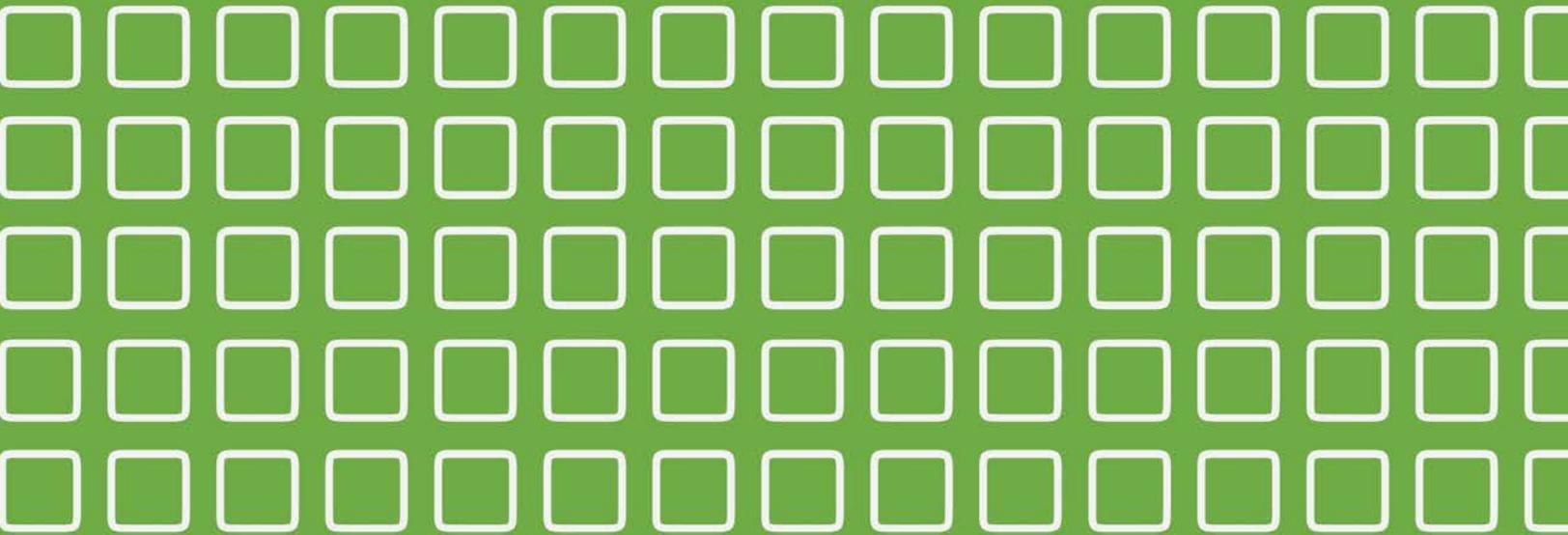
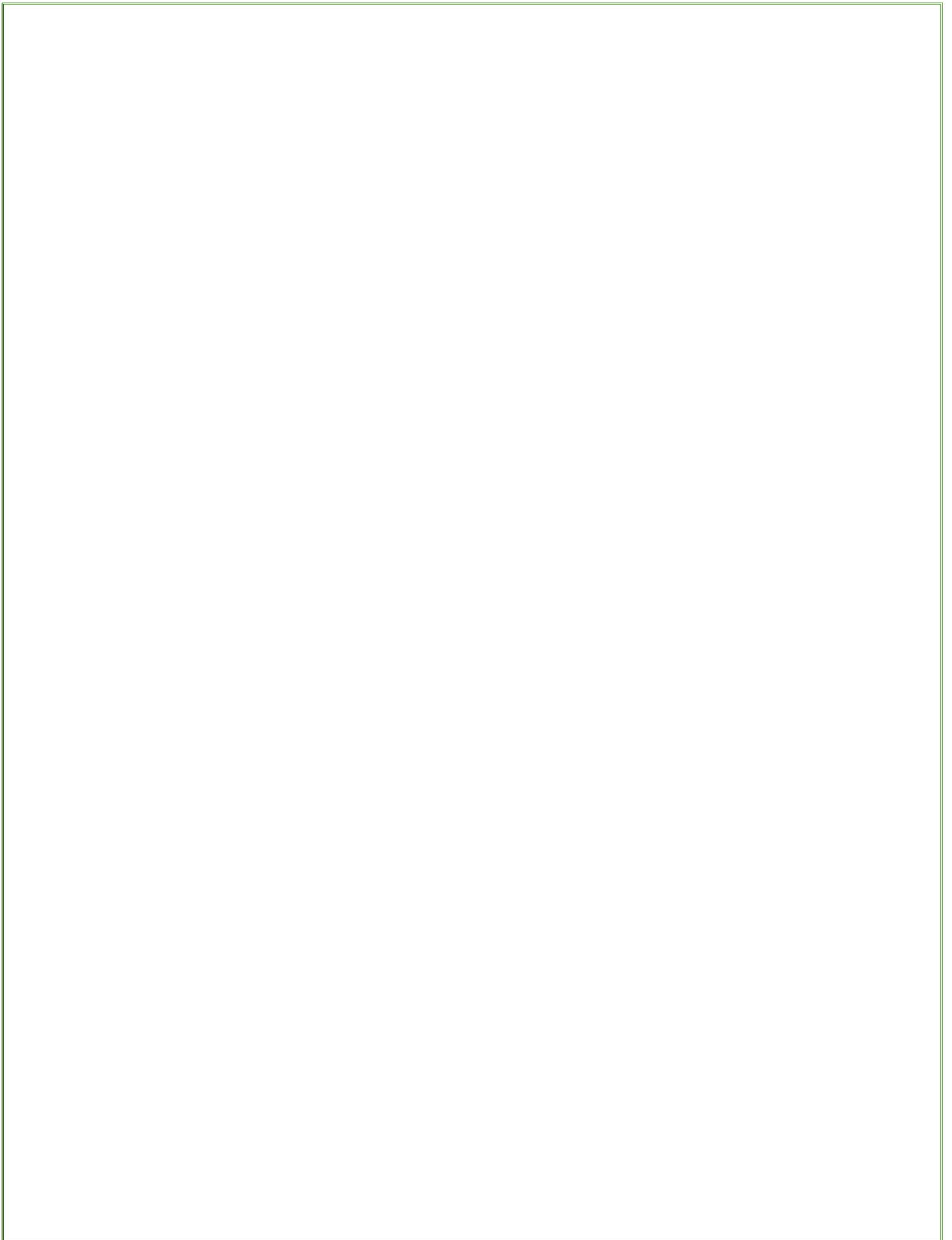


# Two (or More) Generation Frameworks: A Look Across and Within



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## TWO (OR MORE) GENERATION FRAMEWORKS: A LOOK ACROSS AND WITHIN

### Context

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What if – at this the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the start of the War on Poverty -- we really meant it when we talk about educational and economic success as the legacy that passes from one generation in America to the next, as the mission of Ascend at the Aspen Institute<sup>1</sup> so boldly asserts?

What if we focused our policies, practice guidance, program design and systems development on “the family as a unit,” as the Foundation for Child Development so clearly outlines?

What if this approach – genuinely implemented – enabled us to begin to lock the door on chronic, multi-generational poverty within the context of this nation’s vulnerable communities and neighborhoods, as the Annie E. Casey Foundation so properly implores?

WE ENVISION  
AN AMERICA  
IN WHICH A LEGACY OF ECONOMIC  
SECURITY AND EDUCATIONAL  
SUCCESS PASSES FROM  
ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT.

Taken together, these frameworks seek to remedy a set of seemingly intractable social, economic and human development problems: multi-generational poverty; social disconnectedness; persistent gaps in adult educational attainment and workforce preparedness; and the predictable lack of school readiness and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade reading skills among vulnerable young children. These problems are compounded by the persistent and well-documented challenges of racial, health and educational inequity, especially among children and families living with limited economic resources.

Although attention to the family “as the unit of intervention” is now and has long been an aspirational element in the delivery of human services, most of our focus from a policy, practice and program perspective has been on *either children or the parents*. This is especially true within federal, state and municipal categorical systems such as child welfare and child protective services, health and mental health, corrections and juvenile justice, and substance abuse treatment.

Evolving knowledge from the field of neuroscience coupled with the persistent economic challenges facing families -- specifically, multi-generational poverty -- has, however, propelled a serious look at what it would mean if health care, human services and education, broadly writ, were focused innovatively on “the family as a unit” within the context of economic security and educational success. Additionally, emerging knowledge from the science of epigenetics – revealing that adversity in childhood leads to adult health and mental health illnesses which may be passed, through gene expression, across generations -- demands that we work with children, their parents *and their parents*.

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<sup>1</sup> This graphic is included with permission of Ascend at the Aspen Institute. Online at -- //ascend.aspeninstitute.org

The purpose of this paper is to examine five two-generation frameworks – offered or supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Ascend at the Aspen Institute and the Foundation for Child Development -- where the focus is on the “child *and* adult,” whether the framework is labeled as a two-generation, dual-generation, multi-generation or whole family approach. Note that each of these frameworks includes examples of specific organizations exemplifying some or many parts of this approach. Note as well that a number of the program exemplars are supported by more than one of these three foundations.

