Expanding Innovations that Support Whole Families:

State-Level Developments in Minnesota during 2018 and 2019

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Since late 2016, the Future Services Institute at the University of Minnesota has been supporting the development of a 2-Gen Whole Family approach to policy implementation and program innovation in the state of Minnesota. Over the last two years, we have seen expanded state investment, more local program innovation, and greater use of human-centered design focused on improving the experiences of whole families across the entire human services system.

This descriptive case study draws together this work, to highlight and provide specific examples of initiatives and programs in Minnesota during 2018 and 2019 consistent with a 2-Gen or Whole Families approach. It builds upon a similar report, “Developing a Two-Generational Policy Network in Minnesota: 2017 State-Level Developments,” published in January 2018 which includes more general background on the overall systems change activity. Additionally, this video provides a general overview: https://vimeo.com/379932198/ad0aad8428

For this report, we conducted interviews with state program directors and managers, reviewed administrative documents and meeting notes, and assessed grant reports from direct service programs. We also considered materials provided by national intermediaries involved in supporting the 2-Gen strategy and examined web sites of direct service programs working with these partners.

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What is a Whole Family Systems Approach to System Reform?

Traditionally, human services interventions have been designed to address a single cause or problem—for example, shelters to respond to homelessness and workforce development programs for unemployment. However, there is increasing recognition that funding siloed program responses does not meet the needs of families who turn to the publicly-funded system for support. The longer-term implications of growing up in poverty are well-established by social science,¹ and state and local governments in the United States are seeking to more effectively intervene in the cycle of poverty.

A Whole Family Systems approach, sometimes called 2-Generational or “2-Gen,” was originally reflected in the federal Head Start program. As noted in the 2018 FSI report, it also is consistent with the efforts of multi-service nonprofit organizations that have long been required to braid and blend funding sources to respond to the needs of families and local communities.

What is different about the current efforts is that it tries to introduce this focus—on people rather than programs—as a clear goal for redesign of publicly-funded services. It involves “intentionally connecting services for both generations equally and capitalizing on the mutually reinforcing motivation and outcomes of parent [or caregiver] and children.”² As this report documents, the implementation of this idea is now starting to take root at various levels of the human services system, by both public and nonprofit institutions. This report highlights current initiatives that we are familiar with and provides specific examples of different aspects of Whole Family work—it is not an exhaustive inventory of all Whole Family type approaches across the state.

Figure 1: A Whole Family Systems Approach (Source: Ascend at the Aspen Institute)

Many national intermediaries have supported the seeding of these ideas in the state. The Ascend program at the Aspen Institute is the central convener, and they have mobilized national attention to this work through reports, national convening, and active engagement with national philanthropy. A 2016 national scan of fifty-two 2-Gen programs identified that more than half were funded by private donors, including philanthropy.³

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At the state level, Minnesota’s involvement began in 2016 when the Governors Children’s Cabinet and Minnesota Department of Human Services responded to an opportunity to launch the Minnesota 2-Gen Policy Network in partnership with the National Governor’s Association and Center for Law and Social Policy. This work is part of a national initiative involving five states – Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, New Jersey, and Oregon – that are all engaged in exploring how to use a 2-Gen/Whole Family approach to improve state systems. The Minnesota network initially involved four local sites and state agencies working together to identify ways to change state policy to better support Whole Family programming (see Appendix A for a description of these four local sites and the learnings from this work so far).

The growing interest in Whole Family approaches has resulted in scholars and practitioners developing and testing a number of frameworks that articulate what it takes to develop, implement and assess such programs. Yet, matching the range of services and their intensity to specific contexts means there are no well-developed solutions or best practices on how to do such programming effectively—it needs to be supported by innovative program development and collective learning environment. Collaboration, in its truest sense, is at the heart of 2-Gen programming. Programs often have to blend and braid funding for services from different providers to meet the needs of their specific populations—an area where innovation and adaptation gain salience. It requires social service providers (and by extension their donors/funders) to be nimble in all aspects of program design, implementation and evaluation—in fact, control of program design and implementation in this situation are replaced by innovation and adaptation.

Key Activities in 2018 and 2019

In the 2018 report on this topic, FSI documented key events in the development of this Whole Family Systems orientation in the state of Minnesota. In this 2020 report, we focus on activities of the last two years. As illustrated in Figure 2, much of this work was done by various state agencies. Considerable efforts went into documenting the nature of the problem. For example, in early January 2018, the Governor’s Children’s Cabinet released a report documenting more than 40 state programs that provide assistance to children or families, often in a siloed manner. Additionally, there were new activities by state program managers to embed a 2-Gen orientation into their work, in how they shaped requests for grant proposals, made public investments, and evaluated what occurred.

