Building Communities That Help Young Children and Families Thrive

A National Survey by Early Childhood-LINC:
A Learning and Innovation Network for Communities

Rachel Schumacher

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ABOUT EARLY CHILDHOOD-LINC

Early Childhood-LINC (Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities) is a new project of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) – in collaboration with the Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County, other local leaders and a group of early childhood national experts. Early Childhood-LINC is dedicated to supporting families to improve results for young children by accelerating the development of community-based integrated early childhood systems. Early Childhood-LINC includes three main bodies of work:

- Creating a community of communities that fuels learning and innovation to tackle the toughest shared challenges and demonstrate results.
- Building and disseminating knowledge about the range of community-based efforts, the types of strategies being used, and lessons learned.
- Developing opportunities for local leaders and state and federal policymakers to work jointly to accelerate strategies that improve results for children and families.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Rachel Schumacher is an independent early childhood policy consultant. She is a nationally recognized expert on early care and education programs with more than 20 years of experience in policy analysis, research and technical assistance to federal, state and local policymakers and advocates. Her areas of expertise include infant and toddler child care policies, coordination and partnerships to build state early childhood systems and federal programs including the Child Care and Development Fund and Head Start.

INTRODUCTION

On many measures important to child well-being, health and safety, child poverty and family economic security, access to early education and school achievement, U.S. children are falling well behind their peers in other developed countries (UNICEF, 2013). In addition, across the nation there are significant disparities by race, place and family income, and an increasing number of children now live in neighborhoods of concentrated poverty (Annie E. Casey KIDS COUNT®, 2013).

While these changes in the lives of America's children are taking place, a growing body of scientific evidence points to the critical importance of the earliest years of life for building the foundations of future physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. Neuroscience and epigenetic research have shown that healthy development in all of these spheres is an interactive process and is shaped by family and caregiver relationships as well as by the physical, social and economic environments in which children grow up (National Scientific Council on the Developing Child, 2010).

Bolstered with this knowledge, communities across the country are focusing attention on their youngest children and the environments in which they live, learn and play. They recognize that investment in their youngest, including those least fortunate, will benefit everyone. These innovators are working to build communities where children and families thrive.

But how can this be done wisely and well? Too little is known about how local communities can bring together the full range of policies, programs, strategies and opportunities that are needed to help families raise young children who are healthy, safe and ready to succeed in school and throughout life.

How can communities marshal and leverage their resources for the greatest impact – for all children, and particularly for vulnerable populations living in poverty? And how as a nation do we help communities engage parents, businesses, government and *all* residents in building better futures for young children and their families?

To begin to answer these questions, in June-July 2013, the Early Childhood Learning and Innovation Network for Communities (Early Childhood-LINC) conducted a national search to identify local, comprehensive, integrated, multi-sector initiatives focused on improving outcomes for young children and their families. The purpose of the search was twofold: (1) to identify and "map" the current landscape of exemplary and promising community-focused, early childhood initiatives; and (2) to begin to build learning and networking opportunities across interested initiatives and other key partners.

To reach potential respondents across the country, a notice about the survey was disseminated through state and national organizations, associations and networks focused on early childhood, maternal and child health, family strengthening (including the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families Network) and community capacity building, among others. Particular interest was in identifying local community/neighborhood initiatives that shared a set of values and strategies identified by the Early Childhood-LINC founding communities and national experts as critical to the development of effective early childhood systems, and to the development of shared learning across initiatives (See Box: Shared Values and Strategies). These criteria were also included in the search notice.

A total of 119 programs and broader community initiatives completed the survey, providing rich information to begin to understand the nature of those engaged in building better communities for children and families. While the number of completed responses shows interest and commitment in communities across the country, it is important to recognize that this brief does not describe the full gamut of efforts that exist nationwide. These data do, however, provide a glimpse into the diversity of those who answered the call for information about community-based integrated early childhood systems, services and opportunities.

