

NCCP Pathways Project – Illinois Action for Children  
 Early Childhood Action Partnerships  
 Presentation to Managing Partners

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November 14, 2012



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Overview of Presentation

- ◆ Background on NCCP and children living in poverty
- ◆ Research on school readiness
- ◆ Pathways conceptual framework
- ◆ Overview of Pathways Goals
- ◆ Strategic planning: A Systems Approach
- ◆ Pathways communities, to date
  - Lunch Break
- ◆ Pathways Process & Tool-Kit
- ◆ Results
- ◆ Evidence from the field
- ◆ Discussion and Q&A



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Who is NCCP?

- ◆ NCCP is the nation's leading public policy center dedicated to the economic security, health, and well-being of America's low-income children and families.
- ◆ Part of Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, NCCP promotes family-oriented solutions at the state and national levels.
- ◆ Our ultimate goal: Improved outcomes for the next generation.



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NCCP is a nonpartisan, public interest research organization

- ◆ **Our Vision:** Improved family economic security; healthy, nurturing families; and children who thrive at home and in school.
- ◆ **Our Goal:** Effect research-informed policy and practice that will help children thrive and smarter spending of existing public funds.



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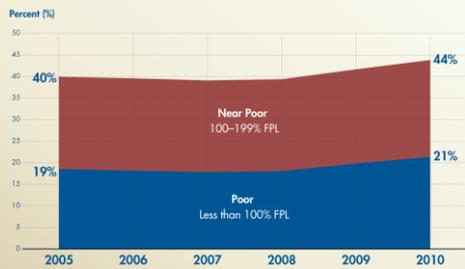
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Children living in low-income and poor families, 2005–2010



Source: NCCP (2012). *Basic Facts About Low-income Children, 2010: Children Under Age 18*



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### Federal Poverty Level (2012)

Family Size	100%	200%
1	\$11,170	\$22,340
2	\$15,130	\$30,260
3	\$19,090	\$38,180
4	\$23,050	\$46,100
5	\$27,010	\$54,020
6	\$30,970	\$61,940
7	\$34,930	\$69,860
8	\$38,890	\$77,780

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Poverty Guidelines, 2012  
 Accessed on June 12, 2012 at <http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/12poverty.shtml>



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## Research on School Readiness

- ◆ What is school readiness?
  - Physical well-being, social & emotional function, approaches to learning, language & literacy development, cognitive & general knowledge including math and science
- ◆ The national ECLS-K study shows that kindergarten test scores account for about 60% of the variance in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade test scores
- ◆ Children who are doing poorly in preschool and kindergarten are likely to continue to do poorly through elementary grades
- ◆ Other predictors of school readiness include: Parental health including mental health, parenting behaviors, and neighborhood resources



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## The Pathways Project

- ◆ What is the overarching goal of Pathways?
  - To improve school readiness so that children are on a positive achievement trajectory in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, especially those growing up in difficult circumstances, such as poverty
- ◆ Why the Pathways model?
  - The evidence indicated that neither a individual intervention nor single system was sufficient for improving children's school readiness
  - Pathways aims to strengthens the linkages between and build capacity within early childhood systems (e.g., early childhood care and education, health/mental health, family supports)



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## Process for Developing the Pathways Framework

- ◆ Conducted a literature review
- ◆ Convened a group of experienced researchers and practitioners with diverse expertise
- ◆ Mental Map of School Readiness Outcome
  - Considering the research, theories, and experiences that you have been exposed to, what could a community do to raise rates of school readiness?
- ◆ Framing the question in this way made clear the "big picture" or systems implications of this work



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## Pathways: A Systems Approach to Improve School Readiness

1. Provides reliable guidance about what has worked elsewhere, users can combine with their understanding of local conditions and opportunities
2. Provides policy makers and philanthropic funders with new ways of understanding what works, so that they think and act more broadly and deeply in their efforts to improve outcomes
3. Creates a forum through which community experience can continuously inform and modify the knowledge base
4. Makes it easier for an array of stakeholders to develop strategies across disciplines and jurisdictions



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## Pathways Framework: Identify *Essential Attributes*

