From People to Place and Power: Coalitions that Succeed by Grounding Efforts in Community Context

Jochebed G. Gayles, Sylvia Lin, Francisco Villarruel, Mary Lisa Penilla, Sarah M. Chilenski, Megan Galinsky, and Aaron Luneke

Successful community change initiatives begin with their most vital component—the community itself. In this action guide, explore practical insights from six communities on how to effectively center community involvement in your change efforts, including:

- combining community-based wisdom with research-based technical practice for strategies that can withstand challenges over time;
- creating opportunities to reflect on your community's culture and historical landscape so that decision-making is situated within a continuum of change;
- using data specific to the community in ways that can have transformative effects on whose voices are heard, what priorities are elevated, and how resources are spent.

Hear about what worked and what didn't, then respond to thought-provoking questions while embarking on similar work in your community. Improving youth well-being is a long game that starts with the community. *How will yours get started?*

PennState College of Health and Human Development

EDNA BENNETT PIERCE PREVENTION RESEARCH CENTER

A FIVE PART GUIDING COLLECTIVE CHANGE SERIES • 4

This is the fourth of five action guides in the *Guiding Collective Change* series based on the experiences of communities implementing Evidence2Success, a framework for engaging communities and public systems in improving the well-being of children and youth, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Each action guide takes a close look at a prevention practice used by communities to shift the way decisions are made about programs, resources, and strategies that impact outcomes for youth and family well-being.

Contents

Contents Home

Honoring Communities That Drive Change

Rhode Island / Selma, Dallas County, Alabama / Mobile, Alabama / Kearns, Salt Lake County, Utah / Memphis, Tennessee / Miami, Florida

2012
2013
2014
2015
2016

Rhode Island – www.cycri.org

The **Children and Youth Cabinet**'s mission is to work alongside resident experts locally and nationally to invest in and effectively implement evidence-based programs designed by people of color for people of color to meet the social and emotional needs of children, youth, and families. The community residents of our two original Evidence2Success neighborhoods, South Side and West End, are the true leaders of this work, and, after a decade, we continue to rely on their expertise to deliver on the promise of Evidence2Success.

CYC RI
CHILDREN • YOUTH • COMMUNITY

2015
2016
2017
2018

Selma, Dallas County, Alabama – www.dallascountysos.org

DCSOS
DALLAS COUNTY SYSTEM OF SERVICES

Dallas County System of Services is the outgrowth of the Selma/Dallas County Evidence2Success initiative. It reflects years of community-driven work to identify needs and create lasting change for youth. By bringing together residents, public agencies, educators, and nonprofit leaders, the initiative has built a shared vision rooted in data, equity, and prevention.

Through community-led workgroups and a representative board, Evidence2Success prioritized collective decision-making, identified high-risk behaviors, and implemented evidence-based programs tailored to Selma's unique needs. This grassroots approach has aligned resources, reduced duplication, and invested in proven strategies. The result is a unified, data-informed effort to uplift youth and strengthen the fabric of Selma and Dallas County.

2015
2016
2017
2018

Kearns, Salt Lake County, Utah – www.MyKearns.org

The Evidence2Success framework has played a key role in guiding **MyKearns Community Coalition**'s efforts to improve outcomes for youth and families in Kearns. The structured, data-driven approach has enabled us to identify and focus on important risk and protective factors like school and family attachment, family management, and equitable access to healthcare. We've implemented targeted, evidence-based strategies like Guiding Good Choices, Me Time!, Project CREST, Youth Court, and after-school programs that directly address the root causes of youth substance use and other problem behaviors. The Framework has also improved our ability to build inclusive partnerships, involve diverse community voices, and provide culturally and linguistically accessible resources. We've not only enhanced youth well-being but also created a foundation for lasting community resilience and equity.

MyKearns
COMMUNITY COALITION

Authors' Note: The Evidence2Success framework would not have happened without these six communities. Their contributions occurred across the whole spectrum, from development of the Framework through implementation, evaluation, and development of these guides. They are not simply in the mix—*they are the mix*.

To each one: Thank you. We are humbled by your trust and immeasurably grateful for your participation.

Contents Home

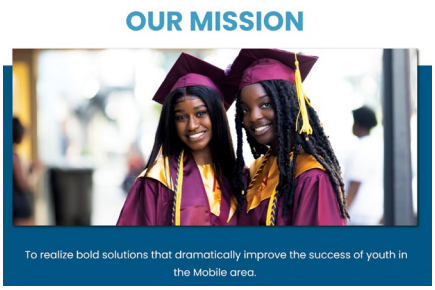
Honoring Communities That Drive Change

Rhode Island / Selma, Dallas County, Alabama / Mobile, Alabama / Kearns, Salt Lake County, Utah / Memphis, Tennessee / Miami, Florida

2015
2016
2017
2018

Mobile, Alabama – Four neighborhoods – www.maef.net

The Mobile, Alabama, Evidence2Success coalition began its work by bringing together grassroots and grasstops leaders from across the community to use high-quality data to select and expand tested and effective programs to meet the unique needs of youth and families in specific Mobile neighborhoods. This work resulted in the expansion of high-quality programs and services both inside school sites and across the community.



The success of this initial partnership targeting key communities has fostered the expansion of the work to support the needs and priorities of the entire county through the newly formed **Mobile Partnership for Youth Success**, a cradle-to-career evidence-based collective impact collaborative. Through the work of the Partnership, measurable outcomes are driving the investments in youth and family programming across Mobile County.