Shared Values and Strategies Critical to Effective Early Childhood Systems

Community-based integrated early childhood systems connect many types of services, supports and opportunities for young children and their families from the prenatal period through third grade. But this work is more than just "connecting the dots." To be effective, Early Childhood LINC believes that community early childhood systems need to be grounded in a core set of values and strategies that guide their work. From our collective experience, the most effective early childhood systems are:

- Grounded in supporting the importance and role of families in raising healthy and resilient children.
- Using intentional developmental activities that work to increase parental skills and capacities and build the full range of protective factors shown to improve outcomes for children.
- Working to align and integrate multiple sectors and systems critical to early childhood development, i.e. parenting, health, mental health, early learning and development, and family leadership and support.
- Identifying shared results across multiple sectors to drive change and improve outcomes for young children and their families.
- Analyzing data to inform continuous system, program, and practice improvements and innovations.
- Strengthening social networks, a sense of community, and opportunities for leadership and collective action among residents.

SURVEY FINDINGS

What Do Community-Based Early Childhood Initiatives Look Like?

Responding initiatives began from diverse starting points -- most commonly generated by the community itself or as part of a statewide public initiative. Almost a third (31 percent) of responding communities say they started as a grass-roots effort by a local, community-based private organization. The second most common starting point – reported by 21 percent of respondents – is a statewide public initiative, often local councils and coalitions of a state-to-local early childhood initiative. Others who responded are local affiliates of nationwide efforts, such as the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, or individual grantees of national foundations that support local work. Some are federal-to-local grantees of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (Project LAUNCH and Systems of Care grants), the Department of Education (Promise Neighborhoods) or the Department of Housing and Urban Development (Choice Neighborhoods).

Some initiatives have been operating for over a decade, while others are just getting started. One might assume that older initiatives would be more comprehensive or integrated, but it appears there is variety in the scope of initiatives no matter the length of time they have operated. Some seasoned pioneers say they are continually evolving as well. Respondents fit into three categories of operational experience:
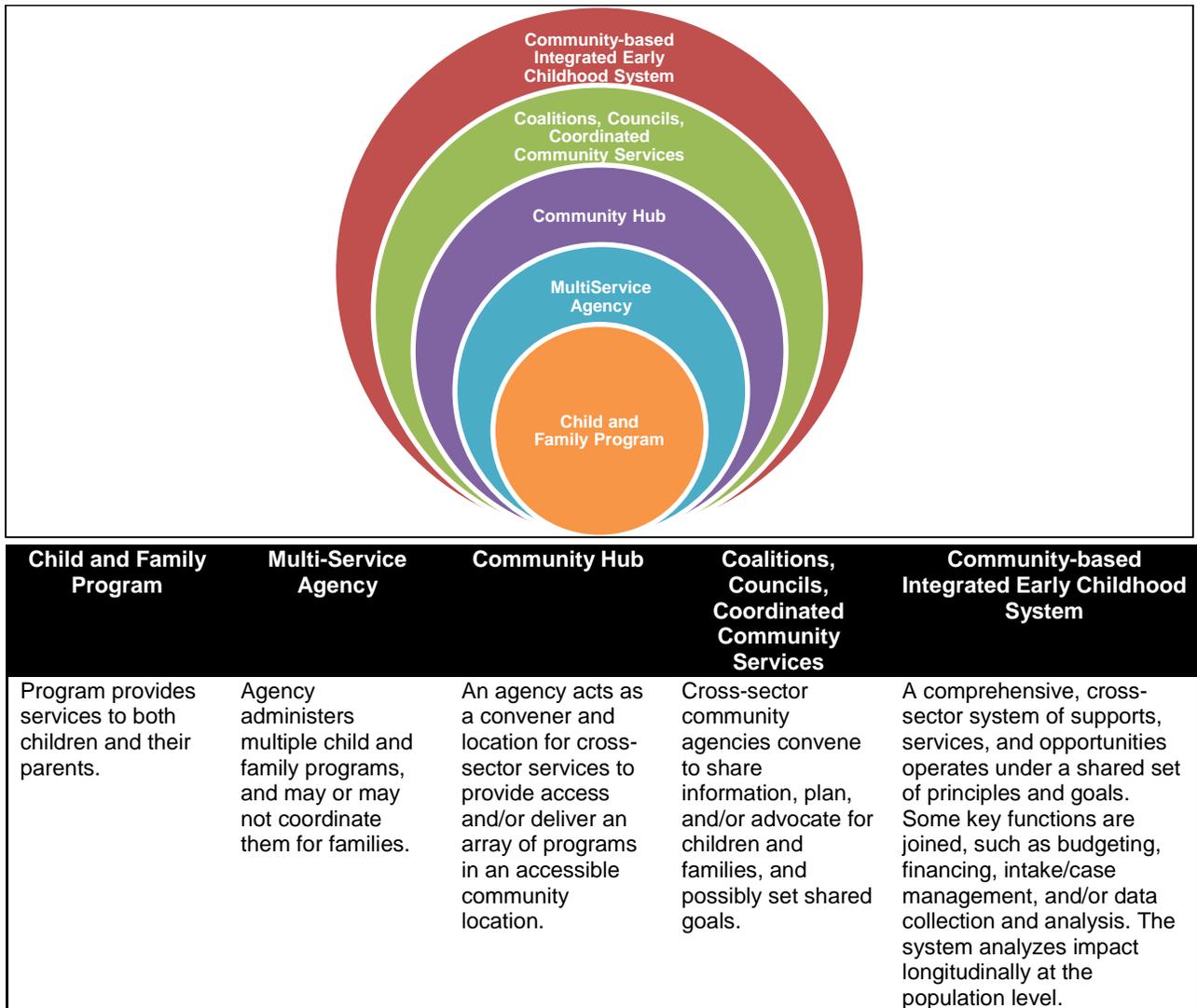
- Longer than 10 years: 35 respondents
- Between three and 10 years: 49 respondents
- Less than three years: 35 respondents

