The Promise Of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

Helping People. Changing Lives.
community
Action
PARTNERSHIP
AMERICA'S POVERTY FIGHTING NETWORK

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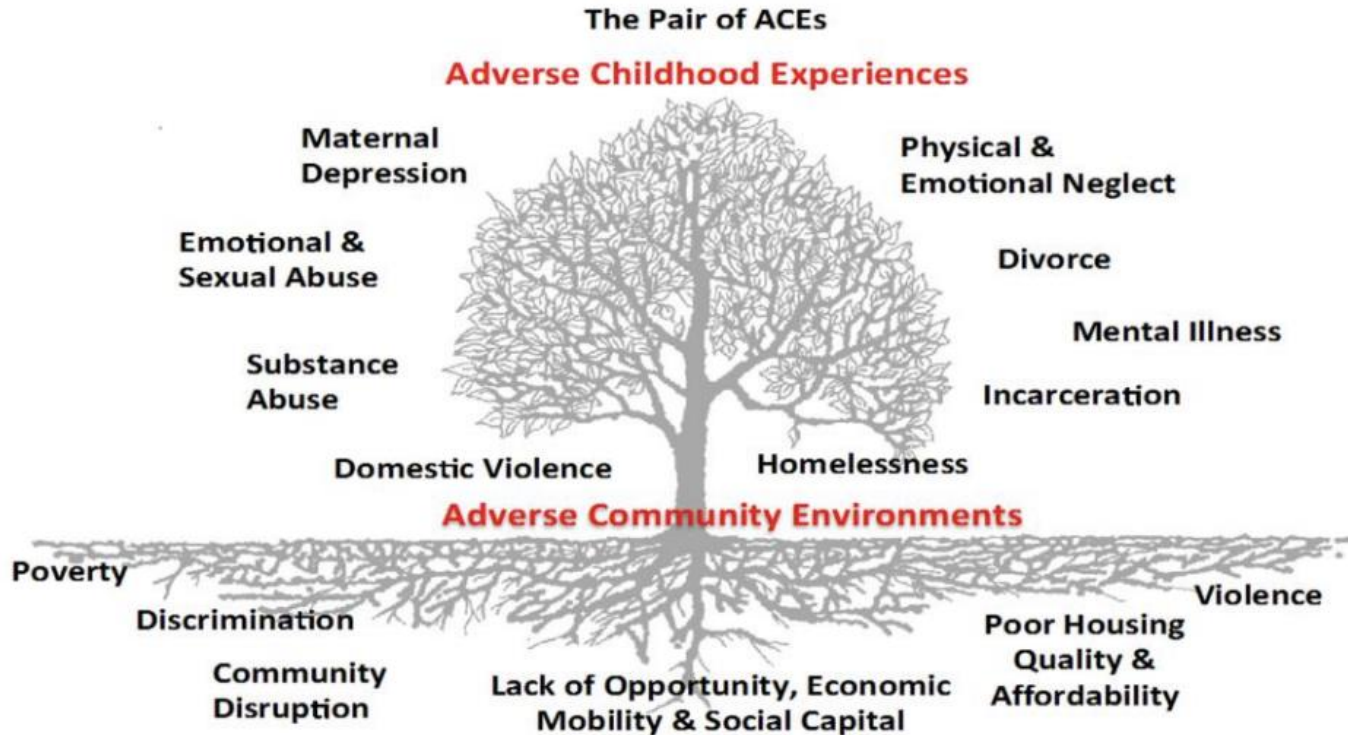*Washington, DC*

Objectives

- Define Social and Economic Mobility (SEM) and why it is the north star
- Highlight Community Action's legacy and historical efforts to advance SEM
- Highlight lessons learned from the Impact Community of Practice
- Identify promising frameworks and approaches for driving SEM for families and communities
- Engage in generative conversation to promote learning and implementation

North Star: Social & Economic Mobility for Families

Why Are We Here Today?