2018
2019
2020 [COVID]
2021
2022

Memphis, Tennessee – South City – www.wfgm.org

The **Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis (WFGM)** found that the Evidence2Success framework aligns with our Strategic Plan to increase investment, reduce poverty, and positively impact youth and families in South City. Evidence2Success supports our organizational focus on youth development through education, leadership, and community involvement. With the support of Evidence2Success, WFGM administers the Youth Experience Survey (YES) to collect data assessing the well-being, risk factors, and protective factors affecting Memphis youth. Survey results informed our decision to implement the evidence-based Strong African American Families program, addressing substance use and risky sexual behaviors, while increasing school engagement. Implementing the Evidence2Success model in Memphis revealed our community's resilience and how the intentional integration of data and evidence-based interventions creates generational change.

2019
2020 [COVID]
2021
2022
2023

Miami, Florida – Liberty City and Brownsville – https://miamichildrensinitiative.com/ and www.kbcf.org

The **Miami Children's Initiative** spearheaded the Evidence2Success work, supported by finance partners at the **Key Biscayne Community Foundation** and data leads from **Covian**. The process experienced multiple delays while suitable team leads were selected. Over time, they employed the Framework to determine what was essential for a more holistic child well-being strategy. They selected a program that addressed many community priorities and identified the right partners to help implement it. The Framework helped navigate socio-environmental challenges, including COVID and coalition dynamics. Importantly, the workgroup united community partners; members listened to and addressed concerns. "If we were on a river, you could say Miami Evidence2Success adapted to the strength of the current, navigating from sandy banks through Class 5 rapids, always towards our destination. We kept things rolling."

> "We listened to Liberty City youth. That was key to identifying the mental health priority."

Contribution statements were provided and approved by representatives from the Children and Youth Cabinet, Dallas County System of Services, MyKearns Community Coalition, Mobile Area Education Foundation, Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis, Key Biscayne Community Foundation, and Miami Children's Initiative.

Contents Home

Introduction

Have you dreamed of a world where your community change initiative not only succeeds but thrives? Where the voices of local residents and youth echo through every decision, not just as beneficiaries but also as active architects of change? This is not an unobtainable dream—it's the powerful reality of truly community-centered coalition work.

Imagine embarking on a journey where every step forward is guided by the wisdom of generations, the pulse of current realities, and the aspirations of those who call a place home. This is the essence of truly transformative community coalition work—a process that doesn't just acknowledge a community's culture and context but weaves them into the very fabric of its change efforts. In the complex tapestry of community change efforts, success isn't measured by flawless execution or by the absence of challenges but by the ability to adapt, learn, and persist.

Meanwhile, work on the ground in your own community may have raised questions like these:

Contents Home

This action guide addresses questions like these. We invite you—leaders in neighborhoods, community champions, young people, community-based organizations, faith communities, businesses, coalitions, governmental agencies, and anyone working on youth well-being in your community—to dive deeply into the art and science of community-centered coalition efforts with your particular community in mind. We will examine how understanding the intricate interplay of historical legacies, sociopolitical dynamics, and structural determinants is critical, and how resident voice becomes your compass. Read about real communities that adapted a process of change to address youth well-being for their culture and context in ways that moved them toward achieving their goals. Use this guide to facilitate a conversation with your community about how these learnings and actionable suggestions may apply to your situation in your own community. The evidence shows that ***centering the community is key*** to unlocking the transformative potential of community-led prevention efforts.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Real communities adapted a process of change to address youth well-being for their culture and context in ways that moved them toward achieving their goals.

What Do We Mean by "Centering Community"? Why Is This Important?

Before we get to "centering," let's define what we mean by "community." In this guide, we use community to refer to a geographically bounded area where people, groups, organizations, institutions, and businesses live and interact, creating and reflecting a unique culture and context, while also responding to, and being influenced by, them. The six communities featured in this guide represent one or more neighborhood(s), stretch across a zip code or region, or were identified as an area of focus. See Table 1 (in the Appendix).

Centering community is a critical element for initiatives seeking to change outcomes for youth. The practice places residents' needs, voices, perspectives, and history at the forefront of the work—involving residents in interpreting data, making decisions, and co-creating solutions rather than having these elements determined and imposed without their input. It's more than just a nice idea. Research shows that centering community benefits the effectiveness and longevity of the work in ways that:

- **Foster resilience and adaptability.** Continuous progress can happen when community input and leadership are prioritized. [2] [37]
- **Ensure relevant, effective, sustainable solutions.** This involves understanding and integrating the particular history, culture, sociopolitical context, and social and systemic determinants within a community. [37] [3] [60] Conversely, community change efforts are ineffective when they do not consider a community's culture and context. [26] [27] [55]
- **Cultivate space for placing inequities and privileges in context.** When community voices and historical narratives are placed at center, persistent social, structural, and systemic factors that impact different groups over time can be revealed. The practice can expose root causes that shape current realities.

Strategies for Centering Community include:

- Integrating and emphasizing local culture and context.
- Prioritizing what communities determine are relevant issues.
- Building capacity in community members and residents to lead and provide input on the work.
- Respecting the diversity of perspectives and lived experiences.
- Considering the impact of historical legacies on current circumstances.

[1] [33] [55]

Community-led approaches yield more effective solutions [31], uncover hidden power dynamics overlooked by traditional methods [40], and transform mindsets by acknowledging historical injustices, thereby mobilizing support for equity initiatives. [39] [62] Using both contextual and cultural sources can powerfully impact how community leaders, stakeholders, and residents think about and come together to address a problem, creating unique approaches to systems reform [3]. It can inform how a coalition proceeds with community change efforts. Taken further, community transformation may occur.

You might wonder: what exactly do we mean by community change? And how do we take the next step toward community transformation?

Contents Home

What Makes Community Change Efforts Successful and Transformative?