Respondents hail from 30 states. A handful of states have 10 or more respondents - California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan and Wisconsin. However, several states with well-established state-to-local early childhood governance or planning structures are not represented here.

Diverse leaders are engaged in community initiatives. There is an impressive range of local organizations and institutions committed to this work. Lead agencies and organizations include: county commissions, mayors' offices, school districts, human service programs/multi-service agencies, home visiting programs, child care resource and referral agencies, United Way agencies, hospitals and community health organizations.

Initiatives reflect a continuum of components of integrated early childhood systems. Respondents report great variation in the level of comprehensiveness, structure and desired results they are currently undertaking. For example, a single program working to implement a two-generation strategy is not the same as a formal integrated community-wide system of child-, adult- and family-focused services. The graphic in figure one is an initial effort to better define and describe the community system-building continuum among survey respondents.

Figure One. Types of Community-Based Early Childhood Initiatives

Child and Family Program	Multi-Service Agency	Community Hub	Coalitions, Councils, Coordinated Community Services	Community-based Integrated Early Childhood System
Program provides services to both children and their parents.	Agency administers multiple child and family programs, and may or may not coordinate them for families.	An agency acts as a convener and location for cross-sector services to provide access and/or deliver an array of programs in an accessible community location.	Cross-sector community agencies convene to share information, plan, and/or advocate for children and families, and possibly set shared goals.	A comprehensive, cross-sector system of supports, services, and opportunities operates under a shared set of principles and goals. Some key functions are joined, such as budgeting, financing, intake/case management, and/or data collection and analysis. The system analyzes impact longitudinally at the population level.

The above graphic should be viewed with the understanding that system-building a) can start at any point in this continuum and b) does not necessarily go through these stages in any particular order. For example, a community hub may move directly to develop an integrated system, and a single program does not have to become a multiservice agency to join a coalition or system.

Strong and supported families and school readiness are the most frequently cited goals among responding community initiatives. The Early Childhood-LINC survey asked whether community initiatives have goals that are shared across sectors in a set of broad categories (*see table one*). Four goals rose to the top according to respondents. "Families are strong and supported" and "children are ready to succeed in school" were most often selected (at 93 and 92 percent, respectively). The next most frequently selected goals were "children have health and development on track" (85 percent) and "children are safe and nurtured/safe from abuse and neglect" (83 percent). Eighty-three of the survey respondents (70 percent) report all four of these as shared goals.

Table One. Does the initiative have shared goals across sectors that fit into the following broad categories? *(Select all that apply.)*	*N=119*	*Percent*
Families are strong and supported.	**111**	**93%**
Children ready to be successful in school.	110	92%
Children have health and development on track.	102	85%
Children are safe and nurtured/Prevent and reduce child abuse and neglect.	99	83%
Children born healthy and wanted.	80	67%
Children succeeding in early grades through 3rd Grade.	77	64%
Communities are healthy and safe.	77	64%
Families, youth, and individuals are engaged in their community's decisions and activities.	71	59%
Children have health insurance.	57	48%

Where Do Community-Based Early Childhood Initiatives Target Their Work?