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6 For example, Making Tomorrow Better Together: A Guide to Outcomes for Two-Gen Policymakers
Figure 2: Significant events in 2018-2019 in development of statewide network

January 2018
- Children’s Cabinet release of report documenting systems challenge – over 40 state programs that serve families and children in a disconnected way; Second funding year for 2-Gen programs from MnDHS (cohort 1)

January-March 2018
- “Launch of half day workshop for state program managers”; Development of “Principles to Practice” tool for administrative reform

May 2018
- Competitive process of selecting 16 local communities to implement Family home visiting program; Whole Families Research-Policy-Practice Summit at University of Minnesota

May 2019
- Additional funding for communities to implement the Family Home Visiting program

July 2018
- Competitive process of selecting 16 local communities to implement Family home visiting program; Whole Families Research-Policy-Practice Summit at University of Minnesota

June 2019
- Competitive selection of 8 local site partners for the Whole Families System Initiative and start of local design and engagement efforts

July 2018
- Recommendations from state’s early childhood system reform engagement stress whole families approach

July 2019
- State investments made in three local Community Action Agencies to support 2-Gen program planning

December 2018
- 2-Gen profiled at Minnesota Community Action Partnership conference; Election of Governor Tim Walz

October 2018
- Competitive funding of five local sites as part of the Homework Starts with Home initiative; Integration with ongoing state momentum for reform of early childhood system; State children’s Interagency Leadership Team assumes responsibility for ongoing 2-gen discussions

January 2019
- Engagement of stakeholders through the Preschool Development Grant throughout 2019

January-March 2019
- Implementation of 2-Gen program pilots begins at local sites
Throughout this period, considerable efforts focused upon owning up to and addressing the significant racial biases in the operation and outcomes in the Minnesota social welfare system. This is occurring through a number of ways.

First, there is widespread use of a framework to analyze racial bias. The Equity Action Framework developed by the BUILD Initiative has been used to build capacity among local organizations to identify and address racial equity challenges across early childhood systems.\(^9\) It begins with an assessment by a group of leaders or organization staff committed to advancing racial equity; the assessment touches on areas such as identifying areas of authority or influence, identifying the problem, identifying and engaging relevant stakeholders, identifying solutions, documenting impact and identifying structural changes for sustainability and viability of the solutions developed. The use of this framework can be seen as a first step toward dismantling personal, inter-personal, institutional, and structural biases that influence program planning and service delivery at multiple levels.

Second, the grant-funding provided to local sites and persistent focus upon learning from community-based innovators to change system operation is a major way that the Whole Family Systems initiatives are trying to make progress in addressing those institutionalized biases. State administrators have heard clearly that the reverberations of generations of trauma and inequities continue today, presenting some of the root causes of the disparities in our state.

Third, this reorientation requires more purposive attention to program planning and operational realignment in organizations to both address legacy racial biases and assure that families rather than programs shape agency structure. To enable this redesign, a number of state agencies invested public resources of time and money. Some highlights include:

- **Preschool Development Grant.** As part of implementing the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the state of Minnesota focused attention on how to advance more integrated, Whole Family approaches to early childhood programs and services. During 2019, seventy-eight engagements were held throughout the state exploring the parents and children’s experiences during children’s first five years. What emerged were ideas of regional implementation hubs focused on family support and better strategies for actively engaging parents. Care was taken for purposive engagement of the full range of cultural and racial communities in the state, and the regional structure being recommended provides one way to customize services to needs of particular ethnic communities.

- **Whole Family Systems Initiative.** In 2019, three distinct divisions within the Minnesota Department of Human Services – Child Safety and Permanency, Child Care Services, and Economic Assistance and Employment Supports – worked behind the scenes to integrate separate funding streams into a five-year initiative focused upon learning from eight community organizations serving Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) with 2-Gen oriented services. The investment builds off a first round of grants (‘Cohort 1’- see Appendix A) originally made by the Economic Assistance and Employment Supports division in 2017. In addition to providing grant funding, these local sites receive support in applying human-centered design. Appendix B provides a high level summary of each of the sites. The Whole Family Systems Initiative also is built upon active learning. Figure 3 illustrates how local sites work with families and with partners from state agencies who have the responsibilities for bringing proposals for policy and practice changes to state agencies. By purposively creating feedback loops, public managers are trying to

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\(^9\) For the complete assessment tool, see [http://earlysuccess.org/files/EquityActionFrameworkbrochure.pdf](http://earlysuccess.org/files/EquityActionFrameworkbrochure.pdf)
encourage innovation, and trouble-shoot solutions to system barriers. This is an approach to bottom-up systems change grounded in direct service experiences.

