



Developing a Two-Generational Policy Network in Minnesota:

2017 State-Level Developments



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This descriptive report highlights the activities of the Minnesota 2-Gen Policy Network in 2017. Impressions of the two generation framework and the network were gathered through structured interviews with twenty state leaders, including staff from nine state offices and leaders of statewide organizations (see appendix 1). Many of those interviewed were members of the network's home team and very involved in activities throughout 2017; others had merely attended a meeting or two early in the projects' development.

In our analysis, one factor we explored was depth of engagement (separating the network leadership team members from others). This report also summarizes the work of the four local sites in the network that will be implementing innovative approaches in 2018 (see Appendix 2). Additional information was compiled from a review of network documents, materials from local program sites including work plans for upcoming pilot projects, and assessment of the national context from published reports and articles.

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Foundation of a Two Generation Approach

While “two generation” anti-poverty programs, often called 2-Gen programs, have come into use more recently, the concept is not new to human services.¹ In 1965, the federal Head Start program first began directly linking support of parents to the needs of their children. The two generation concept became popular in the 1980s and 1990s, with most programs generally taking one of two approaches. Many were child-focused with parent elements, generally based in early childhood education settings and including family services such as parenting classes, literacy and mental health, or support accessing public benefits. A second approach focused primarily on parents but brought in child-relevant programming, such as the provision of childcare during education or employment training. Many of these “first-wave” 2-Gen programs were specifically provided to adolescent mothers and welfare recipients; attention to that target group waned in the late 1990s after the passage of national welfare reform.

Approximately a decade later, private, philanthropic funders began again to consider the positive attributes of 2-Generation focused program models. In a recent article, Chase-Lansdale and Brooks-Gunn (2014) describe a few key elements that distinguish the newer wave of 2-Gen programs from earlier attempts. First, they “combine human capital programs for adults and children that have previously been kept in separate silos” (pg. 16). They also build upon sector-based employment training programs to provide career ladders within high demand industries. Additionally, they reflect new knowledge about how to create and support high-quality early childhood education. Finally, whereas earlier programs were targeted to welfare recipients, current 2-Gen programs serve a broader array of families earning low incomes.

The Two-Generation Continuum

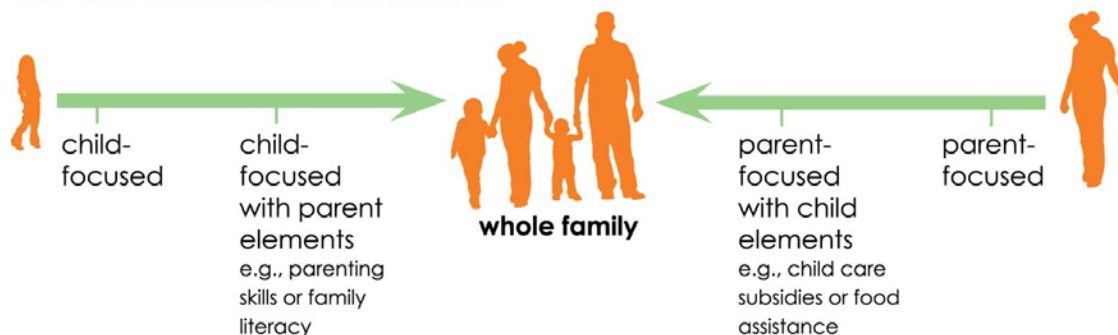


Figure 1: Aspen Institute Ascend’s Two-Generation Continuum of Services

¹ P. Lindsay Chase-Lansdale and Jeanne Brooks-Gunn (2014), “2-Generation Programs in the Twenty-First Century,” *The Future of Children*.

Generally, two generational approaches align with the well-established programming of multi-service organizations which try to blend and braid funding to best meet the needs of their client group. In addition to providing early childhood education, the federal Head Start program continues to provide funding for health, mental health and family support services through 34 programs in the state. Minnesota invests \$25 million of its own state revenue in this network of local nonprofits and tribal governments to serve parents and children birth to age five.

Two generational models also are not limited to the nonprofit sector. In Dakota County, staff of the New Chance day treatment program recently started broadening their engagement with families of the young people they serve by conducting intake meetings in their homes, learning about family conditions and relationships. They also started engaging parents in social activities, such as cultural events and picnics, and are working to better align their services with other internal county resources such as economic assistance programs, to better support stressed families.

The Minnesota Interagency Council on Homelessness notes in their 2016-17 action plan that families with children are over half of individuals experiencing homelessness. The plan emphasizes the importance of a family's housing stability on positive childhood outcomes, and includes strategies to partner with career pathway programs, K-12 schools, "food, health care, mental health and chemical health...early childhood,... transportation and childcare" systems. As an interagency council, there is an expressed understanding that preventing and addressing family homelessness requires coordination and collaboration across an array of service areas for two generational interventions.

