1. Descriptive Information

B4 – Two-Generation Program Approaches: Strengthening the Research Base for Emerging Programs Public and private agencies concerned about intergenerational poverty have revisited the idea of coordinated and aligned services for parents and their young children. Two-generation program approaches that combine high-quality education, career training, and job services for adults with high-quality ECE for their children aim to improve both family economic security and children's development. Few evaluations have learned how contemporary, still-developing, two-generation program approaches might enhance the impacts of programs serving only one generation. Panelists will discuss emerging two-generation program approaches, policy opportunities, and strategies for research and evaluation. A moderated discussion will cover conceptual frameworks, expected outcomes, opportunities for using program data, and evaluation strategies for two-generation programs.	**Facilitator** • Kathleen Dwyer, OPRE, ACF **Presenters** • Christine Ross, Mathematica Policy Research • Mary Bogle, Urban Institute • Hannah Mathews, Center for Law and Social Policy • Cara Sklar, Briya Public Charter School **Scribe** • Van-Kim Lin, Child Trends

2. Documents in Session Folder

Slides and content used in discussion are still in draft form and are being prepared for publication. Information will be made available when ready.

3. Brief Summary of Discussion

- **What do you see are the key challenges that two-generation programs face?**
  - Cara: At Briya, they provide education for both children (e.g., constructivist and holistic dual language programs) and adults (e.g., English as a Second Language, technical skills, and parenting). Then, they have time where parents practice what they are learning about parenting with their children with the support of teachers. The challenges they face include:
    - Integrating the adult and child program components
      - Solution: Adult education teachers learn the early childhood content and integrate the principles into adult education lessons. The school takes a whole family approach by interweaving information in both programs.
    - Handling the administration of the adult and child systems where there are separate reporting requirements and systems
      - Solution: They have aligned and integrated as many systems as they could to be able to report back to funders and legislators. They also learn about how to "advocate up" to shape policies to make sense for two-generation programs at the state and federal levels.
    - A need for partnership because their program is in a low-income, high-need area
      - Solution: They are fortunate to be co-located with Mary's Center, that provides medical, dental, mental, and social services, but they continue to do grant-writing for more support and to build partnerships for other services.
  - Hannah: There is a challenge to "advocate up" to influence regulations because programs are facing challenges at the state-level. When state policies focus on two generations, they are better able to reach many more families.
  - Mary: Effective leadership in two generation programs is critical and can be measured by policymakers. There could be more cross-training so that people can switch roles to learn about each other's jobs to speak across generations as well as topical needs and services.

- Chris: This discussion has highlighted the importance of organizational partnerships to deliver services to both generations. Often, different organizations deliver services to children and adults. Mathematica and its partners at Northwestern University are developing a partnership logic model to show dimensions along which organizations may collaborate to provide two-generation services, which draws on business and public management frameworks.
  - The logic model shows organizations partnering along a continuum from cooperation → coordination, → collaboration along five dimensions (engagement, mission, resources, co-creation of value, and innovation and systems change). This logic model is a theory about how organizations collaborate. We need research to measure these dimensions of the partnerships that provide two-generation services, and to measure the development of partnerships over time. It would also be useful to measure how the level of partnership development along these dimensions relates to families' engagement in services, the quality of services, and ultimately, to program outcomes for parents and children.

- **How are states thinking about two-generation approaches? What challenges are they facing in implementing these approaches?**
  - Hannah: At the state-level, policymakers are looking at policy and systems reforms with intentional focus on whole family approach (development of policies, reforming policies, practices, rules and regulations, and budgets) to work better for low-income families.
    - CLASP has partnered with the National Governor's Association, the Annie E. Casey Foundation and other foundations to launch the five-state Parents and Children Thriving Together project, which provides technical assistances to help states develop two-generation initiatives. They are finding that each state is approaching two-generation reforms differently and with different focuses. For example, some are looking at workforce development programs, and others may look at chronic absenteeism in schools. However, all states, to varying degrees, must focus on improving family economic self-sufficiency, early childhood and child care, and supports for parents in their caregiving role.
    - Challenges include: Two-generation approaches requires bringing different agencies together, which is not something agencies have done previously. A significant effort is going toward learning how to work across agencies, sharing information and data.
  - Mary: Certain policies can impede two-generational approaches in states and how states define their policies, in practice, may benefit one generation over another. There are two vectors in service integration
    - Across needs and services: This is more evolutionary (e.g., how do you make food stamps work for two generations?)
    - Across generations: This is more revolutionary (e.g., if a state decides to push the field forward, other states may follow suit)
  - Christine: An important issue is that states are focused on "return on investment," which is appropriate, but they need answers in the short-term, which may be challenging for two-generation programs, particularly when the programs are developing.