This analysis was written, shared and rewritten based on input from the people and organizations whose frameworks are presented here.<sup>2</sup> It examines commonalities across these frameworks, presents each in more detail, and reviews emerging resources and recommendations to guide organizations at the federal, state and local levels interested in moving forward to answer the questions:

*What if we really meant it when we say we want to serve children and their adult family members together? What would have to change in our knowledge base and in the domains of public policy, practice, program design and systems-building to begin to make this a reality?*

## Sources and Resources

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This paper examines two-generation frameworks currently on the national radar screen from the following organizations:

- The Annie E. Casey Foundation
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute
- The National Human Services Assembly, in collaboration with the Annie E. Casey Foundation
- The Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources at the University of Texas, in collaboration Ascend at the Aspen Institute and the Foundation for Child Development
- The MOMS Partnership, in collaboration with Yale University and the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

In addition to studying the core documents below, readers are advised to check the websites of these organizations where additional information is continually added, including announcements of new two-generation “programs” being launched as we speak.

- [The MOMS Partnership: A Concept Paper](#) (Yale University, February 2014)
- [Two-Generation Playbook](#) (Ascend at the Aspen Institute, January 2014)

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<sup>2</sup> The author gratefully acknowledges the help of the following individuals in review of this evolving document between November 2013 and March 2014: Donald Hernandez, Hunter College and The Graduate Center City, University of New York; Jennifer Stedron, Ascend at the Aspen Institute; Molly French, National Human Services Assembly; Megan Smith, the MOMS Partnership and the Departments of Psychiatry, Public Health and Child Study at Yale University; Shelley Waters Boots, Annie E. Casey Foundation; Jill Reynolds, The Public Consulting Group; Frank Farrow, Center for the Study of Social Policy; and the “two-generation” team at the National Governors Association convened by Alexandra Cawthorne.

- [\*Gateways to Two Generations: The Potential for Early Childhood Programs and Partnerships to Support Children and Parents Together\*](#) (Ascend at the Aspen Institute, January 2014)
- [\*Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Young Families: Two-Generation Strategies for Disconnected Young Parents and their Children\*](#) (A research report by the National Human Services Assembly, December 2013)
- [\*Promoting Two-Generation Strategies: A Getting-Started Guide for State and Local Policy Makers\*](#) (Foundation for Child Development and the Ray Marshall Center for the Study of Human Resources, November 2013)
- [\*A Two-Generational Approach to Strengthening Families: Working Paper\*](#) (Robert Giloth, Annie E. Casey Foundation, August 2013)
- [\*Request for Initial Submissions. Family Engagement: A Shared Responsibility of Families, Schools and Communities\*](#) (WK Kellogg Foundation, August 2013)
- [\*Two Generations, One Future. Moving Parents and Children Beyond Poverty Together\*](#) (Ascend at the Aspen Institute, 2012)
- [\*Two-Generation Approaches: Initial Observations and Reflections\*](#) (Karen Murrell, prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation, September 2012)
- [\*Dual-Generation Strategy Overview. A Research Brief\*](#) (Ray Marshall Center, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, February 2012)
- [\*Two Generations in Poverty: Status and Trends among Parents and Children in the United States\*](#) (Child Trends, November 2011)
- [\*Investing in Children and Parents: Fostering Dual-Generation Strategies in the United States\*](#) (Ray Marshall Center, LBJ School of Public Affairs, University of Texas at Austin, 2011)

In addition, two recent presentations at the October 2013 National Governors Association convening of human services commissioners and policy leaders are also helpful:

1. J. M. Gruendel, *Who Says Elephants Can't Dance: Exploring the policy, practice and program implications of a multi-generational, neuroscience-informed framework* (Connecticut Department of Children and Families, October 2013)<sup>3</sup>
2. Anne Mosle, *Two Generation Strategies for Vulnerable Families* (Ascend at the Aspen Institute, October 2013)<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Available from the author -- [janice.gruendel@aya.yale.edu](mailto:janice.gruendel@aya.yale.edu)

<sup>4</sup> Contact the author for availability – [ascendinfo@aspeninstitute.org](mailto:ascendinfo@aspeninstitute.org)

## Looking Across Emerging Two-Generation Frameworks

The following questions guide our comparative look *across* these two-generation frameworks:

- What significant social policy problems does the framework seek to address?
- What is the target population?
- What components and strategies are core to each framework?
- What outcomes are articulated for each framework?

As will be seen, all of the frameworks are directed at enabling *families* with young children to improve economic security, mobility and success. Each includes a core focus on the education and workforce skill development of the parent, and on the learning and development of the young child being parented. Several of the frameworks make explicit reference to the impacts of trauma and adverse childhood experiences, and one pays particular attention the evolving neuroscience of child and adult development. Only one, however, focuses its theory of change on challenges in maternal mental health and executive functioning as mediators for successful participation in social services *and* as key causal agents in children’s development. It should also be noted that attention to the following issues will doubtless strengthen these frameworks further:

- The presence and role grandparents and other 3<sup>rd</sup> generation kin who provide primary caretaking for young children in their families
- The role of fathers and fatherhood
- The impact of racial, health and educational inequities on child and family success, and
- The different needs of families with young children who live in rural versus urban poverty.

**Table 1: What significant social policy problems does each framework seek to address?**

<b>Annie E. Casey Foundation</b>	<b>Ascend at the Aspen Institute</b>	<b>National Human Services Assembly</b>	<b>Ray Marshall Center, University of Texas</b>	<b>MOMS Partnership, Yale University</b>
Persistent poverty among families and communities School readiness and persistent educational achievement gaps Racial inequalities limiting access to services The impact of toxic stress and trauma on children and families	The cycle of poverty and limited economic mobility Low education levels of vulnerable families with young children Social dis-connectedness Note: These issues are viewed through a racial equity lens.	Impaired health, economic mobility and stability among families living with poverty and Adverse Childhood Experiences Intergenerational transmission of poverty	Low income Lack of “educational and occupational credentials” for low income parents with young children Limited access to high-quality early education Fragmented and inadequate support services	Social isolation and mental health needs of urban mothers with young children Persistent poverty and lower educational attainment Inadequately developed maternal parenting skills specific to young children

**Table 2: What is the target population?**

<b>Annie E. Casey Foundation</b>	<b>Ascend at the Aspen Institute</b>	<b>National Human Services Assembly</b>	<b>Ray Marshall Center, University of Texas</b>	<b>MOMS Partnership, Yale University</b>
Low income young children and their families living in high poverty communities	Young children and their families with limited economic mobility and low levels of educational attainment Special focus on mothers	Out-of-school and out-of-work youth and their young children	Young children and their parents in low-income families	Low income mothers (or other female caregivers) raising young children in high-risk urban environments

**Table 3: What components are core to each framework?**

<b>Annie E. Casey Foundation</b>	<b>Ascend at the Aspen Institute</b>	<b>National Human Services Assembly</b>	<b>Ray Marshall Center, University of Texas</b>	<b>MOMS Partnership, Yale University</b>
Family economic success Capacity building for parents and caregivers Early care and quality education	Economic supports and asset building High quality education for children and post-secondary education/skill training for adults Social capital and networks for family strength and resilience building Health and well being	Positive Youth Development “Baby Boosts” to develop parenting skills Family development Social connections	Adult education (HS/GED/post-secondary) and sectoral job training for credentials associated with high-paid work High quality early education (PK-3 <sup>rd</sup> grade) Family and peer support services, including intensive wrap around	Evidence-based mental health services Skill development in executive functioning and self-regulation Community Mental Health Ambassadors Tiered education and workforce development framework

**Table 4: What outcomes are articulated in each framework?**

<b>Annie E. Casey Foundation</b>	<b>Ascend at the Aspen Institute</b>	<b>National Human Services Assembly</b>	<b>Ray Marshall Center, University of Texas</b>	<b>MOMS Partnership, Yale University</b>
Family economic success & upward mobility Improved parental executive functioning skills and parenting Improved job readiness skills Children ready for school and achieving grade level reading success	Educational and economic success for children and families	Parental re-engagement in education and/or work Parent-child bond is nurtured Child well-being improves Families are connected with economic, social, and/or other supports	Short- to medium-term participation in PreK-3 <sup>rd</sup> programs, sector-specific job training, and wraparound peer and support services Long-term academic success for children Parental work in high-wage, high-demand occupations	Improvements in maternal mental health, executive functioning and self-regulation Reduction in social isolation Basic needs (e.g., diapers and food) are met Improvements in work readiness skills

**Digging Deeper into the Two-Generation Frameworks**

The assignment of specific programs, services or strategies to one component or another of each framework reflects the individual experience, vision and investment of the organizations that have offered these frameworks. The surface-level charting presented above clearly reveals that there are both commonalities and some differences across these frameworks. It is instructive now to dig a little more deeply to understand what elements comprise the core components of *each* framework.