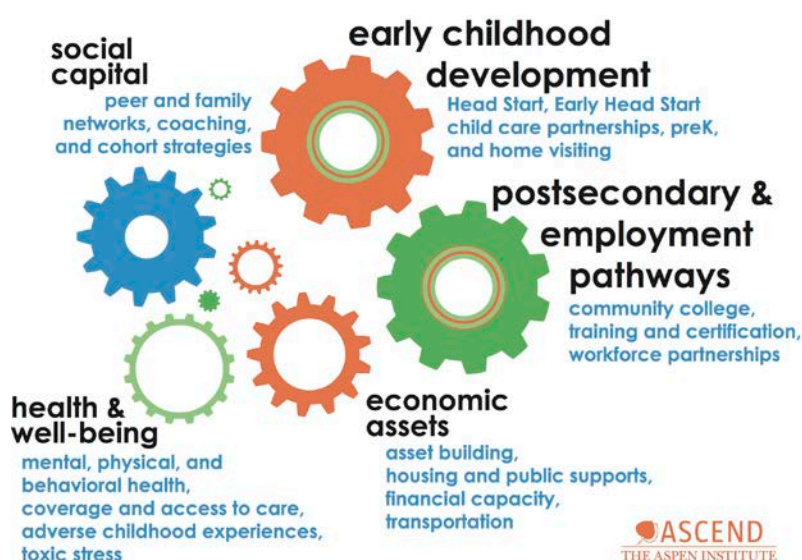


Figure 2: Model of two generational program components

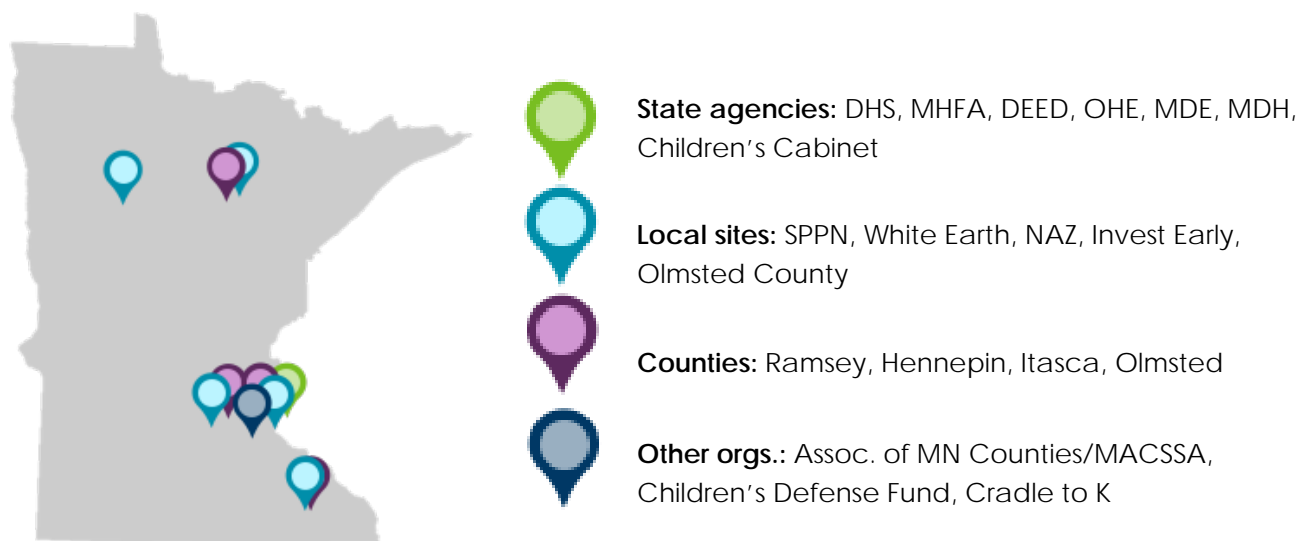
Minnesota nonprofit organizations operate an array of programs in an effort to meet the needs of whole families. For example:

- *Comunidades Latinas Unidas En Servicio (CLUES)* offers a variety of services to children and adults in behavioral health, family wellbeing, "economic vitality," and education, specifically describing their education programs as a 2-Generation approach.
- The *Family Partnership* has a long-standing investment in 2-generational programs and are now targeting young people who are the victims of sex trafficking.
- The *Jeremiah Program* is a national model in the 2-Generation movement, providing supportive housing and early childhood education for single parents enrolled in post-secondary education who are raising young children. Started in Minneapolis in 1993 by a local priest, the model has been disseminated to five additional metropolitan areas across the country and is starting development of a program in Rochester.
- The *Phyllis Wheatley Community Center* provides both early childhood education and programs for parents such as financial literacy and support accessing community resources.
- *Pillsbury United Communities* provides a broad range of educational and extracurricular programs for preschool-age children through the teen years while also providing an array of parent and family-focused services. The latter include parent networks, tax and legal assistance, health and wellness initiatives, career pathway and employment support programs, and community businesses.
- The *Wilder Foundation's Family Independence Initiative* works to remove barriers that challenge families' ability to leverage their assets, strengths, and capacity. FII families meet and come together to solve the problems that keep them from leading more economically secure lives; thus, the families are the experts.

