

Two-Generation Approaches to Addressing Poverty

A Toolkit for State Legislators

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“The general pattern has been to focus programs on adults or focus programs on children but rarely, if ever, on both at the same time, resulting in fragmented approaches that leave one or the other behind. Two-generation approaches focus on the needs of both generations to interrupt the cycle of poverty.”

—Nebraska Intergenerational Poverty Task Force, [Final Report](#), 2016



Introduction

A new approach to help families break the cycle of poverty is taking hold in states across the country.

This approach, commonly known as two-generation, intergenerational, multi-generational or whole-family strategies, simultaneously addresses the needs of parents and children to improve outcomes for the whole family. Two-generation approaches draw from findings that the well-being of parents is crucial to their children’s social-emotional, physical and economic well-being. And at the same time, parents’ ability to succeed in school and the workplace is substantially affected by how well their children are doing. Existing policies and programs mostly fail to acknowledge this connection, limiting their effectiveness and the ability of families to move themselves from poverty to opportunity.

Legislators play an important role in creating and sustaining these efforts, as evidenced by initiatives in several states, including Colorado, Connecticut, Utah, Washington and others. This toolkit outlines and describes the fundamentals of two-generation approaches to addressing poverty, with a focus on opportunities for state legislators and their critical role in legislating, convening, partnering, championing and coordinating funding.

Strategies that promote government efficiency while also achieving important outcomes for children and families have gained momentum in recent years. A survey commissioned by Ascend at the Aspen Institute shows legislators, state agencies and the public support this approach. With more than 1,000 adults over the age of 18 polled, the survey, [Voices for Two-Generation Success: Findings and Messaging Tips from a National Survey](#), found widespread support for two-generation approaches across gender, race and political party. Eighty-nine percent of those surveyed said they were in favor of a two-generation approach to help bring people out of poverty, particularly when focused on parents’ work skills training and education, as well as early care and education for their children.

Why Two-Generation?

In the United States, [one-in-four parents](#) lives in poverty, and [20 percent of children](#) in the United States live in a household with income below the federal poverty level. More alarming, 44 percent of children live in households with income less than twice the federal poverty level. These statistics are even more pronounced when you consider the [disproportionate impact](#) of poverty on children of color. As shown below, in 2016 the U.S. Census Bureau found that child poverty status varied widely when disaggregated by race:

- 31 percent of Black children.
- 31 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native children.
- 27 percent of Hispanic children.
- 25 percent of Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander children.
- 11 percent of non-Hispanic white children.
- 11 percent of Asian children.

Experts also agree that lack of economic mobility across generations is an issue facing many families, and that current efforts are not doing the job. The [Equality of Opportunity Project](#) and the [American Enterprise Institute](#) have released reports discussing economic mobility across generations and recommending policy options to improve economic mobility among families.

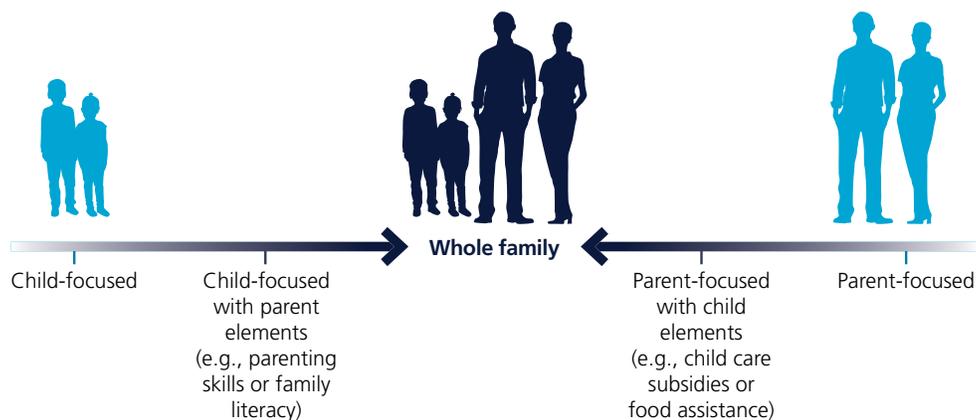
Human service policies and practices often focus on one population or one generation at a time. For example, workforce development programs, such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training (SNAP E&T), generally provide services for parents, while child care and programs traditionally focus on children. This single-generation approach ignores the responsibilities and dependencies of parent-child relationships. For example, if a child goes to a high-quality child care setting where he or she learns to read, but then goes home to parents who can't read or are unavailable to read with their child, the impact of the early learning experience is diminished. Similarly, if a parent participates in a workforce training program but doesn't have access to safe and affordable child care, he or she may not be able to accept or keep the job trained for.

With a two-generation approach, workforce development and child care assistance programs would be paired together as would children's literacy and adult education programs. [Evidence shows](#) that doing so increases the value of both sets of services and leads to better outcomes for parents and children.

What Is a Two-Generation Approach?

