

Invitation: Obama Administration announces Rural IMPACT Demonstration

The White House Rural Council in February launched “Rural Impact,” a sustained campaign to enhance quality of life and upward mobility for children in rural and tribal places. Through this effort, the Obama Administration aims to build upon the progress already made in reducing rural poverty by leveraging technology, forging new partnerships, and exploring new models of program delivery, to ensure that all kids have an opportunity to succeed.

In support of Rural Impact, the Obama Administration is announcing a new technical assistance demonstration initiative: **Rural Integration Models for Parents and Children to Thrive (IMPACT) Demonstration**. The Rural IMPACT Demonstration will focus on providing technical support for rural and tribal communities to incorporate a two-generation approach, with the goal of reducing child poverty.

The Demonstration will be administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and will be implemented in collaboration with a broad range of Federal agencies, including the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, and Labor, and the Corporation for National and Community Service. HHS has cooperative agreements with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Community Action Partnership (CAP), to administer the demonstration and provide technical assistance to participating rural and tribal communities. By embedding a two-generation approach in programs and systems, HHS and its partners anticipate improvements in service delivery, participation, and outcomes for low-income families in rural and tribal communities.

What is a two-generation approach?

Too often, programs are structured to serve either adults or children, rather than focusing on the entire family together to improve outcomes. This is sometimes unintentionally reinforced by federal, state, and local systems that focus on programs and related outcomes for either adults or children.

The Rural IMPACT Demonstration will help communities adopt a two-generation approach to programs, policies, and systems to better meet the needs of low-income rural and tribal families and use a comprehensive, whole-family framework for addressing child poverty.

Two-generation approaches intentionally link, coordinate, and align high quality services for children with high quality services and supports for their parents. Generally, two-generation strategies:

- Provide parents with high quality, job-driven workforce development services and income to enable them to achieve financial stability.
- Ensure children’s access to high-quality early childhood development and enriching elementary school experiences.
- Encourage strong parental engagement strategies, including parental education and social and emotional supports, for parents to meet the health and developmental needs of their children.

A resource list and further information on various two-generation efforts is provided in Appendix A.

The Rural IMPACT Demonstration will support communities in aligning these disparate systems more effectively to achieve better outcomes for children, parents, and whole families simultaneously.

Overview of Rural IMPACT Demonstration

The Rural IMPACT Demonstration will provide technical assistance and other support for up to 10 rural and tribal communities that have vision, capacity, and assets to develop innovative two-generation strategies.

Through Rural IMPACT's two-generation approach, HHS and its partners will work with rural and tribal communities to address concurrently the needs of both vulnerable children and parents, with a goal of increasing parents' employment and education and the well-being of their children and families.

Beginning in October 2015, Rural IMPACT Demonstration communities will enter into a planning phase in which cross-agency representatives will identify barriers and opportunities to embedding a two-generation approach within the local community. The planning phase will support communities in identifying the objectives, measures and strategies for its two-generation work. Technical assistance, peer learning, and other tools will be available for communities; there are no direct service dollars available.

A key factor in local communities' success will be the establishment or enhancement of a strong cross-system planning team that can identify community and programmatic strengths, map areas where alignment and/or integration could occur, and then systematically develop strategies to overcome barriers to alignment and integration. A federal interagency team coordinated through a single point of contact will support designated communities.

At the completion of the planning phase, communities will begin testing and refining new strategies and approaches. This could include supporting collocation of services, building collaboration models across agencies, establishing new systems to link services, aligning data systems, and improving coordination of program delivery across agencies. Technical assistance will be provided to support designated communities in implementing these strategies and aligning federal, state and local resources.

Demonstration communities will receive:

- A six-month planning period with targeted technical assistance (TA) from AAP and CAP , supported by HHS's Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) and Administration for Children and Families (ACF), to help communities link programs and services, including through facilitating physical collocation, universal "no wrong door" intake, referral networks, shared measurement systems, and use of technology to deliver services;
- Six months of additional TA for the beginning of an implementation period, during which sites will work to address system, policy, and program changes targeting alleviation of child poverty per their cross-site plan.
- A trained AmeriCorps VISTA member to help coordinate local partners and outcomes, conduct benefits outreach, braid disparate state and federal funding streams, and facilitate access to TA, though roles may vary based on community need and capacity; and
- Participation in a peer learning network to facilitate the sharing of best practices among sites facing similar opportunities and challenges.

Rural IMPACT Demonstration Criteria

The two-generation approach established by the 10 communities may vary, and should be responsive to the particular needs of each community. However, each site will be required to articulate a vision and plan that includes several programs that are essential to a successful two-generation strategy.

To be considered for the Rural IMPACT Demonstration, rural and tribal communities must demonstrate the following:

Leadership

- Evidence of a clear vision of which programs need to be integrated to help reduce child poverty and what policies may need to be changed to enable two-generation programming.
- Evidence of success or interest in engaging in a two generation approach.
- Evidence of strong engagement at all levels, with leadership empowered to change systems and programs to achieve results.