The MN 2-Gen Policy Network

In 2016, Minnesota was notified that it had been selected to receive a grant from the National Governor's Association and the Center for Law and Social Policy, as part of the Parents and Children Thriving Together (PACTT) Network, to launch the "MN 2-Gen Policy Network." This opportunity capitalized upon the initiative of local and state leaders who increasingly realized that programmatic initiatives that consider the relationships between parents and children can improve long-term outcomes.²

Following two convenings to analyze current gaps and create a joint vision for the network, a small group of state and county leaders and representatives from five local innovation sites formed the network's "Home Team." They met regularly in 2017 to align ideas for local program innovations with potential state-level policy and programmatic changes. Local agency representatives worked together with state officials to plan implementation of two generation pilot projects at four local sites in 2018: Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), Olmsted County, Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood (SPPN), and White Earth Nation.³



MN 2-Gen Policy Network vision is that "The state of Minnesota will have: families that thrive, services that are integrated to support children and families, and systems that support integration and effectiveness. At the core of this are families that have health, economic assets, social capital, career pathways, and nurturing learning environments."

² Ron Haskins, Irwin Garfinkel, and Sara McLanahan (2014), "Introduction: 2-Generation Mechanisms of Child Development," *Future of Children*; Teresa Sommer, et al. (2016). Two generation educational programs for parents and their young children. In N. K. Lesaux & S. M. Jones (Eds.), *The leading edge of early childhood education: Linking science to policy for a new generation*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

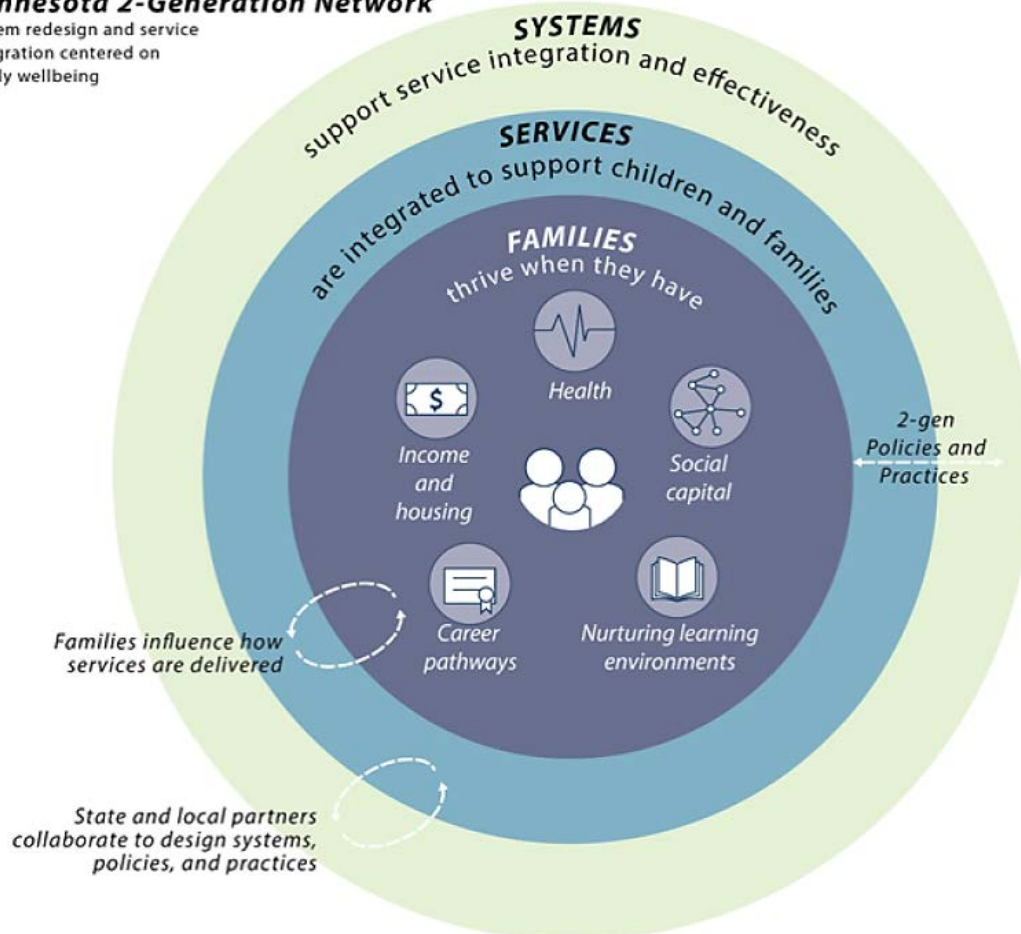
³ A fifth local organization, Invest Early, participated in the network in 2017, but will not participate as a pilot site in 2018.