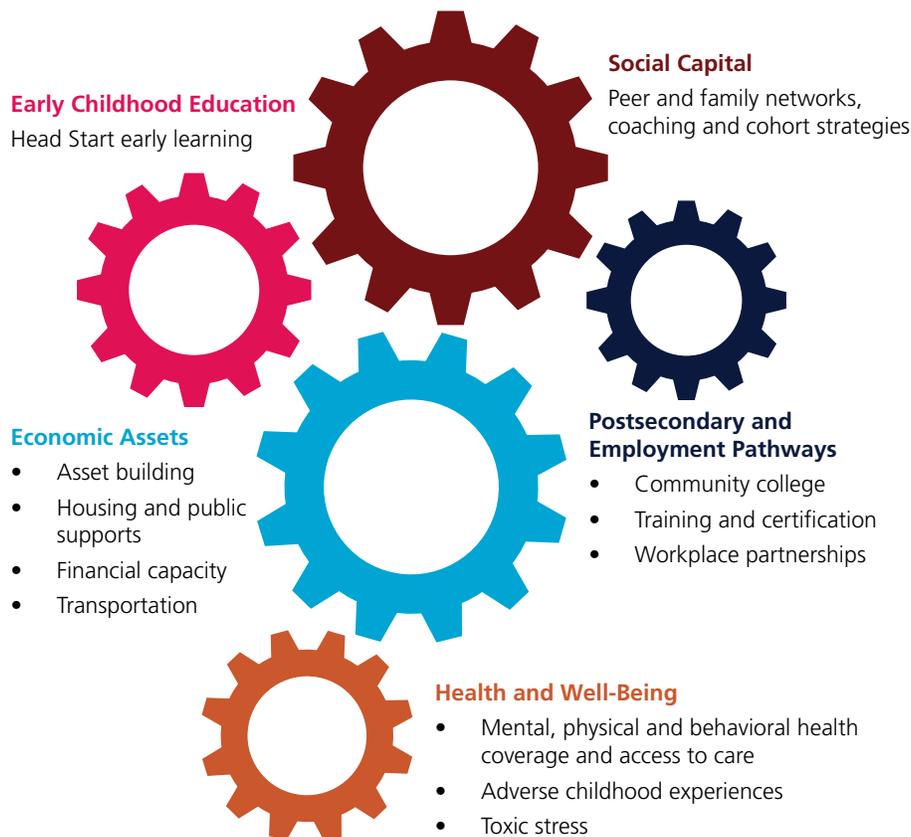
The graphic below illustrates the continuum of two-generation policies and practices with parent-focused and child-focused policies on either end and the family in the center. Two-generation strategies exist in the middle, with parent-focused policies that incorporate child components and child-focused policies that incorporate parent components.

The Two-Generation Continuum



Source: Ascend at the Aspen Institute

Two-generation strategies can be used in many policy areas, including human services, education, labor and workforce, and health. They can be used to address a myriad of policy issues, including poverty, literacy, school readiness and family economic stability.



Source: Ascend at the Aspen Institute

- Pairing higher education and workforce programs with child care or early education programs are examples of two-generation strategies. This dual focus helps parents improve their life opportunities while also supporting the developmental needs of their children—both essential to ending intergenerational poverty. CAP-Tulsa, the [Community Action Program in Tulsa, Oklahoma](#), takes this approach by offering education and job training opportunities to parents while, at the same time, providing high-quality early education services to their children and a host of support services for the whole family.

Questions to Consider

Legislators interested in adopting two-generation strategies in their state should begin with asking and answering questions such as:

- How many recipients of this program have children? What do we know about their well-being?
- What do we know about the parents of the children enrolled in this program?
- How can these programs address the needs of the whole family?
- What barriers exist within child-focused or adult-focused programs that may affect the needs of the whole family?
- What are programs and services for children and families doing to identify and establish outcomes that impact the whole family?
- How might current funding sources be used to assist the children or parents of individuals receiving services?

In most cases, two-generation strategies align existing programs and funding toward outcomes that improve the health, well-being and economic security of families. In other words, two-generation strategies do not necessarily require creating new programs or budget line items. As the graphic on page 2 illustrates, two-generation approaches add parent components to child-focused programs and add child components to parent-focused programs. Consequently, two-generation strategies are opportunities to improve the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of government programs. Common sources of program funding are outlined on page 11.

How to Define Two-Generation Outcomes

Two-generation approaches seek positive outcomes for entire families, whereas traditional, single-generation programs typically define outcomes for parents or children. Two-generation approaches also frequently cut across multiple systems. The inherent complexity of working across systems calls on lawmakers and other leaders to define programmatic outcomes early. By establishing clear target outcomes early, state leaders can determine the most appropriate strategies and create common ownership among stakeholders.

Outcomes should look not only at how many people were served by a program, or how they were served, but whether the program improved opportunities for success for the whole family. With limited capacity for evaluation, state programs often struggle with defining and measuring outcomes.

Connecticut is one state that has redefined the way it approaches outcome measurement by shifting its focus from outputs to outcomes, according to Steven Hernández, executive director for the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors for the Connecticut General Assembly. “Family success

By the Numbers: Two-Gen Outcomes

Here are just a few potential outcomes of two-generation strategies:

- CAP-Tulsa’s Career Advance® program recruits parents from Head Start programs for post-secondary education and health care workforce training opportunities. The program’s results are striking. A 2017 [report](#) shows 61 percent of Career Advance® participants attained a career certificate, compared to 3 percent of the comparison group. In addition, 49 percent of program participants found employment in the health care sector by the end of the program’s first year of operation. Reflecting the program’s two-generation approach, attendance in Head Start increased and chronic absenteeism decreased.
- The [Jeremiah Program](#), currently operating in seven urban locations across the country, provides early childhood education for children, and housing and life-skills training to single mothers. [The program highlights](#) a return on investment of \$4 in societal benefits for every \$1 spent. The calculation includes reduced dependence on public assistance and increased taxable earnings and reflects increased personal incomes and reduced dependence on public assistance. In addition, the children receiving child care are meeting or exceeding age-appropriate milestones. Perhaps most impressive, all recent graduates found safe and affordable housing, which has a significant stabilizing effect on the whole family.
- The [Washington State Institute for Public Policy](#) was created by statute to conduct cost-benefit analyses and evaluate state programs. The Institute evaluated programs that address the needs of two generations including training and work experience for adult [welfare recipients](#) and adults who are [not welfare recipients](#). Services were, at their core, two-generation strategies in that they provided support to both parents and children. They included job search and placement assistance, adult basic education, English as a second language courses, General Equivalency Diploma preparation, vocational training and support services such as child care or housing support.

Services for adult welfare recipients showed a cost-benefit ratio of \$1.30 and had an estimated 55 percent chance of producing benefits greater than its costs. Services to adults who are *not* welfare recipients showed a cost-benefit ratio of \$1.65 and a 78 percent chance of producing benefits greater than its costs.



outcomes are more difficult to define because we are so accustomed to determining whether a parent or child was treated in a certain way,” he said. Instead of looking at how many people were touched by a program, or how many children or parents were served, Connecticut began looking at whether families were more successful after being touched by a program. For example, instead of looking at how many children received literacy interventions, state leaders began looking at third-grade reading outcomes and whether parents and children were learning to read together.