Infrastructure

- A strong leadership team with required local partners from agencies overseeing human services, community action, health, workforce development, higher education, and early childhood systems (including early childhood education and K-3 education).
- Previous programmatic collaboration among at least several of the proposed partners.
- Demonstrated ability to track and manage data based on results and outcomes.

Programming

While integrated services can include a range of systems and programs, the primary systems that must be addressed include:

- High quality, job-driven workforce development programming, which may include adult education, skills training, post-secondary education, and other workforce strategies. The Council will be especially interested in strategies that recognize and incorporate a dual customer approach and job driven training, providing services for harder-to-serve rural residents while addressing employer demand for skilled workers. These could include sectoral strategies, career pathways, integrated instructional strategies, and other best practices. (Please refer to Vice President Biden's [Ready to Work report](#) for best practices.)
- Strong early childhood development with evidence of quality programming and utilizing a mix of delivery systems, potentially including quality home visiting, family child care and center-based care, and early elementary education services (K-3rd grade).
- Engagement by health systems, including public health departments and county Medicaid agencies which often bring strong planning and coordination capacities.
- Within these programmatic systems, strong family support and engagement processes that demonstrate a commitment to building on parents' strengths and motivation and help increase the self-efficacy, executive functioning, and social supports of rural and tribal parents.

The partners are additionally interested in demonstration efforts that might also include:

- Established or anticipated partnerships with mental and/or behavioral health systems and programs.

- Use of cohort models and/or social capital development for adults to strengthen programming and impact.
- Coordinated intake and referral system, or a commitment to establishing one, including coordinated access to public benefits.
- Financial education and asset development strategies to help families develop skills and financial cushions to weather financial challenges.
- Evidence of committed financial resources to support the work of the pilot. Resources can include public or private dollars; they can be new, repurposed, or in-kind.
- Commitment to a future integrated data system across key sectors, and willingness to invest funds into that system.
- Evidence of, or commitment to developing, a learning organization/approach and ability to do rapid testing/prototyping.
- A plan or approach for sustaining the effort after one year.

Final Identification Process

In collaboration with HHS, AAP and CAP will implement and manage the Rural IMPACT Demonstration. As cooperative agreement grantees, AAP and CAP will review the letters of interest based on the required and desired criteria and recommend to HHS and the other Federal partners approximately 10 communities to take part in the demonstration. HHS will then approve the final demonstration cohort of rural and tribal communities.

In selecting these communities, HHS and its partners will seek a balanced cohort that achieves:

- Representation from rural and tribal communities, including U.S. territories,
- Geographic diversity across rural America,
- A range of community economic strength within low-income communities, and
- Variability in the location of leadership at the local level and the mix of two-generation services.

These elements will be weighed along with the strength of the applications.

Key dates:

August 5: Release of invitation to submit materials

August 11: Webinar for interested communities:

Time: 2:00-3:00 p.m. ET

Website: <http://bit.ly/RuralIMPACT>

August 31: Designated communities submit their letter of interest

September: Obama Administration announces approximately 10 designees

Application process

In many communities across the country, the capacity and infrastructure of programs and systems varies. The broad criteria above reflect a set of optimal conditions for implementing Rural IMPACT; this invitation also recognizes that communities will have to work to build and connect across a range of stakeholders and resources that will help the Rural IMPACT Demonstration succeed. The application questions allow communities to articulate strengths and potential opportunities for advancement while

acknowledging that no community will likely have a full two-generation program in place that taps into all of these areas.

Interested communities should submit a letter of interest by August 31st to: RuralIMPACT@aap.org

Letters of interest (no more than 5 pages, 12 point font, one-inch margins) should include:

1. Location of community, name of lead Agency for the community effort (which may include public or tribal agencies, not-for-profit organizations, and/or public-private partnerships existing within a given community), and name and contact information of lead staff within lead agency. Communities or regions should be located outside of cities of 50,000 people or greater, with a special interest in less densely-populated and more remote areas.
2. A brief statement (one paragraph) about why the organization/agency is interested in becoming a Rural IMPACT Demonstration community.
3. A brief description of the rural or tribal community (include the location of the community, family/child demographics including race and ethnicity, educational attainment, and poverty rates). Include a description of the state of the local economy and any existing community-based industries, mature economic development efforts, and/or workforce training efforts. Additionally describe other factors impacting families with children. The description should use data to show why a two-generation approach is needed and has the potential to reduce child poverty.
4. A description of the local cross-agency partners, including a description of previous or current partnerships among the proposed partners; description of the lead organization/agency; and a discussion on the ability of local leadership to drive systems change including past successes in similar efforts, including those funded by HHS or the Departments of Agriculture, Education, or Labor. Include a description of proposed roles, and how partners will be accountable for their work. Discuss current cross-system coordination efforts, and identify the structure that would support this work.
5. A description of the vision of an aligned, two-generation approach to addressing child poverty in your community. Provide examples on where your community could better align child and adult programs, and how you will work to integrate or align services to help reduce child poverty. Describe the community assets upon which the two-generation strategy will be built. Include in this overview how workforce development, post-secondary education, early childhood programs, and family supports would work differently than they do now.
6. A description of how the community might plan to collect and manage data, including a description of past efforts to track data and manage initiatives based on results. Describe your current experience and infrastructure for data driven decision-making across systems.
7. Expectation of short and long-term outcomes and results from this initiative, with a focus on what changes you would see at the end of year one. How will you measure success in embedding a two-generation approach in your community? Explain in your answer how the two-generation approach will improve service and program delivery and over time, support decreasing child poverty. Outline related system or programmatic results or anticipated outcomes as a result of the Rural IMPACT Demonstration.