The network seeks to achieve this vision through the implementation of four core strategies:

1. Align state policies and practices that could better support family stability
2. Invest in approaches to service delivery and fund program innovations to inform future two generation policies and practices statewide
3. Engage and communicate with a broad range of audiences to build public awareness of two generation policies and practices
4. Evaluate the above three strategies to improve partnerships, policies, and practices.

Minnesota 2-Generation Network

System redesign and service integration centered on family wellbeing



Timeline of Activities

April 2016 Network leaders at DHS, the Minnesota Children's Cabinet, and MMB discuss strategies to more intentionally integrate the two generation approach at the state policy level. Minnesota "Transformation Zones" sites are also engaged in the conversation.

October - December 2016 The MN 2-Gen Policy Network is launched with two large convenings intended to bring together representatives of five local sites, six state agencies, and numerous county and other community human services leaders to learn more and analyze the gaps between the current publicly-funded system and the mechanisms needed to serve families holistically, through a two generational approach.

March and April 2017 State agency staff make onsite visits to all five local sites. Like the Home Team meetings, site visits provide opportunities for state staff to learn from the local sites about their 2-gen models and brainstorm opportunities for using the frame to identify solutions to barriers that impede their programming from being sustainably developed.

September 2017 Minnesota 2-Gen Summit to Reduce Poverty co-hosted by the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation, MN state agencies, the City of St. Paul, the St. Paul Foundation, and the Future Services Institute at the University of Minnesota

January 2018 Implementation of 2-Gen program pilots begins at local sites.

October 2016 The State of Minnesota is one of five states to receive a 2-Gen Network grant from the National Governor's Association. Minnesota is the only grantee state to integrate local implementation sites alongside state leaders

January 2017 The MN 2-Gen Policy Network Home Team, a representative group from state agencies and local organizations that implement two generation programs, is launched. The home team meets regularly throughout 2017.

Summer 2017 Local sites and their collaborative partners form teams to explore ideas and further develop concepts to build upon two generation models.

November and December 2017 Local sites submitted implementation work plans that aligned with the Network vision: Families at the center of prototype development; orientation to learning, iteration, and system change; and relationship and partnership building with the intention of modeling a generative relationship between local, county, and state partners. The implementation of work plans is supported with TANF innovation funds.

Initial Evolution of the Idea

Given the number of two generation-focused programs in Minnesota, it's not surprising that many state leaders were already familiar with the "two generation" terminology prior to the Policy Network. State-level discussions of two generation human service models began through groups like the Minnesota Children's Cabinet, Results for Children and Youth (formerly World's Best Workforce), Race to the Top, and the Interagency Council on Homelessness. However, among the twenty state-level officials interviewed for this report, some first learned of the terminology at the start of their participation in the network. Most agreed the concept is fairly intuitive. When providing health, education or human services to either an adult or child, the needs of other family members frequently come into focus. Those interviewed uniformly believe it would be ideal to build systems that more intentionally integrate the needs and strengths of the whole family.

Yet, current policy and the programmatic silos developed at the federal, state, county, and local levels make this challenging. One way forward is to try to narrow the gaps between those creating policy and program rules, and those implementing programs. The MN 2-Gen Policy Network was created to help bridge these divides. To do so, they are drawing upon resources provided by national organizations, such as the National Governor's Association, the Center for Law and Social Policy, and the Ascend initiative of the Aspen Institute.

In interviews undertaken for this report, many state-level network members reported their understanding of the model expanded throughout 2017 to include not only a need to serve a whole family but also a focus on system changes. Current funding practices, regulatory oversight, and program development for narrowly defined groups sustains an infrastructure that artificially segments those in need of social and economic support. Many also reported their understanding of the complexity of implementing two generation policies and practices within state government has deepened.

The Network began with an intention to rapidly identify and prototype small scale adjustments to policies and practices at the state level, informed by local site experiences. This was based on an initial assumption that if the right people were brought together across state agencies and local 2-Gen program sites, policy barriers could be easily identified and addressed.

LOCAL SITE PROFILE: NAZ

The Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ)

collaborative of 33 Northside nonprofits and 10 schools exists to close the achievement gap and end generational poverty in North Minneapolis. The ecosystem includes: early childhood, K-12 schools, college, housing, career, health, and parent education. NAZ Families are surrounded by their "team" of NAZ and partner staff who provide support and connections to reach their goals. NAZ Family Achievement Coaches partner with families by instilling the belief that college is possible, helping them create family goals called Achievement Plans, connecting them to opportunities, and referring them to NAZ Specialists who provide additional focused support the areas of health, housing, and career. The work is supported by NAZ Connect - an online achievement-planning and data collection system - which drives achievement, supports coordination across the NAZ ecosystem, and tracks family and program data.