Geographically, initiatives target different "places." Just more than half of respondents report that counties are the focal point for their efforts; 41 percent focus on neighborhoods; 28 percent on cities and 13 percent report working at the state and regional (multi-county or town) levels.

A frequent pattern emerging is that of a county or city level initiative also focusing in-depth in neighborhoods or smaller areas of population. Most cities (21 out of 38) and many counties (20 out of 63) report targeting activities to specific neighborhoods as well. For example:

- In Boston, Thrive in 5 is a public/private partnership between the mayor's office and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley. "Thrive in 5 operates at a neighborhood level...focusing its efforts in low-income communities where the Boston Public School's kindergarten entry data indicates that children are falling into the achievement gap."

State-to-local early childhood structures – councils, coalitions, and formal planning collaboratives – have helped launch county-based initiatives. A total of 16 respondents from eight states report they are connected to state early childhood structures. Some have evolved over many years, such as California's First 5 and Michigan's Great Start systems. Other survey respondents represent more recently developed strategies to support localities, such as the Thrive by Five Washington, a public-private partnership in Washington State that provides funding to 10 regional early learning coalitions; state to local grants in Massachusetts that promote family and community engagement in early learning and a newly established effort in Minnesota. For example:

- Seven established First 5 Commissions from California counties responded to the survey. California voters created First 5 using tobacco taxes in 1998 to enhance optimal early childhood development and to ensure that children are ready to enter school at age five. California counties receive 80 percent of the funding raised based on the number of live births per county.
- Seven Michigan Great Start Collaboratives responded to the survey. Michigan's Great Start system, started in 2004 by Governor Granholm, is now a statewide network of local collaboratives providing infrastructure for planning and system-building, as well as community-based parent coalitions.

What Age Group is the Primary Focus?

Not surprisingly, children up to age five are the main focus of the responding initiatives. The vast majority of the responding communities (105) indicate a focus on the prenatal period through age five. A little more than half (66) say they also extend services to children through age eight. Specifically, 91 percent focus on the prenatal period through age two, 95 percent focus on children ages three through five and 61 percent of respondents report that they target services to children ages six through eight. In addition, 81 percent indicate a focus on parents and caregivers.

What Services and Systems Are Actively Engaged in Community-Based Early Childhood Initiatives?

Most surveyed initiatives involve parenting education, child care and early education, family support, health and mental health/infant mental health. The preponderance of those who responded to the survey reported they have active involvement of one or more of the above listed sectors (*see table two*). Further analysis shows that two-thirds said all five were actively part of their efforts.

Table Two. Which service sectors are actively engaged in the initiative? (Select all that apply.)	N=119	Percent
Parenting Education	111	93%
Child Care and Early Education	107	89%
Family Support	106	88%
Health	102	85%
Mental Health /Infant Mental Health	98	82%
K-12 Education	82	68%
Child Welfare	78	65%
Family Literacy	65	54%
Higher Education	45	38%
Workforce Development	43	36%
Substance Abuse Treatment	33	28%
Food Security	31	26%
Economic/Community Planning and Development Housing	24	20%
Law Enforcement	19	16%
Legal services	9	8%

School systems are actively represented in two-thirds of the initiatives responding to the survey.
This is encouraging given that in the past, many jurisdictions lacked links between early childhood initiatives and schools. Some local initiatives are particularly well-grounded in schools or school districts. For example:

- First 5 in Ventura County, California "allocates funding based on need to 11 Neighborhoods for Learning (NfLs), which are geographically defined, place-based collaborative service networks that are affiliated with local school districts and/or child service organizations across Ventura County. The NfLs support 26 family resource centers that offer community-based child development and family strengthening services to promote early learning, physical and emotional development and supportive, nurturing parenting for families with young children 0 to five years of age. These place-based strategies offer an innovative way to reach families in need, to reduce the stigma of seeking help and to promote effective resource sharing, networking, and collaboration in service delivery."[1]