**Figure 3: Working model of systems change in the Whole Families Initiative**

![Working model of systems change in the Whole Families Initiative](image)

- **Homework Starts with Home.** This partnership between the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency, the Minnesota Departments of Education and Human Services, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness and a philanthropic collaborative targets housing-support resources to families of students experiencing homelessness. The initiative works with local networks focused in a specific geographic area, who are implementing programs that embraces a housing first, engagement, racial equity and a 2-Gen approach. In developing the initiative, the legislature enabled purposive braiding of public and private dollars for the five grantees so they could help with students’ stability and educational achievement.

- **Family Home Visiting Program.** This voluntary service provides health and parenting information and support to families in their homes until the child is three or five. Drawing upon federal and state resources, local communities can choose to implement one of three evidence-based program models; families living with low-incomes or those thought to be at risk for poor maternal and child outcomes are often identified for the support services that includes improving safety and security, supporting positive parenting, and referring to special mental health or social services. In May 2018, a competitive grant program selected 16 local communities for either implementation or planning. A year later, additional communities were provided with grants to implement specific models.

Other highlights of 2-Gen/Whole Family initiatives within state agencies include MN DHS’s Office of Refugee Resettlement and the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO). OEO held a 2-Gen conference for Community Action Programs (CAP) agencies across the state and embedded a 2-Gen focus into the funding for CAP agencies in 2019.
Table 1 summarizes these and some of the other public investments made in Minnesota during 2018 and 2019 to support development of more 2-Gen programs or system redesign consistent with 2-Gen principles.

Table 1: Minnesota Public Sources of Funding Reflecting 2-Gen Goals during 2018-2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Entity</th>
<th>Focus</th>
<th>Total Funding</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Department of Education</strong></td>
<td>Preschool Development Grant</td>
<td>$4.7 million</td>
<td>January – December 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Statewide engagement &amp; needs assessment for early childhood and family services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Human Services</td>
<td>Office of Economic Opportunity</td>
<td>$75,000</td>
<td>July 2019-December 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Program development and organizational redesign</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Families Initiative (cohort 1)</td>
<td>Direct service programming to inform policy changes</td>
<td>~$4.5 million</td>
<td>January 2017-December 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole Families Initiative (cohort 2)</td>
<td>Direct service programming to inform policy changes</td>
<td>$22.5 million</td>
<td>November 2019 – October 2024</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minnesota Housing</td>
<td>Homework Starts with Home</td>
<td>$4.1 million</td>
<td>October 2019 – September 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Direct service partnerships providing housing subsidies &amp; services to families with school aged children</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department of Health</td>
<td>Family Home Visiting Program</td>
<td>$57 million</td>
<td>May 2018-December 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Funding for counties to offer voluntary to mothers before childbirth and the early years of parenting.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
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The Practice Principles Underlying a Whole Family Systems Approach to Systems Reform

In the last two years, it has become increasingly clear to many public managers that making changes in the systems that currently exist to support families requires more than new funding. To address the systemic ways whiteness had emphasized individuals, rather than families, as the targets of programs and interventions, we must use new frameworks and draw upon different practice principles. The Aspen Ascend project has articulated the charge, illustrated in Figure 4. It is often most easy to understand a Whole Family orientation at a program level – many people intuitively see how parents and children, or grandparents and children are interconnected and benefit from services that recognize and capitalize upon their relationships.
Building upon a long-standing tradition in Minnesota, private philanthropy and nonprofit service organizations continued to innovate to design and deliver Whole Family programs. Increasingly, as noted in Box 1, they are drawing upon national 2-Gen resources to support their work.

However, this current interest in a Whole Family orientation has the potential to support more fundamental systems redesign. First, there is the level of strategy – refocusing how publicly funded human services are directed, creating an expectation for coordination and alignment between programs that may have been adopted incrementally over time. This operational improvement points to an even more fundamental change in the overall approach. Second, there is adopting the Whole Family mindset that is consistent with human-centered design. Rather than assuming the structure of policy implementation is fixed, with federal, state, local governments all playing set roles, a Whole Family approach is an invitation to redesign roles and functions. Rather than having policy and program descriptions shape system operation, this mindset pushes people to discover new ways of organizing, new ways of coordinating experiences to accommodate the diverse and unpredictable experiences of families.