Who to Engage in Two-Generation Strategies

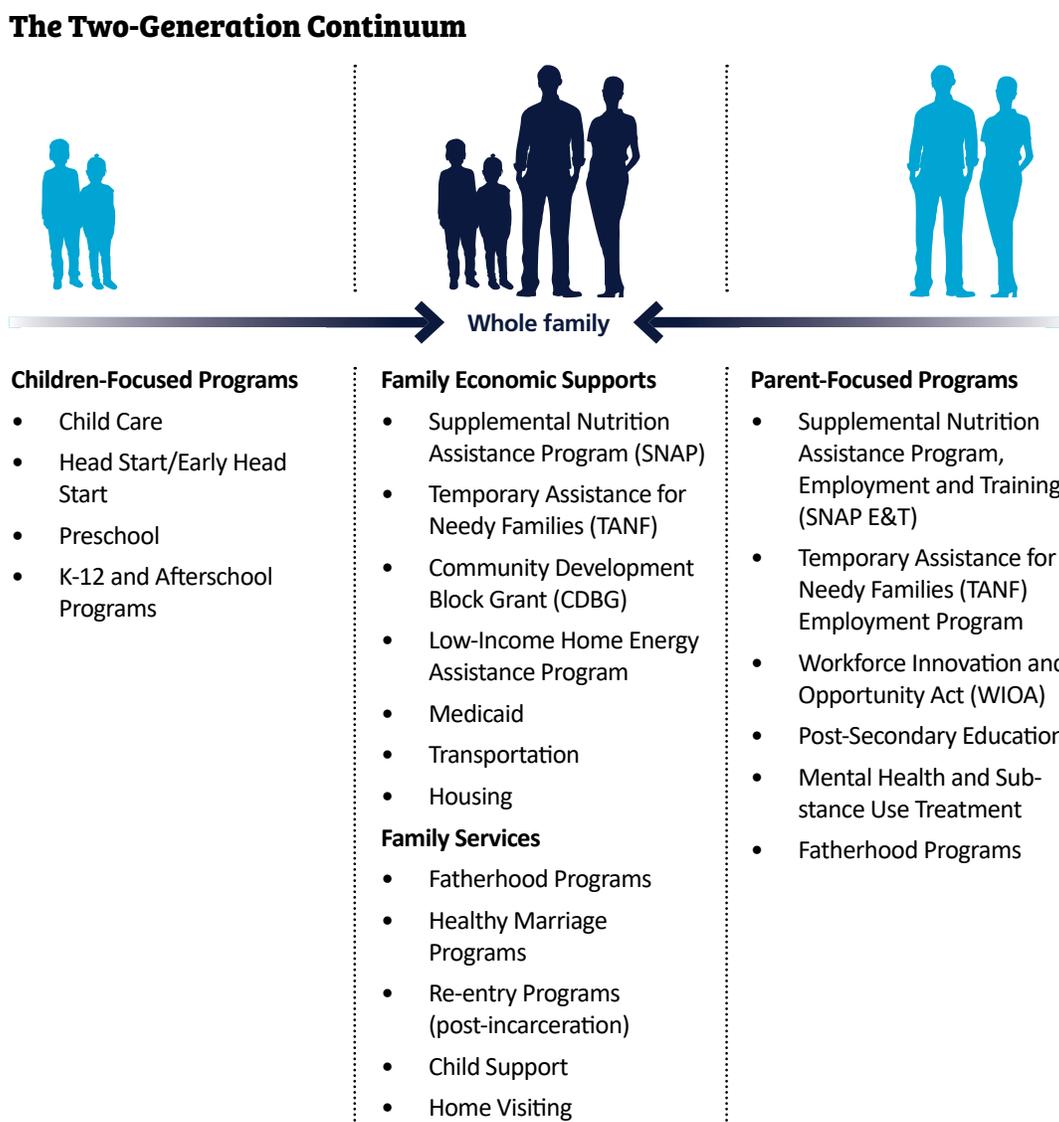
Stakeholders to engage in two-generation strategies often come from the health, human services, education, criminal justice and workforce sectors. Often, the stakeholders involved flow naturally based on family entry points into systems. If a parent is seeking assistance through a child support office or trying to enroll in post-secondary education, knowing the barriers to compliance or completion and providing referrals to parenting classes or child care could lead to better family outcomes. For example, a noncustodial parent paying child support could benefit from fatherhood programs or parent employment programs. In Colorado, the [Colorado Parent Employment Project](#) connects noncustodial parents to fatherhood programs and workforce services, which has been shown to result in higher rates of employment and more consistent child support payments.

“Two Generation means we understand that adults want to be great parents and great employees.

This means understanding their parenting and work responsibilities and helping people to be able to make great parenting decisions while being successful at work.”

— Roxane White, Morgridge Family Innovator in Residence, Ascend at the Aspen Institute

As discussed earlier, adding a child component to parent-focused programs and adding a parent component to child-focused programs is the essence of a two-generation approach. The image below illustrates the variety of programs available to parents or children, or parents on behalf of children. Family economic supports and family services, in the middle, can be leverage points to bring the child- and parent-focused programs together.



A critical partner is parents. Parents provide important insights into barriers to family economic stability and the often-confounding reality of engaging with multiple public systems. States have taken various approaches to engaging parents. Connecticut’s [Parent Leadership Training Institute](#), housed within the General Assembly’s Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, sponsors a one-day training for parents known as the [Two-Generation Parent Academy](#). The academy, which is planned by parents for parents, is an opportunity for parents to engage with state leaders in the policymaking process. Parents share their needs and challenges, discuss barriers and learn about two-generational approaches and available resources.

Although the list of potential stakeholders is long, two-generation approaches do not require every organization or sector to be involved at all times. Creating a two-generation strategy can be within one program, such as home visiting, or across two programs, such as post-secondary education and child care. Two-generation strategies can involve many systems. Connecticut’s approach to home visiting, Maine’s Family Futures Down East and Colorado’s multi-system approach to health and well-being provide examples of each.