A change effort moves toward transformation in the community when ***changes are sustained in the long term.*** See box at right for factors that support transformation.

The community-centric approach reimagines how processes usually occur in efforts to address issues affecting youth in the community. It challenges traditional top-down or solely bottom-up approaches that often exclude community voices, residents, and context. [27] Instead it prioritizes the wisdom of communities while incorporating proven strategies and tools from experienced practitioners in the field. [17] Strategies used by practitioners with evidence-based expertise provide structure and resources, while community-rooted expertise ensures local relevance and participation. [50] This combination enhances the potential for sustainable, context-appropriate solutions that benefit from both research and evidence-based external expertise and community wisdom grounded in experience. [14] The result of harmonizing these approaches is an increased possibility for scalable, sustained growth deeply rooted in the community's unique context.

Change will necessarily look different by community. The passion and commitment of those involved, and the needs, priorities, resources, strengths, and challenges, are all variables. We saw this in six communities that navigated community transformation processes over the course of more than a decade, starting in 2012.

So, what does an integrative community-centric approach to improving youth well-being look like in action? Let's dive in!

Factors promoting community transformation include:

1. Supporting community access to data and ability to connect with lived experience. See Mobile's Data Revolution
2. Building community capacity to do the work long-term.
3. Allowing flexibility in implementation alongside scientific rigor.
4. Listening to and including diverse perspectives in the work. See Kearns, Salt Lake County
5. Supporting the community to drive change. See Providence's Grassroots Revolution

1. [53] *2.* [5] *3.* [53] [60] *4.* [53] *5.* [26] *6.* [55]

MATHEUS BERTELLI FOR PEXELS

Centering community means prioritizing the wisdom of communities while incorporating proven strategies and tools from the field.

Contents Home

Introducing the Evidence2Success Community-Centric Approach to Community Change

Evidence2Success integrates the community-centric approach along with prioritizing evidence-based practices to promote sustainability. The Evidence2Success framework (the Framework) is a ***structured yet flexible five-phase process*** based on research evidence and supplemental expertise that is inherently adaptable, allowing for community tailoring at each step to ensure forward progress. Communities may customize activities to their specific needs and contexts while making decisions that both draw on rigorous methodology and reflect local values, resources, and objectives. This accommodating design allows diverse communities to leverage the Framework's structure while infusing their unique perspectives and needs into the process.

Five Phases of Evidence2Success

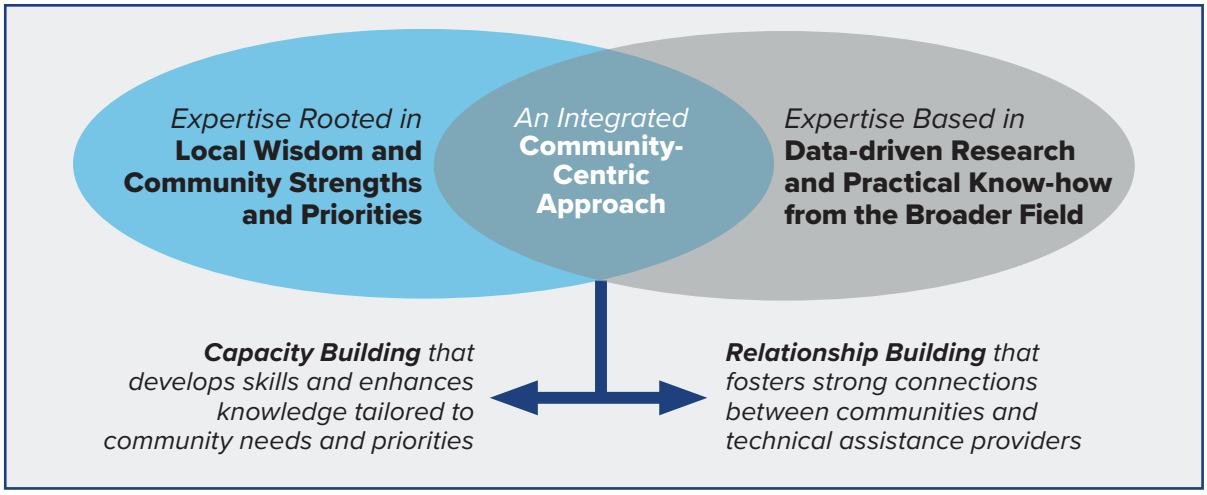
1. Get started.
2. Get organized.
3. Develop a Community Profile.
4. Create a plan.
5. Implement and continuously evaluate.

This ***community-centric approach*** drives meaningful transformation by using effective tools and activities that can be adapted to each community's unique culture and context. By respecting local knowledge and priorities, it ensures that proven practices are sustainable and that local assets are leveraged to truly benefit the community, empowering communities to shape and define their progress in ways that matter most to them. [28]

ADOBE STOCK

Placing the community's experience and voice at the center are key to creating successful, sustainable initiatives.

Contents Home



Evidence2Success's community-centric approach exemplifies a powerful synergy between different kinds of expertise, from research, practice, and local experience, which can be particularly beneficial for communities whose experience has historically been under-resourced. This integrated community-centric model leverages expertise in:

- **Local wisdom and community strengths and priorities:** Integrating community knowledge and experience in strategy development allows communities to define their own priorities and success metrics.
- **Data-driven research and practice:** Connecting to research-based tools and practices and coaching support builds the resource repertoire for communities in areas like finance, systems change, and data-based decision-making.

Applied together to community change work, the approach enhances two foundational precursors to longer-term transformation:

- **Relationship building:** Fostering strong connections between communities and technical assistance providers.
- **Capacity building:** Offering opportunities for skill development and knowledge enhancement tailored to community needs.