**Annie E. Casey Foundation**

In his working paper circulated in the early fall of 2013, Robert Giloth, Vice President of the Center for Community and Economic Opportunity at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, describes the context for the continued development of a two-generation approach of the Foundation:

*The idea of serving children and their parents holistically is not new. Dating as far back as the settlement movement in the early 1900s, several organizations and efforts have had deep experience delivering effect supports to parents and children. However, such programs rarely addressed parents’ economic stability, focusing instead on literacy or parenting rather than many of the underlying issues of poverty. Even those that did combine adult economic and early childhood services struggled to integrate these services for families in a way that was sustainable. Rarely did these programs focus on strengthening the ability of parents and*

*caregivers to reduce toxic stress and build child coping skills. And typically, organizations were not able to deliver services on a large scale in communities across the country” (p. 1).*

The working paper outlines the Foundation’s theory of change upon which its emerging two-generation framework is based:

*“Faced with emerging research findings about the issues confronting children in poverty, Casey is developing and testing a new two-generation approach for children and families that can be expanded and sustained over time. Casey’s two-generation theory is that when families have access to high-quality early education and supports for children, assistance to strengthen parents’ caregiving skills and tools to improve their economic standing, the outcomes for both will improve—and even more so when they live in supportive communities with strong ties to other families and interact with systems that are responsive to their needs. Such an approach would involve providing key services to support both children and parents in an intentionally coordinated and simultaneous manner” (pp. 1-2).*

Over the past six months, the Foundation has continued to refine the framework for two-generation work and investment. Of note, the Foundation describes its approach as involving three simultaneous interventions, resulting in better outcomes for parents and their children. As can be seen below, attention is accorded the workforce as well. In addition to improving the lives and outcomes of vulnerable parents and children, two-generation work guided by this framework is expected to influence change in at both the policy and systems levels. <sup>5</sup>

The three areas of simultaneous intervention are:

- **Family economic success strategies:** Workforce and career development; Access to income and work support benefits; Financing coaching and education as well as access to financial products
- **Capacity building for parents, caregivers and agencies:** Creation of a continuum of accessible resources and partners to engage families; Enhancing parent voices, advocacy and networks; Addressing family stress and trauma; Ensuring that agency staff are culturally competent and view parents as assets
- **Early care, education and quality experiences:** High-quality early education programs (center-based or home-based); Successful transition to elementary school; High-quality elementary school experiences.

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<sup>5</sup> Personal communication, Shelley Waters Boots, Annie E. Casey Foundation, March 25, 2014.

Core features of the Foundation’s evolving two-generation approach are charted below.

<b>Core Features of the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s Two-Generation Approach</b> (February 2014)		
<p><b><i>This framework seeks to address the following significant social problems:</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Persistent poverty among families and communities</li> <li>Lack of school readiness and the presence of persistent educational achievement gaps</li> <li>Racial inequalities that limit access to services</li> <li>The impact of trauma and toxic stress on children and families</li> </ul>		
<b>Family Economic Security</b>	<b>Capacity Building for Parents and Caregivers</b>	<b>Early Care and Quality Education</b>
Interventions directed to parents that aim at addressing their economic success through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training, education, job assistance and other workforce development and career-enhancing strategies that lead to family-supporting work</li> <li>• Access to public benefit and work supports</li> <li>• Financial coaching, asset building, financial education and access to non-predatory financial products and services</li> </ul>	Interventions directed to parents that engage them as both parents and workers through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development of parents’ skills enabling them to improve their decision making, problem solving, executing and evaluation plans.</li> <li>• Support to address parental stress and well-being</li> <li>• Development of parents’ confidence and agency, increasing their empowerment so they can fulfill their role as their child’s best advocate</li> <li>• Development of parents’ social networks of support as both a parent and worker</li> </ul>	Interventions for their children through high-quality early educational supports: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High-quality early education programs (either center-based or home-based)</li> <li>• Successful transition to elementary school</li> <li>• Quality elementary school experiences</li> <li>• Effective teaching across all ages</li> <li>• Trusting relationships with parents</li> <li>• Comprehensive services and supports for children, parents and families, such as health, nutrition, mental health</li> </ul>
Services are built on policies, systems and communities that enhance the lives of families		

Importantly, Giloth’s paper also identifies the Foundation’s investment approach to advancing two-generation implementation and knowledge development. There are three core strategies – advancing research and knowledge, demonstrating two-generation practice on the ground, and influencing policy and systems. Investment now being made specific to each strategy is shown below.

Strategy	Where Will the Casey Foundation Make its investments?
Advancing research and knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Frontiers of Innovation, Harvard Center on the Developing Child</a></li> <li>• New Haven, <a href="#">CT MOMS Partnership</a> (See a description of this effort later this paper.)</li> <li>• Boston, MA <a href="#">Crittenton Women’s Union</a> (described later)</li> <li>• New: A focus on creating opportunities for young parents, in partnership with the Jim Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative</li> </ul>
Demonstrating two-generation practice on the ground	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The Atlanta Civic Site</a> (See references to this effort later in this paper.)</li> <li>• Baltimore, MD initiatives</li> <li>• Family economic success coupled with early childhood: New York City, Garrett County MD, Atlanta GA, and Tulsa OK</li> <li>• Family-centered community change: NY, OH and TX</li> <li>• Housing platforms in New Orleans and San Francisco</li> </ul>
Influencing policy and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Building a “networked field” of two-generation approaches</li> </ul>

As the Foundation’s comprehensive approach is implemented and work at the system and policy level advances, it expects to “directly touch about 5,000 families” and to reach “thousands more.”

### Ascend at the Aspen Institute

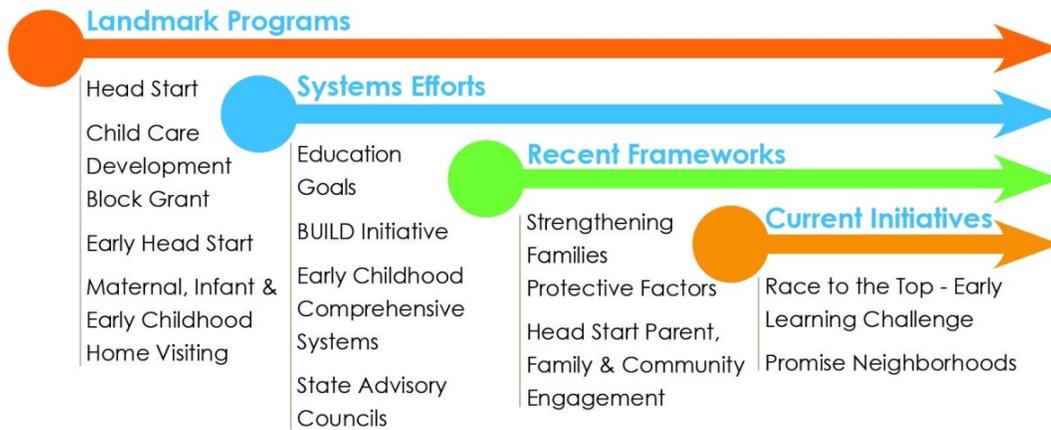
In its January 2014 publication, *Gateways to Two Generations*, Ascend at the Aspen Institute describes its evolving two-generation framework as:

*...a lens for thinking about programs, policies, systems and research. The framework draws on a history of efforts to address the needs of both children and parents while capitalizing on the implications of what science has demonstrated: the development of children and parents is inextricably linked... The primary assumption is that when parents have access to the core components [of a true two-generation model], they will be better able to support the healthy development of their young children, and, concurrently, when young children receive quality early childhood services, the parental benefits are manifold” (p. 7).*

The 2014 report provides a very helpful graphic depicting the evolution of programs and systems change initiatives that – over the past nearly 50 years -- intentionally seek to engage parents in their children’s development. Taken together, charting these investments over time reveal a real federal commitment to investment that moves from program to systems development, anchored in strength-based, protective factors and focused focus on neighborhoods and community.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Figure 3 is included with permission of Ascend at the Aspen Institute. It appears in Lombardi, J., Mosle, A., Patel, N., Schumacher, R. and Stedron J. (2014). *Gateways to Two-Generations: The Potential for Early Childhood Programs and Partnerships to Support Children and Parents Together*. The Aspen Institute. Online at -- [ascend.aspeninstitute.org](http://ascend.aspeninstitute.org)

## Engaging Parents in Early Childhood Development, 1965 - Current <sup>iv</sup>



As described in *Gateways to Two Generations* (2014), this framework is anchored in four core components: education of the parent and the young child; economic supports for the family that serve as a “scaffold for families as they work to build the skills that lead to better jobs and longer-term financial stability” (p. 16); social capital that includes the natural and professional human resources to support families to move beyond poverty; and health and well-being.

Categories and Components of the Framework from Ascend at the Aspen Institute			
<p><b><i>This framework seeks to address the following significant social problems:</i></b></p> <p>Poverty and limited economic mobility                      Low education levels of vulnerable families with young children                      Social disconnectedness among vulnerable young families</p>			
Education	Economic Supports	Social Capital	Health and Well-Being
Postsecondary education and workforce development Early intervention Early childhood development programs (child care; Head Start; PreK; Home Visiting; Hubs of support for family/ friend/ neighbor caregivers) K-12 education Family literacy	Housing Transportation Financial education & asset building Tax credits Child care subsidies Student financial aid & Pell Grants Food assistance & SNAP	Peer/cohort support Family, friends and neighbors Community and faith-based organizations School and workplace contacts Leadership and empowerment programs Case managers and career coaches Family life skills Family engagement	Preventing toxic stress Supports to build strong parent-child relationships Family planning Access to health insurance Mental health supports

Reports published by Ascend at the Aspen Institute over the past three years provide a rich base of community examples in which intentional programming is directed at the child and parent together, “actualized in early childhood programs” (*Gateways*, 2014, p. 9).