Some community-based early childhood initiatives actively engage services and systems that can help achieve parents' own life goals for education and employment. Respondents say that family literacy (54 percent), higher education (38 percent), workforce development (36 percent) and substance abuse treatment (28 percent) services and sectors are actively engaged in the early childhood initiative in their community. These two-generation approaches are worth further study given that research has demonstrated the linkages between parental well-being (particularly of mothers) and child well-being. Some initiatives are very explicit in tying adult and child strategies together, for example:

- The White Center Promise in Seattle, Washington is a long-term cradle-to-career initiative aimed at "eradicating poverty in White Center through a continuum of educational results that bring about social change." Increasing post-secondary education and living wages among resident families is the central goal of the program. "We will align the voices, work and resources of community members, community organizations and area institutions across sectors to ensure that we eliminate barriers to equity and provide a foundation for family and student success."

How are Initiatives Supporting and Engaging Parents?

Most responding initiatives use multiple strategies to support and engage parents. Respondents were asked about their use of the five protective factors identified in the Center for the Study of Social Policy's Strengthening Families approach (parental resilience, social connections, concrete support in times of need, knowledge of parenting and child development, and social and emotional competence of children) as well as other components related to family engagement (opportunities for leadership and collective action). The vast majority of respondents incorporate one or more of the protective factors in their work (*see table three*). For example:

- The Coos County Coalition for Young Children and Families in New Hampshire has a mission to promote optimal development for children birth-five and their families in Coos and surrounding communities. One strategy being utilized is making Triple P – positive parenting program – widely available by training and certifying 23 practitioners from six local organizations in this evidence-based model designed to increase parental confidence in handling child behaviors and strengthen families.

Some respondents are promoting parent leadership and collective action as a parent support strategy. While fewer respondents have activities to promote leadership or collective action, some have built in methods of involving parents not only in their children's learning, but also in shaping the initiative. For example:

- In Wayne County, Michigan, the Great Start Parent Coalition is "a group of Wayne County parents and guardians of children pre-birth to 12 years of age. They are dedicated to improving the responsiveness and performance of programs and services that are to support the needs of all children pre-birth through age eight and their families." According to the coalition parent recruitment brochure, one purpose of the coalition is to "to serve as a referent and constituency group for parents on the Great Start Collaborative, giving them a means to better understand the desires and needs of parents in the community."

Table Three. Does the initiative include one or more of the following key components to strengthen parents and families? *(Select all that apply.)*	N=119	Percent
Increasing knowledge of parenting and child development.	**115**	**96%**
Enhancing child social and emotional competence.	107	89%
Developing social connections among parents and families.	98	82%
Ensuring families have ways to secure concrete supports in times of need.	98	82%
Increasing parental resilience.	91	76%
Improving a sense of community.	85	71%
Opportunities for leadership.	68	57%
Organized collective action.	57	48%
No	1	1%

How Are Community-Based Early Childhood Initiatives Funded?

Responding local initiatives most often utilize several different sources of funding to address the whole child, family and community. Respondents checked off multiple sources that they are tapping to be able to address the range of needs in their communities.

State public funding is the most common source of support for survey respondents. More than half (53 percent) of the initiatives say they receive funding from this source (*see table four*). This finding is likely related to the high number of responses from states with state-to-local structures, e.g. California First 5, Florida Early Learning Coalitions, Massachusetts Community and Family Engagement grants, Michigan Great Start and Thrive by Five Washington.

Federal grants help to support community-based initiatives. Thirty-nine percent of respondents report use of federal funds. Federal sources of funding reported by respondents include but are not limited to: the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) funds authorized by the Affordable Care Act; SAMHSA's Systems of Care and Project LAUNCH grants; Maternal and Child Health State Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems grants and Maternal and Child Block Grant; Title V of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act; the Community Development Block Grant; Medicaid dollars used to support home visiting services; Department of Education Even Start funds and Race to the Top Early Learning Challenge state funds flowing to localities. Federal Head Start/Early Head Start grantees are often part of local initiatives as well.

Community-based funders are investing in strengthening systems and improving results for children and families. Leadership and funding support comes from communities themselves, not only from state and federal sources. Survey respondents say they receive funds from private local foundations (38 percent) and public local sources (33 percent). Nine survey respondents reported strong United Way involvement.

