



# Workforce Solutions and Community Impact

## December 15, 2015

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Board Workshop

Presenters:

Patricia Brady, Director

Kate Probert, MFIP/DWP/SNAP Employment Services Division  
Manager

Michelle Derr, Ph.D., Mathematica Senior Researcher

# Ramsey County Board Workshop Purpose

To update the Board on:

- the heightened role of resident self-determination implemented through a goal-setting framework
- program innovation within MFIP/DWP
- Workforce Solutions (WFS) leadership in national, state and local conversations

# Today's Agenda

- WFS Role, Mission and Vision for the Work
- Alignment of WFS Strategic Priorities with Ramsey County Goals
- Building a Foundation for Family Economic Stability: 2013 to Present
- Initiatives
  - Families Achieving Success Today (FAST)
  - Lifelong Learning Initiative (LLI)
  - Health and Human Services National Academy
- Positive Outcomes - Self-Support Index
- Proposed Strategic Directions Moving Toward RFP Release in 2018
- Partnerships
- Next Steps

Previously, this Board approved RFPs that resulted in much of the work and progress we will be discussing today.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Allowing us to take risks on behalf of our residents is very much appreciated.



Minnesota Department of **Human Services**

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December 7, 2015

Ramsey County Workforce Center  
Attn: Kate Probert Fagundes  
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To Whom It May Concern:

The Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) fully supports Ramsey County's mission to maximize participant economic self-sufficiency by:

1. Encouraging and empowering all families to secure employment;
2. Guiding families to increase their income and move out of poverty;
3. Preventing long-term dependence on welfare as a primary source of family income.

DHS priorities align with Ramsey County's strategic goals to address employment racial disparities, family well-being within a multi-generational programing, career pathways, WIOA and TANF collaboration, and a continuous strive for improvement through evaluation and accountability.

DHS has worked closely with Ramsey County on multiple projects over the years and currently has the privilege of working with Ramsey County Workforce Solutions this past year to implement the Minnesota Subsidized Transitional Employment Demonstration (MSTED) and Families Achieving Success Today (FAST) and (FAST2) projects. Our aim is to continue to work in close partnership with Ramsey County within the National Policy Academy and future MFIP projects. Ramsey County's continued work with families is a vital investment for the entire community.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (651) 431-4046 or by email [jovon.perry@state.mn.us](mailto:jovon.perry@state.mn.us).

Sincerely,

Jovon Perry, Minnesota Family Investment Program Manager  
Economic Assistance and Employment Supports Division

## Workforce Solutions Strategic Role

- Financial stewardship & oversight
- Community partnership
- Direct service provider
- Program development based on evidence
- Champion of the use of evaluation to inform, adapt, replicate and advance programs
- Policy development in conjunction with federal, state and county partners

## Mission and Vision

The Ramsey County Mission is “A county of excellence working with you to enhance our quality of life.”

The Ramsey County Vision is “A vibrant community where all are valued and thrive.”

*The Ramsey County Workforce Solutions MFIP/DWP Employment Services Mission is to maximize resident economic self-sufficiency and family stabilization by:*

- 1. Encouraging and empowering all families to secure employment;*
- 2. Guiding families to increase their income and move out of poverty;*
- 3. Preventing long-term reliance on public assistance as a primary source of family income.*

*The Ramsey County Workforce Solutions MFIP/DWP Employment Services Vision is to provide residents on public assistance opportunities for improved employment and family stabilization.*

# Ramsey County's MFIP/DWP Caseload

- Population-wise, the caseload was at its historic low during the summer of 2015 - consistent with state and federal caseload reduction trends.
- These families represent Minnesota's most difficult to employ and to move off of cash assistance.
- Based on DHS analysis, Ramsey County has the most difficult county caseload in Minnesota.
- Forty-three percent of all families on MFIP in Ramsey County have documented disabilities.

# WFS Strategic Priorities

1. Reduction of racial employment disparities
2. Strategic partnership
3. Program integration of 4Es – engagement, education, employment, and employment retention
4. Full-family approach and family well-being measurement
5. Career pathways
6. Integrating executive skills development for residents and staff
7. Increase WIOA and TANF program collaborations
8. Investment in staff development
9. Strive for continuous improvement/evaluation