- **The Jeremiah program in St. Paul, Minnesota** pursues a *whole family* approach, comprehensively wrapping early childhood and “adult career and life coaching, job placement assistance, and access to an alumnae network” (*Two Generations, One Future*, 2012, p. 14).
- **The Career ADVANCE program in Tulsa, Oklahoma** pursues a *child-parent approach*, where the enrollment of young children in a quality early education center is linked with sector-specific job training and supports. This program was designed in partnership with Ascend at the Aspen Institute Fellows from the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas. (See the description of this framework later in this paper.)
- **The Keys to Degrees program at Endicott College in Beverly, Massachusetts** illustrates a *parent-child* two-generation approach. This program “provides an immersion college experience for student parents while ensuring quality early education for their children” (*Two Generations*, 2012, p. 15).
- **All Our Kin in New Haven and Bridgeport, Connecticut** “improves education levels for low-income women while simultaneously enhancing the quality of family child care in low-income neighborhoods” (*Gateways*, 2014, p. 12).
- **The Atlanta Civic Site** has established “a seamless partnership with Sheltering Arms-Educare Atlanta, Dunbar Elementary Schools, and The Center for Working Families.” Together, the partnership offers high quality early education and care, education and workforce development services for parents, year-round comprehensive services including family support works, and economic supports to “smooth over gaps in subsidy eligibility when possible” (*Gateways*, 2014, p. 14).
- **Acelero Learning, with programs in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, and Wisconsin**, “strategically focuses on four family life practices that research suggests help promote school readiness: daily reading time, positive guidance and discipline, experience- and language-rich environments, and consistent family routines...[integrated] into all aspects of family engagement work” (*Gateways*, 2014, p. 16).

Importantly, work advancing intentional two-generational efforts does not live at the community level alone. The Ascend at the Aspen Institute *Gateways* report cites several examples of noteworthy initiatives at the state level as well.

- **Aligning and integrating child and adult-serving agencies:** Colorado has engaged its Department of Social Services, Department of Education and the Office of the Lt. Governor in establishing a set of goals and objectives to guide creation of a “purposefully connected and coordinated system of early childhood services and programs that includes: 1) early learning; 2) family support, 3) social, emotional and mental health; 4) health for children and families in need” (*Gateways*, 2014, p.17). This is accomplished through a formal Memorandum of

Understanding across organizations and is linked, as well, with the state’s 30 local Early Childhood Councils focused on systems building at the county level.

- **Leveraging networks at the state level:** Vermont’s Learning Together effort “provides quality child care for babies and toddlers while their teen mothers participate in counseling, education, job readiness training, and other services” (*Gateways*, 2014, p. 17)
- **Embedding family engagement and support:** Nineteen states “have integrated Strengthening Families, an initiative at the Center for the Study of Social Policy, into their state Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS)” (*Gateways*, 2014, pp. 17-18). Quality Rating and Improvement Systems are designed to incentivize and support child care and early learning settings to improve the quality of services.

In the Ascend at the Aspen Institute’s 2012 report, *Two Generations, One Future*, a five-year blueprint for the initiative’s two-generation approach is described. The table below presents its strategies along with a current update on activities and investment.

How Ascend at the Aspen Institute Will Work and What it Will Do	
Strategy	Activities and Investments
Build on established work and learning	Tapping initiatives such as New Hope, Head Start, Early Head Start, All our Kin, the family literacy movement, and other community-level efforts to advance knowledge of what has worked and what has not in terms of outcomes, sustainability, and the consistency, quality, type and intensity of services
Link, streamline and connect	Identifying and promoting “new efforts that bring together early care and education with postsecondary education and workforce development” ( <i>Two Generations</i> , 2012, p. 20)
Foster innovation and collaboration	A \$1.7 million Aspen Institute Ascend Fund and Innovation Fund was established to provide “flexible capital to fuel breakthrough ideas and support leaders in the field” ( <i>Two Generations</i> , 2012, p. 20)
Spark a new conversation	Ascend engages parent voices to inform program and policy design. It also leverages its website and the Aspen Institute media platform to amplify and deepen the conversation around two-generation approaches, and provide tools and resources for practice, policy and research.
Develop an economic case with solid metrics	Ascend at the Aspen Institute is convening national-respected researchers to identify the core effective elements of two-generation approaches.
Build and expand a network of leaders	The Ascend Fellows Program targets “exceptional leaders who are pioneering and paving new pathways that break the cycle of intergenerational poverty” ( <i>Two Generations</i> , 2012, p. 21).
Elevate promising practices and policy ideas to build political will	Ascend at the Aspen Institute functions as a national online hub for information. National forums and roundtables are hosted highlighting promising programs and policies for leaders in positions to make decisions that can shift practice, policy and resources are continuously convened. Graphics are made available for use from the website.

## National Human Services Assembly

In its December 2013 report, *Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Young Families*, the [National Human Services Assembly](#) defines two-generation frameworks as programs that “...intentionally serve parents and children individually and together as a family unit. At a minimum, these approaches seek to re-engage young parents in education and/or work; nurture parent-child bonds; improve children’s well-being; and connect families with economic, social and other supports” (p.2).

The report notes that, “Over 1.4 million youth ages 15-24 are out-of-school and out-of-work (OSOW) and are raising dependent children. When youth are out of the education system, lack early work experience, and cannot find employment, the likelihood is poor that they will have the means to support themselves and the needs of their children” (p. 1). In response to these data, the two-generation work described by the National Human Services Alliance is anchored in “[positive youth development](#)” models now widely in use across the nation:

*“Specifically, young people work with a caring, knowledgeable adult whom they trust, and the program culture is positive. Services emphasize building on young people’s strengths (rather than focusing on problems), and youth provide input about their development plans and take ownership of their decisions and their lives. Flexible program structures enable case managers to creatively tailor services for the unique situation of each young person and family” (p. 7)*

To construct its two-generation approach, the Assembly conducted a survey funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Through semi-structured interviews, the Assembly surveyed 32 National Assembly member organizations and some of their affiliates with programs that “exemplified national family-strengthening practices...as a surrogate for data indicating program quality” (p. 5). Assembly staff then interviewed local practitioners and reviewed case studies to “identify common practices that practitioners had flagged as instrumental to achieving positive outcomes” (p. 5).

Information from these surveys is organized within the following two charts. The first focuses on elements of success related to services offered. The second focuses on elements of success related to program design.

**National Human Services Assembly: Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Young Families**  
**Elements of Success related to Services**

***This framework seeks to address the following significant social problems***

Impaired health, economic mobility and stability among families living  
with poverty and Adverse Childhood Experiences  
Intergenerational transmission of poverty

<b>Positive Youth Development</b>	<b>Baby Boosts</b>	<b>Family Development</b>	<b>Social Connections</b>
<p>Based on a relationship with a knowledgeable, caring, trusted adult</p> <p>Positive program culture</p> <p>Individualized strength-based approach</p> <p>Youth give input and take ownership for their own decisions</p>	<p>Timely health services for children, including prenatal care, early preventive care, and early detection of delays and other conditions</p> <p>Early childhood education and care programs “that deliberately nurture child development and work with parents as partners”</p> <p>Parent-child attachment affirmed by program staff through individual learning and the reconnection of children to parents if they become separated</p> <p>Parenting education and training that builds parenting skills</p>	<p>Stabilize family living by addressing basic immediate needs, including, housing, food supports, health care</p> <p>Supporting young parents to adopt a “family mindset” as head of household, including managing rent and finances, making plans and navigating within community systems</p> <p>Assuring additional “wrap around” supports for the family as a whole</p>	<p>Support for peer networks that provide social and emotional support to young parents and reduce social isolation</p> <p>Strengthen “existing ties to caring people and supportive adults” for each young family</p> <p>Encourage community involvement through library use and faith-based programs</p>

**National Human Services Assembly: Elements of Success related to Program Design**

Multi-faceted	Employing both prevention and intervention approaches in which young parents are provided with the “tools for raise their children in a positive environment” by program staff adept at navigating the many service systems that control access to specific services
Intensive	Program staff work with individual families to build and implement specialized plans for each family
Longer-term	Involving engagement with young families for up to 24 months (or longer) in order to assure the “time, resources, and supportive environments to develop brain maturity, education and workforce credentials, and parenting know-how” (p. 7)
Collaborative	Case managers foster broad community-based partnerships that can support the young family over time. “Organizational partners include government agencies, employers, many other service providers, and civic groups (such as faith-based institutions, play groups). Case managers also facilitate partnerships with individuals in the community who care about young families’ success” (p. 7)

The Assembly identified six exemplary two-generation programs serving young out-of-school/out-of-work families at the local level. Each of these six agencies are a part of national networks of human services providers, some of which have national model programs models that support two-generation strategies.

- **Association of Jewish Family and Children’s Agencies:** This is a member organization of over 100 agencies in the US and Canada. [Jewish Family Service in San Diego, CA](#) is highlighted. Its two-generation approach with young families employs [Triple P \(Positive Parenting Program\)](#), an evidence-based intervention for vulnerable families with young children.
- **National Crittenton Foundation:** This umbrella organization with 27 member agencies supports young women and girls, many of whom are single mothers and survivors of adverse childhood experiences (ACES). The Foundation’s two-generation approach is anchored in building “on what works – the strengths and resilience in the young families’ lives, instead of trying to fix what is wrong” (p. 9). While no particular affiliate is highlighted, note that the [Boston Crittenton Women’s Union](#) is supported as an exemplary program within the Annie E. Casey Foundation’s two-generation investment strategy (noted earlier).
- **National Urban League:** In partnership with 95 Urban League affiliates in 36 states and the District of Columbia, this member organization is dedicated to economic empowerment in historically underserved communities through civil rights and urban advocacy. [The Northern Virginia Urban League](#) is featured for its multi-generational approach in the Resource Mothers home visiting program. A central tenet of Resource Mothers is to address the “disconnect between the teen’s parents, the mother and the baby’s father” (p. 10).
- **United Neighborhood Centers of America:** In the tradition of the settlement house movement, this organization is focused on social justice community-building at the neighborhood level. The [Martha O’Bryan Center](#) in Nashville, Tennessee is highlighted. Its multi-generational parenting program for young families is called “Tied Together.”