In Providence, community priorities drove the action plan agenda. Getting input from technical experts informed how to fund it.

These activities reflect a dynamic partnership where external expertise catalyzes and amplifies local insights and knowledge, fostering sustainable, community-driven change. By balancing ***structured support*** with ***flexibility for local adaptation,*** the Framework has enabled communities to address their unique challenges effectively while building long-term capacity and self-efficacy.

You can see examples across the five-phase community change process. See Table 3 (in the Appendix) for a detailed phase-by-phase analysis.

The following section explores how specific communities engaged in and adapted the Evidence2Success framework to transform their community.

Contents Home

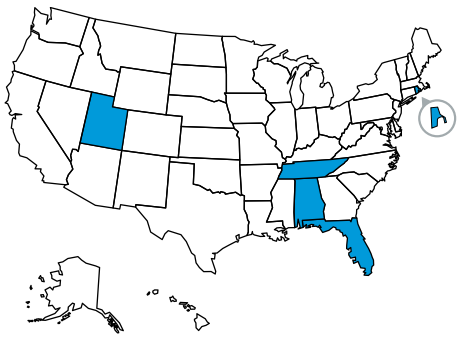
What Are Key Benefits of Conducting a Community Change Effort with a Community-Centric Approach?

Key Benefit 1: *Using a Community-centric Approach for Collective Change Efforts Can Keep Efforts Moving Forward and Promote Sustainability.*

Key Benefit 2: *Learning About, Listening To, and Understanding Your Community's Socio-historical/political Landscape Creates a Reflective and Reflexive Environment That Invites and Keeps the Right People at the Table.*

Key Benefit 3: *Harnessing Your Community's Data, From Interpretation to Actionable Insights, Can Lead to Real Community Change.*

In the first two action guides, we looked at the benefits to communities of gathering and analyzing data for making decisions about youth well-being (Action Guide 1) and of creating a strategic finance plan to fund priorities (Action Guide 2). In Action Guide 3, we examined the benefits of successfully using a coalition approach to engage community members across sectors to guide local collective change efforts. This fourth action guide takes the coalition approach one step further—to a ***community-centric*** approach.



The benefits of using a community-centric approach are evident in the experiences of six communities across the country that began implementing the Evidence2Success framework as early as 2012: Providence, Rhode Island; Selma and Dallas County, Alabama; Mobile, Alabama; Kearns Township and Salt Lake County, Utah; Memphis, Tennessee; and Miami, Florida. See Table 1 (in Appendix) to view demographic information about these communities. Though the communities that adopted the Framework varied in population density and demographics, they shared ***low-income*** and ***racially and ethnically diverse*** characteristics. Of note, each of the communities used the Framework within a coalition structure called a community board embedded within a local backbone organization employing a coordinator, who leads the coalition in both operations and decision-making, and a finance lead, tasked with ensuring financial sustainability. All coalitions were supported by technical assistance providers, known as "coaches," to guide community leaders and coalitions on the process and tools.

As with each of the previous action guides, we reviewed data collected by a Penn State research team during the Evidence2Success process evaluation that documented each community's implementation of the Framework as it occurred. The data came from annual interviews with coalition members and other community leaders as well as

coaches' notes from interactions with coordinators and community boards. We conducted additional, retrospective interviews with coordinators and other local leaders from each Evidence2Success community. For details about the measures and individuals involved in these data collections, see Table 2 (in Appendix).

Taking this bird's-eye approach after implementation and data collection yielded lessons about what worked and what didn't, as well as keys for successfully navigating the unique challenges that each community experienced. The end goal, as always, is to improve outcomes for youth and families in local communities.

Key Benefit 1: Using a Community-centric Approach for Collective Change Efforts Can Keep Efforts Moving Forward and Promote Sustainability.

Evidence from the process evaluation shows that using a ***community-centric approach*** allowed each community to keep its community-systems change effort moving forward even when challenges arose. Promoting sustainability goes beyond keeping programs running. It's also about sustaining engagement, maintaining investments, and envisioning forward progress through efforts that continuously reach out to youth and families and refresh relationships in key community roles. Even when setbacks occur, partnerships can evolve.

To examine this benefit, we looked at two sets of data: ratings of progress achieving project milestones (using the Milestones & Benchmark Rating Tool) and participation data from interviews.

First, Using Data from the Milestones and Benchmarks Rating Tool, We See that Across Four Years of Tracking Progress, All Communities Successfully Advanced Across All Five Community Change Stages

Even more specifically, ***we see that all six communities kept making progress in their community-systems change efforts month after month after month.*** At times, progress was quick; at other times, progress slowed. Each community attended to its needs and moved at its own pace given those needs. Consequently, all change efforts remained active at least four years after the work began.

79%

The average rate of ***community change*** tasks completed across all phases and all communities.

Communities reported strong completion rates across all phases, with communities on average completing ***over 75% of tasks in the first four phases,*** and about ***50% of tasks by the end of Year 4 in Phase 5.*** See Figure 4 (in Appendix.).

- When we look at the overall progress and pace of change as a whole, we see that completion of community change tasks ***improved over time,*** though this pace varied by community. By year four, the average completion rate across all phases of the work and all communities was ***just under 80%.*** See Figure 5 (in Appendix).

Contents Home

- When we look at how each phase of change unfolded, we see ***overall positive progress across each community.*** We also see that ***communities differed*** in when work started, at what pace, and to what degree of completion individual communities advanced efforts for each individual phase. See Figures 5–9 (in Appendix). For example, in early phases, communities appeared to get started at about the same time, move through tasks at a similar pace, and complete tasks at a similar rate. In later phases, more variation occurred. This suggests that each community attended to its particular needs as it rolled out the work.