Community Action believes in the promise that **every family** should have access to the opportunity for success
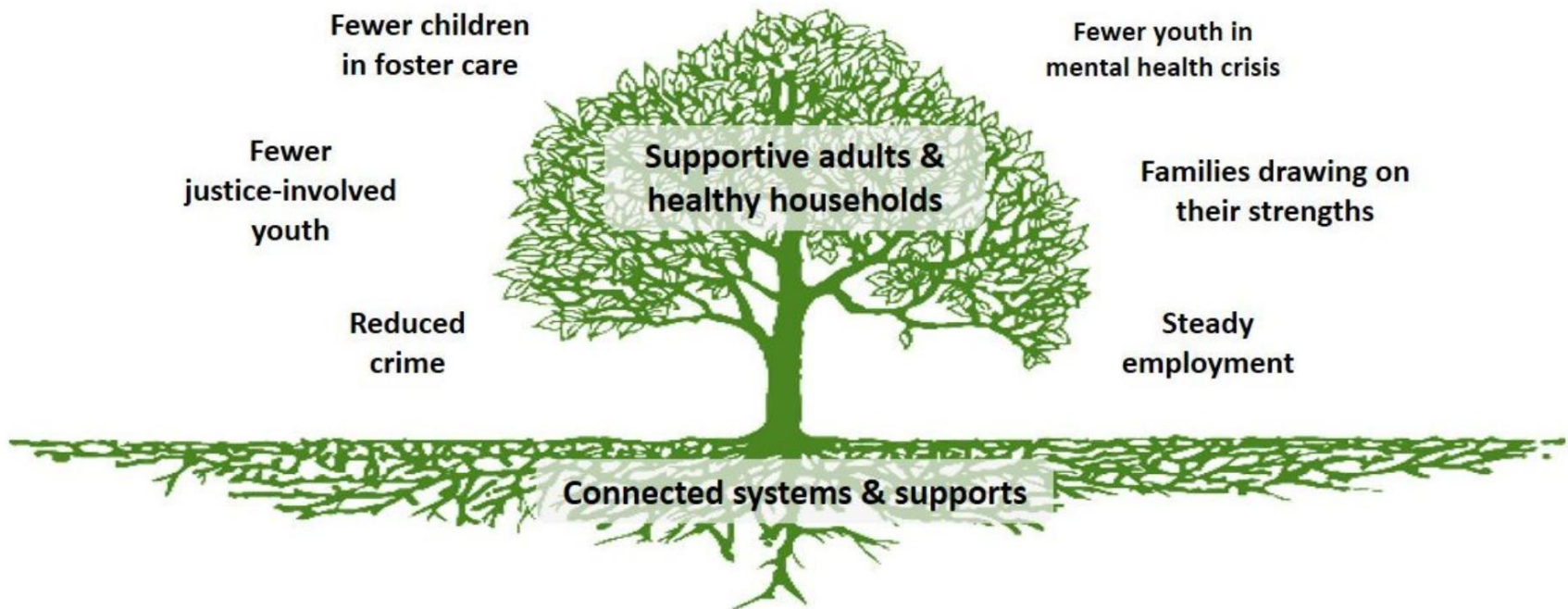
Environments and Experiences

The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences

Maternal Depression

Physical & Emotional Neglect

Emotional & Sexual Abuse

Divorce

Mental Illness

Substance Abuse

Incarceration

Domestic Violence

Homelessness

Adverse Community Environments

Poverty

Violence

Discrimination

Poor Housing Quality & Affordability

Community Disruption

Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital

Building Community Resilience's Pair of ACEs

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Environments and Experiences

Fewer children in foster care

Fewer youth in mental health crisis

Fewer justice-involved youth

Families drawing on their strengths

Supportive adults & healthy households

Reduced crime

Steady employment

Connected systems & supports

Building Community Resilience Collaborative at the Redstone Center, George Washington University

What is Social and Economic Mobility?

Social mobility is the movement of individuals, families, and households between social strata. It relates to being valued in community and equitable, sustained access power and autonomy.

Economic mobility is the ability of an individual, family, or some other group to improve their economic status – usually measured in income, but also potentially including other assets and resources.

-Kresge Foundation

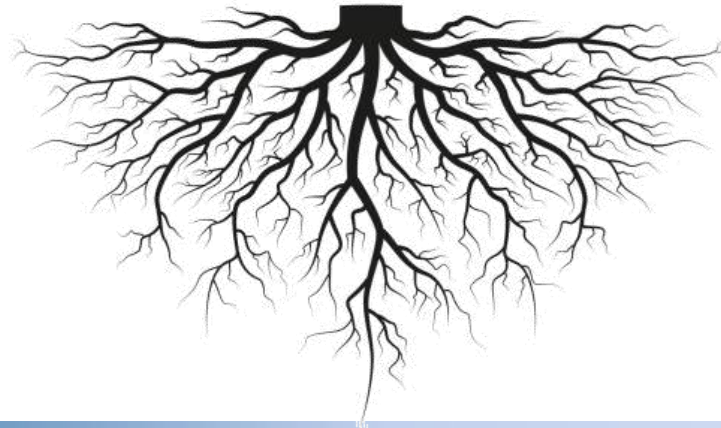# What is Social and Economic Mobility?

Help people move up the social and economic ladder toward achieving the American dream.

Building well-being and helping people reach their full potential.

Strong Roots: Community Action

The National Community Action Network has had boots-on-the ground in fighting poverty for low-income children and families in local communities since 1964 when the **Economic Opportunity Act** was ratified.

The Economic Opportunity Act was a policy aimed to "eliminate the paradox of poverty in the midst of plenty in this Nation by opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity".

