

Today's Session

Introduction to OPRE's Coordinated Services Portfolio



Examples from Current and Past Projects

AMCS

VoCS

NS2G



Reflections on Cross-Project Coordination



Discussion

Brainstorming Gaps and Next Steps



OPRE's Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio

Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio

- Research and evaluation projects focused on the intentional coordination of two or more services
 - Provided under the umbrella of a single organization OR
 - Provided by multiple organizations
- Projects span OPRE's research portfolios
 - Head Start
 - Child care
 - Home visiting
 - Child welfare
 - Welfare and family self-sufficiency

Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio

- OPRE aims to extract lessons and key findings from projects across this broad portfolio
 - To gain a comprehensive understanding of the state of the evidence related to service coordination and
 - To identify knowledge gaps and next steps for research and evaluation
- Moving toward a coordinated research agenda
 - OPRE cross-project workgroup
 - Cross-project convenings and toolkit of resources to promote coordination across projects
 - New resource page on OPRE website to guide audiences to relevant projects!
 - Inclusion of information on new publications pointing to the cross-cutting portfolio and the resource page



Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio

- <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/coordinated-services-research-and-evaluation-portfolio>

PROJECT NAME	FOCAL POPULATION	RELEVANT ACF PROGRAMS	LEVEL OF SERVICE COORDINATION EXAMINED	YEARS	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
Understanding the Value of Centralized Services (VOCS)	Families with low incomes	Child Care, Child Welfare, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Early Head Start, Head Start, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Local	2020-2022	Literature review and qualitative research to explore the advantages and disadvantages of providing multiple services for families with low incomes at one location.

Overarching portfolio research questions

1. What services do initiatives coordinate for children and families?
2. How do initiatives coordinate services?
3. What factors shape coordination?
4. Who is involved in the coordination process?
5. What are the barriers, facilitators, benefits, and challenges related to coordinating services?

A Picture of Service Coordination

- Service coordination can be initiated at federal, state, tribal, and local levels.
- Federal, state, or tribal level coordination can involve:
 - system-level work such as setting policy or organizational roles;
 - connecting agencies and promoting partnership among them; and/or
 - providing resources and assistance to encourage and sustain local alignment across service providers.
- Locally, coordinated services may take a holistic approach that considers the range of a child or family's needs.

Examples of Coordination Strategies

- Adopt a shared mission and goals
- Align program rules, such as enrollment criteria and service calendars, to enable better coordination
- Emphasize relationships and communication between organizations and agencies, or between multiple service providers and families
- Align, share, and/or jointly pursue resources, such as funding, staffing, and data systems
- Streamline processes, such as intake, enrollment, assessment, and referrals
- Follow up with families or partners to support service completion as families progress
- Collect data, measure common outcomes, and participate in a shared continuous quality improvement process

Toward a Coordinated Services Research Agenda

- Cross-cutting review of findings from research project activities, including literature reviews, environmental scans, conceptual model development, and qualitative and quantitative research
- Identification of research gaps and next steps for research and evaluation



ASSESSING MODELS OF COORDINATED SERVICES
FOR LOW-INCOME CHILDREN & THEIR FAMILIES

- Operating at level
- Coordinate at child-level, or

Coordinated services approaches:

An effort by any individual program or a group of programs, an agency, department, or other organization focused on coordinating services for low-income families, at the state or local level.

We use the term “coordinated services approaches” to refer to these coordinated services efforts because in many cases, the effort involves coordination among multiple “programs” or “agencies.” Coordinated services approaches can include a variety of models or configurations for coordinating services for families.