Each community had a different trajectory. The community-centric approach enabled all to make forward progress while attending to community-specific needs.

- Early on in Phases 1: *Get started,* 2: *Form a coalition,* and 3: *Assess and identify priorities,* communities appeared to get started at about the same time, move through tasks at a similar pace, and complete tasks at a similar rate. See Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8 (in Appendix).
- More variation appeared later in starting, pacing, and completion between communities in Phase 4: *Create an action plan,* and Phase 5: *Implement and evaluate programs.* See Figure 9 and Figure 10 (in Appendix).

Each community had a different trajectory. Some adapted a lot, while others hardly adapted at all. Leaders described how *their coalition* used a community-centric approach to keep moving forward in the context of *their* community:

- One leader recalled previous change efforts that had not led to *"results we desired."* The new *"streamlined process"* was different, supplying ***much-needed guidance*** and an ***emphasis on local data use*** that *"got everyone on the same page."* Change followed: the coalition agreed to select priorities based on *"what was being reported out from youth needs and youth perspectives"* and not on *"the hot topic of the day."*
- In another coalition, a leader adapted early on to ***make processes relevant*** to the *"unique needs"* of the participants in the work. As she put it: *"... we had to create that space and push for clarity or ask for forgiveness or whatever to adapt processes to better reflect local context."* The facilitator kept presentations to the coalition rooted in science while adapting aspects of delivery, like starting with *"what was most interesting to the audiences"* or adjusting an activity to *"what was really going* to work."
- ***Many challenging circumstances*** prompted leaders in a third coalition "to adapt at every step." For example, youth data collection with a school-based survey was hampered by a school district policy that required active

> When we got our youth surveys back the first time, we sat down and said, okay, we're going to look at the elevated risk factors. That's when we started getting our vision together [using] what was being reported out from youth needs and youth perspectives...
>
> *— A coalition coordinator*

Contents Home

parental consent for youth survey participation and restricted survey administration to non-instructional time only (see Action Guide 1). The COVID pandemic shut down in-person meetings during sensitive finance planning work (See Action Guide 2). Staff turnovers and organizational crises hampered progress and necessitated pauses in the initiative.

- Meanwhile, a longtime leader in a fourth coalition recalled ***no adaptations.*** This was because, as he explained, *"we all understood"* the approach as *"prescribed"* and believed that adapting or changing might put the effort *"at risk for not achieving what you expect to deliver on."*

Second, Drawing from Annual Coalition Member Interviews, We See Evidence of the Variability that Each Coalition Attended to when Building its Coalition and Executing the Change Process

Specifically, coalition membership was broadly inclusive of public and private sectors, engaged community residents, and reflected local racial and ethnic demographics. All coalitions achieved diverse representations of these characteristics at all waves, and each coalition's sector and demographic construction varied from the others. Each coalition was *not* required to have specific sectors represented or a specific number of representatives from each sector, and the data demonstrate that communities exercised variability. See Figure 11, Figure 12, and Figure 13 (in Appendix).

The community-centric approach allowed for variation in community sector participation while hewing to local racial and ethnic demographics.

- Across all waves and all communities, ***an average of 7.5 of 8 sectors*** were represented. In each community and at each wave, ***a minimum of 5 of 8 (62.5%) sectors*** were represented. See Figure 11 (in Appendix).
- In examining race and ethnicity, characteristics of the coalition compared to those of the region and neighborhood; in some cases, the inclusion of minoritized racial and ethnic groups in the coalition ***met or even exceeded the neighborhood racial and ethnic demographic makeup.*** See Figure 12 (in Appendix).

Third, Drawing from Annual Coalition Member Interviews and Census Data, We See Evidence that Each Coalition Became More Community-centric Over Time

Looking at residency and race together, we see a strong overall trend ***toward inclusion of people of color from the focus neighborhood*** (34.8%) ***and region*** (82.8%). See Figure 13 (in Appendix). This trend was mirrored in interviews with leaders:

- Going to the residents was seen in one community as the moment when *"the big shift came,"* allowing the coalition to "*really [go] deep with our residents and communities."*

- When the coalition engaged members of the community to chair workgroups, some residents were reticent, citing a lack of experience. A leader shared his response: *"It's not about you knowing about that. It's more of having a community voice in that workgroup or being a part of that workgroup so that we can validate what we're trying to get accomplished and then also be that voice of reason when it came to the community, [that] this will work. This may not work. So that was kind of the approach that we had."*

In summary, we see in the data that there was high variability in how communities constructed their coalitions, that change efforts became more community-centric over time, engaging more residents and people of color, and that communities advanced at their own pace through the phases of the change effort.

Key Benefit 2: Learning About, Listening To, and Understanding Your Community's Socio-historical/political Landscape Creates a Reflective and Reflexive Environment That Invites and Keeps the Right People at the Table.

While the first key benefit shows that a community-centric approach likely moved communities forward in their systems change work, Key Benefit 2 dives more deeply into ***the internal reflective and reflexive processes*** that coalitions used to center community and what the ***coalition composition and functioning, including decision-making,*** looked like as a result of instilling this practice.

Evidence supporting this key benefit comes from annual interviews with coalition members and recent retrospective interviews with coalition coordinators and leaders. We share the evidence in four parts.