The North Star…

EQUALITY

EQUITY

LIBERATION
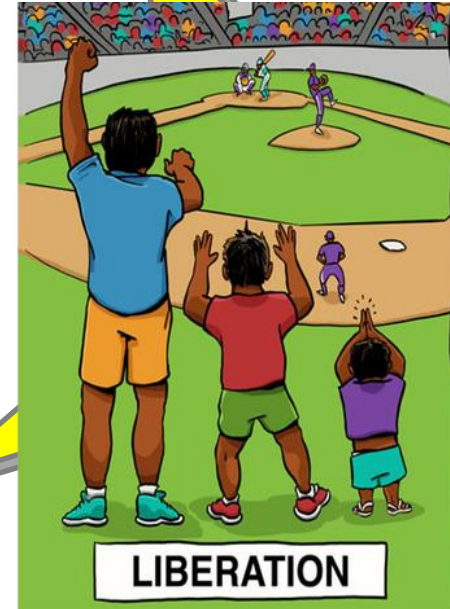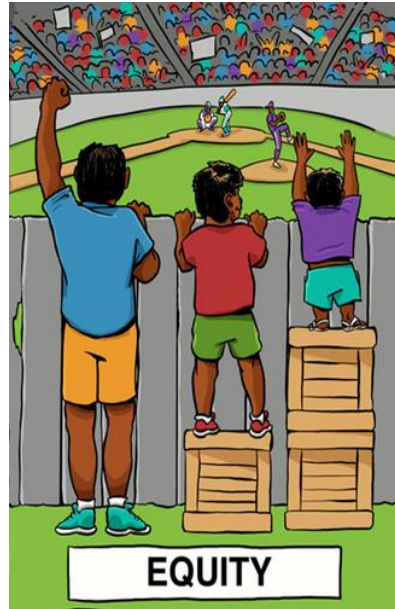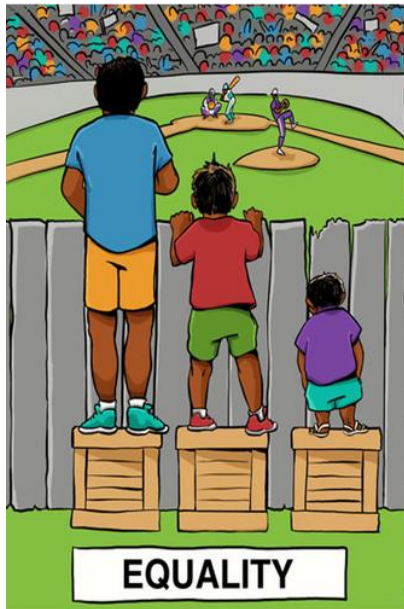
Accelerating Social and Economic Mobility

This requires deeper engagement with families, being data driven, person-centered, deep grounding in equity starting with racial equity, innovation, and achieving greater impact.

The Bottom Line

"Poverty is not just about a lack of money. It's about a lack of power."

-john a. powell, director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society and member of the US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty

SEM Framework

Economic success:
Having rising income and assets.

Power and autonomy: Having control over one's life, the ability to make choices, and the collective capacity to influence larger policies and actions that affect one's future.
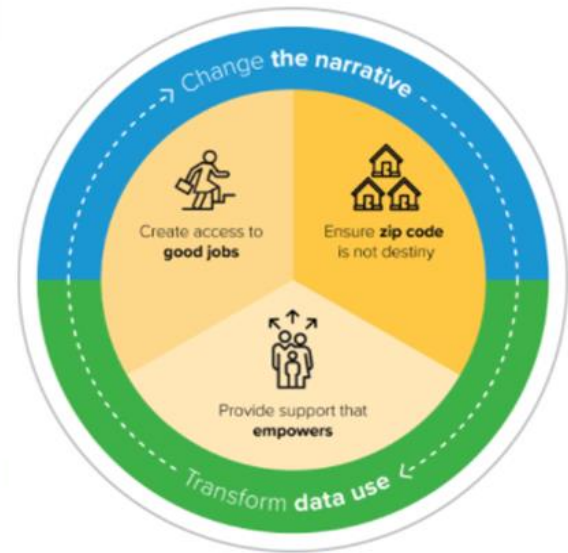
Being valued in community:
Feeling the respect, dignity, and sense of belonging that come from contributing to one's community.

Source: *U.S. Partnership on Mobility from Poverty*

- Change the narrative.
- Create access to good jobs.
- Ensure zip code is not destiny.
- Provide support that empowers.
- Transform data use.

We seek to build power and justice with the people and communities we serve.

Agency/Choice/Freedom

Dignity   Justice

POWER

SEM Connects to The North Star for WFA

THE North Star for Families:

- Breaking the cycle of poverty from one generation to the next

- Creating a legacy of well-being from one generation to the next

2Gen/Whole Family Approach Concepts

The 2Gen Continuum

CHILD-FOCUSED

CHILD-FOCUSED WITH PARENT ELEMENTS
e.g., early childhood development, parenting skills, family literacy, and health screenings

ASCEND
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

WHOLE FAMILY

PARENT-FOCUSED WITH CHILD ELEMENTS
e.g., workforce programs, food and nutrition, and supports for student parents

PARENT-FOCUSED

2Gen Core Components

SOCIAL CAPITAL
peer and family networks
coaching
cohort strategies

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
Head Start
Early Head Start
child care partnerships
preK
home visiting

K-12
kindergarten ready
3rd grade reading skills
parent engagement
graduation and postsecondary prep

HEALTH & WELL-BEING
mental, physical, and behavioral health
coverage and access to care
adverse childhood experiences
toxic stress

ECONOMIC ASSETS
asset building
housing and public supports
financial capacity
transportation

POSTSECONDARY & EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS
community college
training and credentials
workforce partnerships

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Hallmarks of the 2Gen/Whole Family Approach

- Center on families
- Integrate services
- Remove barriers
- Incorporate coaching
- Develop partnerships
- Center in equity, starting with racial equity
- Measure parent, child, and family outcomes
- Apply science and evidence while continually improving
- Attend to core life skills for children and parents
- Incorporate strategies that build family resiliency (trauma-informed focus)
- Provide high-quality services
- Deliver services of sufficient intensity, duration, and dosage to enable families to achieve social and economic mobility

We Achieve Our Mission If We:

Advance Impact & Mobility

Pursue Organizational Excellence

Opportunities for all people to thrive, strong, resilient communities, and a more equitable society

Build The Community Action Movement

Advance social and economic mobility to build the capacity for individuals and families; and activate communities and systems to work for everyone.