EXPANDING EXISTING PROGRAMS

Early childhood home visiting is a family-support service designed to help parents meet the health and developmental needs of their children. These community-based programs are focused on parent capacity-building, child well-being and healthy development. Building on its existing home visiting program, [Connecticut](#) is using a state innovation grant to redirect unused funds from the federal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) program to help home visiting clients find and retain jobs, a service not typically provided by home visiting programs.

COORDINATING MULTIPLE PROGRAMS

Maine's [Family Futures Downeast](#) brings together post-secondary education and job-skills training with early childhood education. The agency provides parents access to educational and employment supports while enrolling their children in a high-quality early childhood program. Family Futures Downeast [grew out of efforts](#) by the Community Caring Collaborative, a community-based organization that brought together academic and social service professionals to develop a program to meet the needs of families. The program [collaborates with](#) community colleges, college and career readiness centers and the Sunrise County Economic Council, which serves as the program's fiscal sponsor. This type of cross-sector, community engagement is another example of a two-generation approach in action.

STATEWIDE APPROACH

Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper is spearheading efforts to advance the adoption of two-generation approaches throughout state government. In 2017, he created a two-generation program coordinator position within the governor's office to help state agencies develop and implement two-generation programs, policies and goals. This multi-agency work is in addition to a departmentwide two-generation initiative by Colorado's [Department of Human Services](#), which already uses a two-generation approach to guide its service delivery, including TANF and child support programs.

Hickenlooper has also focused attention on public-private partnerships to better serve Colorado families. In 2017, his office hosted a [statewide conference](#) that was attended by more than 200 representatives from the state, county and local governments, philanthropic and community-based organizations, researchers and businesses. Colorado is using input from the event to develop a Colorado 2Gen Action Plan to serve as a "road map" for its two-generation objectives and activities.

These three approaches illustrate the breadth of options available to states and state legislators when considering who to engage in two-generation work.

More Statewide Initiatives

Connecticut's General Assembly created a [two-generational initiative](#) within the Commission on Women, Children and Seniors. The 2014 legislation requires the commission to form a Two-Generational Policy Work Group to develop a "two-generational school readiness plan to promote long-term learning and economic success for low-income families by addressing intergenerational barriers" to school and workforce readiness. The policy work group morphed into an [Interagency Working Group](#) that continues to meet, and in 2018 the general assembly enacted legislation to integrate Connecticut's reading plan for students in kindergarten to third grade with the state's two-generation initiative.

[Mississippi's Gen+ approach](#) to serving children and families is an investment in front-end systems that seeks to increase the effectiveness of existing interventions and overall family outcomes by considering the needs of parents and children together. Mississippi's Gen+ family model uses state agencies, community-based organizations, Families First for Mississippi, aging and adult services, community services, child support, early childhood care and development, economic assistance and youth services to provide a two-generational approach to helping families obtain and maintain self-sufficiency. Mississippi's approach starts with individual and family assessments and referrals provided by the state's Department of Human Services.

Tennessee's [2G for Tennessee](#) program within its Department of Human Services focuses on four components of well-being for parents and children: education, economic supports, health and well-being and social capital. Included in these efforts are Governor Bill Haslam's Drive to 55 initiative, which has a goal of 55 percent of Tennesseans earning a college degree or vocational certificate by 2025 and the Imagination Library, which is working toward reading proficiency for 75 percent of third-grade students by 2025. The Tennessee General Assembly built on the Drive to 55 initiative by enacting the [Tennessee Promise Scholarship Act](#), which provides a scholarship for an associate's degree or certificate to any Tennessee high school graduate that meets certain conditions.

What is the Legislative Role in Two-Generation Approaches?

State legislators can play many important roles related to two-generation strategies. They can build credibility for and champion ideas and innovations. They can help scale projects from local to state levels. They can breakdown bureaucratic barriers to support systems change. Legislatures also have the responsibility to hold state agencies accountable for programs in their state. The following examples show how state legislators have taken the lead in legislating, convening, partnering and funding two-generation initiatives.

Legislate

Convene

Partner

Fund

Legislate

Legislation can require or permit state agencies to perform certain functions, such as sharing data and coordinating with other agencies addressing the needs of the same populations. It can also be a catalyst for systemic change and cross-agency collaboration. Below are examples of states that have enacted legislation to bring stakeholders together, leverage existing programs for the support of families or create a new approach for simultaneously serving children and their adult caregivers.

MASSACHUSETTS

Massachusetts legislators are considering a pair of bills (Senate Bill 38/House Bill 1969) to establish a special commission on two-generation approaches. The commission would comprise legislators from the education committee and the children, families and persons with disabilities committee; the commissioners of early education and care, elementary and secondary education, higher education, and transitional assistance; the secretaries of labor and workforce development and housing and economic development, among others defined in statute. The commission would be required to do the following:

- Measure and account for outcomes for children and their parents.
- Engage and listen to the voice of families.
- Foster innovation and evidence together.
- Align and link systems and funding streams.
- Prioritize intentional implementation.
- Ensure equity.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

The New Hampshire General Court created and charged the Wellness and Primary Prevention Council with facilitating the development and delivery of wellness and primary prevention services through Family Resource Centers of Quality ([N.H. Stat. § 126-M:1 et.seq.](#)). By statute, wellness and primary prevention services include parent-focused programs, such as parenting education, parent support groups, job readiness, skill building, community services and criminal justice diversion activities. They also includes child-focused programs, such as developmentally appropriate infant and toddler care, play groups, before- and after-school programs, and health and developmental screenings. The law requires a two-generation approach to service delivery that supports both parents and children. Examples of programs include play groups for families, home visiting, literacy and educational opportunities, health promotion, and illness and injury prevention.

NEW JERSEY

New Jersey introduced Senate Bill 371 in 2018 to establish, within the Department of Education, a five-year two-generational school readiness and workforce development pilot program. The pilot program would be designed to foster family economic self-sufficiency in low-income households by delivering academic and job readiness support services across two generations in the same household. If enacted, the commissioner of education would be responsible for selecting pilot sites based on poverty rates. The pilot sites would be required to work together as a learning community, informed by members of low-income households within the pilot sites, peer-to-peer exchanges and technical assistance in best practices. The pilot program would be overseen by an interagency working group composed of, among others, state legislators and representatives from the departments of education, labor and workforce development, human services, children and families, community affairs, transportation and health.