With funding from the Minnesota 2-Gen Network, NAZ will pilot an initiative in partnership with Hennepin County and employment service providers (HIRED and EMERGE) that target 75-100 NAZ families on MFIP to:

- Align two roles working with NAZ-County shared families to support transformational engagement
- Support parents to be ready for and successful in career trainings for employment at Hennepin County & other regional partners
 - Provide integration of supports between NAZ, County, and partners based on Achievement Plans and data sharing for real-time progress

Key elements include: shared training opportunities across organizations, connecting info and tracking systems, starting presumptive eligibility for child care assistance payments on behalf of parents, and developing a cohort approach to support career readiness.

Over the course of the year, it became clear that a great deal of discussion and deliberation was needed to identify policy barriers as well as potential solutions to address them. Numerous individuals identified current federal and state statutes and regulations as a barrier to change, although a few also discussed self-limiting beliefs that policy change is not possible within the current polarized political environment at the legislature. Over time, trust and the willingness to co-create came out as state staff, local nonprofits, and counties learned to deeply engage each other. This allowed the work to identify barriers and potential solutions to emerge incrementally as they got more comfortable identifying current limitations without easy answers, and to co-create short- and longer-term solutions. Continued work is needed to make the implementation of the two generation model more tangible, to leverage changes in state policy, and disseminate ideas about the approach to local communities across the state.

Many state staff and leaders also noted the need to be flexible in their terminology. The term “two generation” is well understood as the Aspen Institute’s nationally-recognized framework and it provides a common language for network members to use amongst themselves and with other states and national groups. The term has also earned political support within Governor Dayton’s administration and the interagency Minnesota Children’s Cabinet. However, other audiences perceive the term as jargon; many state-level network members find that while the framework is intuitive, the terminology requires frequent explanation. Some stakeholders expressed concern that the term implies a sole focus on parent-child units to the exclusion of multiple generations and other important adults in a child’s life. Over the course of the year, many network members have moved to using the term “whole family,” finding it resonates better with some audiences such as people being served by human service systems and state legislators.

LOCAL SITE PROFILE: OLMSTED COUNTY

Olmsted County has long provided state-level leadership among county governments for integrated human services. For over twenty-years, the county has offered whole family services to those families at-risk of being referred to the child protection system. They launched supportive housing programs for young parents and troubled youth, and work specifically with fathers to assure adequate family connections.

With funding from the Minnesota 2-Gen Network, Olmsted County is documenting their practice model for young parents who have histories of poverty, housing instability, child-welfare involvement and/or chronic physical or behavioral health needs. This includes piloting and implementing an “integrated service assessment tool (ISAT)” which assesses families’ needs across a broad range of domains. Additionally, a new financial ‘cliff forecaster’ tool is helping county staff identify a family’s potential loss of benefits as income increases, so the county is poised to identify resources to smooth out these abrupt changes and build their long-term financial stability.

Early Successes of the MN 2-Gen Policy Network

One goal of the network is to create opportunities for state leaders to learn from local organizations already implementing two generation program models. Members of the Home Team view their meetings and site visits to the individual organizations as important opportunities that have provided a way to learn about different approaches to implementing 2-Gen programs, and inform potential state-level changes. For example, one interviewee discussed how planning for Help Me Grow, an interagency state-level collaborative to provide resource to families with young children, can be informed by White Earth’s existing WE CARE information sharing and referral system.

The Network built upon several existing interagency initiatives. In turn, the degree of leadership and accountability created among network members helped facilitate collaboration in other interagency initiatives. Many state-level network members described increased alignment and coordination across existing public programs and agencies in 2017, as a direct result of both the network and other interagency initiatives. Said one network leader, “I think there’s just a newly developing baseline that agencies work together.”

Several described how they were empowered to reach out to staff in other agencies or departments due to new connections made or strengthened. In some instances this was done to specifically consider how a particular policy or procedural change might affect another in relation to shared goals of supporting more 2-Generational initiatives. One home team member said “I always have known what goes on at the county in terms of program administration but I think that the relationships in the home team that have developed have been great to be able to check in with folks and say ‘Hey, I’m thinking about this. Now what would that mean, you know, in terms of program administration in your office?’...I think that those relationships are ones that hadn’t been formed previously, especially between the folks who imagine policy and those who actually implement it at the ground level.” Some examples include:

- A new Homework Starts at Home initiative, a multi-agency collaboration, specifically encourages local community applicants to incorporate a two generation approach.
- A 2-Gen Network leader was invited to participate in the new Early Childhood Systems Reform oversight committee with a specific plan in place to introduce two generation concepts to the larger group.
- Minnesota Department of Education and the Office of Higher Education have strengthened their relationship to leverage complementary resources that support college-bound high school students.
- Conversations are taking place to incorporate the two generation model and language into the updated statewide Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness and state workforce initiatives.
- One of the local sites, Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ), will soon pilot a presumptive eligibility mechanism for parents who obtain employment and apply for support through the Child Care Assistance

LOCAL SITE PROFILE: WEN

The White Earth Nation (WEN) utilizes WECARE (White Earth Coordination, Assessment, Resource and Education), a care coordination database system that provides an efficient and effective way to link families living on the White Earth Reservation to needed services. Key employees of the Tribal programs including Human Service programs, Bureau of Indian Education and Indian Health Service have access to the WECARE information technology system housed within RiteTrack software. The comprehensive WE CARE assessment tool can be used to assess a family’s broad needs and automatically send referrals to relevant publicly-funded programs. The tool assesses both child-focused needs such as childcare funding and immunizations, and parent- focused needs such as transportation, training support, and financial assistance.