Promote and support the implementation of organizational and programmatic capacity building to strengthen effectiveness and operations.

Align at local, state, and regional levels to amplify the Community Action voice and advocate for policy changes that support the mission and vision.

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What is Systems Change?

What is a system?

A system is a set of interconnected, interdependent, and interacting parts that form a complex, unified whole.

Systems Influencing SEM

- **Economic System**
  - job availability and job quality; globalization; deindustrialization; technology and unemployment; financialization and shareholder revolution
- **Political System**
  - political structure; federalism; marginalization; gerrymandering; voter suppression; civic life; politics of race; money and power; inequality; decline of labor; welfare reform and the fraying of the social net; minimum wage; environmental protections
- **Cultural System**
  - mental models or deeply held beliefs and assumptions, social values; American Dream; individualism; beliefs about the poor and poverty; narrative; partisanship; news media
- **Social System**
  - demographics; geography and neighborhood effect; institutional resources; social networks/groups, connections, and social capital; people's place in society; resources

Ecosystems

**Birth to Eight Stakeholder Map
National Academies of Science,
Engineering and Medicine**
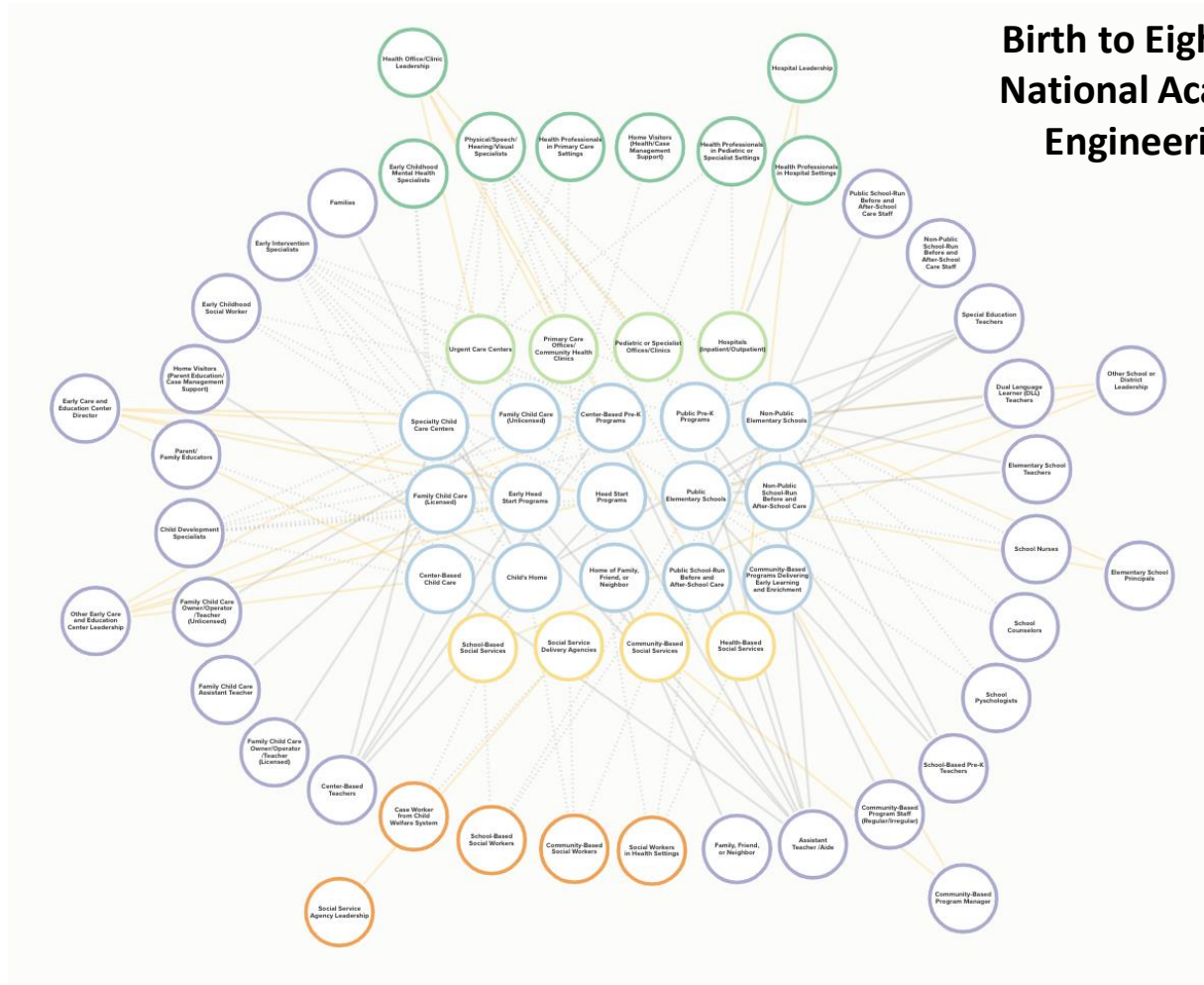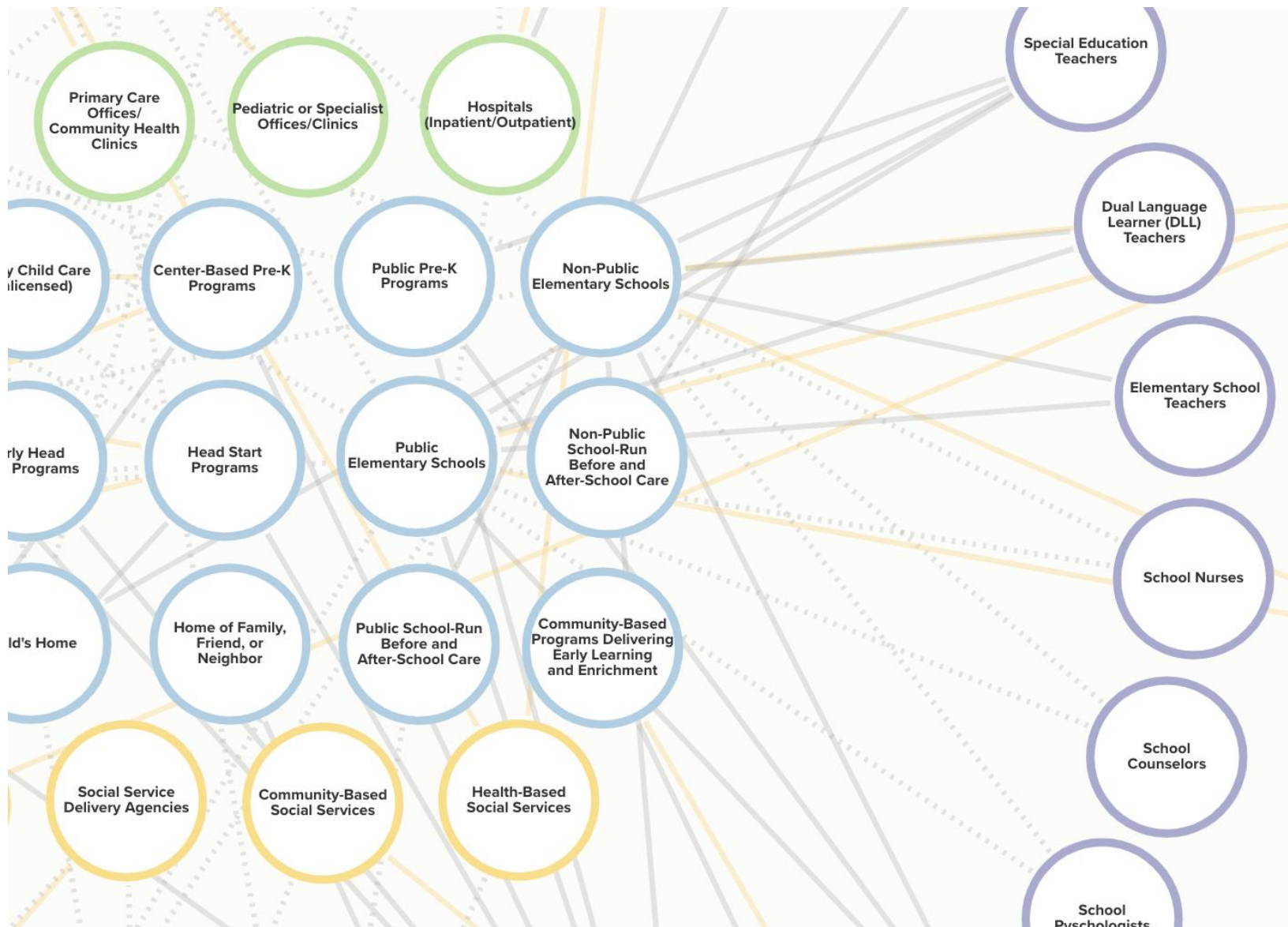
Transforming Leadership and Local Human Services Ecosystems Initiative

Transforming Leadership and Local Human Services Ecosystems Initiative

The Impact Community of Practice (COP) supports six (6) local teams who have chosen a local issue to work on together. This work will create change at the community level that builds opportunity across the community, centered in equity, to support children, parents and families achieve social and economic mobility.