Early care
&
education

Family
Economic
Security

Model scan and analysis of 40 coordinated services approaches profiles

Step 1: Review of public information to identify approaches
N = 207







Step 2: Identify approaches that meet study criteria
N= 95

Step 3: Development of selected profiles
N = 61

Step 4: Verification of profiles
N = 40

November, 2018 – December, 2019

Models of Coordinated Services

State Level	Local Level
 <p data-bbox="545 465 1284 586">State Systems Change & Investment in Family Services</p>	 <p data-bbox="1691 496 2440 554">Family Centered Coordination</p>
 <p data-bbox="580 793 1243 915">State-Supported Local ECE Coordination</p>	 <p data-bbox="1671 793 2466 915">Community-Oriented Collective Impact for Families</p>
 <p data-bbox="537 1143 1289 1200">State Family Services Provider</p>	 <p data-bbox="1798 1143 2346 1193">Focused Coordination</p>

- Improving alignment of services for parents & children



Local level aspects to

Innovation at local level
Grants

Individual-level data

Minnesota 2-Generation

State Systems Change & Investment in Family Services

Key types of coordination at state level



State-Supported Local ECE Coordination

- Focused on improving alignment of ECE system
- Often developed through legislation
- Provide structure for local ECE coordination
- Collect individual-level data
- *For example, Oregon Early Learning Hubs*

Key types of coordination at state level

- State directly involved in local service delivery
- Coordination of local services supported by state
- Shares some characteristics of other models
- Often collects individual-level data, but sometimes limited
- *For example, 'Ohana Nui (HI)*



State Family Services Provider

Key types of coordination at state level



Family Centered Coordination

- Increase family access to services
- Many track families in combined data system
- *For example, Northside Achievement Zone (MN)*

Key types of coordination at local level

- Lead agency coordinated partners around community-wide outcomes
- Primarily administrative coordination
- *For example, South Coast Early Learning Hub (OR)*



Community-Oriented Collective Impact for Families

Key types of coordination at local level

- Small number of service-providing partners focused on specific program/population
- Usually grant funded
- One set of enrollment criteria
- Data collected for grant requirements
- *For example, Central Georgia Technical College*



Focused Coordination

Key types of coordination at local level

Findings from the
*Understanding the Value of Centralized
Services Study (VOCS)*



VOCS Team

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Background

- Congressional directive to *“research how centralized community resource centers, which allow citizens to apply for several Federal social services in a single location, can reduce the burden on constituents and ensure the cost-effective allocation of Federal resources.”*



“Centralized Community Resource Center”

Brick-and-mortar locations where individuals can apply for or receive multiple services and/or benefits that are funded by the federal government. This focuses on single physical locations where multiple federally funded services or programs are co-located.



Research Questions

- What is the range of models that have been used to provide centralized social services?
- What do we know about the different models used to deliver services centrally?
- What was the impetus for co-locating and coordinating services? How does the impetus for centralization relate to the types or models of co-location and centralization?
- How are services being coordinated virtually and how does it differ from physical co-location? How does virtual coordination complement centralized services provided in person? What are the costs and benefits of virtual co-location? What lessons can practitioners learn from the COVID-19 pandemic as it relates to centralized services?



Methods

- Engagement of experts and interested individuals
- Literature review (2021-2022)
- Site visits (spring 2022):
 - Blackfeet Manpower One Stop (Browning, MT)
 - Neighborhood Place (Louisville, KY)
 - Wayne Metro Community Action Agency (Detroit, MI)



Features of Centralized Service Delivery

FEATURES	BLACKFEET MANPOWER	NEIGHBORHOOD PLACE	WAYNE METRO
Shared Mission/Vision	●	●	●
Universal Application	●		●
Central Intake	●	●	●
Warm Handoffs		●	●
Data Release Form	●	●	
Shared Data System	●		●
Braided Funding	●		●
Blended Funding	●		



Access

- Centralizing services can increase access for clients:
 - Speed
 - Efficiency
 - Access to additional services
- Limited availability and staff capacity could limit access if demand increases as a result of centralization.
- The literature review did not identify studies that examined how centralization impacts client outcomes.

“I prefer to go in person, 'cause the workers there get to know you. They get to know your case. They know what your situation is, and they can cross reference other organizations with other services based on what your needs are. They can analyze that and say well, “you need to call so-and-so.”