## Alignment of WFS Strategic Priorities with County Goals

<p><b>Ramsey County Goal: Well-Being</b>            Strengthen individual, family and community health, safety and well-being through effective safety-net services, innovative programming, prevention and early intervention, and environmental stewardship.</p> <p><b>Related WFS Strategic Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Family Approach and Family Well-Being Measurement</li> <li>• Integrating Executive Skills Development for Clients and Staff</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ramsey County Goal: Prosperity</b>            Cultivate economic prosperity and invest in neighborhoods with concentrated financial poverty through proactive leadership and inclusive initiatives that engage all communities in decisions about our future.</p> <p><b>Related WFS Strategic Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduction of Racial Employment Disparities</li> <li>• Program Integration of 4Es – engagement, education, employment and employment retention</li> </ul>
<p><b>Ramsey County Goal: Opportunity</b>            Enhance access to opportunity and mobility for all residents and businesses through connections to education, employment and economic development throughout our region.</p> <p><b>Related WFS Strategic Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic Partnership</li> <li>• Career Pathways</li> <li>• Increase WIOA and TANF/MFIP program collaborations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ramsey County Goal: Accountability</b>            Model fiscal accountability, transparency and strategic investments through professional operations and financial management.</p> <p><b>Related WFS Strategic Priorities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Investment in Staff Development</li> <li>• Strive for Continuous Improvement/Evaluation</li> </ul>

# Building a Foundation for Family Economic Stability: 2013 to Present

- Paired the MFIP work requirement activities more closely with career coaching and education (especially GED or high school diploma).
- Placed a new emphasis on the resident's pathway to work.
- Expanded career planning to include building on the resident's self-determination and strengthening resident's executive skills.
- Developed and executed in-depth strategies to reduce racial employment disparities.
- Shifted from a process outcomes-based system to a family-centered, self-determination-based, life-long learning informed system.

## Innovation Supporting Forward Movement - National/State/Local Conversation

- Families Achieving Success Today (FAST)
- Lifelong Learning Initiative (LLI)
- Health and Human Services National Academy

# Families Achieving Success Today

## Serving families with documented disabilities:

- Evidence-based, co-integrated and co-located model serving the full family
- Emphasizes helping people to obtain competitive employment in the community and providing necessary supports
- Driven by resident's choice
- Nationally evaluated by MDRC using randomized controlled method
- Shows evidence of enhancing executive (essential) skills
- Shows that:
  - FAST Families earned more income from work during the first and second year than a control group
  - FAST Families are more likely to participate in meaningful social services, job search, and other related activities and are less likely to be sanctioned
  - FAST Families are more likely to close off MFIP employed

## Success of FAST Initiative led to:

- an increased interest from Federal Department of Health and Human Services for continuous randomized/ controlled evaluation of the FAST model as the only model that demonstrated evidence of employment among the hardest to serve TANF population
- replication of the WFS FAST model in San Diego County, California
- scaled up within WFS system, enhanced model includes:
  - cultural consultants and cultural conversations for families
  - education

Video:

[Building Adult Capabilities to Improve Child Outcomes](#)