Our Work
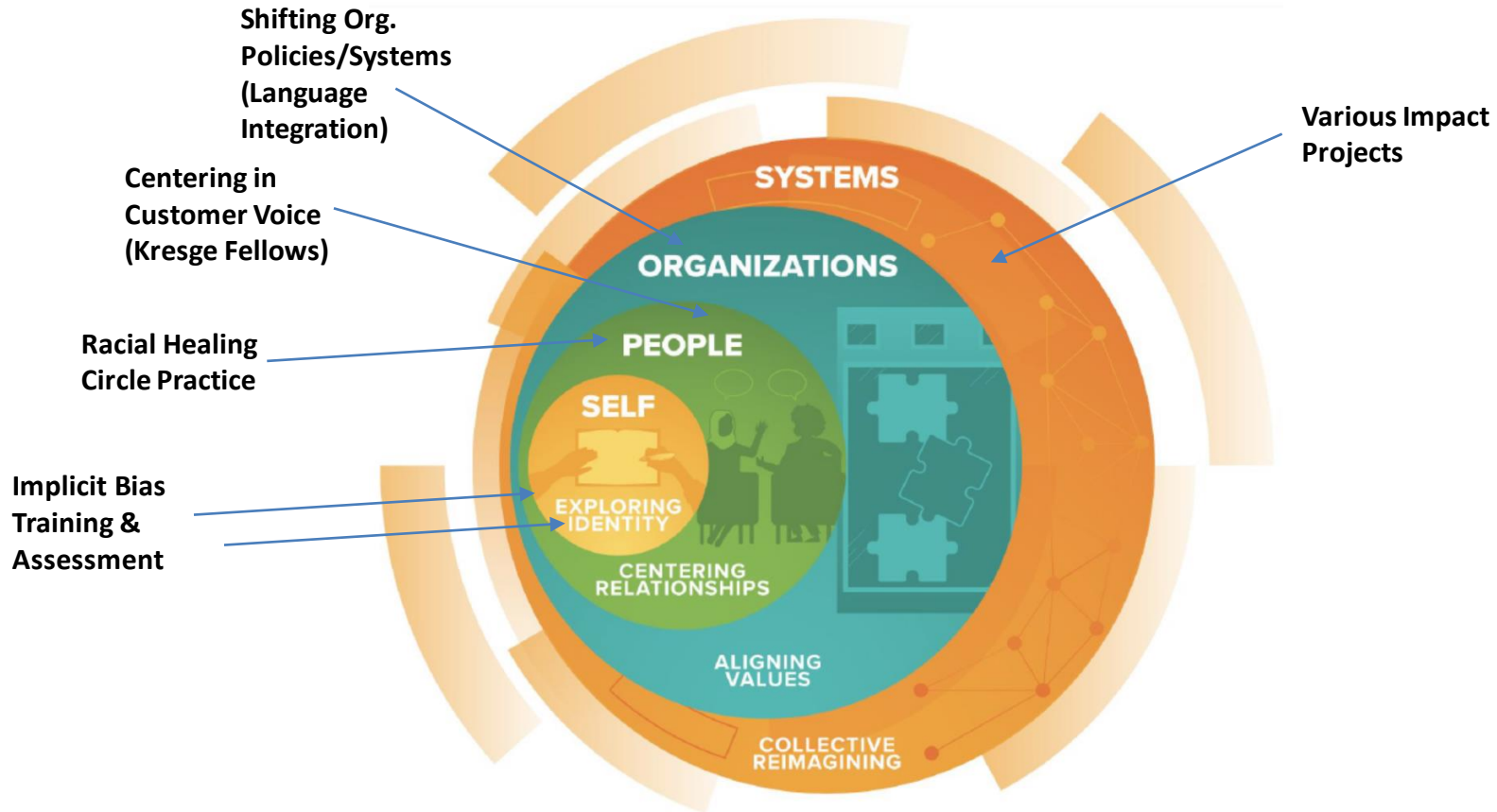
Six Conditions of Systems Change

Policies | Practices | Resource Flows — **Structural Change** *(explicit)*

Relationships & Connections | Power Dynamics — **Relational Change** *(semi-explicit)*

Mental Models — **Transformative Change** *(implicit)*

Human Services Value Curve (HSVC)

The Human Services Value Curve

A Leadership Framework and Theory of Change for Health and Human Services Outcomes and Value

LEADERSHIP FOR A NETWORKED WORLD

Array (Breadth) of Measures

Generative Measures

Integrative Measures

Collaborative Measures

Outcome Frontiers

Regulative Measures

Granularity (Depth) of Measures

Human Services Ecosystem
Theory of Change

Vision

What is your "North Star"?

Describe the picture of a better human services ecosystem for the children and families in your community.

Theory of Change Statement

If we do _____X_____, then _____Y_____ (change) will occur.

Systems **Organizations** **Communities**

Strategies

What strategies are being implemented to achieve the intended outcomes?

Examples:

- Engaging Customer Voice
- Power Building
- Human Service Value Curve
- Collective Impact
- Centering Equity
- Narrative Change
- Civic Engagement

Links

What are the components that directly link the strategies to the intended outcomes?

Examples:

- Policies
- Practices
- Resource Flows
- Relationships & Connections
- Power Dynamics
- Mental Models

Outcomes

What changes are expected to occur in the community?

Examples:

- Improved high school graduation rates
- Increased funding to community-based indigenous organizations
- Improved community health & wellness conditions
- Improved public narratives about people living in poverty
- Reduction of racial and ethnic vaccination disparities in communities
- Increased civic engagement around issues of racial and economic justice

Target System

What is the identified problem or systemic issue, and who is most impacted?

Describe the system, group of people, or place your initiative is focused on. Include quantitative and qualitative data such as: geographic location, demographics, social, economic, cultural, and/or situational characteristics.

Assumptions & Beliefs

Why do the proposed points of the intervention have the potential to advance the outcomes while further advancing equity and ultimately social and economic mobility?