- Client



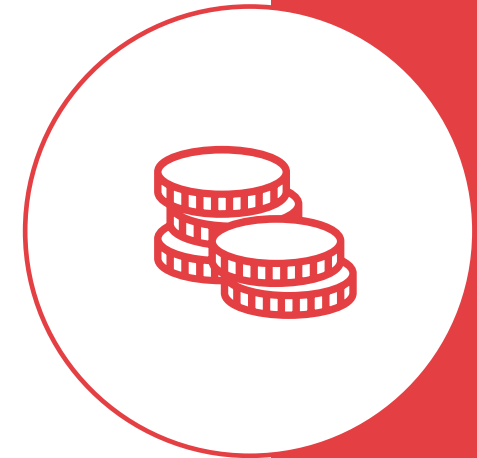
“There is no reason not to [centralize]. It benefits everyone we are here to serve. We are here to serve our community, not ourselves. Can’t expect people to succeed if there are barriers and walls, so we take those barriers down.”

- Staff member



Allocation of Resources

- Centralizing services can result in a more efficient allocation of resources.
- Possible efficiencies (depending on type of centralization):
 - Saving time and money for clients
 - Assistance in securing additional funding
 - Reducing time and resources on tracking and reporting for different funding streams
- Centralizing services also requires up-front investment.



Facilitators for Centralization



Blending funding

“It is so important that each person and agency stays outside of their silos, everybody needs to sit at the kitchen table and work with the other agencies there.”

- Staff member



Buy-in from staff and leadership



Communication with clients

“We know the people at [program] care and aren’t there just for a paycheck.”