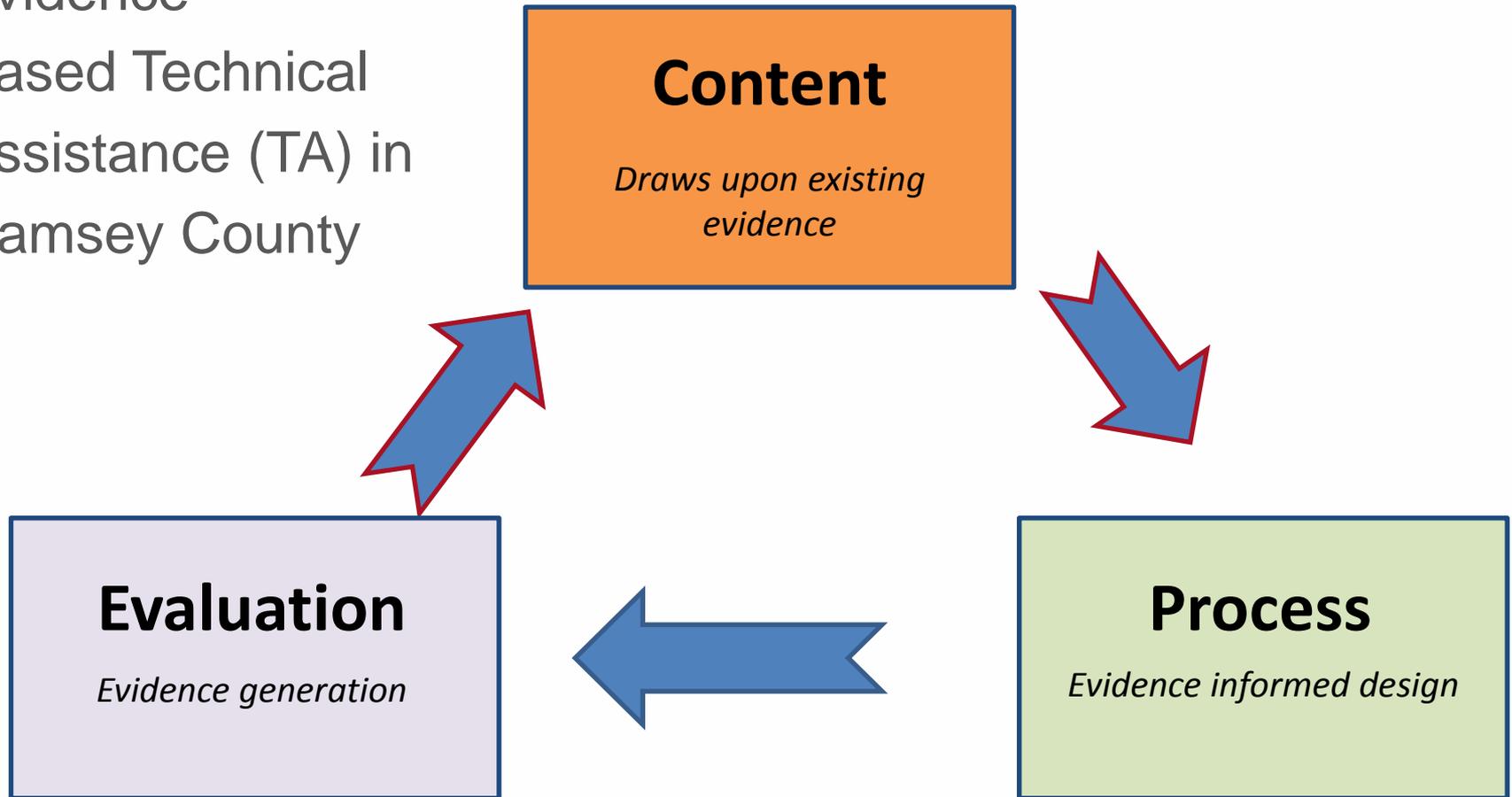
Produced by Frontiers of Innovation at Harvard University's Center on the Developing Child

# Lifelong Learning Initiative Mission Statement

The Ramsey County Lifelong Learning Initiative promotes sustainable change by teaching TANF residents to effectively set and achieve self-sufficiency goals. As a program:

- we place the resident at the center of the process designed to enhance one's ability to make informed decisions, set priorities, and manage day-to-day life
- staff model goal achievement behaviors and practices
- participants unleash power through guided self-determination
- we recognize executive skill strengths and weaknesses and then coach residents toward small, achievable steps on their way to achieving employment and education goals
- residents and counselors share accountability
- we provide resources and supports to increase the likelihood of success.
- we inspire and celebrate progress

# Evidence-Based Technical Assistance (TA) in Ramsey County



## Content—Draws Upon Existing Evidence

- Draws upon the best available knowledge and evidence to inform program change
- Multiple forms and formats
- Producers of evidence are translators for Ramsey County
- Relationships with seasoned experts and providers of “promising practices” used to match experts to Ramsey for LLI

## Process—Evidence Informed Design

- Use of research methods to identify technical assistance needs
- Inform, inspire, and support Ramsey County throughout the change process
- Support for a “top down, bottom up” approach
- Learning community in which Ramsey County shares innovations and best practices
- Resource materials and communication are grounded in adult learning principles (Global Learning Partners)

## Evaluation—Evidence Generating

- Inspire and support a “culture of evaluation”
- Use of a rapid-cycle learning process
- Implementation of a planned, incremental process for scaling up the intervention and evaluation