To operationalize a Whole Family strategy and approach, division directors from many state agencies began to discuss practice principles. They imagined how to embed a Whole Family approach into the work of Minnesota’s government and nonprofit sectors. Through multiple workshops, they articulated specific principles for embracing the orientation as a way to improve the processes and outcomes of government. The resulting tool, “2-Gen Principles and Practices,” is directed to state program.

**Box 1. Selection of Minnesota nonprofits leveraging national resources for 2-Gen programming**

Nonprofits in Minnesota continued to connect to national leaders in the Whole Families system-change work. Examples include:

- The **Family Partnership** received national attention for efforts to reorganize their agency around 2-Gen service provision. Working with the Alliance for Children and Families, they developed and began testing an intervention with parents and children to improve executive functioning.
- The **Wilder Foundation** continued to work with the national Family Independence Initiative to deploy Whole Family assessment and support that involves parents in determining the direction of the programming.
- The **Jeremiah Program** continues efforts to nationally adapt its program model that support mothers and children with housing and high quality education. At the end of 2019, the organization operated seven sites throughout the country.
- **MAHUBE-OTWA Community Action** participates in a learning cohort with the National Community Action Partnership that involves nine other agencies, all reorienting the programs to keep whole families at the center.
- **Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies**, through its Family Stability program, is partnering with organizations in local communities throughout the North Central and Pacific Northwestern states, including Minnesota, to help vulnerable families achieve greater stability, build supports, and increase self-sufficiency through programs that address the whole family.
Understanding of Challenges to address

Some key learnings from the work that happened in 2018 and 2019 include:

- **Counties and their nonprofit partners want to be able to work with families in a different, more relational way but feel constrained by system expectations and requirements.** Families engaged with the TANF-funded Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) must complete an ‘Employment Plan’ that lays out goals and objectives for the parent. These required components and threat of sanctioning for failure to comply result in fear-based and compliance-focused interactions between a caseworker and families. Counties in the 2-Gen Network have experimented with a more generative approach to these interactions.

- **Tribes, counties, and nonprofits are leading the development of new tools to document current conditions and changes.** Families involved in the human services systems often interact with a different set of institutions depending on what program and who in the family participates. Each institution and program may have a different way of working with the family and a different set of requirements, goals, and objectives for the family. Well intentioned as each individual plan may be, this can produce mixed messages, conflicting requirements, and plans defined narrowly or in isolation from one other and without attention to the interrelated nature of these facets of a family’s life. A number of local sites in the 2-Gen Network have developed integrated service assessment tools and systems, to help capture a comprehensive snap-shot of family needs and how it changes over time.

10 For access to the tool see [https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/2-gen/2-Gen-Principles-to-Practice.pdf](https://mn.gov/mmb-stat/2-gen/2-Gen-Principles-to-Practice.pdf)
• **Tools and resources must be grounded in a holistic practice model, or way of working with families.** The development of several different tools supports the infrastructure for Whole Family approaches. Partners doing this development emphasize that the tools in development and others that are in use at sites are complementary to a ‘practice model’—meaning a way of working with families, rather than for use standalone alongside more conventional case management approaches.

• **State government struggles to have collaborative platforms to support cross-agency and cross-division work.** In the last few years, many individual program managers have embraced a 2-Gen philosophy. However, they must try to implement change without basic operational support; state government is structured by programmatic accountability to the federal government rather than according to the outcomes that we want to achieve for families. In day to day work, this creates significant operational barriers that need to be overcome.

• **It is essential to broaden engagement in the policy field.** In the 2018 report, it was noted that while the 2-Gen approach in Minnesota has executive branch support, legislative actions is also essential. While the seeds for systems change oriented to delivering 2-Gen support are planted, they must be fertilized and watered by legislative initiatives that reinforce and invest in this approach, and enable program administrators to pursue a strategy of learning from families and the frontline staff and agencies who work with them.

• **Clarify statewide governance of this movement.** As documented in this report, the 2-Gen network in Minnesota has developed in a bottom up manner, driven by the vision and ingenuity of program directors and leaders within nonprofits and state government. There is currently no overall governing body for this work that enables sharing of information and strategy refinement among public and private leaders. Clarifying this function will be important to assure the seeds planted in the current investments continue to thrive and grow more robust.
Appendix A: Direct Service Programs in “Cohort One” of the 2-Gen/Whole Family Systems Policy Network

Four local programs participated in the Minnesota 2-Gen Policy Network, receiving a planning grant in 2017 and four years of program funding through 2021. As part of the initiative, they meet quarterly together and with state program administrators across state agencies in a ‘home team’ to trade ideas of best practices, document administrative barriers, and develop novel solutions to resolve them. Here we provide high-level summary of each local site as of fall 2019.

Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)

The Northside Achievement Zone, one of Minnesota’s federal Promise Zones, exists to permanently close the achievement gap and end generational poverty in North Minneapolis. It operates as the hub with other partner organizations, to walk side by side with low-income families as they put their children on a path to college.

Partners for this initiative: HIRED and Hennepin County (EMERGE was a partner the first 15-18 months)

Funding Source: Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant

Beginning date of applying 2-gen principles: The Northside Achievement Zone, one of Minnesota’s federal Promise Zones, has centered their work on the ‘scholar’ since its inception and had significant involvement of parents including the empowerment program. In more recent years, efforts from NAZ have expanded to include parent-focused initiatives to have a more coordinated approach to employment services through shared coaching, training, and co-located staff. Their 2-Gen work started as the ‘FAST’ program and has focused on child care and Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) policy areas; housing and employment career pathways also have been implicated throughout many conversations. NAZ also receives state funding for 2-Generational programming through the Homework Starts with Home initiative. They had been interested in connecting more families to employment Career Pathways and are partners with several organizations that are Pathways grantees from the Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, including HIRED.

What are new ideas (prototypes) tested in the effort:

- Engage HIRED MFIP families in NAZ ecosystem of programming.
- CCAP, MFIP and employment services alignment and effectiveness, policy and practice changes including:
  - Ensuring child care subsidy for MFIP families with identified employment or training start dates that do not allow for the traditional Child Care Assistance (CCAP) application process - Presumptive Eligibility for Child Care Assistance
- Develop MFIP ‘After Care’ strategies for parents leaving MFIP with employment.
- Across all prototypes:
  - Engage practitioners as learning partners.
  - Engage families as learning partners, develop a parent equity advisor role.

How have the ideas evolved?

- Engaging HIRED MFIP families in the NAZ ecosystem is broadening the strategy to co-enroll MFIP HIRED families as NAZ families. The current prototype allows families more informal/exploratory engagement with NAZ.
An initial focus on career pathways for MFIP parents widened into a broader strategy for MFIP ‘After Care’ that includes a career readiness and pathways component but also explores resources that can be provided to families post MFIP through TANF and other funding sources.

Communication was identified as a key issue. The MFIP App was explored as a potential solution. In 2020, prototyping the MFIP app has been set aside to devote time to other strategies.

Shared coaching and training for HIRED and NAZ practitioner’s evolved in 2020 to focus on learning from and educating practitioners around the identified policy initiatives.

What resulted for the system?

- The State of Minnesota is learning from this site. Good ideas for responding to emerging issues have come from this site, and state administrators are trying to take advantage of learnings for upcoming changes (for instance, expedited child care for homeless families).
- Hennepin County is modifying their implementation of the child care subsidy program and contracts with employment service nonprofit providers based upon what has been learned. They have also embraced a Whole Families approach by providing training to staff about the concept and tools of human-centered design.
- The state is evaluating guidance on how TANF resources can be allocated for families who have exited MFIP. Hennepin County is revisiting support services policy to potentially expand service offerings for post MFIP families.
- The state is examining the CCAP eligibility process for MFIP families.

What resulted for the families?

- A small number of families took advantage of the opportunity to access child care assistance through presumptive eligibility and to co-enroll with NAZ.
- Families share their voices on CCAP and poste MFIP engagement. They have had a direct impact the work of the 2-Gen partnership and their voice will continue to be heard as Hennepin County and the state consider potential policy and practice changes.
- Ideas that have been highlighted through the focus on CCAP, MFIP and employment services alignment and the presumptive eligibility pilot could impact many hundreds of families; for example, the expedited child care for homelessness families could affect as many as 1/3 of the people served by the organizations.
- Many thousands families in the county may experience changes to services due to system changes noted above.

Key learnings about what it takes to move toward a focus on whole families in service delivery/program administration/other.

- It is critical to have a cross-sector and cross-level team that meets regularly and owns the collective work. They have invested relationships focused upon program solving.
- It is extremely difficult to focus on both systems changes and changing outcomes with families. Doing the systems change piece (policy analysis, data analysis, and then changing policies and practices) all takes a lot of time and effort; figuring out adjusting improvements in family outcomes or in process measures related to families is a completely different set of activities, objectives, and efforts. Having the same people focus on and be held accountable for both is very challenging.
• It is critical to align the funding with where the work is—and sometimes where the momentum of where the work is moves faster than the state can make a change to program budget.