First, Examining Your Community's Landscape Can Help Create a Coalition that Reflects Your Local Context and Ensures Intentional and Equitable Representation

As we saw in Key Benefit 1, while the composition of the six coalitions varied, all were multi-sectoral, racially and ethnically diverse, and inclusive of residents. And, as we saw in Action Guide 3, coalitions reported that, community-wide, racially and ethnically diverse participants increased levels of active participation in planning and implementation over three years, by 21% across all communities. With this as our foundation, and using data from retrospective interviews with coalition leaders, we see that coalitions engaged in ***intentional and critical reflection about who was at the table and helped create a group of decision-makers that more closely reflected the local context.***

Three examples illustrate a process of incorporating local context by listening to residents, who were often missing from the early coalition table:

- Families in one community had only encountered public system representatives *"during times of turmoil,"* when their teenager was arrested into the juvenile justice system or child protective services came to call. Yet, the coalition had expected

Contents Home

families to trust the systems-heavy coalition to make life better for young people. ***Hearing from and listening to residents,*** the coalition began to understand how unreasonable that expectation was and became more responsive to residents' lived experiences.

- One leader recalled when the coalition ***realized who was not at the table:*** *"We were beginning to have outright conversations about how we're talking about what's best in these targeted neighborhoods. So,* ***we don't have the number of people from the neighborhoods really truly represented*** *that's not just a token approach…truly it requires more than one voice."*
- Another coalition coordinator recalled that when ***residents became integrated into the work, "[t]hat's when things caught on fire*** *in a good way because these were the folks who were really like, these are our kids, these are our families, these are our neighborhoods… And so that's why we had huge participation in priority setting, huge participation in program selection."*

See Table 14 (in Appendix) to see in each example how coalitions observed who was and was not at the table; how coalitions reflected on their table composition and dynamics; and how coalitions incorporated their local context into decision-making.

> "…that's when things caught on fire in a good way because there were the folks who were really like, these are our kids, these are our families, these are our neighborhoods…".
>
> *— A Coordinator*

Place-based (e.g., based on neighborhood area or zip code), culture-specific community knowledge may enhance a coalition's ability to make informed decisions about the health and well-being of that community's youth and families. Leaders called out the importance of knowledge gained by listening to the experiences of residents and other stakeholders:

- According to one coalition partner, *"if you don't know anything about this community that we're trying to serve, how really can you speak to it? … if you don't really know the footprint of this community, if you don't have that experience, how can you truly add value to it?"*
- Another coalition member emphasized equity: *"…being intentional about the community board and being sure that you are including those from the underrepresented communities and giving them a true equitable voice and equitably providing opportunities for equitable involvement… So we pulled together groups of individuals who were providing direct services in that area from various entities in terms of not-for-profit organizations, faith community representatives from local government, the health department…"*

Being intentional about representation and participation among the coalition's members fostered equitable involvement of not only multi-sector contributors but also underrepresented voices.

Second, Examining Your Community's Landscape Can Help You Recognize the Historical Trauma of Systemic and Structural Racism, the Root Causes of Barriers

Several coalitions held trainings and used specialized tools (e.g., racial equity analysis tool and processes such as backmapping and data disaggregation to explicitly examine the history of structural and systemic racism in the neighborhood area of focus. The act of setting aside a dedicated meeting space for these conversations was critically important, since such discussions are likely infrequent outside of tight social circles or racial/ethnic groups. A lack of practice strains conversation and may feel awkward or stressful. Yet, this shared community history of trauma is an essential part of the story leading up to the current circumstances. In retrospective interviews, coalition leaders recognized a relationship between social, structural, and systemic factors and barriers to change.

Setting aside dedicated meeting space for conversations addressing the local history of racism was critically important.

- *"[Learning about the impact of historical legacies]… always a tough question… given our **history and civil rights,** and the lack of trust with public systems, educational institutions… shifting that lens was a **source of tension**…"*
- *"If you are looking at making a change for a community, you **have to look at root causes and barriers.** Are there policies and structures that inhibit people's ability to be successful?"*
- *"Having **data to help paint the picture** of systemic racism and community level practices, racism among partners, and help us gain a historic understanding of* this issue."
- *"We can't make progress if [we] aren't **discussing the root of inequality.**"*

Deliberate conversations and a focus on centering communities' histories could impact barriers to implementing community systems change work. Members were asked in coalition interviews one year after starting the work how much of a problem they considered *divisions among racial, ethnic, or other groups* over the past year to be toward their systems change work using Evidence2Success tools and processes. Ratings in all communities rated this a ***slight to moderate*** problem. While relatively low, it was rated highest among seven barriers by half of the coalitions. See Table 15 and Figure 16 (in Appendix).

Learning about the impact of historical legacies can be challenging, but recognizing and reflecting on structural and systemic determinants and factors that can cause inequities can help you directly examine and begin to lessen the root causes of barriers to change.

Contents Home

Third, Examining Your Community's Landscape Can Help You Make More Intentional Decisions that Involve Those Most Impacted by the Work

Here, we saw that recognizing and acknowledging a community's historical legacies and socio-historical influences on policies seemed to ***clarify the decisions*** needed to address systemic and structural racism and ***open opportunities for those most impacted by the work to contribute to change.***

In interviews with coalition members after a year into the work and also in retrospective interviews, participants drew a direct line from a focus on the historical context to engaging those most impacted:

> *"[The benefits of integrating racial/ethnic equity and inclusion] ensures that the folks who are going to be most impacted have an opportunity for co-design and not just the people who control resources."*

> *"In addition to bringing together this group as a community board and kind of getting their input and all of that, we also, and in the community board as well, we give them real actionable things that they could do and bring to the table. So not just a meeting where you sit and get some information and you just listen the whole time, but allowing them to bring whatever gifts and value that they had and really taking heed of it and using their input so that again, they each had an opportunity to provide that kind of something that's tangible, like input, that's tangible."*

"...ensures that the folks who are going to be most impacted have an opportunity for co-design and not just the people who control resources."