- Client



Data sharing



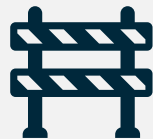
Barriers to Centralization



Physical space



Information sharing and training



Resistance or hesitancy to change



Publications on OPRE's website

Final Report

- Synthesis of findings

Site Briefs

- Highlights of the sites visited

Practitioner Brief

- Spotlight on funding for centralized services

Client Brief

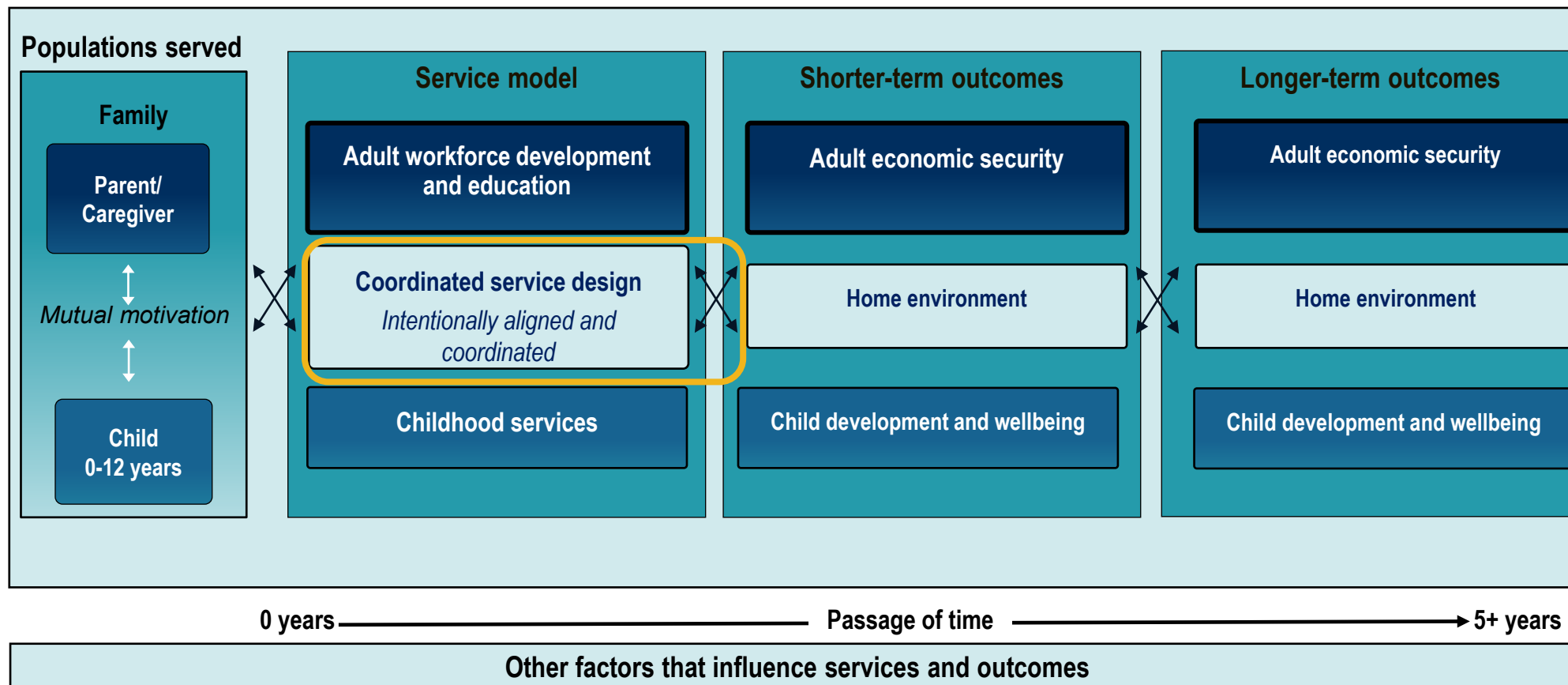
- Summary of client engagement



**Mutual Reinforcement for Two-
Generation Initiatives:
A Measurement Tool from NS2G**



Building on previous work



Adaptation of Chase-Lansdale & Brooks-Gunn (2014)





How do we capture “two-gen-ness”?

/ We considered four constructs from the change model for measurement:

- Mutual reinforcement
- Alignment
- Coordination
- Intentionality

/ Experts advised that a measure of mutual reinforcement has the potential to capture what they called “two-gen-ness”, meaning:

- The characteristics of a two-generation initiative that help families achieve outcomes beyond what single-generation services could attain on their own

/ A measure for mutual reinforcement did not exist yet





What is mutual reinforcement?

Mutual reinforcement occurs when service providers align and build on each other's efforts to serve whole families by adopting a shared vision and working toward common or compatible goals

These efforts are **intentionally coordinated** to make use of each service provider's strengths or expertise.

They can include...

Designing and **offering services of high quality and appropriate intensity** to caregivers and children in the same families

Developing and using **shared measures** to assess both caregivers and children in the same families

Developing a **common theory of change or aligned mission statements** to positively affect both generations within a family



Steps for developing the measurement tool

Definition

Finalized 4-part definition of mutual reinforcement

- Partners
- Principles
- Infrastructure
- Service Delivery Strategies

4 parts → measurement tool subscales

Measures mapping

Gathered existing resources from the field

- Mapped their specific items, ideas, concepts, or activities to 4 parts of the definition
- Identified relevant existing items and gaps; created new items
- Prepared our initial tool for testing

Small pilot study

Tested and refined the measurement tool and its scoring methodology

- 3 initiatives participated
- 3 waves of data collection



What's included in the tool?