If possible, provide an estimate on the potential number of children, adults and families who could be impacted through this effort.

8. Unique aspects or particular strengths of your proposal. Include any existing two-generation work that you plan to build off and any innovative approaches, programmatic elements, public or private co-investment, or strategies that will be included (and discuss why they are a part of the vision)

APPENDIX A

NATIONAL RESOURCES

Alliance for Early Success

Bridging State Policies for Children and Families

www.earlysuccess.org/sites/default/files/AESBridgingPaper6.pdf

Ascend at the Aspen Institute

Ascend Playbook

www.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/two-generation-playbook

Two Generations. One Future. Anne Mosle and Nisha Patel. January, 2012.

www.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/two-generations-one-future

Gateway to Two Generations: The Potential for Early Childhood Programs and Partnerships to Support Children and Parents Together. Joan Lombardi, Anne Mosle, Nisha Patel, Rachel Schumacher and Jennifer Stedron, January, 2014.

www.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/gateways-to-two-generations

The Affordable Care Act: Affording Two-Generation Approaches to Health. Alan Weil, Shayla Regmi and Carrie Hanlon, September 2014.

www.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/the-affordable-care-act-affording-two-generation-approaches-to-health

Making Economic Security a Family Tradition: Report from the 2012 ThinkXChange. Ascend at the Aspen Institute, 2013.

www.ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/making-economic-security-a-family-tradition

Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)

Thriving Children, Successful Parents: A Two-Generation Approach to Policy. Stephanie Schmit, Hannah Matthews and Olivia Golden, July 2014.

www.clasp.org/resources-and-publications/publication-1/Two-Gen-Brief-FINAL.pdf

Child Trends

Two Generations in Poverty: Status and Trends among Parents and Children in the United States, 2000-2010. Zakia Redd, Tahilin Sanchez Karver, David Murphey, Kristin Anderson Moore and Dylan Knewstubb, November 2011.

www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/2011-25DUPGenerationsInPoverty.pdf

Foundation for Child Development

Promoting Two-Generation Strategies: A Getting-Started Guide for State and Local Policy Makers. Christopher T. King, Rheagan Coffey and Tara C. Smith, November 2013.

www.fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/Dual-Gen%20Getting%20Started%20Guide.pdf

Mother's Education and Children's Outcomes: How Dual-Generation Programs Offer Increased Opportunities for America's Children. Donald J. Hernandez and Jeffrey S. Napierala, July 2014.

<http://fcd-us.org/sites/default/files/Mothers%20Education%20and%20Childrens%20Outcomes%20FINAL.pdf>

Future of Children

Helping Parents, Helping Children: Two Generation Mechanisms, Volume 24, No. 1. Spring, 2014.

http://www.princeton.edu/futureofchildren/publications/journals/journal_details/index.xml?journalid=81

MDRC

Investing in Parents to Invest in Children, Testimony at the National Summit on America's Children. Gordon Berlin, President, MDRC, May, 2007.

<http://www.mdrc.org/publication/investing-parents-invest-children>

National Center for Children in Poverty

State Policies through a Two-Generation Lens: Strengthening the Collective Impact of Policies that Affect the Life Course of Young Children and their Parents. Shelia Smith, Mercedes Ekono and Taylor Robbins, September 2014.

www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_1092.pdf

National Human Services Assembly

Breaking the Cycle of Poverty in Young Families Two-Generation Strategies for Working with Disconnected Young Parents & Their Children. National Human Services Assembly, December 2013.

www.nationalassembly.org/Knowledge/documents/NHSAFull_Report2GenOSOWFamilies.pdf

Working Poor Families Project

Considering Two Generation Strategies in the States, Meegan Dugan Bassett, Summer 2014.

www.workingpoorfamilies.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/WPFP-Summer-2014-Brief.pdf

STATE SPECIFIC RESOURCES

UTAH. *A Two-Generation Strategy: Right from the Start*, Voices for Utah's Children. August, 2014.

www.utahchildren.org/issues/family-economic-success/item/download/533_169e72ab370180eeb7c0d0976509f259

A Two-Generation Approach to Ending Poverty in Utah, Voices for Utah's Children. June, 2014.

www.utahchildren.org/issues/family-economic-success/item/download/528_17b713294f1c5a3c58c0de8facc5b332

COLORADO. *Investing in Hope: A Two-Generation Approach to Asset Building*. Colorado Department of Human Services, CFED and Ascend at the Aspen Institute, 2014.

www.cfed.org/assets/pdfs/investing_in_hope.pdf