— *A Community Board member*

Fourth, Examining Your Community's Landscape Can Enact Change in Community and System Practices and Procedures that Precedes Structural Change; It Is a Lengthy Process

Interviews with coalition members just over one year after the start of the community change effort revealed that experiencing change in their communities took time. Collectively, communities reported more evident changes in procedures and practices, such as involvement of diverse races and ethnicities, cross-agency collaboration, and preparedness to work together, compared to improvements in local policies one year into implementation. This observation on timing—that local procedures and practices change before policies change—points to the ***developmental nature*** of achieving policy-level changes. Changes in system-level practices and procedures must take place before policy change can be realized. See Figures 17–21 and Box 22 (in Appendix).

In the same interviews, community coalition members who were trained in tools to address racial equity and inclusion described changes they saw related to structural racism due to their use of the community-centric approach to change over the past year. Commenters identified improvements in awareness and dialogue, and shifts in intentionality and even resources:

Awareness:

- *"Biggest change is the awareness and recognition of structural racism that already exists in [this city]. We are aware of it now, and can break down issues now. People that live in these communities have always known about the racism…new people who did not grow up in [in this city] are changing things, too."*

Dialogue:

- *"… we are not afraid to talk about structural racism. We are more comfortable having open dialogue and training and those types of things."*
- *"Due to the political climate, most things are acceptable now which has an impact on the structural racism system."*

Intentionality/shifts in resource allocation:

- *"County government is more intentional in addressing [racial issues]…"*
- *"I think that with the court system there have been some improvements. More considerations are being given to behavioral health when crimes are committed."*
- *"Now, there are more organizations looking at the issue and addressing it with resources for education, or hiring minorities, more resources for communities effected by structural racism."*

In summary, examining your community's socio-historical/political landscape supports critical and intentional reflection, informs decision-making of your community board makeup to reflect local community contexts that include those most impacted by systemic and structural racism, and supports changes in system and community practices and procedures that precede systemic change.

Key Benefit 3: Harnessing Your Community's Data, From Interpretation to Actionable Insights, Can Lead to Real Community Change

Evidence from the process evaluation shows that communities have successfully leveraged data to drive change in various ways, demonstrating the power of data to inform strategic decisions, foster community development, identify priorities relevant to culture and context, and track and communicate successes. Here, we use a case-study approach, which allows us to delve deeply into the processes by which communities harnessed data to drive meaningful change. We draw on document reviews, retrospective community interviews, and notes from technical assistance providers and coaches to provide three perspectives on community-driven data utilization.

Mobile's Data Revolution: Empowering a Community to Write Its Own Story

A Call to Action: Mobile's Context

Mobile, Alabama, a racially and ethnically diverse, mid-sized city, faced significant economic challenges in 2013. Family poverty stood at nearly 20%; Black, Hispanic, and Pacific Islander residents experienced poverty at disproportionate rates; and poverty was geographically concentrated by census tract. Yet, the city had a ***track record of bringing together diverse partners*** and a history of ***collaborative programs driven by data and best practices,*** such as efforts to improve high school graduation rates and post-secondary enrollment. The city had developed strategic plans and ***accountability mechanisms*** to address the needs of children and youth in low-income areas.

So, in early 2016, when Mobile joined the Evidence2Success initiative led by a subcommittee of the Mobile Area Education Foundation (MAEF), it was ***complementary to their existing efforts.*** They selected four focus neighborhoods where poverty rates ranged from 26% to 44%. Their goals were to gain access to resources and to expand to include public sector representatives and focus neighborhood residents. Later, in 2016, the city experienced ***unforgettable trauma with the tragic loss of 12 teenagers to gun violence.*** Mobile Mayor Sandy Stimpson launched the Youth Empowered for Success Initiative that year, with the goal of reversing violence and securing a brighter future for Mobile's youth. Stimpson emphasized the need for sustainable action and collaboration across city departments to achieve these objectives. This event further catalyzed the ongoing efforts to improve youth outcomes.

Mobile's community change work was guided by a simple yet powerful idea: ***that data could be the key to unlocking real change.*** The Evidence2Success initiative, offering resources, a set of tools, and supports that promote evidence-based practices, as well as a data-driven approach to community change, further emboldened the Mobile coalition. The process that unfolded is Mobile's community-driven adoption of the Evidence2Success framework, allowing to the coalition to address their community's prioritized needs.

ADOBE STOCK

Mobile prepared about 20 coalition members to review the data in a retreat-like orientation.

Contents Home

THE PROCESS

Navigating Uncharted Waters with Evidence2Success

Mobile followed the structured process recommended at the start of the Evidence2Success work. They oriented a coalition of about 20 members to the data review and decision-making process in a retreat-like orientation. Then, they held multiple series of meetings with smaller workgroups. These looked at the Youth Experiences Survey (YES), examined existing community resources, reviewed how evidence-based programs on the Blueprints program registry mapped onto their selected priorities, and selected evidence-based programs. But the process did not feel quite right. Coalition leaders began adapting it to ensure they engaged the right people at the right time to make decisions with relevant information.