The Excel-based measurement tool includes 14 sets of survey-style questions

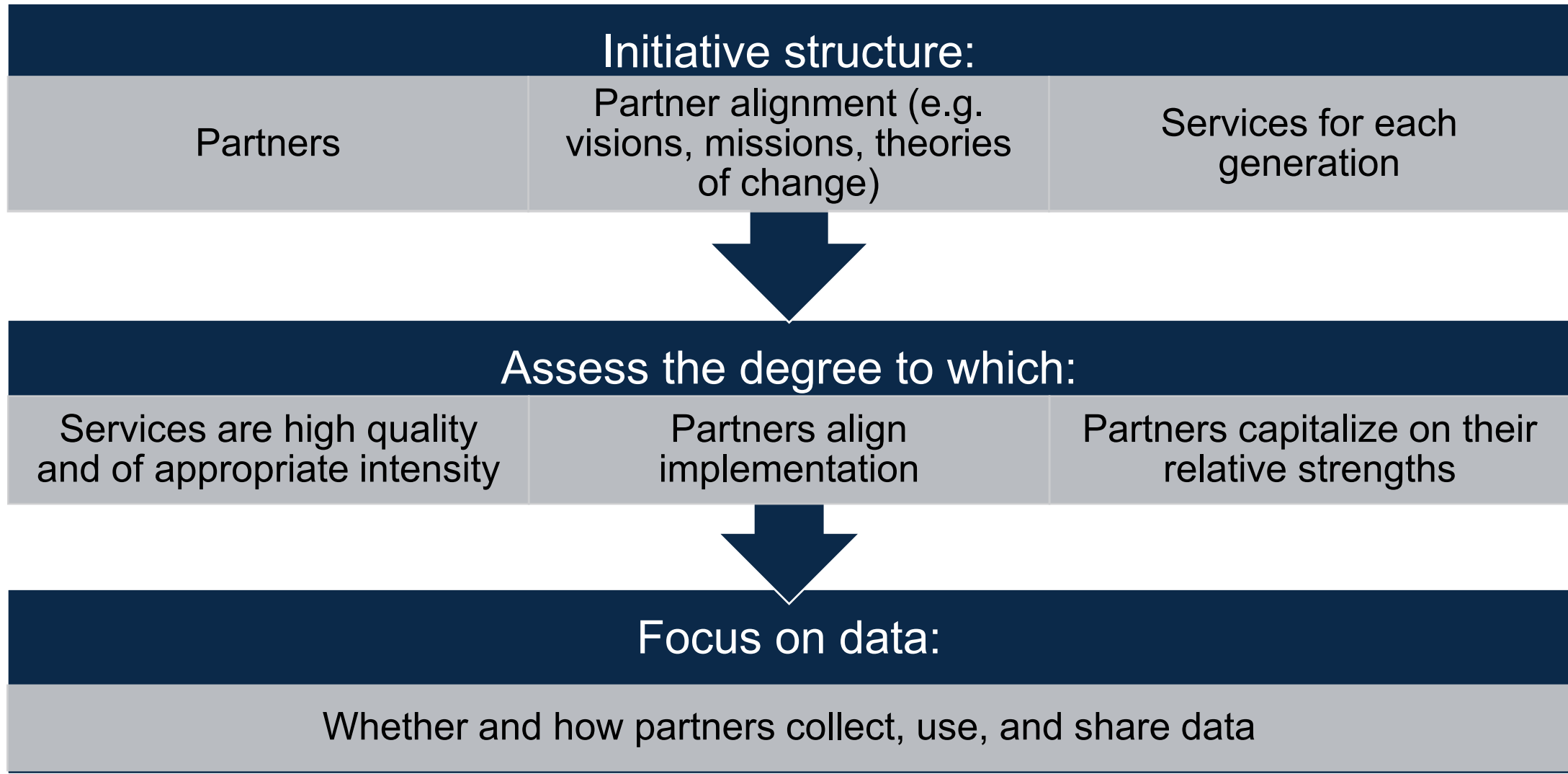
It calculates an overall “score” for Mutual Reinforcement and 3 subscales:

- Principles
- Infrastructure
- Service Delivery Strategies

Note: Higher scores indicate stronger levels of mutual reinforcement. However, this tool and its scoring method are preliminary. More testing is needed after the NS2G project.



What are the 14 questions?



Suggested steps for completing the tool

Step 1: Organizational reflection

Each partner organization completes the tool.

Staff identify opportunities to strengthen mutual reinforcement with an emphasis on *their organization's contributions* to the initiative.


Staff use responses to Question 1 to determine who should be involved in Step 2.

Step 2: Initiative-wide reflection

Representatives from each partner organization meet to discuss results.

Using the collective results, partners determine improvements they can make to strengthen mutual reinforcement *across the initiative*.

“[Completing the tool as a group] was really an “aha” moment for us and how we could approach this in a holistic sense. Now we have a monthly meeting set up to discuss data, programs, and reporting together.”



Repeat at regular intervals.

Opportunities to share learning across OPRE projects

Motivation and goals for cross-project coordination

- Under the NS2G contract, OPRE allocated funds to facilitate coordination with OPRE and contractor staff



To support projects so that they complement, rather than duplicate, one another



Think more deeply and concretely about project coordination

Projects involved in coordination

Project name	Relevant ACF programs	Activities
Assessing Models of Coordinated Services (AMCS)	Child Care, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Early Head Start, Head Start, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)	Literature review and environmental scan, qualitative research
Building Capacity to Evaluate Community Collaborations to Strengthen and Preserve Families (CWCC)	Child Welfare	Evaluation technical assistance, process evaluation
Coordination of Comprehensive Family Support Services in Head Start Programs (Head Start Connects)	Head Start	Literature review, case studies, theory of change development, descriptive study
Next Steps for Rigorous Research on Two-Generation Approaches (NS2G)	Child Care, CSBG, Early Head Start, Head Start, TANF	Formative evaluations, measure development
Understanding the Value of Centralized Services (VOCS)	Child Care, Child Welfare, CSBG, Early Head Start, Head Start, TANF	Literature review, qualitative research