Describe the underlying beliefs your initiative has about the conditions necessary for human services ecosystem change to occur?

Lessons Learned

Lessons Learned Themes

- Governance and Infrastructure

- Strategic Thinking and Planning

- Community Engagement

- Evaluation and Improvement

- Equity

Governance & Infrastructure

- Governance & Infrastructure
  - Strong cross sector representation
  - Momentum impacted due to loss of Executive Director
  - Part of a larger community coalition

Strategic Planning and Thinking

- Developing a Theory of Change
- Shared vision for community definition of WFA
- Strategic plan report

Community Engagement

- Community listening sessions and focus groups
- Established as lead for community resource centers
- Strong Shriver Fellow engagement
  - Shriver Fellow deeply involved with indigenous speakers
- Native and indigenous language focus

Evaluation and Improvement

- Continuous shared learning

- Establishing performance measures

- Working on shared data system

Equity

- Building belonging through language
- Hosted equity convening and training for staff
- Incorporated tribal liaison position at agency
- Native medicine garden

Resources

SEM Framework

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Source: _U.S. Partnership on Mobility from Poverty_

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SEM Framework

UPWARD MOBILITY
PREDICTORS

OPPORTUNITY-RICH & INCLUSIVE NEIGHBORHOODS	HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION	REWARDING WORK	HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT & ACCESS TO GOOD HEALTH CARE	RESPONSIVE & JUST GOVERNANCE
Housing affordability	Access to preschool	Employment opportunitites	Access to health services	Political participation
Housing stability	Effective public eduaction	Jobs paying living wages	Neonatal health	Descriptive representation
Economic inclusion	School economic diversity	Opportunities for income	Envionrmental quality	Safety from crime
Racial diversity	Preparation for college	Financial security	Safety from trauma	Just policing
Social capital	Digital access	Wealth-building opportunities		
Transportation access				

Boosting Upward Mobility From Poverty, Urban Institute

Evidence Resource Library, Urban Institute

Advancing WFA in Community Action
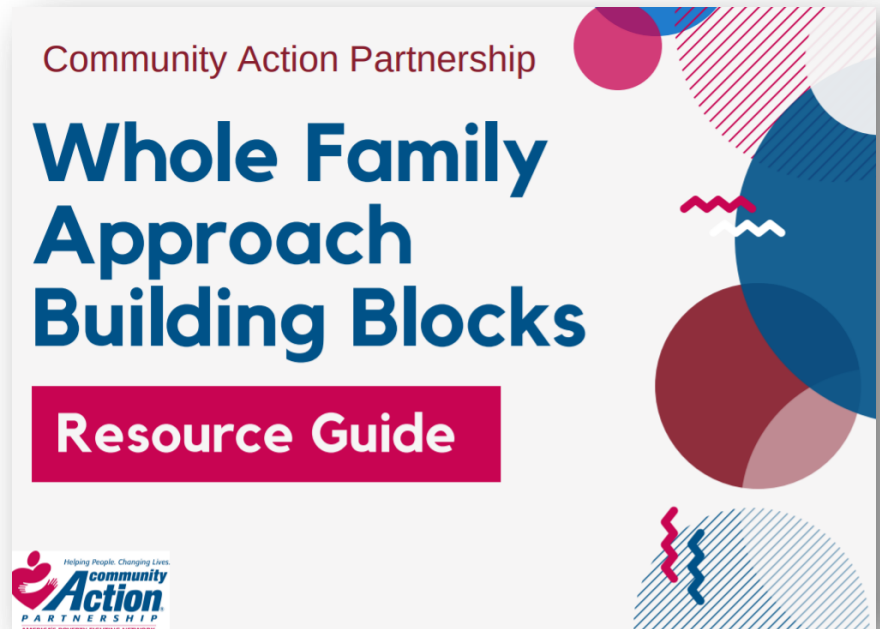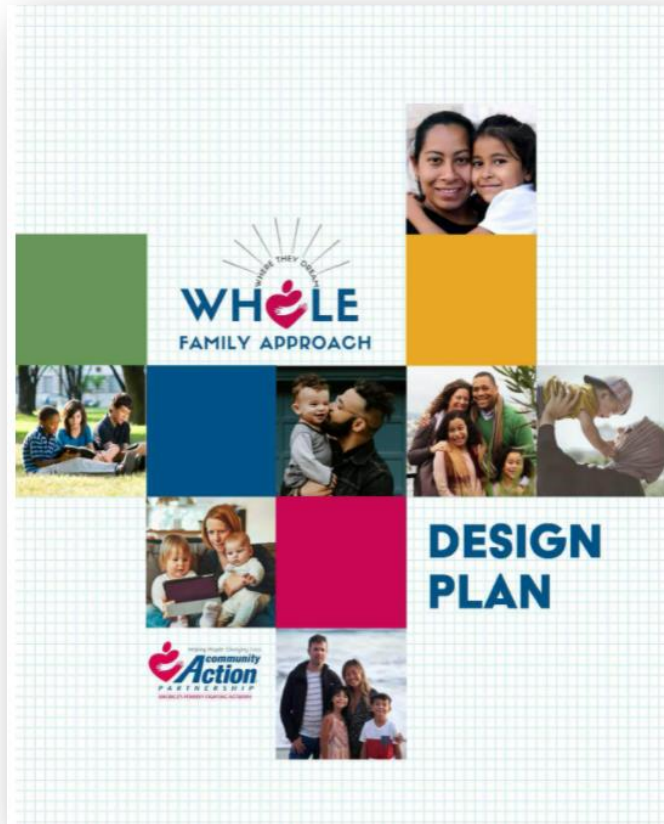
Whole Family Approach Building Blocks