VERMONT

In 2018, Vermont's General Assembly passed Senate Bill 280 creating the Advisory Council on Child Poverty and Strengthening Families, amending and replacing a previous entity. The goals of the council are to identify structural issues leading to poverty and to advance policy solutions that promote financial stability and asset building, support safety nets for families with low incomes, and mitigate the effects of childhood poverty. Members of the council include a bipartisan and bicameral group of legislators from the education, health and welfare, and human services committees, state advocacy groups and heads of states agencies, including education, human services, children and families, health and labor. The council is tasked with making recommendations and preparing legislation to be presented to the General Assembly each year.

Convene

As elected officials, state legislators are well-positioned to convene constituents, community partners and other stakeholders. In the two-generation landscape, the power to convene helps legislators and stakeholders learn together and explore opportunities for policy changes to benefit parents and children. Examples include the establishment of intergenerational poverty task forces in Nebraska, Utah and Washington.

Nebraska's [Intergenerational Poverty Task Force](#), created by Legislative Bill 607 in 2015, brought together legislators, executive branch agencies and community partners to look at intergenerational poverty in the state and recommend ways to help break the cycle of poverty. Task force members include state legislators, legislative staff and representatives from the health and human services, labor and education agencies. The task force's recommendations addressed employment, financial stability, early childhood education, health care, child care, fair credit, financial literacy, housing and language access. Though the task force disbanded, its report is still used in education and policy discussions.

Utah's Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission was established by the [Intergenerational Poverty Mitigation Act of 2012](#) (Utah Code § 35A-9-101 et. seq.). The commission's charge includes reviewing data and existing policies, appointing the Intergenerational Poverty Advisory Committee and creating five- and 10-year plans with the primary goal of establishing measurable goals and benchmarks for decreasing intergenerational poverty. [The commission](#) continues to work toward breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty in Utah and releasing annual reports on the progress of the permanent [Intergenerational Poverty Initiative](#), an ongoing initiative housed within the Department of Workforce Services. The [2017 Intergenerational Poverty Annual Report](#) showed increases in the amount of accessible high-quality preschool programs, as well as preschool and kindergarten enrollment and improved language arts and math proficiency. The report also showed a 13 percent increase in the high school graduation rate across the state. Along with improved education outcomes, the wages for adults experiencing intergenerational poverty also increased.

In late 2017, Washington Governor Jay Inslee created an [interagency work group on poverty reduction](#) as an expansion of the existing WorkFirst Oversight Task Force. The group was charged with looking at poverty reduction efforts beyond the state's WorkFirst (TANF) agency. The work group includes executive agencies, legislators, employers, community stakeholders and those experiencing poverty. The legislature, in 2018, enacted [House Bill 1482](#) to create the legislative-executive WorkFirst Poverty Reduction Oversight Task Force and an intergenerational poverty advisory committee.

Partner

Legislators add a unique voice and perspective. Ensuring the legislative voice at convenings and in partnerships can be a powerful tool in the development of two-generation approaches. See below for examples of partnerships:

WHOLE FAMILY APPROACH TO JOBS PROJECT

A Whole Family Approach to Jobs: Helping Parents Work and Children Thrive is a partnership between the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Primary funding for the collaboration is provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. Additional funding is provided by local foundations. Recognizing the effect of parents' education, economic stability and overall health on a child's trajectory, and similarly the effect of children's health and education on parent's success, the project helps participating state leaders develop program, policy and system solutions that help parents achieve employment gains and economic stability. The project currently is working in ACF Region 1, which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont. Each state has a team of legislators, executive branch staff, business leaders, philanthropic organizations, community leaders and parents.

Vermont's team had an early victory. In 2018, Vermont passed House Bill 919 to allow the state workforce development board to make recommendations to align funding sources for the promotion of best practices aligned with a two-generation approach to eliminating poverty, as identified by the Vermont Work Group on Whole Family Approaches to Jobs. The legislation directs Vermont's State Workforce Development Board, in cooperation with Vermont's Department of Labor and agencies of commerce and community development, education, human services, agriculture, food and markets, natural resources and transportation, to conduct a stakeholder alignment, coordination and engagement process.

For more about the project, visit NCSL's [Whole Family Approach to Jobs](#) webpage.

PACTT NETWORK

The *Parents and Children Thriving Together: Two Generation State Policy Network* (PACTT Network) is a 2016-2018 National Governors Association (NGA) collaboration between the NGA Center for Best Practices, the Center for Law and Social Policy and Ascend at the Aspen Institute. The PACTT Network includes five states—Colorado, Georgia, Minnesota, New Jersey and Oregon. With letters of commitment from their governors, the five states participate in peer networking and receive technical assistance and financial support from NGA to develop and implement two-generation strategies to achieve statewide systems change across a range of policy areas, including workforce development, human services, education, health, child care and early childhood education.

If the PACTT Network is operating in your state, legislators may be interested in learning about engaging with their work. For most states without a PACTT Network project, legislators may be interested in the lessons learned from this project or connecting with peers in the five participating states.

NGA's report, [Parents and Children Thriving Together: The Role of State Agencies in Crafting a Statewide Two-Generation Strategy](#), provides detail on the network.

“Communication is probably the most important tool in addressing challenges, not only among workers in the field, but also with other stakeholders who affect the work. Child support workers and legislators are an example of that. Each needs to understand more about what the other does and why. If we work together, we can spend more time doing good stuff!”

— North Dakota State Senator Judy Lee

Fund

As explained earlier, two-generation approaches generally align existing programs and funding toward outcomes that improve the health, well-being and economic security of families. Two-generation strategies often involve a complex mix of federal, state, local and private-sector funding. Legislators, as holders of states' purse strings, play a critical role in funding these approaches.