- **Youth Advocate Program:** This national program operates in 17 states and the District of Columbia with community-based alternatives for “young people who would otherwise be homeless or in the juvenile justice, child welfare, or behavioral health systems” (p. 11). Its two-generation framework engages young people, their families and “broader family teams,” provides case managers, organizes community supports, and addresses parenthood and trauma.
- **YWCA USA:** This national network of YWCA member organizations is dedicated to eliminating racism, empowering women, and promoting peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all. The [YWCA of Seattle/King/Snomish](#) is featured because of its Young Parents Program, a two-generation model in which case managers bring together housing, education, employment, child and parenting services, behavioral health support, and more to help young families to begin building their futures.

### **Ray Marshall Center and the Foundation for Child Development**

In the report entitled *Investing in Children and Parents: Fostering Dual-Generation Strategies in the United States* (2011), Christopher King (an Ascend Fellow) with colleagues Tara Smith and Robert Glover of the Ray Marshall Center asserts that a two-generation approach focused on both the child and the parent(s) represents an important paradigm shift in policy thinking. The theory of change posits that:

*“...the combination of high-quality early childhood education (preschool through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade) with sectoral job training leading to high skill/high wage employment, supplemented by wrap-around family and peer support services, will lead to long-term academic and economic success for low-income families” (p. 3).*

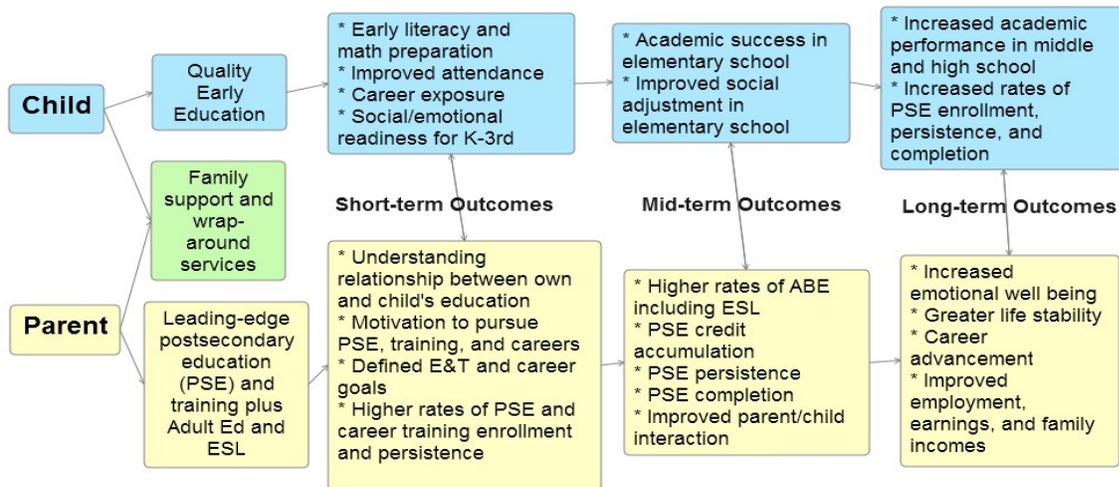
*“Ultimately, the purpose of the Dual-Generation Strategy initiative is to help low-income families achieve greater education and economic success over time. The combination of educational, occupational, and other services is expected to result in a range of outcomes that progressively move the family toward a more stable and secure future” (p. 4).*

Of note, writing in November of 2013, King, Coffey and Smith note that 17 states now support sector-based strategies: Oregon, Washington, Nevada, Colorado, Oklahoma, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Illinois, Arkansas, Mississippi, Georgia, North Carolina, Maryland, Pennsylvania, New York, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

**Ray Marshall Center Dual-Generation Strategies (2011 & 2013)**

<p><b><i>This framework seeks to address the following significant social problems:</i></b>                  Low income, Lack of educational and occupational credentials                  Limited access to quality child care, Fragmented and inadequate support services</p>		
High-quality PK-3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade Education	Cohort-Based Sectoral Job Training	Wrap-Around Family and Peer Support Services
Early Head Start Head Start PreK K-3 <sup>rd</sup> education	Post-secondary education Workforce intermediaries Industry- and geographically specific employer-driven job training (often in health care, energy, utilities, information technology, transportation logistics)	Adult basic and developmental education Career coaching Earnings supplements Transportation assistance Peer community building Asset development/Financial education Child care and early education

Somewhat more detailed in its presentation than other reports in circulation, King and his colleagues offer the following dual-generation conceptual framework<sup>7</sup> as part of the 2011 report (p. 5):



In *Dual-Generation Strategy Overview*, published in 2012, King and his colleagues note that dual-generation strategy implementation "...can originate from multiple directions: workforce development to early learning programs; early learning to sectoral training programs; postsecondary education to early learning programs; or collaboration among effective programs across these arena" (2012, p. 1).

<sup>7</sup> See the *Research Brief. Dual-Generation Strategy Overview* (2012) for a slightly amended graphic depicting this conceptual framework. The 2011 schematic is referenced here as it includes wrap around services as a core component connecting child and family services.

In November 2013, the Foundation for Child Development along with the Ray Marshall Center issued a report entitled *Promoting Two-Generation Strategies: A Getting-Started Guide for State and Local Policy Makers*. This report highlights several two-generation programs “...customized to meet local workforce needs and service availability within their unique institutional and programmatic contexts” (p. 4). Two of these are summarized below.

<b>Local Two-Generation Models with Customized Sectoral Workforce Strategies</b>	
<p>Career Advance®, The Community Action Project of Tulsa, Oklahoma</p>	<p>Targets jobs in the healthcare industry “with a ladder of education, training, and certifications in selected occupations offering opportunities for advancement and family-supporting earnings with fringe benefits” (p. 4).</p> <p>Participants are supported and motivated through “a cohort training model; peer mentoring and support through facilitated weekly meetings of participants; tuition payments and other education/training expenses; and wrap around services such as before and aftercare for children, and transportation assistance” (p. 4).</p> <p>The program is being evaluated by the Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University and the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas. The evaluation will include “implementation and longitudinal parent/child outcomes and impacts” (p. 5).</p> <p>Funders: George Kaiser Family Foundation and US Department of Health and Human Services through its Health Professionals Opportunities Grant program</p>
<p>Atlanta Civic Site, Atlanta, Georgia</p>	<p>A partnership between the Center for Working Families, Inc. and Sheltering Arms Early Education &amp; Family Centers and funded by several foundations</p> <p>Ensures “children’s health and school readiness as well as parents’ achievement of economic success” (p. 5). The early childhood component is part of a PreK-3 curriculum in conjunction with an adjoining elementary school and parents are supported through “caregiving resources, parent engagement, and education programming” (p. 5)</p> <p>Through the working families component each family “...works with a Family Coach to identify the family’s strengths and determine the services and interventions that are needed to help the family thrive” (p. 5)</p> <p>Implementation and outcomes will be examined over time.</p>

## The MOMS Partnership, New Haven Connecticut

A Harvard Frontiers of Innovation charter community site, the MOMS Partnership began its work in 2010 as part of a year-long assessment of the needs of New Haven, Connecticut mothers raising young children in urban neighborhoods marked by poverty, social isolation and crime. These mothers -- often viewed as among the most difficult to engage and serve -- were interviewed in natural settings within the city by other New Haven mothers trained in the interview process. The women ranged in age from young adulthood through 45 years of age. One cluster of younger mothers had only one child; a second cluster had 3-4 children and the third group consisted of third-generation kin caretakers, generally raising their grandchildren

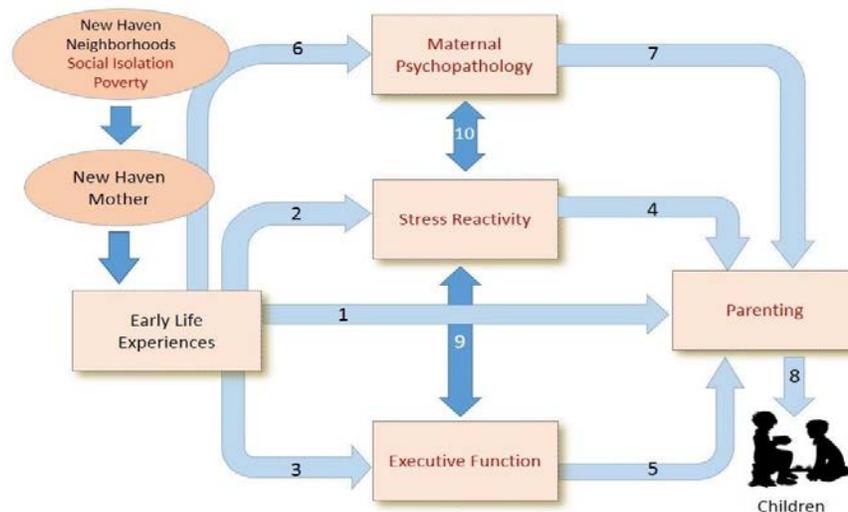
A set of core factors emerged that placed all of these mothers at high risk of poor outcomes for their children and themselves: "Poverty, not specifically defined by mothers as lack of money, but rather defined as tangible basic needs related to parenting — diapers, food, child care, clothing, and unstable housing; social isolation; and high levels of maternal mental illness or 'stress,' defined by mothers to include symptoms of actual depressive, anxiety and addictive disorders" (2014, p. 3). Of the city's 19 residential neighborhoods, 12 were found to evidence high levels of economic challenge, social isolation and crime – and it is in these neighborhoods that the city's most vulnerable families with children reside.



