

Building Community Capacity to Advance Equity and Cross-Sector Systems Alignment

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April 18, 2019

Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium
Annual Meeting | Washington, DC



Networks of
Opportunity for
Child Wellbeing
POWERED BY VITAL VILLAGE



Vital Village Network

The Vital Village Network is committed to maximizing child, family, and community wellbeing.

Since 2010, Vital Village has fostered partnerships between residents and organizations designed to improve the capacity of three Boston communities to promote child wellbeing and prevent early life adversities.



Equity Approach to Community Capacity Building

Trauma-informed
and early life
adversity lens

Cross-sector
collaborations to
foster alignment

Community co-
design and
leadership model

Strengths based,
solutions-finding
approach

Iterative
improvement
cycles

Curate and share
data

What is NOW?

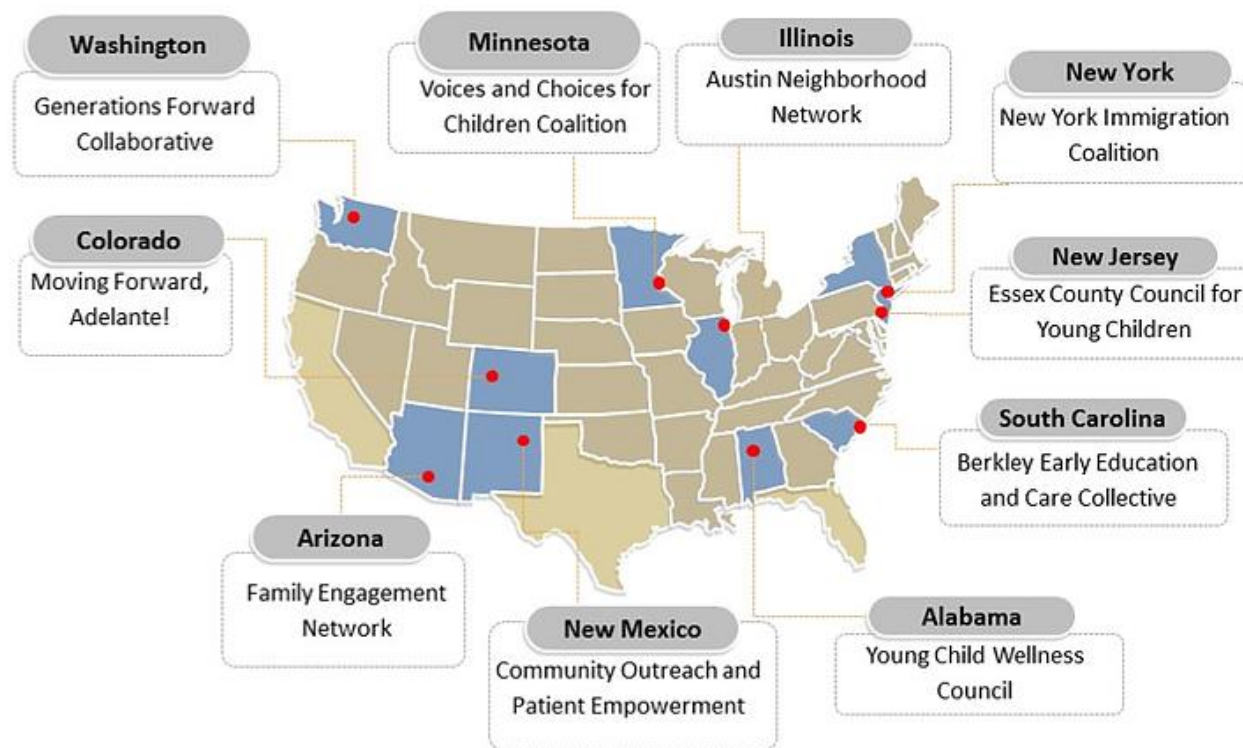
Networks of Opportunity for Child Wellbeing (NOW) is a national initiative led by Vital Village to improve the capacity of local communities and coalitions to advance health and educational equity for children.

The NOW Innovation Forum is a national network of peer communities working to promote child wellbeing and prevent early childhood adversities.



NOW Learning Community

Supports **10 selected communities** over 18 months to build essential knowledge, skills, and tools to scale and sustain equitable transformation of early childhood, education, and health systems in their neighborhood, city, or county.