Cross-project coordination group meetings

- Initial meeting in December 2020 identified priority discussion topics and project synergies, overlaps, and gaps
- Topics discussed
 - Tools for projects to support coordination
 - Common definitions and research questions
 - Coordinated dissemination
 - Next steps to inform a research agenda
- Meeting series products
 - Toolkit for contractor staff
 - Shared definition of coordinated services
 - Text box for all products
 - Coordinated services portfolio website text

Opportunities, risks, and gaps for coordinated services projects



Sharing data collection approaches (e.g. measures)
Cross-project analysis (e.g. aligning terminology)



Burden on sites participating in multiple projects
Relying on the same experts and active engagement partners
Answering the same research questions (e.g. duplicative literature reviews)



Findings and indicators of effectiveness (including understanding which family outcomes describe the impact of coordinated services on families)
Influence of technical assistance

A shared understanding of coordinated services

- Available on OPRE's Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio webpage
- Three features of the common understanding of coordinated services components to definition:
 - Goals of coordination
 - Levels of service coordination
 - Examples of coordination strategies

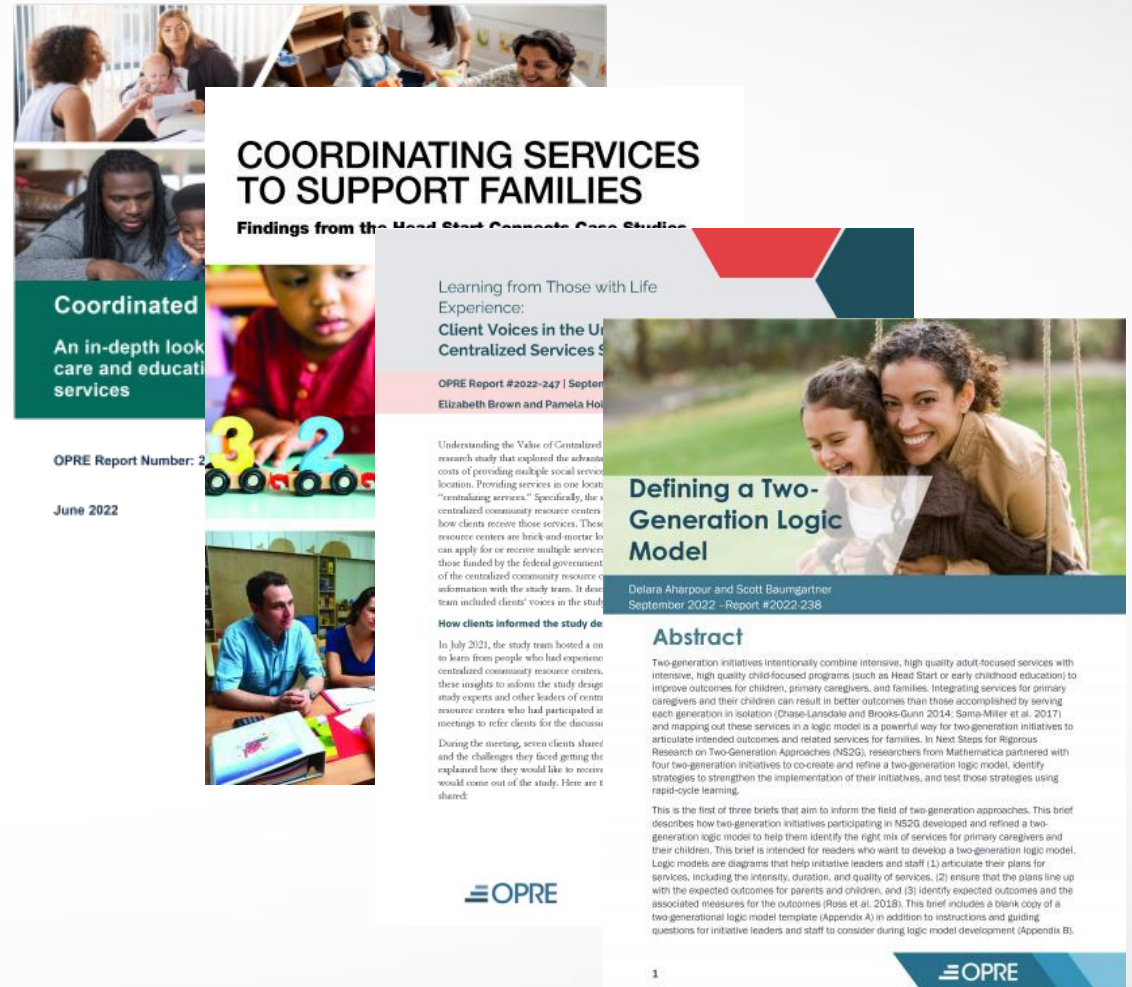
“Regardless of the level at which services are initiated or funded, a common expectation is that coordination will be felt by the families receiving the services.”

