

TWO-GENERATION STRATEGIES IN COLORADO

COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
SERVICES

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Two-Generation policy Approaches: State & Local Convening,
Austin, TX

Colorado's Big Question: What Would a State-Level Two-Generation Approach Look Like?

- Here's what we think we know:
 - ▣ Families achieve through work
 - ▣ Wealth is achieved through Financial Literacy
 - ▣ Children achieve through quality early learning
 - ▣ A coordinated, strategic, state-level approach could move mountains



A (very) little background on CDHS

□ Why here? Why now?

- New administration= breakthrough leadership
- Commitment to children and families
- Support from Governor's Office
- Spirit of innovation
- Focus on outcomes

- State-supervised, county-administered.
- Children, Youth and Families
 - Youth Corrections, Child Welfare
- Economic Security
 - TANF, Child Support, SNAP, Energy Assistance, Refugee Services, Vocational Rehabilitation
- Early Childhood (new!)
 - Child Care (subsidy, licensing), EC Councils, Early Intervention, Mental Health Consultation
- Behavioral Health: MH Hospitals, Community BH
- Long Term Care: Developmental Disabilities, Vets Nursing Homes, Regional Centers, Adult and Aging
- Performance and Strategic Outcomes
 - C-Stat, Audits, QA, Budget, Strategic Policy

Our Two-Generation Convening

Another meeting?!

Meals on site and un-scheduled on purpose

- Our executive and program leaders; Lieutenant Governor's Office; county representatives
- Also: performance, budget, admin leaders
- Three big goals:
 - ▣ Cross-sharing, team building (new way of working)
 - ▣ Introduction to Two-Generation approaches
 - ▣ Identify opportunities; align them within our current framework
- With Ascend support:
 - ▣ Went off-site (Signaled importance, permission to fully attend)
 - ▣ External facilitator (a HUGE help!)
- ED as host; all wore program hats and “smart person” hats

“Not One More Initiative”

- Two objectives with this theme:
 - ▣ Avert participants’ panic
 - ▣ Encourage thinking about current framework
- We didn’t realize until later how critical this was/is!

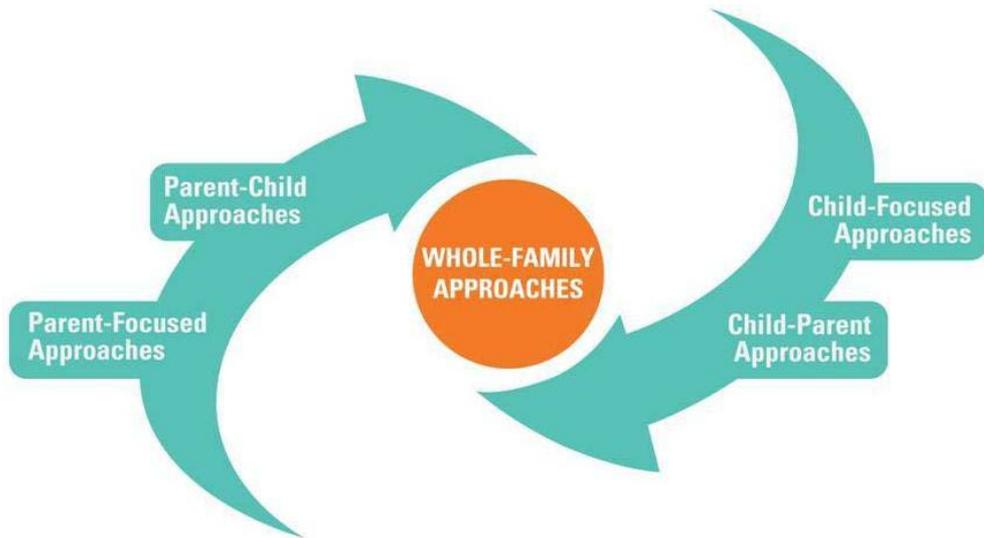
Homework and Preparation

A-has!

Oh wows!

- Reading on Two-Gen Strategies, National and CO data
- Presentations with common template
 - ▣ Major functions, objectives, strategies, results, funding, workforce
 - ▣ Two-Gen current practices & opportunities
- Many “A-ha!” moments
 - ▣ Our DYC kids could get help with SNAP
 - ▣ Kids aren’t just “barriers to employment;” the quality of their care matters
- And some “Oh wow” moments in the County presentations: “They’re already doing this!”

Establishing common vision, principles



- Placing our programs on the continuum
 - ▣ Harder than we thought
- What's the glue?
 - ▣ Vision: Whole family, outcomes oriented, iterative
 - ▣ Principles: Innovation, adjustment, flexibility, integration

Getting down to business: work plans

Not one more
initiative!

- In groups: So what can we do with this Two-Gen thinking?
- Standard stuff: who will do what, by when

- Plans in CONTEXT (this is big for us)
 - ▣ Executive Contract Goals
 - ▣ Budget and Legislative Requests
 - ▣ Strategic Plan
 - ▣ C-Stat measures

And then what? Two-month check-in

- “How has this way of thinking settled for you?”
 - ▣ *It’s a lens! We like it.*
 - ▣ *We already think this way.*
 - ▣ *Two-Gen is too small. We think in terms of “Whole Family.”*
 - ▣ *I don’t yet have the elevator speech for it.*
 - ▣ *It’s as automatic as breathing.*
 - ▣ *We’ve found a way to rework our child care licensing rules to do some of this.*
 - ▣ *I can’t believe how obvious this (and how little of it we were doing)!*
 - ▣ *Two-Gen isn’t a thing; not an initiative. It’s a VALUE, and a way of doing work. We’ll never check it off our list as completed.*

What's in the hopper?

- New position: Strategic Policy Advisor; will lead Two-Gen
- Two-Gen activities in three executive managers' contracts
- Creating our new Office of Early Childhood, looking at measures for C-Stat
- Two-Gen in Early Learning Challenge grant application
- Feasibility study re: financial literacy and college savings accounts at state level
- Focus on non-custodial parents' employment and development to support their ability to support their families
- Improved data sharing/data warehousing
- Nutrition education in child care
- Budget request to connect high-quality child care with at-risk populations
- Using Head Start centers as cornerstone of focus on EITC outreach, financial literacy, quality child care opportunities
- Thinking about the relationship between Two-Gen and Trauma Informed Care
- Two-Gen in upcoming strategic planning outreach conversations

What we're pretty sure of, so far

- Make it a top-level priority
- Don't brand it: no mugs!
- Not "Reggie's thing," but **our** way of thinking/working
- Marinate **everything** in the Whole Family sauce: Ask, "What about the rest of the family?"



Questions?



Nikki Hatch

Deputy Executive Director, Operations
Colorado Department of Human Services

Nikki.Hatch@state.co.us

(303) 866-3668