Learn more at: <https://www.networksofopportunity.org/learning-community>

Building a Culture of Health through Project HOPE (Harnessing Opportunity for Positive, Equitable Early Childhood Development)

A **multi-level and multi-pronged approach** to generate real progress toward equitable outcomes for young children (prenatal to age five) and their families by:

- **Building the capacity** of local communities, state leaders, cross-sector state teams, and local coalitions to prevent social adversities in early childhood and promote child wellbeing.
- Fostering **connections across communities and states** that have multi-sector coalitions, networks, or initiatives committed to reducing inequities



Children's Health System

*Supported by Robert Wood
Johnson Foundation*



Innovations on the Ground

Linking Immigrant Families with Early Childhood Education (LIFE) Project

- **Location:** New York City, NY
- **Focus Community:** Immigrant families in Bronx, East Harlem, Brooklyn
- **Lead Agencies:** New York Immigration Coalition, LSA Family Health Services, Masa, Fifth Avenue Committee
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Culturally responsive outreach and enrollment to empower immigrant families to access quality PreK and 3K that meets their needs (NYC DOE program)
 - Remove structural barriers to access family-sustaining support services
 - Advocate for DOE to adopt equitable policies and practices



Snapshot: LIFE Project

Coalition Strengths and Expertise

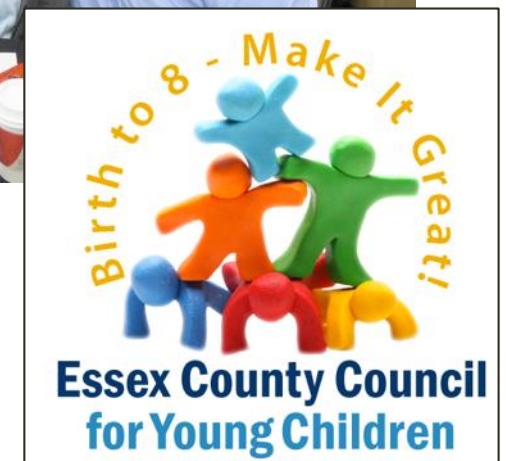
- Model for partnership
- Culturally responsive CBOs with deep relationships with families
- Long history of parent engagement
- Robust advocacy experience
- Successful pilot year

NOW Capacity Building Focus

- Data storytelling and strategic communications to policymakers
- Strengthening internal mixed-methods data collection systems

Essex County Council for Young Children (ECCYC)

- **Location:** Newark, NJ
- **Focus Community:** City of Newark
- **Lead Agency:** Programs for Parents (PfP)
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Establish Newark as a trauma-informed early care and education community
 - Strengthen community champion model through trainings and professional development opportunities
- Nested in Join State for Project HOPE



Snapshot: ECCYC

Coalition Strengths and Expertise

- Established coalition structure and cross-sector partnerships
- Robust leadership pathways and training model
- PfP serves as Child Care Resource and Referral agency for county
- Strong history of engaging local, county, and state early childhood leaders

NOW Capacity Building Focus

- Integrate trauma-informed training models for parents, providers, professionals, and other partners
- Refine parent engagement and leadership development strategy

Young Child Wellness Council (YCWC)

- **Location:** Tuscaloosa, AL
- **Focus Community:** Crescent East Neighborhood
– City of Tuscaloosa/Tuscaloosa County
- **Lead Agencies:** Child Development Resources (University of Alabama), Alabama Department of Public Health, Community Service Programs of West Alabama
- **Focus Areas:**
 - Cross-system development and implementation of targeted outreach and prevention services
 - Strengthening the continuum of family centered maternal and child health services and supports
 - Ongoing parent outreach/engagement and development of community voice
- Nested in BUILD State c/o Project HOPE



Snapshot: YCWC

Coalition Strengths and Expertise

- Behavioral health-primary care integration, developmental screenings
- Infant/early childhood mental health consultation model
- Parent engagement strategies and partnerships Existing relationships with state leaders

NOW Capacity Building Focus

- Strengthening parent engagement
- Engaging with municipal and elected leaders for cross-agency and sector alignment

What are we learning from communities?

Centering parents and leadership pathways as part of governance structure

Data storytelling tools to create counter stories

Building adaptive, flexible (data) systems and processes to respond to community needs

Fostering cross-site peer learning through diverse modalities

State-community feedback loops – leveraging existing relationships; letting communities lead



Thank You!

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