**Olmsted County Health, Housing and Human Services**

In Minnesota where county governments administer public sector programs, Olmsted County has long-standing relationships for innovation. Capitalizing upon attention in the community on the social determinants of health, leaders are able to invest in efforts to move systems change forward. The initial investment as part of the 2-Gen program enabled the county to move forward on its integrated services agenda.

**Partners for this Initiative:** Rochester Family Services, Dakota County Community Services.

**Funding Source:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant; Kresge Foundation NexGen grantee

**Beginning date of applying 2-gen principles:** The 2-Gen Policy network grant allowed Omsted County to engage in cross-program planning grant and develop the Integrated Services Assessment Tool (ISAT) with Future Services Institute at University of Minnesota. They then embarked upon a human centered design process of a new service experience for young families, called the Pathways to Prosperity and Wellbeing. While the county had previously developed a Father Project, based on ideas from the Goodwill/Easter Seals, the 2-Gen grant money has helped to stabilize the funding. Fathers – often noncustodial parents – are provided support to employment, training, and other resources needed for them to thrive and build strong relationships with their children.

**What are new ideas (prototypes) being tested in the effort:**

• New staffing arrangements between Financial Services and Family Support units at the County. A dedicated eligibility worker is now co-located for ease of access by families and staff.
• Master leasing (where Olmsted County is the main lease holder for tenants that traditionally struggled with securing housing due to credit or background issues) started with four families in Family Supports programming, with potential for expansion. Fathers from the Father Project were among the first ones to test this out.
• The Integrated Services Assessment Tool is a holistic assessment process used with families as they turn to the county for support. It was developed, field tested, and initially validated.
• Expanding access to customized service experience for young families who are struggling with low-income through a pilot program, Pathways to Prosperity and Well-Being.

**What resulted for the system?**

• Strengthened partnership between Olmsted County and Rochester Family Services in providing programming that is meaningful and responsive to fathers and young parents.
• Coordinated service redesign with Dakota County, another partner in the Pathways initiative.
• Engagement of senior management across the organization in a human centered design process to develop an integrated services approach. The design process altered frontline relationships, frontline assessment, supported innovative supervisory practices, and leveraged new community resources.
• Explicit articulation of a program theory that challenges conventional structures and processes in public social welfare agencies.
What resulted for the families?

- Created new access for young families to customized case management that meets them where they are at and engages them in supports to stabilize their families.
- Provides programming for fathers to be supported in getting back on track with their families.

Key learnings about what it takes to move toward a focus on whole families in service delivery or program administration/other.

- Development of integrated data system for tracking service experiences and family conditions over time is essential. Given that the state currently does not have such a system, it falls to county government to develop an alternative.
- Altering public sector practices and structures takes time, and often happens incrementally because of their various accountabilities. To move forward, one needs a dedicated program coordinator with authority in the public agency.

Other key factors?

- Senior leaders have a clear vision for public sector reform. They are connected to other national sector leaders in shaping design and implementation details.

Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood (SPPN)

SPPN is a state and privately-funded initiative Promise Neighborhood initiative focused on connecting families in schools with other community organizations. It seeks to be a transformative education partnership that puts children on the pathway to college and career success, supporting children at four Pathway Schools in the Frogtown, Rondo, and Summit-University neighborhoods of Saint Paul to deliver a comprehensive, culturally-rooted experience for families.

**Partners for this initiative:** Ramsey County, Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD)

**Funding Source:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant

**Beginning date of applying 2-gen principles:** Engaging with the 2-Gen Policy Network enabled them to engage Ramsey County, and deepen their relationship with Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD); previously, they exclusively focused on school-based engagement, community building, and political mobilization. Like NAZ, SPPN also has support for the 2-Gen program through the state’s Homework Starts with Home grant program. The SPPN Parent Council builds parent power in public decision-making spaces through public policy and community organizing to build a movement of people of color in the neighborhood working to build a thriving community.

**What are new ideas (prototypes) being tested in the effort:**

- The People’s Fellowship brings together a mix of opportunities designed to promote self-determination and self-efficacy using a two-generation framework:
  - **Core Programs:** The Sankofa and Parent Power programs run concurrently over 9-weeks, engaging children and parents at the same time.
  - **Wraparound Services:** Covering the areas of: housing, education, wealth-building and income boosters, early childhood education, these supports helps stabilize families so they can focus on academic success, self-determination, and more.
  - **Skills Building Workshops:** Exploring themes related to child and family success, coupled with complementary activities meant to support long-term child and family stability.
- Wage Subsidy: Fellowship activities will provide an income boost of ~$5,000 per parent participant. Participants receive a modest stipend for their participation in NdCAD’s programs, and subsequently receive 16 weeks of wage subsidized work through Ramsey County.
- Fellowship Fridays for regular check-in.

