taking a two-generation approach
November 12, 2014
Problem: Nearly half of kids in Utah under age 8 – 191,000 – are growing up in low-income families.

We need to ensure these kids have a shot at the American dream.

Today, too many programs address the needs of parents and children separately and in isolation.

What we need is a new approach that recognizes kids succeed when families succeed – a two-generation approach.
Families Are Struggling to Make Ends Meet

- 103,000 low-income families with children age 8 and under
- Challenges at home and work:
  - Only 37% with full-time employment, limited skills for better wages and inflexible work schedules
  - Stress at home
  - Concerns about child care and early childhood development
Utah Families with Children Age 8 and Under, 2012

Percentage Headed by a Single Parent

- Low Income: 26.2
- Med/High Income: 11.5

Percentage With High Housing Burden

- Low Income: 75.5
- Med/High Income: 16.0
Low Income Families Face Greater Barriers to Success

Utah Families with Children Age 8 and Under, 2012

Percentage With Parents Who Have Difficulty Speaking English
  • Low Income 15.3
  • Med/High Income 1.2

Percentage In Which No Parent Has Associate Degree or Higher
  • Low Income 62.1
  • Med/High Income 34.3

Percentage In Which No Parent Has Full-Time, Year-Round Employment
  • Low Income 37.0
  • Med/High Income 11.4
Poverty can take a **serious toll** on child and parent health and well-being.

A **child’s first eight years** lay a critical foundation for academic and life success. The timing of poverty is very important, especially during preschool and early school years.

A combination of **job training, financial coaching and access to income-support programs** can help low-income families get on a path to stability — allowing them to better support their kids.
Our Approach: Strengthening the Whole Family

Financial Stability
- Education and job training
- Access to income and work support benefits
- Financial coaching
- Access to affordable financial products

Parent Involvement
- Treating parents as assets and experts on their kids
- Having culturally competent staff
- Addressing family stress
- Enhancing social networks

Quality Early Care and Elementary Education
- Access to high-quality early education programs
- Successful transition to elementary school
- Quality elementary school experiences
- Effective teaching
Two-Generation Approach: Seeking Better Outcomes for Families

**PARENT OUTCOMES**
- Less parental stress
- Stronger parenting skills
- Parent confidence as child’s first teacher and best advocate
- Recognition of parents as leaders and experts on caring for their kids

**CHILD OUTCOMES**
- More positive, high-quality interactions with parents
- Improved social-emotional development
- Readiness for school
- Ability to meet school and life milestones

**FAMILY ECONOMIC OUTCOMES**
- Ability to meet basic needs
- Greater income and financial stability
- Ability to achieve major economic outcomes
- Housing stability
The Challenge Today

Many federal and state programs operate in isolation

• Adult programs treat children as barriers to employment
• Child programs often do not help parents who are struggling with day-to-day stress of providing for their family
Create policies that equip parents and children with the income, tools and skills for success.

Make government policies and programs more family friendly.

Build evidence on promising programs and platforms that serve parents and children together.
Help Families Gain the Income and Tools They Need

- Enable families to keep more of the income they earn to raise their family
- Increase and make refundable the child tax credit and expand the earned income tax credit for workers without dependents
- Strengthen policies that equip parents with limited education and job skills to earn a family-supporting income.
  - Adult serving programs should build bridges to family and child supports
  - Policies should pay particular attention to the role of fathers
Help Families Gain the Income and Tools They Need

• Give parents more flexibility and paid time off (family and sick leave) and options for parents for flexible work arrangements
• Connect families to health care and newly expanded mental health programs
• Recognize parents’ strengths, promote peer support systems, and offer leadership development opportunities.
Make Government More Family Friendly

• Use interagency commissions and innovation funds to promote cross-sector collaboration
• Connect child and adult data systems
• Adopt practices that offer a “no wrong door” and take the whole family into account.
• Use new federal legislation and reauthorization periods to begin to bridge policies and programs
Build Evidence on Promising Programs and Platforms

Create partnerships to serve parents and children together:

Schools and early education, home visiting and job training are some of the platforms that can serve parents and children together.

**HOME VISITING**: Home-visiting programs can help families move toward financial stability by building relationships with organizations focused on employment and financial coaching.

**SCHOOLS AND EARLY EDUCATION**: An elementary school or early-education program can collaborate with parents to expand their involvement in their child’s development and create programs for their own educational advancement.

**JOB TRAINING**: Job-training programs and community colleges can help parents access employment, high-quality child care for school and work and financial coaching to plan now and for the future.
Core Principles and A Call To Action

• Parent voice is critical. Need to partner with families in creating solutions and decision-making.

• Poverty disproportionately affects children of color so need to prioritize equity for all families

• Call to action for all public and private sectors -- government can’t do this alone.
Panel Presentation

• Lori Bays – Director Human Services Salt Lake County
• Tracy Gruber - Senior Advisor, Intergenerational Poverty Initiative Department of Workforce Services
• Erin Trenbeath Murray – CEO Salt Lake CAP and Head Start
• Mayor Cherie Wood – South Salt Lake
The Power & Potential of 2-Gen

Sarah Haight
Ascend at the Aspen Institute

November 12, 2014
taking a two-generation approach

November 12, 2014