Figure 1: Maternal Hierarchy of Needs (n=912)

Underlying the search for breakthrough outcomes for the young children in these families is the belief that four factors "mediating the relationship between early life adversity and child outcomes" must be successfully addressed: maternal psychopathology, stress reactivity and executive function, and parenting quality. A graphic depiction of the MOMS Partnership Theory of Change follows:

Figure 2: MOMS Partnership Theory of Change



Core elements of the MOMS Partnership model include:

- **Neighborhood MOMS Hubs** with locations determined in partnership with participating mothers, where Community Ambassadors (see below) are located, and mothers and their children receive mental health, economic security and attachment-based parenting interventions, tangible items and services to meet basic needs, and opportunities to create community and build natural supports close to home.
- **Community Mental Health Ambassadors** who are themselves mothers from New Haven trained in brief mental health intervention and intergenerational health promotion, act as supports, care extenders and referral sources at the Hub.
- **Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**, an evidence-based mental health intervention, is available to mothers at the start of their engagement with community ambassadors. Of note, 90% of mothers complete this sequence as compared with adherence rates of below 50% nationally. This intervention builds key executive function skills in participating mothers.
- **Executive function skill development** is delivered through a specifically-developed smart phone “app” for individual mothers, called MOMBA, with rewards anchored in a token economy and data-tracked on a real time, 24/7 basis by researchers.
- **Tiered workforce preparation skill development** tied to the science of executive functioning.

The MOMS Partnership is directly affiliated with Yale University and operates as a nonprofit enterprise with eight community and state partners. It is now being implemented in three of the 12 most vulnerable neighborhoods within the City of New Haven. It is also being replicated in one rural county in Tennessee. Because the model operates as both a service and a research site, expansion of the framework is anchored in a longitudinal, prospective, repeated measures design where interventions are randomized by neighborhood.

Across the initiative, key maternal outcomes include: improvements in executive function; a reduction in symptoms of psychopathology (e.g., depressive, addictive and anxiety disorders); and improvements in the quality of parenting. Key child outcome measures include: age-appropriate progress in executive function development; kindergarten readiness and K-3<sup>rd</sup> grade school success; physical, emotional and cognitive development within expected growth and age parameters; reduction of depressive and anxiety symptomology; and reduced emergency room visits.

## On Multigenerational Poverty and Mental Health

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### Poverty in a Multigenerational Context

Each of the frameworks referenced here is focused on enabling adult caregivers in families to improve their economic security, increase economic mobility and escape (often) multi-generational poverty. While there is a robust and constantly expanding literature on the impacts of poverty, a recent *Child Trends Research Brief* focuses explicitly on two-generation poverty.

The November 2011 report, entitled “[Two Generations in Poverty: Status and Trends among Parents and Children in the United States, 2000-2010](#),” was commissioned by Ascend at the Aspen Institute and the Communications Consortium Media Center in Washington, DC. The summary of findings reveals that:

- “In the wake of the recent recession which has resulted in persistently high rates of unemployment, poverty among two generation families, that is working-age adults and their children, rose in the U.S. Overall, rates increased among almost all demographic groups between 2007, when the recession began, and 2010.”
- “...groups with historically high levels of risk for poverty – including children, young adults, young parents, single mother families, and Blacks and Hispanics – experienced larger percentage point increases in rates of poverty or low-income during this time period.”
- “Poverty and low-income status vary greatly by age, racial and ethnic origin, gender, family structure, and geography.” Among groups with the highest prevalence of poverty include children, especially young children, younger parents (ages 18-24), Blacks and Hispanics, women, and single-parent families, especially single-mother households.
- “Poverty is highly concentrated in the southern region of the United States.” (p. 6)

### Maternal Depression as a Core Mental Health Challenge

The Urban Institute has, for the past five years (2008-2013), managed a research and policy initiative funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation focused on how to better serve low-income mothers suffering from depression in order to prevent child abuse and neglect and improve young children’s development. In May of 2013, the Institute convened 40 leading individuals representing government, philanthropy, the research community, practitioners and advocates to address a series of issues and ideas resulting from its half-decade of work on this topic. In September, the Institute published a report on the convening, entitled [Linking Depressed Mothers to Effective Services and Supports: A Policy and Systems Agenda to Enhance Children’s Development and Prevent Child Abuse and Neglect](#).<sup>8 9</sup> We include this specific report because it articulates a two-generation approach and because it identifies concrete cross-agency and cross-program opportunities to move from thinking to action.

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<sup>8</sup> Related research and policy reports are posted online at -- [//www.urban.org/depressed-mothers-effective-services.cfm](http://www.urban.org/depressed-mothers-effective-services.cfm)

<sup>9</sup> See also a March 2014 report by CLASP, [Maternal Depression: Why it Matters to an Anti-Poverty Agenda for Parents and Children](#)

Key findings on the “prevalence, severity, and treatment among depressed mothers with infants and young children” also make it clear that, unless included as an element in evolving two-generation frameworks, mental health challenges will impede the effectiveness of other interventions. Data below are cited directly from the report:

- 11% of infants born into poverty have a mother with severe depression; 41% have a mother with some form of depression
- Infants born into poverty with depressed mothers are more likely than their peers with non-depressed mothers to be exposed to domestic violence and substance abuse
- 96% of infants in poverty with severely depressed mothers live with someone who receives benefits from the [federal] Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program; 82% live with someone who received Medicaid; 70% live in household(s) receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits
- Uninsured low-income mothers with depression were less likely to receive treatment for their major depression than insured mothers with depression...(2013, p. 2)

Participants at the convening identified the need to focus on both the child and the parents, noting that the “service system is designed to treat individuals, not families, and places that focus on taking care of children (including health care providers) are not set up to address the needs of parents” (2013, p. 4). “At the same time, participants wanted to make sure that fixing this problem through a two-generational or family-oriented approach did not mean giving short shrift to one generation or the other” (2013, p. 4).

In addition, participants noted that a two-generation approach must attend to fathers and must explore the “role of grandparents and others in multigenerational families” (2013, p. 4).

**Examples of Service Opportunities**

- Prenatal and primary care
- Home visiting with clinical supports
- Early intervention
- Early care and education
- Nutrition programs
- Child welfare linkages
- Family and mental health services
- Criminal justice services
- Place-based strategies

Finally, concerns were expressed that insufficient attention is paid to role of secondary trauma as a negative impact on the service delivery workforce.

The paper proposes a multi-level “Systems and Policy Map” for improving outcomes for young children of depressed mothers (2013, p. 6, Figure 2). Specifically, the Institute identifies “system supports needed for effective service delivery,” provider-level service options, and individually-focused program and practice components designed to address the needs of (a) women of child bearing age, (b) pregnant women and mothers of young children, and (c) babies and young children.

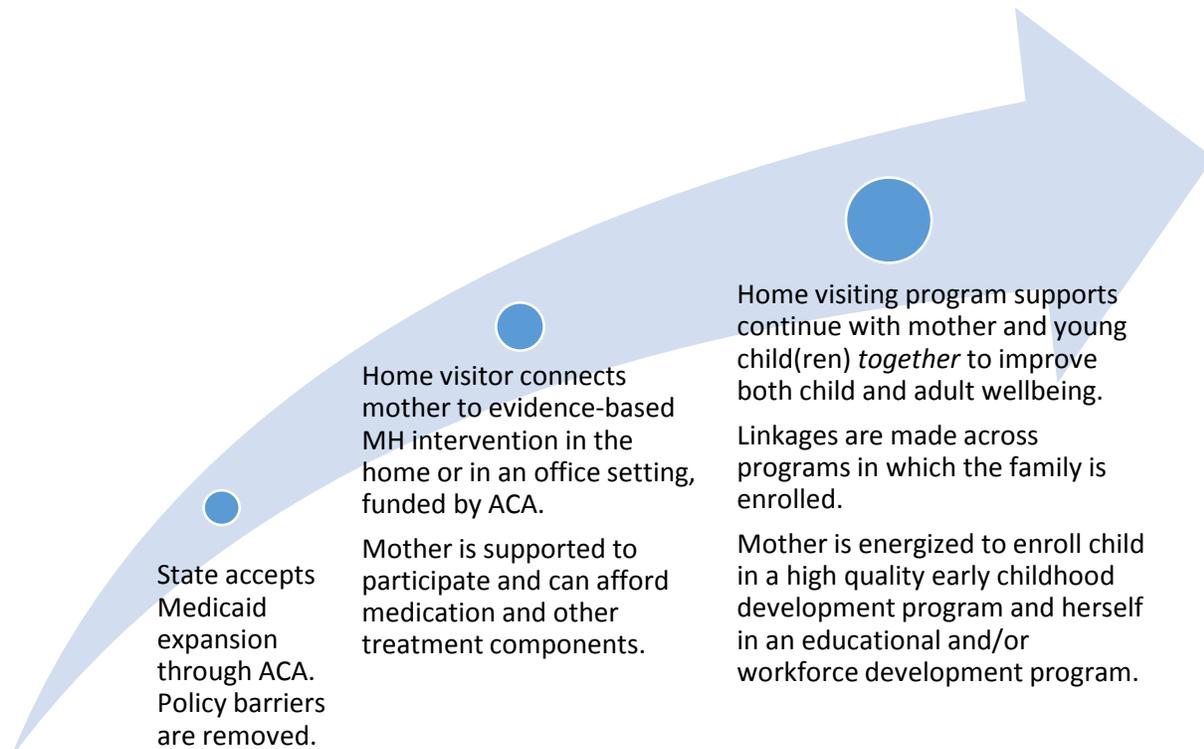
**Examples of System Supports**

- Provider training and capacity building
- Support for provider collaboration
- Financing streams
- Data tracking for operations and assessment
- Research and knowledge building
- Service integration

For those seeking to implement a two-generation approach at the federal and state policy level, the paper identifies a series of opportunities including the active involvement of home visiting programs and their practitioners, the development of “warm handoff” strategies from WIC to other services and supports including adult and child mental health programs, and utilization of mental health provisions in the Affordable Care Act, including vastly expanded screening for depression. As does the Foundation for Child Development paper, the Urban Institute report highlights the need for expanded research and data generation, improved financing strategies and incentives, and family engagement strategies specifically geared to target cohorts of parents and their young children.