Federal Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)• Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG)• Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)• Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV)• Child Support• Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP and SNAP E&T)• Head Start/Early Head Start• Medicaid• Social Services Block Grant (SSBG)
State Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maintenance of Effort (MOE)• General Fund• Dedicated Funds• Child Support• State Workforce Funds• State Child Care Funds
Local Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Services Block Grant (CSBG)• Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)
Other Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Philanthropic• Contributions

The federal funding in the table above flows from three departments, five agencies and nine offices, each with their own priorities. All play a role in supporting two-generation strategies.

FEDERAL FUNDING SOURCES

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) is one of the largest and most flexible funding streams that can be used to implement two-generation strategies. Its [four core purposes](#) are fundamentally aligned with two-generation approaches:

- Assist needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes.
- Reduce dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage.
- Prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies.
- Encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families.

In addition, the Administration for Children and Families, which administers TANF at the federal level, released an [information memorandum in 2016](#) promoting the use of TANF in two-generation approaches.

In fiscal year 2016, TANF and state maintenance of effort (MOE) spending totaled nearly [\\$31 billion](#). This spending supported activities that could be part of a two-generation strategy, including:

- Work supports and supportive services (2.9 percent of total TANF spending).
- Prekindergarten/Head Start (7.5 percent).
- Child care (16.6 percent).
- Work, education and training activities including financial education and asset development (9.2 percent).
- Fatherhood and two-parent family programs (0.5 percent).
- Child welfare services (7.4 percent).
- Refundable tax credits (9 percent).
- Services for children and youth, which may include home visiting (2.1 percent).
- Out-of-wedlock pregnancy prevention (1.4 percent).

CHILD CARE DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT

The Child Care Development Block Grant Act of 2014 (CCDBG) reauthorized the [Child Care Development Fund](#) (CCDF) to continue supporting high-quality child care for low-income families. States can combine TANF and CCDF funds when TANF funds are transferred to their CCDF or spent directly on child care services. In fiscal year 2016, states spent [\\$8.7 billion](#) in federal, state matching and state MOE funds from the CCDF.

WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

The federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), enacted in 2014, governs and funds employment and training programs. It is “[designed to help job seekers](#) access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need to compete in the global economy.” The program specifically requires collaboration among labor, education, agriculture, and health and human services departments to administer the program, making it capable of being leveraged to support two-generation strategies in states.

In addition to WIOA, in 2016, the Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration awarded \$54 million to 14 grantees in 11 states—Arizona, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New York, Tennessee, Vermont and Virginia—as part of the [Strengthening Working Families Initiative](#). These grants were awarded to support and break down child care barriers for working parents. Work includes identifying career pathways, training necessary to enter those career pathways, and advancement opportunities. These efforts are to be paired with services to help families find and access affordable, high-quality child care for their children.

MATERNAL, INFANT, AND EARLY CHILDHOOD HOME VISITING

The federal Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program (MIECHV) funds home visiting programs in all states and territories and many tribes to improve maternal and child health, prevent child abuse and neglect, encourage positive parenting and promote child development and school readiness. MIECHV’s budget in fiscal year 2017 was [\\$370 million](#). Most of the funding must be used on evidence-based home visiting programs, with up to 25 percent of the funding eligible for innovative practices that will undergo rigorous evaluation. As mentioned above, [Connecticut](#) uses a state innovation grant to redirect unused funds from the MIECHV program to help home visiting clients find and retain jobs.

CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

The federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) administers child support programs across the country. [State child support programs are primarily funded](#) through state and local funds, federal matching funds and federal incentive payments. States also collect fees from child support participants. These

fees account for 3 percent of total funding. Child support is one of the most cost-effective programs in the country with more than \$5 collected for every \$1 spent on the program.

As a federal matching grant program, state and local governments must spend money to receive federal funding. For every state or local dollar spent, the state child support program receives 66 cents from the federal government. This federal-to-state transfer is known as federal financial participation (FFP). Federal incentive payments, on the other hand, are intended to encourage strong performance by states on key measures, including paternity establishment, order establishment and cost effectiveness.

In 2012, OCSE launched the [Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration Project](#) to identify effective policy alternatives to increase the ability of underemployed and unemployed non-custodial parents to pay child support. California, Colorado, Iowa, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin received five-year awards through this demonstration project. An [interim evaluation](#) report focuses on implementation, participation uptake and project partnerships. It also addresses early implementation challenges and lessons learned. Further evaluations of the impacts on noncustodial parents and their children are forthcoming. [OCSE Commissioner Scott Lekan recently reinforced the](#) program's focus on parent employment, stating "HHS is eager to grant exemption requests that would allow states to use their incentive payments to provide employment programs for noncustodial parents" when certain requirements are met.

CO-PEP shows promise in helping Colorado families

The [Colorado Parent Employment Project](#) (CO-PEP) is an example of a state's [five-year demonstration grant program under the federal Child Support Parent Employment Demonstration project](#). CO-PEP pairs noncustodial parents involved with the child support program with job training, parenting classes and child support case management. The project has led to more consistent payment of child support and improved relationships between parent and child. [Early results](#) show increases in employment among noncustodial parents and child support payments. After six months, 74 percent of participants were employed, having entered the program un- or under-employed. During the same period, 79 percent of participants paid some child support after receiving services, compared to 57 percent prior to receiving services.

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)/SNAP EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING (SNAP E&T)

In federal fiscal year 2015, the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) provided food and nutrition services (food stamps) to some 46 million low-income people. SNAP also provides employment and training services to promote self-sufficiency and economic stability among its participants. This two-generation approach of providing food security to parents and children, while helping parents become more self-sufficient through employment and training, makes SNAP an important tool in the state legislative toolbox.

[SNAP Employment and Training \(SNAP E&T\) services](#) include job training and job-search assistance, community services, work experience, such as on-the-job training and apprenticeships, self-employment assistance, educational programs, vocational education and job-retention assistance. SNAP E&T programs may also provide services to assist parents in achieving their goals. These services include transportation, child care, safety equipment and uniforms, as well as school supplies and books.

Funding for these services is [available to states](#) through grants (also known as 100 percent funds) and 50 percent reimbursement funds. The 100 percent funds are formula grants to all 50 states. They totaled \$90 million in federal fiscal year 2016. This funding is meant for states to plan, implement and operate SNAP E&T services. The 50 percent funds are reimbursement grants to states for the cost of services above and beyond that provided by the formula grants. This funding is typically used to pay for supportive services for parents and children not covered by formula grants. For every dollar that states spend on these additional services, the federal government will reimburse 50 cents.