- OPRE definition of coordinated services

Coordinating dissemination activities

OPRE's Portfolio on Coordinated Services

This project is part of a portfolio of research focused on coordinated services to support children and families. Projects within this research portfolio address the intentional coordination of two or more services. These projects span OPRE's program-specific research portfolios, including child care, Head Start, home visiting, child welfare, and welfare and family self-sufficiency. More information about OPRE's Coordinated Services projects can be found at <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/coordinated-services-research-and-evaluation-portfolio>.



COORDINATING SERVICES TO SUPPORT FAMILIES
Findings from the Head Start Connects Case Studies

Coordinated
An in-depth look at care and educational services

OPRE Report Number: 247
June 2022

Learning from Those with Life Experience:
Client Voices in the Use of Centralized Services
OPRE Report #2022-247 | September 2022
Elizabeth Brown and Pamela Holt

Understanding the Value of Centralized research study that explored the advantages and costs of providing multiple social services in one location. Providing services in one location "centralizing services." Specifically, the centralized community resource centers how clients receive those services. These resource centers are brick-and-mortar locations that can apply for or receive multiple services, those funded by the federal government of the centralized community resource centers. Information with the study team. It does not include clients' voices in the study.

How clients informed the study design
In July 2021, the study team hosted a meeting to learn from people who had experienced centralized community resource centers. These insights to inform the study design study experts and other leaders of centralized resource centers who had participated in meetings to refer clients for the discussion.

During the meeting, seven clients shared the challenges they faced getting the explained how they would like to receive would come out of the study. Here are 1 shared:

Defining a Two-Generation Logic Model
Delara Aharpour and Scott Baumgartner
September 2022 - Report #2022-238

Abstract
Two-generation initiatives intentionally combine intensive, high quality adult-focused services with intensive, high quality child-focused programs (such as Head Start or early childhood education) to improve outcomes for children, primary caregivers, and families. Integrating services for primary caregivers and their children can result in better outcomes than those accomplished by serving each generation in isolation (Drause-Lansdale and Brooks-Gunn 2014; Samer-Miller et al. 2017) and mapping out these services in a logic model is a powerful way for two-generation initiatives to articulate intended outcomes and related services for families. In Next Steps for Rigorous Research on Two-Generation Approaches (NS2G), researchers from Mathematica partnered with four two-generation initiatives to co-create and refine a two-generation logic model, identify strategies to strengthen the implementation of their initiatives, and test those strategies using rapid-cycle learning.

This is the first of three briefs that aim to inform the field of two-generation approaches. This brief describes how two-generation initiatives participating in NS2G developed and refined a two-generation logic model to help them identify the right mix of services for primary caregivers and their children. This brief is intended for readers who want to develop a two-generation logic model. Logic models are diagrams that help initiative leaders and staff (1) articulate their plans for services, including the intensity, duration, and quality of services, (2) ensure that the plans line up with the expected outcomes for parents and children, and (3) identify expected outcomes and the associated measures for the outcomes (Rios et al. 2018). This brief includes a blank copy of a two-generation logic model template (Appendix A) in addition to instructions and guiding questions for initiative leaders and staff to consider during logic model development (Appendix B).