- Incentives for asset building for completion of the work (IDA and Education accounts).
- Foundational connection to African identity and framing of self-and-community.
- Community-based and rooted organizations as the face of public programs. Self-Determination Plan development and measure achievement of goals included in each plan.
- Critical Participatory Action Research (CPAR).
- Optional skill building workshops.

**What resulted for the system?**

- Ramsey County now has a cohort approach for this group, meaning they all have the same child care, financial worker (eligibility), employment support, and ongoing case worker.
- In partnership with NDCAD and SPPN, County Employment and Training Services work with parents to develop a “self-determinizing plan” where parents select from a menu of services in the domains of housing, wealth building/income, early childhood, and education that are aligned with their ambitions rather than an employment plan or other required county plan. This pilot, while maintaining family autonomy, offers a more coordinated, multi-partner set of wraparound services that intends to introduce the 2-Gen framework and support service integration across county service divisions.
- The partners shared stories of moving beyond who they represent as individual organizations to leverage their collective connections as they grew their knowledge of resources available to families in the community.

**What resulted for the families?**

- The first phase focused on NdCAD’s Parent Power and Sankofa cohorts. Attendance and completion rates are higher than for any other cohort-centric programming that county’s Workforce Solutions has experienced. Notably, 100% of parents and children completed Parent Power and Sankofa, respectively. Attendance during the programs is also very high as parents attended 94% of Parent Power sessions and children attended 80% of Sankofa sessions.
- Parents earned more than $20,000 collectively in attendance-based incentives (IDAs, education accounts, etc.).
- Multiple stories of housing stability reached, access to education opportunities, and employment stability (with several entering into work with Ramsey County).

**Key learnings about what it takes to move toward a focus on whole families in service delivery/program administration/other.**

- The community-level buy-in and connection to this work is deep and it appears as though the families can feel that, too.
- Lots of transition in leadership at SPPN and partners challenged the institutionalization of this effort.
White Earth Nation

White Earth Reservation Tribal Council promotes “mino bimaadiziwin” (the good life) for all the people of the White Earth Reservation—promoting a shared vision of creating a safe place where all people will have access to quality employment, housing, education, health and human services. The role of White Earth Public Health Department is to integrate the White Earth Coordination, Assessment, Resource and Education (WECARE) in an effective way to help families by linking them with the services they need through an electronic referral system.

The White Earth Coordination, Assessment, Resource and Education (WECARE) electronic referral system brings all agencies to work in partnership with the client at the center of the care team. Staff across multiple agencies are better equipped to provide the necessary supports and services which reduce health risks and increase the overall health and well-being to the family. Additionally, the WECARE system and staff reduces inefficiency, confusion and frustrations involved with different systems working with clients because of the coordinated care and the client is actively involved in developing their care plan.

**Funding Source:** Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) federal block grant

**Beginning date of applying 2-gen principles:** The multigenerational concern is a deeply held cultural value. Historically, U.S. federal policy focused upon destroying cultural identity and family connections. But leaders within the community always tried to resist, and focused upon how to use public-funding in ways that aligned with core community values and priorities.

**What are new ideas (prototypes) being tested in the effort:**

- Broader implementation of WECARE—White Earth’s integrated data system and care coordination:
  - 3 Kinship Lifepath Navigators
  - Previously there was just one person managing all of the families and the integrated care meetings.
- Cultural nights for WECARE families.
- Connectivity to the schools.
- Initially thought of as a cohort method to connect families towards employment/training but the model developed differently as an urgent needs connection in part because of tribal resolutions passed; this is again getting to be on track again with the connection with WETCC and AIWDI and DEED’s deeper involvement.
- Capacity building to do evaluation with the data WECARE.

**What resulted for the system?**

- Tribal resolution for divisions within White Earth to participate in WECARE and for families seeking emergency assistance from the council to participate in WECARE.
- Laid the groundwork and foundation for better connectivity with WETCC to be able to fulfill the original vision of the workplan.
- Feels critical for systems modernization to better understand this and the ISAT system—the integrated data are critical, but without having a plan of how to use the data and the service model that goes along with it, change won’t happen. A navigator is still necessary even (and maybe especially) in this system.
- WECARE data staff are now able to extract and report on data from the WECARE system to better understand how it is being implemented.
What resulted for the families?

- This funding allows them to reach more families in the provision of integrated services.
- There is more support for connection to cultural activities

Key learnings about what it takes to move toward a focus on whole families in service delivery/program administration/other.