Table Four. How is the initiative currently funded? *(Select all that apply.)*	N=119	*Percent*
State public funding	63	53%
Federal public funding	47	39%
Private local foundation	45	38%
Local public funding	40	33%
Grass-roots fund-raising	29	24%
Private regional foundation	24	20%
Corporate donations	24	20%
Private national foundation	9	8%

Community-based initiatives rely heavily on public funding. More than two-thirds of respondents rely completely (39 percent) or significantly (31 percent) on public funding (see Table Five).

Table Five. What proportion of initiative funding is public vs. private?	N=119	*Percent*
All public funding	46	39%
More public than private	36	31%
All private funding	14	12%
More private than public	13	11%
About half public/half private	8	7%

CURRENT CHALLENGES FOR COMMUNITY-BASED EARLY CHILDHOOD INITIATIVES

The Early Childhood-LINC survey asked initiatives to share their biggest current challenges. Responses fell into the following major categories:

Authentically engaging and building partnerships with families.

Finding ways to connect with families who are underserved are ongoing challenges. Local initiatives struggle with how to engage those that have the highest needs for supports. Respondents are working to overcome geographic, social and linguistic and cultural isolation. In addition, several find it difficult to connect with families whose children are not yet in preschool.

Local work must be built on positive relationships with families. One respondent wrote that the biggest challenge was "learning what the parents want as well as what they need…Getting the parents to trust us and build[ing] relationships with them."

Community-based social networks are important to sustain family interest, engagement and results over time. Respondents are looking for innovative ways to promote social networks among families. One wrote: "It is the activities that draw families into [the initiative] but as families gain knowledge and skills, and their confidence builds, they become less isolated and more connected to each other. As this caregiver network develops, indices of social cohesion are emerging and represent the foundation upon which a supportive community can be built where children will thrive."

Coordinating disparate supports, services and opportunities across a community.

Getting cross-sector initiatives started is time intensive. Respondents in the early phases of system-development report they have difficulties convening and planning across agencies sometimes due to turf and competition issues, but more often just the "bandwidth" needed to coordinate the effort. As one respondent wrote: "Our main challenge is focusing and coordinating the work of a very broad range of nonprofit, governmental and private sector stakeholders and establishing the structures and processes in which to do so." Others are struggling with issues particular to their community, such as gaining buy-in from the school district or the challenge of developing strong collaborations across long distances in a rural area.

State-to-community structured early childhood initiatives face challenges in developing policies and communication strategies that work across diverse communities. One county-level respondent wrote that the greatest challenge was "having consistent processes from the state to implement at the county level." A state-level respondent responsible for cross-sector initiative wrote: "We have some challenges at the state level in establishing common priorities, standards and expectations for our community grantees (whose programs are funded by multiple state agencies and thus must collect different data, send different reports, etc. for essentially the same program). We are working to bring these state partners together to streamline procedures for our grantees, but this will take time."

Local initiatives are dealing with differing and changing regulations across multi-sector partners. There are often unintended consequences and ripple effects for communities when one partner in an integrated program or system faces changing requirements from a federal or state funder. "When other agencies implement new protocol, we must "play catch-up" to shift training, practices and policies."

Securing stable and adequate funding.

Local leaders are feeling squeezed by years of austerity and cuts in public funding. One veteran respondent wrote: "Our biggest challenge is funding the entire system in an environment of severe cuts in spending for programs that serve families and children. In the past four years our system has lost nearly half the staff due to ongoing budget cutting from federal, state and local government as well as private sources. We are currently experiencing additional cuts that could dismantle this system."

Community-based initiatives may have difficulty explaining the nature and labor-intensiveness of their work to funders. One respondent wrote: "The current greatest challenge is the constant need to secure funding. Funders are often unaware of the importance of grassroots organizations. They underestimate the time and resources that are needed to create a responsive fully functional organization that is reflective of community needs and vision. They

also tend to underestimate the developmental process inherent in creating authentic collaboration and the importance of having time to create effective programs."

Finding funding for particular promising strategies is a challenge for early childhood initiatives. For example, one respondent shared that "there is little funding outside of child welfare for parent education programs. There is also a challenge for pediatric primary care to integrate mental health/social emotional developmental screening and intervention into practice from a sustainable funding perspective."