OPRE

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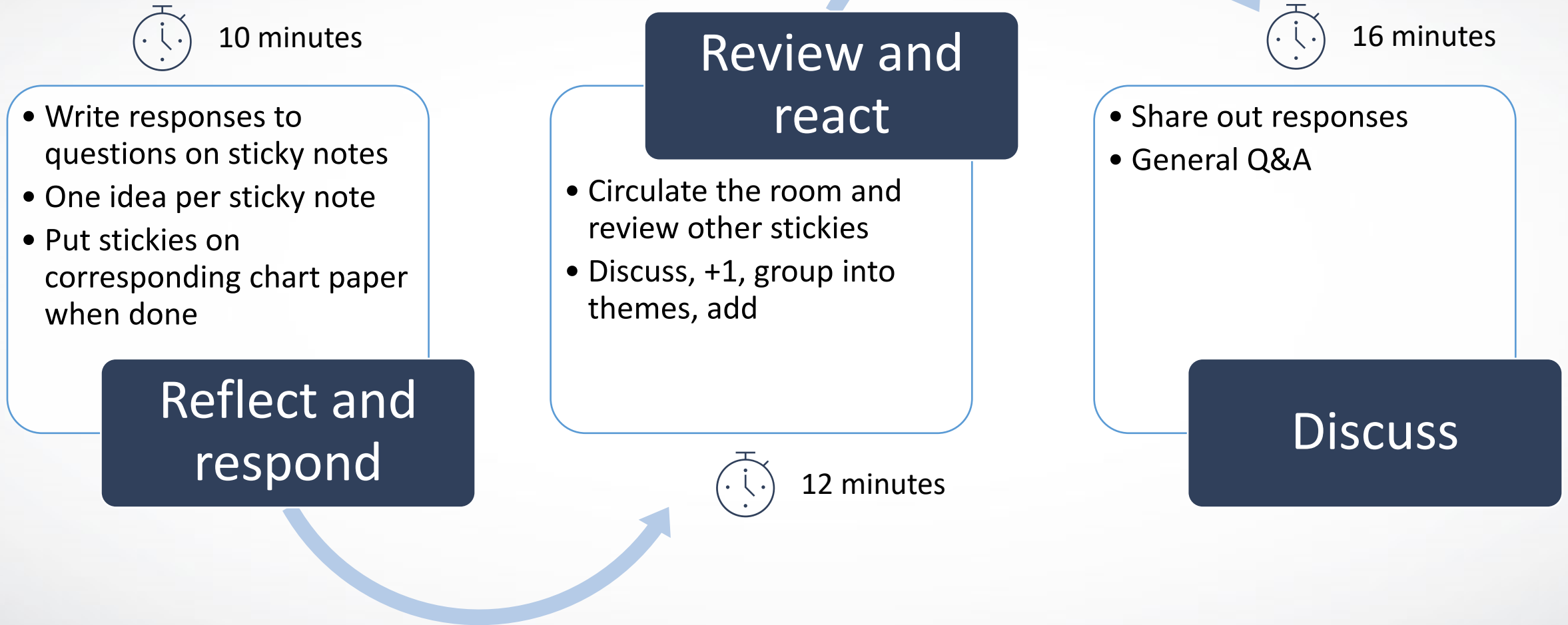
OPRE

Discussion activity

Reflections for future OPRE research on coordinated services

1. What information would be most helpful to provide to early childhood practitioners interested in coordinating services?
2. What format and channels are most useful for disseminating research on coordinated services to raise awareness, maximize reach, and foster shared learning across sectors?
3. What are the most pressing research needs to address to advance understanding of coordinated services? What questions need to be addressed? What constructs need to be better defined and measured?
4. How can we apply an equity lens to research on coordinated services moving forward?

Process



Thank you!

- For more information:
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- Learn more about the Coordinated Services Research and Evaluation Portfolio:
 - Visit: <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/coordinated-services-research-and-evaluation-portfolio>
 - Use the QR code to the right