Due to the comprehensive nature of the assessment, the local Head Start replaced their prior enrollment form with the WECARE assessment for intake, a move toward a more integrated system. With funding from the Minnesota 2-Gen Network, White Earth will hire additional staff to provide intensive care coordination to more families; they will meet weekly with families to support their knowledge and awareness and strengthen their self-advocacy skills, with an emphasis on educational and workforce development services. Monthly culturally-based activities to provide spiritual support, encourage community engagement and strengthen community-based social capital will be developed, grounded in Anishinaabe culture and language. This will help to increase a family’s resilience. Additionally, the pilot will focus on better engaging agencies that are currently underutilizing the WECARE assessment tool and care team process.

Program (CCAP) to bridge the gap in child care support while their application is processed. This partnership between NAZ, Hennepin County, contracted employment assistance providers, and Minnesota Department of Human Services represents an alignment across not only different domains, but also different levels of government and nonprofit human service providers.

Support for interagency work from state leaders including the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and Commissioners has been a critical resource in recent alignment efforts. Those we interviewed who are engaged in the Network recognized the small investment from the National Governor's Association and Center for Law and Social Policy initiative helped galvanize the activity. Even the cross-agency work required by the application and grant helped to build momentum, gave network members permission to think beyond current silos, and connected Minnesota 2-Gen leaders to other states to learn from their approaches. One state leader commented "I think the home team itself is really unique in that it's a different kind of conversation...particularly between state, and county, and tribal governments than often happens, but also with the nonprofits and the other organizations that are at the table...It's just a very rare space to have essentially a state-sponsored initiative that is really providing opportunity for other partners to have a critical role in driving, and shaping, and guiding what it is that we're doing...There's a lot of learning that comes from just having those connections and having people sit at the table in that way."

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (MnDHS) demonstrated real commitment to leading the 2-Gen initiative and investing TANF Innovation funds. These resources enabled collaboration between state agencies and local sites to develop ideas for pilot projects. Additionally, interviewees noted that the design of Home Team meetings created a space for people to think, learn and co-create together across historically separated divisions of state agencies, counties and tribal offices, and service providing and advocacy nonprofits. Network members who are part of or close to the leadership team also spoke about strong interpersonal relationships as both a resource and outcome of this network. In particular, network leaders credited the time that high-level state managers from several agencies spend together as part of the network as a key factor in increased alignment efforts.

LOCAL SITE PROFILE: SPPN

The Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood (SPPN) is a transformative education partnership that puts children on the pathway to college and career success. Using a school-based approach, SPPN supports children at four SPPN Pathway Schools in the Frogtown, Rondo, and Summit-University neighborhoods of Saint Paul. SPPN brings together 10 anchor partners and 70 other organizations to deliver a comprehensive, culturally-rooted, two-generation strategy to families.

SPPN uses education, family stability, and advocacy tools to pave pathways of opportunities for children. The SPPN Parent Council builds parent power in public decision-making spaces through public policy community organizing. The goal is to build a movement of people of color in the neighborhood working to build a thriving community.

With funding from the Minnesota 2-Gen Network, SPPN will partner with Ramsey County and the Network for the Development of Children of African Descent (NdCAD) to pilot the "People's Fellowship" with 25 African-American families. Families will participate in concurrent parent and child culturally-based literacy programs, home visits, community participatory action research, and optional workshops offered by NdCAD. County caseworkers will work with parents to develop a "self-determinizing plan" where they select from a menu of services in the domains of housing, wealth building/income, early childhood, and education that are aligned with their ambitions rather than an employment plan or other required county plans. This pilot, while maintaining family autonomy, offers a more coordinated, multi-partner set of wraparound services. It seeks to introduce the 2-Gen framework into and support service integration across county service divisions.

Challenges to be Addressed

State-level Network members also identified several challenges to alignment across state-level agencies. Network members found that a great deal of time is needed to invest in discussion and joint learning to determine what changes could create a positive impact for families, addressing both programs and systemic inequities.