The lack of adequate funding translates into staffing issues, including inability to hire a full-time coordinator for the initiative and pressures on staff. Collaborative efforts getting started often mention the challenge of doing so without dedicated staff to manage the process. Those who have implemented their initiatives say they are concerned that they will not be able to deliver the quality of services originally envisioned. "Caseloads are high. Quality work has always been the focus and remains so, often times this is reflected in high stress of very capable and quality staff."

Measuring the impact of early childhood initiatives at child, family, program and community level.

There is a lack of reliable tools to measure critical features of child development. Although community-based initiatives may be familiar with research on what is important for child development and future success, they need more assistance to reliably measure progress. One respondent wrote: "We continue to work on appropriate assessment tools in the areas of social-emotional wellness and infant mental health; and the capacity of our providers to address the issues associated with trauma and toxic stress and support the development of executive functioning and self-regulation."

Initiatives have difficulty quantifying impact, especially at the population level. Local initiatives need to show results for their communities, but face challenges in capturing population and/or system level outcomes. "There are no reliable ways to measure the value of our services; we can measure input/participation, but outcomes are much harder to demonstrate." Despite this, 62 percent say they collect population-level data. The survey did not collect detailed information on how respondents are trying to track impact, but some shared information on their strategies ranging from using Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT® data, surveying parents, or creating community-wide data warehouse to combine school and social service agency data. Another reported being part of the Transforming Early Childhood Community Systems (TECCS) network, which is a national initiative of the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families and Communities and United Way Worldwide that helps communities to use kindergarten readiness assessments to measure and map developmental progress of young children at a population level.

Data systems are not adequate to facilitate cross-sector sharing. Poor data system technology and communication across systems hampers local system building and results measurement. "The greatest challenge is creating a data collection system that crosses organizations and that can be implemented at the county level. State child data collection systems do not 'talk' to each other and we don't have a county health department structure so there is no system now to collect data across organizations at the county level. We are trying to create this system but privacy issues, cost and barriers from the statewide systems are a challenge." In some cases initiatives have data requirements built in. For example, a First 5 county in California notes that "Proposition 10 required a strong accountability system and we have developed three different data systems to support our work and that of our partners."

KEY IDEAS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER EXPLORATION AND ACTION

Right now across the nation, too many children lack the opportunity to develop to their full potential. Early Childhood-LINC was created on the belief that communities have a critical role to play in reversing this trend and improving results for children and families. Effective systems for young children and their families have to be embraced and driven at the local level, but more needs to be known about strategies that have been successful at getting results and the challenges that persist. This brief starts to map a diverse and dynamic continuum of existing efforts, but there is much more to explore. As communities continue to mobilize resources to reach young children and their families, lessons learned from these local initiatives can and should be shared across communities, as well as at the state and national levels.

Survey findings point to several areas where diverse initiatives have common issues and could benefit from an opportunity to problem-solve and innovate jointly. Key topics include:

- **Authentic parent engagement**: How have communities effectively engaged community members and transformed the culture of the community to authentically value parents in the design and implementation of these initiatives, including both formal services and informal supports and opportunities?
- **System development**: How have communities succeeded in developing truly integrated early childhood systems across the key sectors of health/mental health, family leadership and support and early learning and development? How can the stages and components of such systems be better defined? The graphic depicted in figure one of this brief is offered as a first step in this exploration.
- **Two-generation strategies**: How have communities been able to integrate two-generation approaches across their systems? What does it take to change the culture of organizations and communities to support the development of children and adults together?
- **Demonstrating results**: What tools, data systems and communication strategies can be implemented at the local level to track a common set of indicators of progress?
- **Sustainable financing**: What are the best examples of innovative financing that have enabled community initiatives to sustain and grow their efforts? How are communities covering the costs of cross-systems collaboration and coordination?

- **Policy and system context**: Where have – or could - modifications in city or county, state and national policies and systems fostered the development of integrated local early childhood systems?

Given the level of investment and activity to strengthen families and communities to support the optimal development of young children, there is no reason for community leaders to continue to work in isolation. They want opportunities to learn from their peers and tackle the toughest problems together. Early Childhood-LINC leaders are committed to moving forward in partnership with communities to find answers to the deepest challenges, and secure better results for children, families and communities.

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