In a March 2014 report entitled *Maternal Depression: Why It Matters to an Anti-Poverty Agenda for Parents and Children*, CLASP makes a strong two-generational argument for addressing maternal depression. “Maternal depression is a major public health problem that interferes with a parent’s capacity to help a child develop and stymies their efforts to escape poverty...Depression is widespread among poor and low-income mothers, including mothers with young children...While depression is highly treatable, many low-income mothers do not receive treatment. Unfortunately, untreated maternal depression is damaging to children, particularly young children, placing at risk their safety and cognitive and behavioral development.” (2014, p. 1)

The CLASP report finds this to be an “extraordinary moment of opportunity... By reforming federal and state policies and service systems, the major barriers that have held back widespread depression treatment can flourish and expand.” (2014, p. 3) A core example of changes that are now possible under the Affordable Care Act is presented. The following graphic illustrates the two-generational impact of these potential changes.



## Some Thoughts on Moving Forward

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Taken together, these frameworks provide a rich tapestry of research-informed thinking and program design critical to addressing multi-generational poverty and advancing positive outcomes for young children and their families. To accomplish this, each of these frameworks includes components directed at improving family economic success, parental education and workforce training, and increasing peer supports and social capital to reduce isolation. All are anchored at the community level, and all share the ultimate goal of improving children's outcomes within the context of early learning, school readiness and educational success. Only one, however, explicitly targets parental health, mental health and executive functioning challenges as mediating variables between adult behaviors and child outcomes.

The importance of this approach cannot be overstated. The ability of parents as nurturers, caregivers and economic providers can be hugely limited by the neurologic impact of trauma, toxic stress and adverse childhood experiences. These experiences negatively impact executive function and self-regulation capacity, and we continue to learn about their contribution to such health and mental health challenges as obesity and depression.

Of note for service provision, what may appear to providers to be “willful in-action” -- that is, parents' unresponsiveness to their children, their apparent unwillingness to follow through on guidance and services, and their continued engagement in risky circumstances and/or parental neglect -- may actually reflect mental health challenges such as depression and anxiety as well as impaired or delayed executive functioning and self-regulation.<sup>10</sup> To the extent that mental health and executive function challenges exist for adult caregivers but are not addressed, we should expect that other services and supports will be less effective for these individuals.

Also, for many young families struggling in poverty, grandparents and other kin continue to play a fundamental role in their lives by providing housing, child care, social and/or economic supports. This continued relationship (and, in some cases, dependency) may contribute to the emotional health and well-being of young parents and their children, or may induce further trauma and toxic stress.

### ***Operating Principles for Program Design or Re-design***

In order to increase the likelihood that the service sector itself does not contribute to parental incapacity, to assure a sufficient period of resource commitment to the family, match the delivery of service with the needs and strengths of individuals within the family, and maximize the likelihood of achieving desired child and parental outcomes, it is useful to articulate a set of common operating principles that can be applied across multi-generational framework.

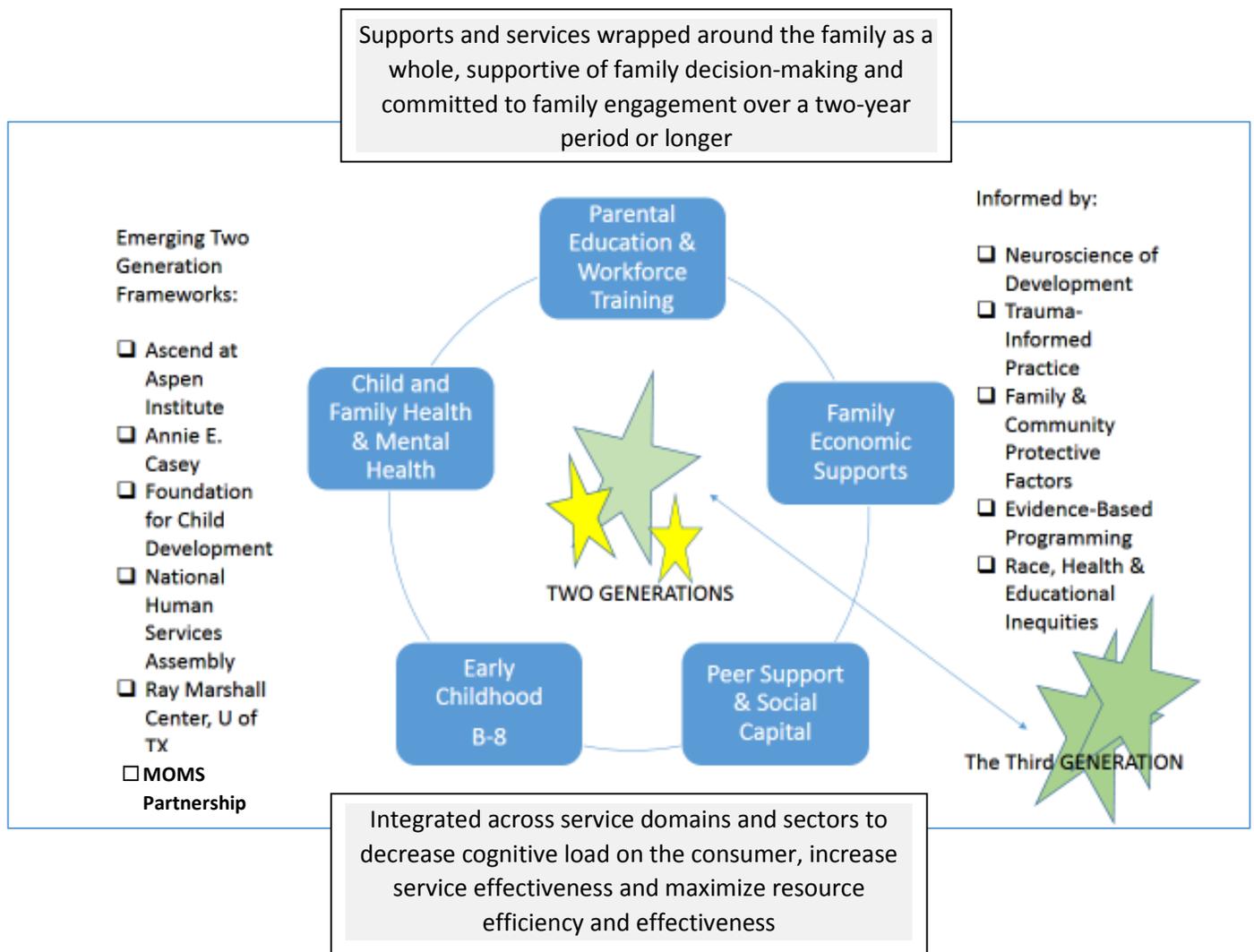
- **Operating Principle #1:** In two-generation models, community supports and services are wrapped around the family as a whole. They encourage and are supportive of family decision-making, and are committed to family engagement over a period that may extend for one or two years, or longer.

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<sup>10</sup> See especially two recent working papers from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University: [Building the Brain's “Air Traffic Control” System](#) (Working Paper #11) and [The Science of Neglect: The Persistent Absence of Responsive Care Disrupts the Developing Brain](#) (Working Paper #12). See also a newly released multi-media presentation entitled [The Spectrum of Neglect: Four Types of Unresponsive Care](#).

- Operating Principle #2: In two-generation models, support and services are delivered simultaneously to the child *and* parent (as well as individually when needed) and are integrated across service domains and sectors to decrease cognitive load on the consumer, increase service effectiveness, and maximize resource efficiency and effectiveness.
- Operating Principle #3: In two-generation models, supports and services quickly focus on individual and family strengths and assets, including within the extended family, and seek to build on family and community protective factors with the goal of helping children and families become resilient, that is, strong in the face of adversity and chronic challenges.

The following schematic captures these operational principals and all other elements of the two- (or more) generation frameworks reviewed here.



### ***Investing in Leadership, Policies and Systems***

In its own way, each of the frameworks speaks to the leadership, policy and systems environment within which investment is required for two-generation frameworks to be designed, developed and effectively implemented. Giloth, for example, describes a three-pronged approach employed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation in making its investments in a two-generation approach:

- ***Advancing research and knowledge development*** so as to “translate the new research in neuroscience and other areas into concrete tools and practices that can be integrated into national policies and federal funding priorities – and into workforce development, financial management and early childhood education practices on the ground” (p. 7)
- ***Demonstrating two-generation practice on the ground*** through supports to community-based efforts that seek to address child and parent outcomes in such places as Atlanta and Baltimore. In addition, the foundation will support work in New York City, Maryland, Atlanta and Tulsa focused on the integration of Head Start programs with other programs in the community “that can help parents achieve financial security” (p. 9). This work will support high level evaluation and the identification of best practices across sites. A third area of “on the ground” investment involves support in three communities – Buffalo, Columbus, and San Antonio – working systematically to “transform low-income neighborhoods into thriving communities” (p. 10). Also, the foundation will invest in several communities – New Orleans and San Francisco --where solid work is ongoing to “stabilize housing and improve educational outcomes for children in low-income neighborhoods” (p. 10).
- ***Influencing policy and systems*** by the promoting and incentivizing cross-service collaboration, including support for a networked field of two-generation approaches.