- The work can be circular and/or looping but progress does actually seem to be moving forward.
- Implementers and visionaries need to be locked hip to hip for these efforts to move as much as they can.
Appendix B: Direct Service Programs In “Cohort Two” of the 2-Gen/Whole Family Systems Policy Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>City of Saint Paul</th>
<th>CLUES</th>
<th>Fond du Lac Tribal College</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Area</strong></td>
<td>Saint Paul</td>
<td>Twin Cities metro area</td>
<td>Cloquet-Duluth-Superior area</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus Population</strong></td>
<td>All families with newborns in single parent households in Saint Paul, with a deeper equity focus on black and Indigenous single parent households with newborns in Saint Paul.</td>
<td>Latino families with low incomes and with children ages 0-3.</td>
<td>Children from prenatal to 3 years whose parents speak Ojibwe or who are rising speakers of Ojibwe.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Whole Family Systems elements</strong></td>
<td>Through partnerships with financial institutions, community-based agencies and early childhood providers, the City of Saint Paul is expanding and building off its college savings account initiative to improve economic stability as well as early childhood health and well-being outcomes for children and their families.</td>
<td>CLUES will address the disparities, particularly during ages birth to 5, faced by children in Latino families regarding school readiness as a result of systemic failures, and engage the whole family in services to enhance their well-being. CLUES will partner with Latino parents and system partners to create community-based solutions and implement recommendations to best meet their multiple needs.</td>
<td>The college’s Ojibwemotaadidaa Omaa Gidakiiminaang language immersion program is partnering with the state, Child Care Aware and Fond du Lac Social Services to plan and implement “Grandma’s House,” a language nest where infants and toddlers, with the help of their parents, elders and language staff, will grow up immersed in Ojibwe language and culture in a rich, home-like environment to convey a sense of identity, responsibility and spiritual relationship to all creation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Area</strong></td>
<td><strong>Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association</strong></td>
<td><strong>Minneapolis American Indian Center</strong></td>
<td><strong>Northpoint Health and Wellness Center, Inc.</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Olmsted County</td>
<td>Minneapolis</td>
<td>North Minneapolis</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Focus population</strong></td>
<td>Immigrant families with pre-Kindergarten to Kindergarten aged children.</td>
<td>American Indian women living in the Twin Cities who are pregnant, or recently delivered, who have a history of substance, and either a previous history with child protection, or a high risk for being involved in child protection.</td>
<td>African American children from conception to age 3 and their parents/caregivers living in North Minneapolis, Brooklyn Center, and Brooklyn Park.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Whole Family Systems/2-Gen elements</strong></td>
<td>The association, along with Families First of Minnesota, is leading a multi-disciplinary team that is partnering with families and other community agencies to explore the social-cultural barriers of success in pre-kindergarten- to kindergarten-age children, whose families are first-generation immigrants and refugees.</td>
<td>With their partners, including families, the center’s Bright Beginnings program will develop individual and systems-level solutions to barriers faced by American Indian women who have experienced substance use and are at risk of or have a history of child welfare involvement, helping them develop a stable, nurturing environment for their children. The project will incorporate cultural teachings and seek out additional cultural resources for their work with families.</td>
<td>To support healthy child development during the critical period from conception to age 3, NorthPoint, along with partners and families, will research the systemic failures that result in an abundance of risk factors and a lack of protective factors for many African American children and their parents/caregivers.</td>
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<td><strong>Northwest Indian Community Development Center</strong></td>
<td><strong>People Serving People</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Geographic Area</strong></td>
<td>Beltrami County</td>
<td>Hennepin County</td>
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<td><strong>Focus population</strong></td>
<td>Anishinaabe and American Indian families disrupted by corrections/judicial systems, who are homeless, have low-income, or are at risk of/experiencing out-of-home placement, prioritizing families with children prenatal to age 3.</td>
<td>Families experiencing homelessness or who have recently experienced homelessness in Hennepin County, especially families who are pregnant, and/or have children ages 0-3 that are experiencing homelessness.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Key Whole Family Systems elements</strong></td>
<td>Working with partners, tribes and families, the center is seeking to identify systemic solutions to family separation caused by intergenerational incarceration and substance use disorder for Anishinaabe and American Indian relatives in Beltrami County.</td>
<td>Family homelessness overwhelmingly impacts African American and American Indian communities. With partners including families, Mill City Kids and the Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness, People Serving People will explore issues related to access to child care and quality early childhood education, and ways to prevent the recurrence of family homelessness.</td>
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