- ◆ A shift from focusing on *successful programs* to *attributes that are crucial for school success* across the following:
  - Services and supports
  - Community activities
  - Policies and systems
  - Funding and regulatory decisions
  - Community capacity to monitor the availability and continuity of high quality services and supports over time
  - Community capacity to strengthen social bonds and to influence neighborhood norms



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## Pathways: An Outcomes Framework

- ◆ Focus on improving the outcomes that matter to children's school readiness
- ◆ Accountability that includes the appropriate use of outcomes and corresponding indicators to measure progress of strategic planning efforts
- ◆ Data and the community's expertise serves as the catalyst for quality improvements



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### Pathways Goals

1. Healthy and well-timed births
2. Health and Development on Track
3. Supported and Supportive Families
4. High Quality Child Care and Education
5. Continuity in Early Childhood Experiences
6. Effective Teaching and Learning in K – 3 Classrooms



Schorr, L. B., & Marchand, V. (2007). *Pathway to Children Ready for School and Succeeding at Third Grade Project on Effective Interventions* at Harvard University



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### Strategic Planning: Early Childhood System Focus

- ◆ Agencies that represent early childhood education, health/mental health, and family support programs work together to implement an initiative
- ◆ Coordinate efforts of coalition to make improvements in specific outcome(s)
- ◆ Develop sustainable infrastructure to implement an initiative
- ◆ Monitor the success of the coalition's school readiness initiative



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### Strategic Planning: Early Childhood System Focus

- Context: Build awareness for the issue
  - Components: Improved program quality
  - Infrastructure: Improved education, training, and professional development
  - Scale: Spread, depth, and sustainability
- Coffman, Julia (2007, 2012)



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## How Progress is Measured

- ◆ Outcome:
  - A goal or objective of the coalition that the coalition is working to achieve
  - A measure of the effect of an intervention or program; progress on the outcome can be documented
- ◆ Indicator:
  - A measure of the coalition's success in implementing an activity or strategy
  - Data are collected over a specified time period that can be compared to another time period.
  - Collect at neighborhood, county, city, state, or national level
- ◆ Types of data:
  - Qualitative: Descriptive information that can be captured and are not numerical in nature
  - Quantitative: Data that are in numerical form such as statistics and percentages



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## Pathways Communities



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## Demographic Information

County Name	White	Single Mom	Poverty	Mom has at least some college	Attending nursery/preschool (ages 3 - 5 yrs.)	English Speaking
Broome County	93%	14%*	17%*	64%	65%	92%
Shawnee County	67%	25%	16%	70%	52%	86%
Dolores & Montezuma Counties	67%	20%	26%	49%	56%	70%
West Los Angeles	56%	9%	10%	82%	39%	49%
Marion County	51%	23%	27%	52%	38%	55%
Coos County	91%	12%*	18%*	72%	28%	88%
Wilkin County**	90%	16%	16%*	78%	53%	91%

All data are for children less than 6 years of age unless otherwise indicated.  
 \*Interpret with caution; estimate may be unreliable due to small sample size.  
 \*\* Wilkin County is too small to estimate separately; estimates include 7 additional counties.  
 † Because Coos County is too small to estimate separately; estimate includes Grafton County.  
 Source: 2005-09 American Community Survey 5-year PUMS data.  
 Source: 2006-08 American Community Survey 3-year PUMS data.  
 Source: 2008-2010 American Community Survey 3-year PUMS data.



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## Break for Lunch



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## Pathways Process and Tool-Kit



- Two phases of the Pathways research project: (1) On-site coalitions and (2) Web-based coalitions
- Typically, coalitions completed each tool within one to three months; however, it is possible to complete a tool in a shorter amount of time
- The tools are designed for use in group settings, for example, at coalition meetings
- Instructional videos, slide shows, and the User Guide provide additional information about the rationale behind each tool and instructions to complete them (available from NCCP Pathways – IAFC website)



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## Illinois Action for Children – Early Childhood Action Partnerships

- ♦ Project represents a partnership between NCCP and IAFC
- ♦ Enhance the existing NCCP Pathways website including the NCCP Pathways tools
  - Each coalition will be able to enter their data and access their results in real time
  - Each coalition will have a unique resources page within the Pathways site and be able to upload their documents.
  - Coalition will be able to post comments and interact online.