Ascend at the Aspen Institute sees itself explicitly as “a lens for thinking about programs, policies, systems and research,” and its five-year blueprint includes building on established work and learning, sparking new conversations, expanding a network of leaders the Ascend Fellowship Program, fostering innovation and collaboration through flexible capital, and building political will through recommendations for policy change.

The National Human Services Assembly makes three quite specific recommendations in its 2013 research brief, focused on advancing a two-generation approach for young families in which the parent is out of school or not working.

- ***Policy makers need to move away from “negative views”*** about out-of-school/out-of-work youth as a group. The Assembly notes that, at the federal level, the White House Council for Community Solutions<sup>11</sup> “...has made an effort to understand the needs of OSOW youth as well as the costs associated with their lack of community connections” (p. 14).
- ***Investment is needed at the community level*** “...to connect young people to opportunity” (p. 15). The Assembly cites a series of recommendations by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, including expanding access to child care, creating multiple pathways within the education and workforce

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<sup>11</sup> See [Pathways for Youth: Draft Strategic Plan for Federal Collaboration](#), published by the federal Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs (2013)

systems, improving job quality and providing additional supports to young families where the parent is out-of-school and out-of work.

- **Federal, state and local governments should accelerate their work to “...unlock funding silos and give service providers more flexibility.”** This could include aligning, simplifying, and coordinating funding and technical assistance resources “...to assure programs seamlessly support young families as they progress toward economic independence” (p. 15).

Finally, the *Getting Started Guide* (2013) prepared and published by the Ray Marshall Center and the Foundation for Child Development dedicates itself very specifically to policy makers and identifies a set of five facilitating factors necessary for the success of any two-generation approach:

- A supportive policy framework
- Leadership
- Program administration
- Integrated and flexible funding streams, and
- An evidence oriented culture.

The following chart, reconstructed from the *Getting Started Guide*, summarizes the challenges and opportunities inherent in moving to a two-generation framework with recommendation at the state and local levels. Of note, the challenges below will resonate with readers, as they represent the focus of much past and present analysis about how to re-form the field of human services.

Ray Marshall and Foundation for Child Development: Challenges, Opportunities and Recommendations for Each Facilitating Factor		
Facilitating Factor	Challenges	Opportunities
1. <b>Supportive Policy Framework</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Policy and program inertia <input type="checkbox"/> Policy development and planning in isolation from other systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Commitment to evidence-based policy development <input type="checkbox"/> Support for integrated planning and policy development at state and local level with comprehensive policy structures
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>State Recommendations</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Issue policy guidance and directives from state agencies to promote two-generation efforts <input type="checkbox"/> Integrate program funding, planning, and service delivery across workforce, education, and human services system <input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate across agencies...to remove barriers to collaboration	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Local Recommendations</b></p> <input type="checkbox"/> Identify low-income families as a target population for service by local governments, community-based organizations, and others <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge the multiple systems involved and ensure that efforts target local economic opportunities using workforce intermediary organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Build on existing collaborations by layering two-generation components that address identified gaps

<b>Facilitating Factor</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>2. Leadership</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Lack of strong political and/or program leadership <input type="checkbox"/> Absence of support for high level policies to enable coordination	<input type="checkbox"/> Active recruitment and training for state and local policy makers <input type="checkbox"/> Prior collaborative projects and community-driven efforts
	<b>State Recommendations</b>	<b>Local Recommendations</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Coordinate agencies to shift the operating environment away from siloed approaches towards more flexible and innovative systems	<input type="checkbox"/> Identify potential partners across workforce, education, and human service organizations <input type="checkbox"/> Identify program champions in the community to spearhead change
<b>Facilitating Factor</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>3. Program Administration</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Rigid or resistant organizational culture <input type="checkbox"/> Conflicting goals, performance expectations, and services <input type="checkbox"/> Program silos -- services planned, delivered and evaluated in isolation	<input type="checkbox"/> Organizational interest in service efficiency and effectiveness <input type="checkbox"/> Experience with integrated family policy structures and programming <input type="checkbox"/> Active intergovernmental workgroups in social, educational or economic development <input type="checkbox"/> Well-developed sector-based workforce development program <input type="checkbox"/> Active workforce intermediary activity in the region <input type="checkbox"/> Community and technical colleges with strong workforce/career pathways orientation and flexible scheduling
	<b>State Recommendations</b>	<b>Local Recommendations</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Provide technical assistance and training to support local implementation of two-generation strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Convene partner agencies to educate them on steps and supports needed for two-generation approaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Develop frequent communication between organizations and among staff at various levels <input type="checkbox"/> Offer programming to children and parents on the same schedule to facilitate full-time/full-year engagement <input type="checkbox"/> Offer individualized case management, career/life coaching, and family support services
<b>Facilitating Factor</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>4. Integrated Flexible Funding Streams</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Structural separation of funding and service delivery <input type="checkbox"/> Multiple, restrictive funding mechanisms	<input type="checkbox"/> Flexible funding sources such as TANF and SNAP Employment and Training programs

	<input type="checkbox"/> Resource limitations	<input type="checkbox"/> Local and state government resources including general revenues and unemployment insurance taxes <input type="checkbox"/> Existing philanthropic and business community resources
	<b>State Recommendations</b>	<b>Local Recommendations</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Allow existing funding streams to be targeted for two-generation strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Develop grant programs to pilot test programs and encourage adoption of two-generation strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Create funds to incentivize implementation of two-generation approaches locally	<input type="checkbox"/> Approach local government, philanthropic organizations, and business community groups to raise awareness and identify potential sources of funding—particularly to support the coordination tasks required for implementation <input type="checkbox"/> Connect existing economic support services in the community around a common mission to improve outcomes for low-income families
<b>Facilitating Factor</b>	<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>
<b>5. Evidence-oriented Culture</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Ineffective approaches to adult basic and developmental education <input type="checkbox"/> Different schedules for parent and child programming <input type="checkbox"/> Communication within and across programs and systems <input type="checkbox"/> Performance measures that favor short-term (temporary) results over long-term gains	<input type="checkbox"/> Existing investments in high-quality education programs demonstrating strong outcomes <input type="checkbox"/> Robust data collection and reporting systems to support program improvement and decision-making
	<b>State Recommendations</b>	<b>Local Recommendations</b>
	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect data or establish performance measures related to family services rather than just child or adult services <input type="checkbox"/> Allow time for programs to work through issues and stabilize before assessing the full impact of the approach	<input type="checkbox"/> Collect and use data to improve programs <input type="checkbox"/> Schedule time for feedback and planning sessions among partner programs to identify issues and develop new solutions <input type="checkbox"/> Require significant engagement in skill development each week for participants with poor basic skills, focusing on college readiness rather than GED standards <input type="checkbox"/> Use peer cohorts and other communities of support to help participants manage multiple responsibilities and build the social capital needed for success

## Unfinished Business: Seven Questions

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1. The national [Strengthening Families](#) effort, hosted and supported by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, has helped us to understand the importance of [parental and community resilience](#). Do current two-generation frameworks pay sufficient attention to the role of protective factors in building individual, family and neighborhood resilience when families cannot extract themselves from neighborhood or community contexts that impair healthy development and economic self-sufficiency? Can emerging work on [“Collective Impact”](#) help us with this?
2. The [National Institute for Early Education Research](#) (NIEER) reports that children are entering kindergarten deficient in behavioral regulation, social skills and the ability to stay on task. The Harvard Frontiers of Innovation initiative focuses, in part, on the [development of executive function in the preschool years](#). How can our early childhood education and care settings (including family child care) incorporate the best emerging knowledge about the early development of children’s executive functioning, self-regulation, and social emotional development intentionally as part their curriculum and activities?
3. The [Harvard Center on the Developing Child’s Working Paper #10](#) describes how biochemical changes in the brain and body impact “gene expression” in successive generations. How can the emerging science of epigenetics inform human service, health and correctional policy and practice related to the prevention of toxic stress and the provision of interventions for adults who have experienced multi-generational challenge and toxic stress?
4. A February 2014 [Office of Management and Budget memorandum](#) provides guidance to support the use of large federal administrative datasets “in promoting important goals and targeting resources toward priorities ranging from expanding economic growth and education to fostering scientific discovery and the very functioning of our democracy.” Improved data collection and data sharing across agencies is also imperative for effective two-generational programming since so many of this nation’s vulnerable families receive services and support from multiple organizations. How can new requirements of the federal Affordable Care Act and the Uninterrupted Scholars Act assist in these vital improvements? What can we learn from the analysis of “big data”? What states are leading here?
5. The federal government and national organizations remain focused on promoting [service integration](#), including between the child welfare and mental health systems (through the recently updated Systems of Care model), between child welfare and K-12 education with a focus on lost learning among foster children, between early education and K-3 schooling, and within the context of health and mental health parity (through the Affordable Care Act). How is this thinking impacting the design or redesign of programs within a two-generation framework?
6. New [financing partnerships](#) involving the philanthropic, governmental and commercial sectors are advancing opportunities for multi-year impact investing for health and human services programs anchored in evidence-based practice. Are our two-generation frameworks and programs sufficiently grounded in a results-oriented culture and do we have the data and capacity to generate the cost-savings projections necessary to engage in [Pay for Success](#) financing models?
7. How can we utilize two (or more) generation frameworks -- implemented with fidelity over time -- as a pivot point for the promotion of [racial justice](#) and reductions in persistent racial, health and educational inequity?