# The Lifelong Learning Initiative (LLI)

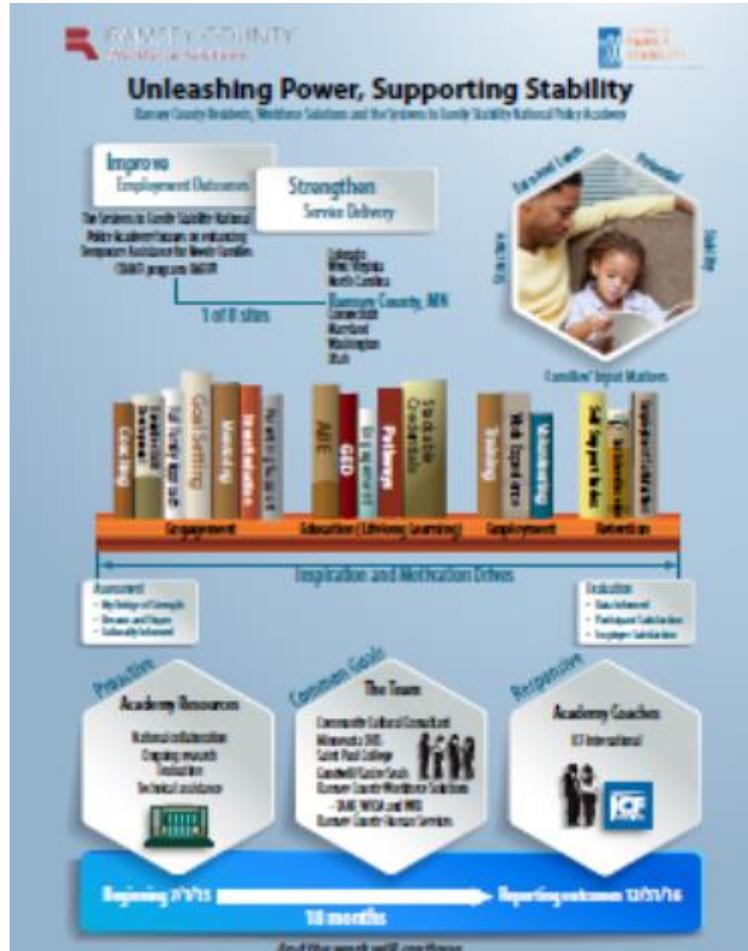
- LLI is a cutting-edge, individualized employment program for TANF recipients built on principles of goal achievement/executive functioning
- Support from a team of nationally recognized Mathematica and external experts
- Initial onsite implementation assessment and observations
- Design teams for preparing the environment and intervention
- Pilot testing will begin in January 2016

## Reflections from Dr. LaDonna Pavetti, a nationally recognized TANF expert

- Describes Ramsey County as an “innovator”
- Translators of scientific research into new practice approaches – “charting a new path”
- Creating sustainable change by building the skills and abilities of individuals to improve future work and parenting outcomes
- Transformative work for the human services and workforce development fields

## Health and Human Services National Academy

Ramsey County was selected as 1 of 8 teams nationally to participate in the Systems to Family Stability National Academy. The goal of the Academy is to redesign and reenergize TANF programs to ensure that families receive needed services and supports for successful transition to employment and economic stability.



# Positive Outcomes – Self Support Index

- The Self-Support Index measures the impact on family employment and self-sufficiency over time
- Increased earnings = Increased well-being for the whole family
- A University of California Irvine study led by Dr. Greg Duncan demonstrates that an increase of \$1.60 an hour for parents with young children directly correlates to children growing up to earn higher levels of education and employment
- The Self-Support Index is the DHS' highest priority measurement
- Families are less likely to return to MFIP within 12 months of closing than the state average
- WFS was one of 18 Minnesota counties to receive an MFIP Consolidated Fund Bonus. WFS was one of three metropolitan counties to receive the Bonus
- The Bonus allowed Ramsey County WFS to keep programming whole

## Proposed Strategic Directions Toward RFP release in 2018

By January 1, 2018, strategies and tactics to meet the following outcomes (and others to be developed) will be established:

- Evidence driven, supported and informed interventions that support the mission and vision and goals
- Increased skill and ability in helping families receive services through the most appropriate intervention
- Sufficient interventions created to serve the range of family needs

## Partnerships

- Ramsey County Departments
- Department of Health & Human Services Administration for Children and Families
- Minnesota Department of Human Services
- Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development
- Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
- PCG, ABT & Associates, Mathematica, ICF International
- Consultant, Clinical Psychologist using executive skill development in Clinical Practice
- Colorado Department of Human Services
- West Virginia Department of Health & Human Services
- Washington Department of Health & Human Services
- Network of Current Providers
- Workforce Innovation Board of Ramsey County
- Community Agencies and Consultants
- St. Paul College, Century College, University of Minnesota – Humphrey School of Public Affairs
- Staff & Residents

## Next Steps

- Lifelong Learning Initiative expansion to the employment services system
- In collaboration with WIOA, enhance services to young adults and those hardest to employ
- Ongoing convening of stakeholders and partners to move initiatives forward
- Contributions to and benefit from National Academy including a career pathway initiative
- Creation of new intervention and measurement to support full family well-being

## Next Steps:

- Continue to work together with Ramsey County Health and Wellness Service team
- Cooperate with Community Investment and Economic Growth Team to create career pathways in the industries that can lead to higher level of earning. This could be as simple as job shadowing or internship opportunities
- Assist hiring organizations with workforce planning