*The NCCP Pathways tools will be available on the NCCP Pathways – Illinois Action for Children website in Nov. 2012*



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### Early Childhood Coalition Monitoring and Assessment of Progress (ECC MAP) Tool

>**Purpose:** Assess and monitor coalitions' clarity of vision, data linked to the vision, and involvement of key stakeholders.

>**Result:** Coalitions will have a better understanding of their vision, goals, and involvement of stakeholders.

SECTION 1 - COALITION HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

1.1 How long has your early childhood coalition been in existence?

Less than 6 months

6-12 months

1-2 years

3-4 years

5-9 years

10 years or more

I don't know

1.2 How long have you been involved with your early childhood coalition?

Less than 6 months

6-12 months

1-2 years

3-4 years

5-9 years

10 years or more

SECTION 2 - VISION

2.1 Does your early childhood coalition have an articulated vision?

Yes

No

I don't know

2.2 What is your early childhood coalition articulated vision?

2.3 Have there been needs, but that have not been met? a.

I don't know if there is a need.

2.4 What was the process for developing the articulated vision? Please select all that apply.

Assessed the community

Involved coalition members

Members of focus groups

Coalitions

Meetings

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

2.5 Who was involved in developing the articulated vision? Please select all that apply.

All coalition members

Coalition members

Members of focus groups

Coalitions

Meetings

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

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### Vision Statement

- ◆ Vision statement will answer the question, "Why are we here?"
- ◆ Represents the coalition's purpose even if the community's political, economic, or social contexts change.
  - Provide clarity about the coalition's purpose
  - Describe the outcomes that the coalition aims to effect
  - Explain the coalition's goals for the future
  - Engaging and memorable



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### Examples of Vision Statements

"The vision of the Early Childhood Initiative is to make our community the best place for our youngest children to grow, thrive, and reach their full potential."

"To maximize the healthy social-emotional, intellectual, language, literacy and physical development of young children, ages 0-8 in Clifford County."



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## Shawnee County Interagency Coordinating Council

Cindy Rosebrook, Program Director  
Successful Connections/United Way



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## Shawnee County Interagency Coordinating Council

Pathways facilitated discussion and strategic planning

### □ Outcomes

- **Development of two committees**
  - Communications Committee
  - Stakeholder Committee
- **Shared Intake Form**



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## Communications Committee

- ◆ **Change the name of the group to reflect the work of the group**
  - Chose Early Childhood Coalition of Shawnee County (ECC)
  - Voted to implement in January 2012
- ◆ **Plan activities and identify opportunities to make stakeholders and the community more aware of the coalition**
  - Develop a website for partners and for the community
  - Distribute press releases regarding ECC activities
  - Develop a social media presence for the coalition



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## Stakeholder Committee

- ◆ Expand the coalition membership to include key stakeholders who were not participating in the group (parents, mental health providers, local business)
- ◆ Look at new ways of gaining input from stakeholders other than attending meetings (social marketing, special events, email surveys, etc.)



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## Shared Intake Form

- ◆ Became the focus of the Kansas Early Learning Collaborative grantees
- ◆ The form will be used by the Successful Connections program (central intake for home visitation and other family service programs)
- ◆ Goals
  - **Families in Shawnee County will benefit by avoiding the duplication of required information with the development of a more efficient and coordinated intake process.**
    - Short-term: When programs receive the form as part of a referral, they will pre-populate their own forms instead of asking families for the information already provided
    - Long-term: All programs will use the form for intake purposes



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## Other Outcomes

- ◆ The group discovered the county had a poor ranking in the state regarding domestic violence
- ◆ Through discussion, found most partnering agencies felt their staff needed more training in domestic violence issues
- ◆ Partnered with the YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment to provide two training, four hours long
  - Trained over 100 community workers
- ◆ Formed a committee to develop domestic violence protocols



YWCA Center for Safety and Empowerment now participates in the coalition

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## Discussion Questions

What might you anticipate as challenges to implementing a systems-building early childhood initiative that aims to achieve a shared outcome(s)?

What are possible solutions to the challenges?



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### NCCP Pathways Project Contact Information

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*This project is made possible with federal funding through the State Advisory Council grant, in cooperation with the Illinois Office of Early Childhood Development.*



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