- **What research and evaluation approaches can support emerging two-generation approaches?**
  - Christine: Many two-generation programs are "emerging" programs, or programs that are still developing services for parents and children in a way that engages both generations and offers a more seamless experience. For programs at this stage of development, it's best to do descriptive research to support program development. The research can help program leaders understand what services clients are receiving, the quality of services, and the levels of outcomes for parents and children. They have developed a logic model that is based on framework developed by Chase-Lansdale and Brooks-Gunn,

2014. While the logic model includes many possible services and outcomes that could be part of a two-generation program, each two-generation program could develop its own tailored version of the model by focusing on the most appropriate services and outcomes for their own program. The logic model is a theory for how the program affects outcomes for children and families; it can be used to identify the program services and outcomes to be measured to assess how well the program's actual practice aligns with the program's expectations. Where they are not in alignment, program leaders and staff can identify ways to modify service delivery or other activities.

    - It's important to measure program outcomes for families and children. ACF has funded measures compendia for child and adult outcomes over the years, and other large-scale studies of children and families can be consulted to identify ways to measure outcomes. Ascend also produced a paper, *Making Tomorrow Better Together* in January 2016, that provides links to many outcome measures that programs might want to use.
    - Programs may need research partners to support this work by helping staff to develop a program logic model, advising on or building data systems that the program can then use, conduct data analysis and help staff interpret the information.

- Cara: At the program level, it helps to use data that programs already have instead of asking them to collect a lot of additional data. She wants to be the least disruptive to what teachers are already doing. Programs should also be included in design as much as possible. It's hard for a program to be measured on something they didn't intend to be an outcome.
- Mary: Researchers need to get on the ground to understand the program at a conceptual level to help inform studies. When researchers want to measure outcomes, the design-level is so important because you want complementary and mutually-reinforcing inputs and outputs that come out of two-generational programs. Oftentimes, we are working with existing data and measuring the wrong things. Researchers can get in there and help a program think things through. Researcher can help design that. Population-level outcomes are tough to measure, so all two-generation programs can work together to understand what to measure in the aggregate. Also, policy and program systems should not use different logic models when measuring two-generation programs.
- Hannah: States can improve policies when they understand research behind parent well-being and employment and its importance for children

4. **Summary of Key issues raised** (facilitators are encouraged to spend the last 3-5 minutes of workshops summarizing the key issues raised during the session; bullets below are prompts for capturing the kinds of issues we're looking for)
    a. There is room in the field to better conceptualize two-generation programs because two-generation programs vary, and the way states want to reform two-generation programs vary. Mathematica, Northwestern University, and Urban are developing logic models to help conceptualize and measure two-generation programs.
    b. Two-generation programs are still emerging, so there are methodological and research implications:
        i. A logic model can be used to inform research design, and these logic models should span across generations and across practice and policy.
        ii. Research design requires a strong conceptual understanding of the program.
        iii. Programs can provide input into program goals for families as well as what data are already available at the program-level and what outcomes may be feasible to measure.
        iv. Research can start with descriptive studies in order to help programs develop their service models before moving into effectiveness studies.
    c. In order to have state policies support two-generation approaches, states need to
        i. Understand that the return on investment of two-generation programs may come over a longer time horizon
        ii. Realize that the way program policies are written may focus on one generation more than the other, making it more difficult to serve the needs of whole families