HEAD START/EARLY HEAD START

Head Start and Early Head Start, which funds and delivers services through 1,700 local agencies in every U.S. state and territory, is often [heralded as the original two-generation program](#). Head Start and Early Head Start [services include](#) early learning and child development; school readiness; and health care services, such as child screenings, nutritious meals, oral health and mental health support. Head Start and Early Head Start also make referrals to medical, dental and mental health services for parents and children. Because overall family well-being is a high priority, programs also support parents in achieving housing stability, continued education and financial security.

MEDICAID

Medicaid is jointly funded with federal and state dollars to provide [medical and well-being services](#) to low-income individuals. Through waiver programs, Medicaid funding also can be used for certain services related to supportive housing. As such, Medicaid could be an important component of a state-directed two-generation strategy in your state. [Learn how your state and others use Medicaid funds.](#)

Medicaid also can be used for maternal depression screening and treatment. Maternal depression can have a significant negative impact on the health and well-being of mothers and their children, including impaired child development. Screening for maternal depression is a simple way to identify mothers who are suffering and connect them with treatment for themselves and sometimes their children. States can cover these screenings for Medicaid-eligible mothers and can also cover maternal depression screenings for non-Medicaid eligible mothers during their Medicaid well-child visit. When a screening indicates the presence of depression, states can then cover treatment focusing on the effects of the mother's condition on her child when both the mother and child are present. Treatment can also focus on services for the direct benefit of the child.

For more information on Medicaid-funded treatment for maternal health and depression see the Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services' [May 2016 information bulletin](#).

Early Head Start – Child Care Partnerships

One strategy that states have used to increase and enhance services to infants and toddlers in low-income households is the [Early Head Start–Child Care Partnership](#) (EHS-CCP). This partnership “brings together the best of Early Head Start and child care through layering of funding to provide comprehensive and continuous services to low-income infants, toddlers, and their families.

These partnerships take the family centered services and early learning environments of Early Head Start programs and integrates it into child care and family child care settings, layering funding and supports for infants and toddlers.

SOCIAL SERVICES BLOCK GRANT

[Social Services Block Grants \(SSBG\)](#) are another source of flexible federal funding that allow states to implement locally appropriate social services to increase self-sufficiency and independence. The grants are intended to reduce the need for social services, and with five policy goals and 28 service categories, states can tailor services to meet the needs of their residents. Categories include child welfare and services for at-risk youth, counseling, day care for children, health and well-being, services for people with disabilities, and supports for vulnerable and elderly adults, among others. This flexibility and mix of services provided by states opens the door to using SSBG funds to create or support two-generation strategies in states. See the [SSBG 2015 Annual Report](#) for more on how states use this funding source.

State Funding Sources

States allocate general and dedicated funds for state and local workforce services and child care. In addition, state funds are typically used to match federal funds or to draw down federal dollars through maintenance-of-effort agreements. These agreements require states to sustain state funding levels at a specified level to remain in compliance with contract requirements.

Connecticut is among a small number of states that have appropriated state general fund dollars expressly for to two-generation initiatives. Connecticut's [fiscal year 2016-2017 state budget](#) includes \$25,000 of general fund in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for a statewide two-generation council. In addition, the state also appropriated \$1.5 million in TANF funds in fiscal years 2016 and 2017 for a two-generation pilot program to decrease poverty and increase employment in the communities of New Haven, Greater Hartford, Norwalk, Meriden, Colchester and Bridgeport.

Local Funding Sources

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANTS

The [Community Services Block Grant \(CSBG\)](#) provides assistance to states and local communities through a network of community action agencies and neighborhood-based organizations for poverty reduction, revitalization of low-income communities and self-sufficiency for low-income families and individuals in rural and urban areas.

In fiscal year 2014, the federal Administration for Children and Families, Office of Community Services awarded more than \$650 million in community services block grants to states, tribes and U.S. territories to achieve the following six national performance goals:

- Low-income people become more self-sufficient.
- The conditions in which low-income people live are improved.

Rural IMPACT Grants

In 2015, the White House Rural Council announced a demonstration program known as [Rural Integration Models for Parents and Children to Thrive](#) (Rural IMPACT). The goal of the program was to blend federal leadership and intensive technical assistance with community-level partnerships and resources to implement two-generation approaches in rural communities.

A team of representatives from the U.S. departments of health and human services, agriculture, labor and education designed the project, with assistance from The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Community Action Partnership and the American Academy of Pediatrics.

The demonstration was rolled out to sites in 10 states—Arkansas, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Ohio, Oklahoma and Utah. Each site was led by one local organization that teamed-up with other key partners in the community. Sites determined their own models for implementing two-generation approaches, including co-locating services, centralizing intake systems, establishing and expanding service partnerships and relationships, adopting family-centered assessments and implementing two-generation pilot programs.

Rural IMPACT is a public-private initiative. Funding was provided through state general funds; state-administered federal funds; direct federal funding, e.g., SNAP E&T; The Annie E. Casey Foundation, John T. Gorman Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation and the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation.

Check out this video describing the [Rural IMPACT program](#).

- Low-income people own a stake in their community.
- Partnerships among supports and providers of services to low-income people are achieved.
- Agencies increase their capacity to achieve results.
- Low-income people, especially vulnerable populations, achieve their potential by strengthening family and other supportive systems.

The goals outlined by the [CSBG program](#) align with two-generation strategies happening in states across the country. In addition, the Administration for Children and Families released an [information memorandum](#) in 2016 encouraging the use of CSBG funds to support and implement two-generation approaches.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANTS (CDBG)

The [Community Development Block Grant \(CDBG\) program](#) is one of the longest running programs within the Department of Housing and Urban Development. In addition to providing funds directly to cities and counties for the development of housing and economic opportunities, the CDBG program also allows states to award grants to local governments. Through the [CDBG State Program](#), states can award grants to smaller units of local government that develop and preserve affordable housing, provide services to the most vulnerable and create and retain jobs, all of which support whole families.