“I think that there’s a lot of barriers around data. We know that typically the kids who are accessing, whether it’s Head Start or Early Learning Scholarships or some of the services through Special Ed are probably a lot of the same kids who are accessing programs through human services, but because we are not able to share that kind of data there’s a lot of duplicative effort required on the part of the parent, or the family or the provider. I mean, look at what the solution has been to help families better access services...it’s to hire navigators. So, I think that speaks to the complexity of the programs, the challenges around sharing data to better coordinate and create these on ramps for families.”

Additionally, while the 2-Gen approach has executive branch support, legislative support will also be necessary to undertake some of what is needed. Many current policies are highly prescriptive, limiting options for procedural change. From the start, the intention of the network has been to prepare a legislative package in 2019 with policies that support a 2-Gen approach to human services in Minnesota. In the interviews, some network members confirmed that current policies are a barrier to 2-Gen implementation, but expressed concern that the current political environment may not be conducive to policy change. A few saw state level policy change as outside the network’s scope. This divergent opinion suggests that additional groundwork must be laid in 2018, both to expand support for 2-Gen as a bipartisan model and to build capacity within network membership to analyze and recommend policy changes.

Like state agencies, the legislature is also very siloed, with committee structures making it difficult for

leaders to appreciate the implementation dynamics that are important in shifting to a 2-Generational approach. Specifically, those interviewed noted that agency budgets are each handled by different committees who don’t always see how an initiative that impacts multiple domains is relevant to the overall legislative agenda. Federal statute and funding streams present similar challenges. These resources come into state agencies in silos and visionary leadership is required to see opportunities for alignment and innovation.

Several network members not strongly connected to the leadership team also identified data sharing restrictions and a lack of data sharing capability as a major limitation.

Network leaders also identified a need for translation between the barriers encountered by local programs and state statutes. Local service providers can list numerous barriers encountered by their staff and the families with whom they work, but often do not describe these in terms of a specific state policy or procedure. At the start of the Network, leaders often asked local sites to identify the necessary policy changes, but found this unrealistic because it assumes local agencies possess deep knowledge of the statutes underlying state policies and procedures. They can see barriers but don’t always know the cause. Network leaders also found that state staff are not always able to take what they heard about

barriers and apply it to changing state institutions and procedures, not knowing what the solutions should be, especially when both knowledge of the field (such as housing, education, etc.) and context (such as state government or local nonprofit) are necessary to develop options.

Network participants outside of the leadership and Home Team were less likely to say they had observed learning by state officials. They gave voice to the importance of moving learning past the small group, translating it from insights held by individual sites or particular state leaders throughout whole state systems. To facilitate such learning, these participants spoke to the importance of the network having support from people in roles of high positional authority such as agency Commissioners, the Lieutenant Governor, and agency program directors. For them, leaders with authority lend credibility to the change effort.

Reflections and Promising Directions

In this section, we highlight potential next steps in the Minnesota 2-Gen Policy Network. In interviews, a few strategies were identified that have been tried in the past year and might be magnified in 2018 to cross the divides between state and local sites and facilitate system-level learning and action.

- **Once a barrier is mentioned, seek to understand its origins.** For example, when childcare is mentioned as a barrier to sustained parental employment, identify where the system breaks down (for example, with MFIP, eligibility staff, childcare providers, workforce system, etc). This laser-like focus on cause enables county and state staff to better pinpoint the barrier in their system and consider which relevant policies, statutes, or guidance need to be examined for adaptation.
- **Continue to engage stakeholders broadly.** While most Home Team members self-selected to participate in this higher intensity team, network leaders have brought in particular people to resolve issues in particular projects.
- **Build shared knowledge and understanding.** Network activities that move beyond traditional meeting format and encourage people to interact in a way that leverages local program knowledge and state-system expertise are helpful. People with experience working in multiple parts of the system (such as state and local human services or government and nonprofit agencies) are important, as they can act as an interpreter between various groups.
- **Engage in ‘level setting’ so all can participate.** Each position in the system has not only its own lingo, but also unique understandings of practices, regulations, constraints, and community needs.
- **Talk about value created by the network.** Traditional state funding and evaluation mechanisms are focused on documenting outputs and activities in one particular categorical topic, rather than supporting creative design for whole families that depend upon a shared learning process.
- **Create tools for bringing a two generation mindset to State program administration.** One program manager noted the need for a clear set of guidelines so that state agencies can incorporate two generation lens into RFPs for funding and into grantee assessment criteria.

Among those interviewed, there was agreement that 2018 must focus more directly upon translating the two generational concept into practice, both in the local program pilots and in integrating lessons

into state statute, funding streams, and program parameters. Few participants outside of the leadership group (or those who work closely with them) could describe what had transpired in 2017. The many examples of small steps forward are not yet visible to those who aren't closely involved and large changes have not yet occurred. Several interviewees noted that this gap may point to challenges in communication that should be addressed, and network leaders are developing plans to respond to it.