NCAP WFA Resources
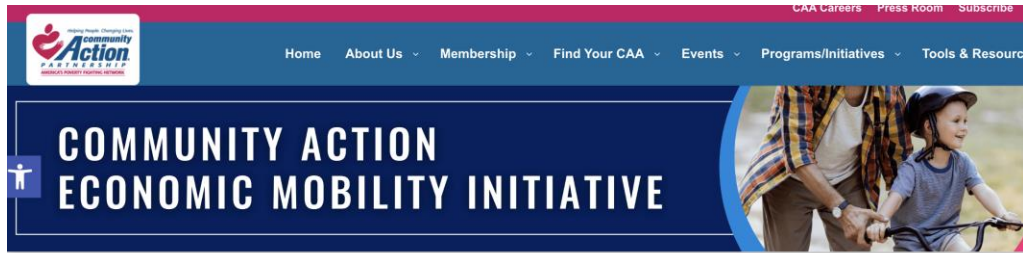
Advancing Equity in Community Action
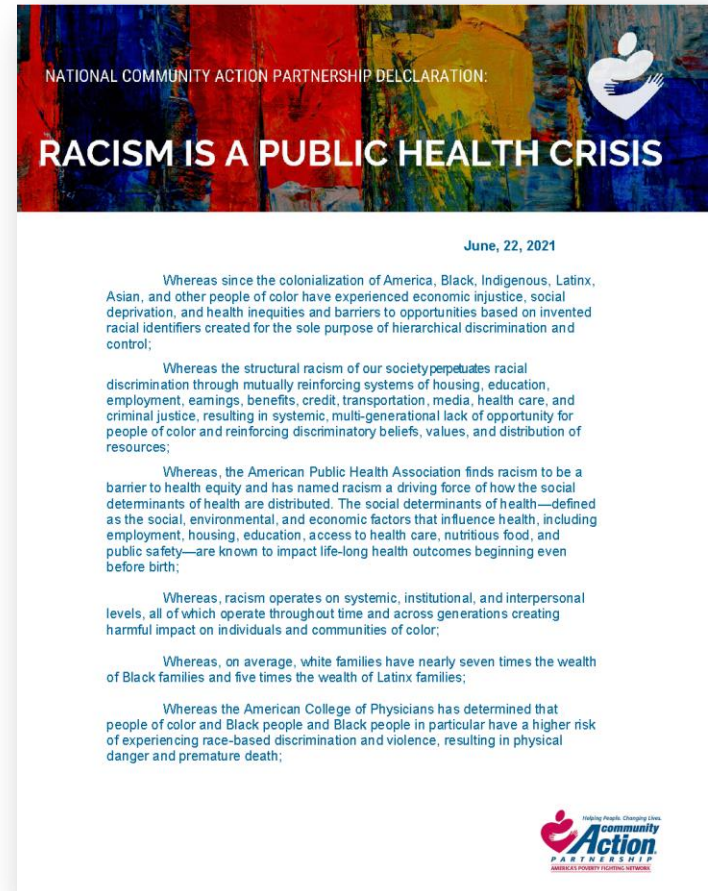
The Human Services Value Curve
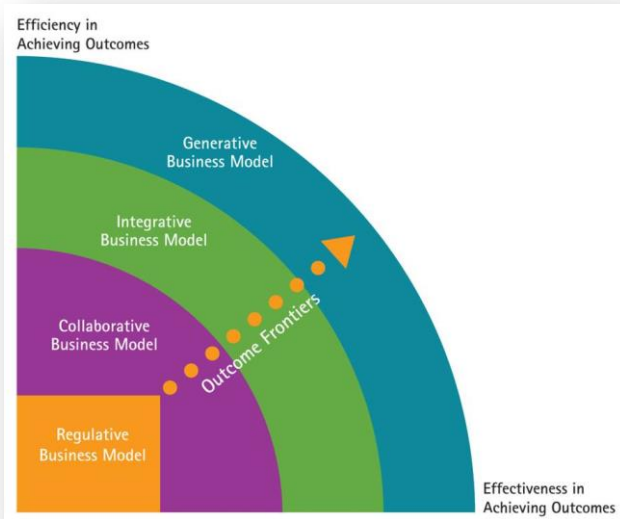
Scan to watch this deep dive of how the Human Services Value Curve inspires and equips leaders and policymakers of health and human services organizations, systems, and communities to envision and create a path for achieving better and more equitable outcomes for individuals, families, and communities, as well as improve and accelerate human services social and economic value for society.

Centering Equity in Collective Impact

Scan to access this webinar and learn how Community Action Agencies can incorporate collective impact strategies in communities as we work towards systems-level changes that are grounded in equity in support of families achieving social and economic mobility.

Thank You To Our Funder!

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Scan here to complete the evaluation for this session!