Philanthropic Contributions

As described throughout this toolkit, philanthropic organizations can play a significant role in two-generation initiatives. Not only are they vital sources of funding, they often have policy specializations and the social capital to convene stakeholders.

Funding Strategies

Understanding how funding sources can be used to simultaneously support parents and children will help legislators lead or support two-generation strategies:

- **Braiding** [coordinates](#) multiple sources of funding, such as TANF and SNAP, to support whole families in ways that can't be accomplish by a single funding source. For example, as described above, TANF and SNAP can be braided together to support families in different ways. Braiding funding often leads to coordinating eligibility requirements or colocation of services.
- **Blending** [combines multiple](#) sources of funding for one purpose. For example, Head Start, CCDBG, and local preschool funding can be blended to support early care and education. Accounting for each dollar is often seen as a barrier to blended funding streams.
- **Pooling** [combines multiple](#) sources of highly flexible funds with few accountability requirements to support common outcomes. Rather than blending funds for common programs, pooling brings sources of funding together for common outcomes and can help fill the gaps in available funding for strategies that support the whole family.
- **Public-Private Partnerships** are just that, partnerships between government agencies and businesses, philanthropies or other nonprofit organizations with shared goals. For example, Michigan, created the [Early Childhood Investment Corporation \(ECIC\)](#) in 2005. ECIC is Michigan's hub for information and investment in early childhood. The group was charged with implementing the Great Start system in Michigan, which provides services in five key areas: pediatric and family health, social and emotional health, child care and early learning, parenting leadership and family support. ECIC's leadership includes representatives from business, philanthropy, communities and state government.

Some state two-generation strategies have included partnerships with private businesses to coordinate workforce training and services. For instance, Tennessee created a [public-private partnership with Nissan](#) manufacturing plants to provide education and training aimed at preparing workers for advanced manufacturing jobs. As previously mentioned, helping parents obtain job skills and higher education credentials has an important impact on children's educational outcomes.

One example of a two-generation program that leverages philanthropic assets is the [Jeremiah Program](#), which provides early childhood education, housing and life skills training to single mothers and their children. The program, with urban locations in Minnesota, Texas, Massachusetts and North Dakota, receives approximately 67 percent of its funding from corporate gifts and philanthropy, according to its [2016 annual report](#).

Conclusion

Legislators generally are familiar with the plight of poverty in their states, and many have been involved with efforts to disrupt the cycle of poverty. It's likely that most of these efforts have focused on a single population—either parents or children, but rarely both at the same time.

For many state leaders, two-generation approaches to improving the health, well-being and self-sufficiency of families are gaining momentum. By investing in cross-program and even cross-sector partnerships, states are starting to use existing programs and resources in new ways to achieve better outcomes for parents, children and communities. At the same time, they are motivated by finding efficiencies and realizing a return on their financial investment. Legislators have a critical role to play in bringing stakeholders together, holding state agencies accountable, and championing issues that benefit their constituencies and communities.

A strong and resilient economy requires a prepared workforce, stable communities and thriving families. Historically, state agencies responsible for labor and workforce preparedness, education, health and human services have worked independently to address the deeply intertwined issues of poverty, unemployment, poor health, low levels of adult literacy, lack of school readiness and economic instability. In recent years, state legislators have been calling for increased collaboration and data sharing across these silos, and now more and more legislators are championing efforts to plan and execute this complex work through a two-generation approach.

Additional Resources

- Kimberley Meinert and Hannah Matthews. [Parents and Children Thriving Together: The Role of State Agencies in Crafting a Statewide Two-Generation Strategy](#). Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association and Center for Law and Social Policy, 2018
- Jennifer Brooks, Sharon McGroder and Alexandra Cawthorne. [Tackling Intergenerational Poverty: How Governors Can Advance Coordinated Services for Low-Income Parents and Children](#). Washington, D.C.: National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2015.
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, [Advancing Two-Generation Approaches: Funding to Help Families Succeed](#), March 2017
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, [Advancing Two-Generation Approaches: Developing an Infrastructure to Address Parent and Child Needs Together](#), July 2017
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, [Advancing Two-Generation Approaches: Integrating Data to Support Families](#), May 2018.
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute, [State Human Services Model: Colorado as a Case Study for Policymakers](#), October 2016
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute, Making Tomorrow Better Together, [A Guide to Outcomes for 2Gen Policymakers](#)
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute, Making Tomorrow Better Together, [Report of the Two-Generation Outcomes Working Group](#), March 2016
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute, [Colorado Guide to 2Gen](#), June 2017
- Ascend at the Aspen Institute, [Two-Gen Playbook](#), September 2016
- Urban Institute, [A Theoretical Framework for Two-Generation Models](#), Lessons from the HOST Demonstration, January 2016
- The Bell Policy Center, [Bound to Succeed: Two-Generation Approaches to Education in Colorado](#), October 2016
- Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation (OPRE), [Features of Programs to Help Families Achieve Economic Security and Promote Child Well-Being](#), December 2017:
- National Head Start Association, [Two Generations Together: Case Studies from Head Start](#), January 2015
- [Scaling Up, Scaling Out](#): White Paper on Lessons from Goodwill of Central and Southern Indiana and Nurse-Family Partnership, January 2017
- Washington State Institute for Public Policy, [Training with work experience for adults, not targeting welfare recipients](#), December 2017
- Washington State Institute for Public Policy, [Training with work experience for adult welfare recipients](#), December 2017

State Examples

- Colorado Governor's Office, [Two-Generation Approach](#)
- Recording, [Valuing children, valuing work: a conversation with Colorado's Governor John Hickenlooper](#), April 2018
- Colorado Department of Human Services, [The Two-Generation \(2Gen\) Approach](#)
- Connecticut Commission on Women, Children and Seniors, [Two-Generational Approach](#)
- Mississippi Department of Human Services, [Gen+](#)
- Nebraska Intergenerational Poverty Task Force, [Final Report](#)
- Tennessee Department of Human Services, [2G for Tennessee](#)

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