Currently the network is composed of leaders who strongly believe in the approach. This base of support must be expanded in the upcoming years if the aspirations of the network are to be achieved. Those interviewed suggested a few potential avenues for this:

- **Build support among policymakers.** This includes not only state legislators but also other elected officials, such as county commissioners and school-board members, as well as administrators in schools and counties. Many may have an interest in introducing the approach in their communities.
- **Target attention.** One individual noted it may be timelier to focus at the county level in 2018 because many state legislators are up for election next year, which may result in turnover.
- **Focus on specific policy issues and engage external advocates.** A few people interviewed stressed the important role that nongovernmental actors play in continuing to build the momentum for a two generation approach in Minnesota. Particular policy issues, framed in the larger two generational approach, can be addressed by those willing and able to build an advocacy campaign around it.
- **Broaden the engagement to other types of partners.** Philanthropy and employer groups may have an interest in the two generation approach. Health care and community health were also suggested as potential arenas to build support due to their interest in the social determinants of health and wellbeing.
- **Continue to build support within other interagency groups.** While ideas about two generational program models have grown through discussions at state-level committees and task forces, additional opportunities exist to align their work with the 2-Gen framework.

To broaden support, the Minnesota 2-Gen Network should also continue to deepen its awareness of how language and frameworks resonate with different stakeholder groups. As noted previously, while there is some established support for the two generation terminology, other plain language may resonate better with broader audiences.

The timing for this ground work is perfect. As staff and leadership turn over in state agencies, new people should be consistently made aware of the Network. As the Network continues to develop in 2018, there is an opportunity to increase communication, education, and engagement with a broader set of state-level stakeholders. This will include sharing ideas from the individual pilot projects throughout the state, through state and local governments and across a greater number of local service providers, school districts, and tribal governments.

Appendix 1: Interviews with State Leaders

Structured interviews were conducted with twenty state leaders. Most are employed by the state of Minnesota in one of nine state agencies, while a few are leaders of statewide or Twin Cities nonprofit organizations. Interviews were generally 30-45 minutes long and were conducted via conference call by a Future Services Institute staff member. The following questions were used to structure for each interview, with clarifying and follow-up questions added as appropriate.

- 1) Can you explain to me your scope of work and how it relates to this 2-generation project in which where we are trying to learn more about how publicly-funded services for parents and children are currently provided?
- 2) How were you recruited to the two generation network activities in which you participate(d)?
- 3) When did you first hear the terminology “two generation?” What did it think about it? Has that impression changed in the last year? 3a) [For members of the leadership group] Thinking back over 2017, how has the initiative evolved over the year? What have been the successes and challenges?
- 4) Has participation influenced your thinking about policy or service delivery? Why or why not?
- 5) Has participation caused you to do anything in a new way? (for example, form new professional relationships across program or agency or government silos, reshape an RFP, attend a national convening) Why or why not?
- 6) One of the objectives of the network is to better align and coordinate existing public programs / investments across state agencies. Have you seen or experienced any success in this direction during 2017? What were the critical resource(s) that supported this? What makes this objective challenging?
- 7) Another objective is to enable state officials to learn from five local sites about two generation program design and delivery. Have you seen or experienced any success in this direction during 2017? What resources supported this? What makes this objective challenging?
- 8) Finally, in 2018, network leaders want to more directly broaden the base of support and understanding for a two generation approach to policy and practice. Do you have any advice about how to proceed in this direction?

It should be noted that data was collected by Future Services Institute staff who were not involved in facilitation of the Minnesota 2-Gen Policy Network, to reduce potential bias in interview responses.

Appendix 2: Local 2-Gen Sites

| | Northside Achievement Zone (NAZ) | Olmsted County | Saint Paul Promise Neighborhood (SPPN) | White Earth Nation (WEN) |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| Geographic Area | North Minneapolis | Olmsted County | Frogtown and Summit-University Neighborhoods in St. Paul | White Earth Nation, Northwest Minnesota |
| Target Group(s) | Families in North Minneapolis with children pre-birth to age 18; 97% are families of color | Olmsted County young parents | Families of children birth-grade five enrolled in one of four elementary schools or 16 early childhood centers in the geographic coverage area. | Tribal members of White Earth Nation |
| Key elements in 2018 two generation implementation plans | Align and integrate NAZ Family Achievement Plan and employment services plan; Cross-training and shared coaching of NAZ and employment service provider staff; Cohort approach to support career readiness; Presumptive eligibility for CCAP | Pilot and implement integrated service assessment tool (ISAT) to assess families' needs across a broad range of domains; Pilot and implement cliff forecaster tool to smooth out financial resource changes and promote long-term financial stability | Introduce 2-Gen, wraparound service model and self-determination plan to Ramsey County; Concurrent culturally-based literacy program for parents and children; Home visits; Optional workshops and community participatory action research. | Provide intensive care coordination to high-need families with focus on education, workforce development and self-advocacy; Monthly culturally-based activities to build connection to culture, social capital, and family resilience; Broaden use of WE CARE universal assessment and care teams participation across agencies |