Instead of breaking into small workgroups, all coalition members were invited to participate in reviewing the YES data. Why would they delegate such an important decision to a smaller group of people? They needed to adapt to fit their unique context to ensure that all voices were heard, especially those historically not at the table. With the full coalition reviewing YES and other preexisting and public system data, a vivid picture of young people's lives emerged. Once-skeptical coalition members were energized by the insights revealed in the data. They began to see not just numbers, but stories—stories of their children, their neighbors, and their community. This wasn't abstract; it was a mirror reflecting their lived realities. Jeremiah Newell, an early coordinator at MAEF, reflected on this turning point: *"After the YES data was presented, we had a stronger sense of urgency and a shared vision for action. It wasn't just numbers on a page anymore; it was our community's story."*

> "After the YES data was presented, we had a stronger sense of urgency and a shared vision for action. It wasn't just numbers on a page anymore; it was our community's story."
>
> *– Jeremiah Newell, Mobile Evidence2Success*

They continued to ***chart a unique course that adapted*** the suggested process to meet Mobile's unique needs. For instance, they tapped a fresh, skilled, and trusted college graduate to dive in, review, and summarize information about preexisting evidence-based programs in an easy-to-understand way. This saved time for coalition members who became more involved again with making final decisions about programs to implement. They also divided the work to talk to program implementors locally and across the country, to learn from real people actively implementing the programs on their short list. Coalition members absorbed answers to what it was like to implement each program: *What were the program's strengths and challenges? How did the program really work? How did participants like the program? Who were the program's participants?*

The coalition made initial program decisions and had one to two years of initial program implementation success. They continued to review data as a core community board practice: program facilitators shared implementation updates at coalition meetings and reviewed coalition functioning data annually. As the coalition continued drawing on various types of data, including a second collection of YES data, they slowly realized that true change would require more than preselected programs.

THE OUTCOME

Mobile's Rising Tides Bring Transformation Through Data

Mobile began to see tangible results of the data-driven approach over months and years. Coalition meetings hummed with more professionalism and momentum. Discussions deepened community engagement with the data and strengthened their resolve to find solutions that truly fit.

The journey wasn't without its challenges. Selecting evidence-based programs sparked debates about relevance and effectiveness in their urban setting. *"We had to navigate the selection of evidence-based programs,"* Jeremiah explained, *"questioning their relevance to our urban context and seeking out successful implementations in similar communities. It wasn't easy, but it made us really think about what would work best for us."* Perhaps the most significant change was less visible yet profoundly impactful: a shift in mindset. The community had become empowered not just to use data, but to own it, to challenge it, and to translate it into meaningful action. Newell summed up the transformation: *"The process was too narrowly focused initially, but it laid the groundwork for a more community-driven approach, prioritizing our own vision setting and organizing principles. We're not just implementing programs now; we're changing how we think about our community's future."*

> "We had to navigate the selection of evidence-based programs," Jeremiah explained, "questioning their relevance to our urban context and seeking out successful implementations in similar communities. It wasn't easy, but it made us really think about what would work best for us."
>
> *– Jeremiah Newell, Mobile Evidence2Success*

CONCLUSION:

Mobile's Lessons for Community-Driven Progress

As community change work in Mobile continues to evolve, it stands as a testament to the ***transformative power of putting data into the hands of those it affects most.*** It's a story of a community that learned to harness information not as an end in itself, but as ***a tool for real, lasting change*** with the community writing the next chapters in its own story.

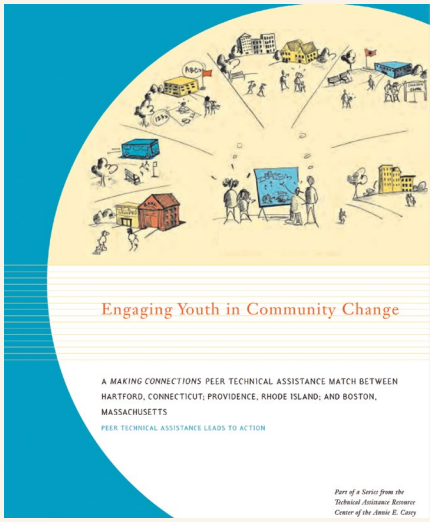
> ...it laid the groundwork for a community-driven approach, prioritizing our own vision setting and organizing principles....we're changing how we think about our community's future.
>
> *– Jeremiah Newell, Mobile Evidence2Success*

Providence's Grassroots Revolution: Redefining Community-Driven Change

Catalyzing Change: The Providence Context

Providence, Rhode Island, is a diverse community with rich cultural heritage from various ethnic groups and a decades-long history of working to effect lasting community change. A densely populated city, it also had significant poverty challenges and one of the nation's highest poverty rates.

In 2012, Providence attracted attention due to ***emerging strong collaborative efforts*** between government officials, public institutions, and local communities to enhance services for families and children that stretched back a decade. The neighborhoods of South Providence, Elmwood, and West End were rich and diverse in cultural heritage, with African Americans making up approximately 16.1% of Providence's population, as well as significant Hispanic communities of people from Puerto Rico, Guatemala, and Colombia. The South Providence and Elmwood neighborhoods were noted for high concentrations of residents in poverty; over one in four families lived below the poverty line. Stagnant incomes and a high reliance on public assistance characterized the economic conditions.



CYC had previously worked with the Foundation to amplify community voice. [4]

Providence had previously worked with the Annie E. Casey Foundation and viewed Evidence2Success as ***complementary to its existing focus*** on community partnerships and data-driven accountability measures. The Providence Children and Youth Cabinet (CYC), a coalition with a mission of ensuring comprehensive support for the city's children through access to an integrated network of private organizations and public agencies, served as Evidence2Success's convening board.

FAUXELS FOR PEXELS

Collective efforts and community voice are powerful drivers of change in Providence.

As the first Evidence2Success community, Providence, Rhode Island, began its journey over a decade ago. The partnership with the Foundation set in motion a process that would redefine and set a ***new paradigm for the meaning of community-driven change.*** Director Rebecca Boxx, the longest-serving CYC employee, noted that Evidence2Success had significantly broadened their perspective from an initial focus on education to today's more holistic approach to child and youth well-being across the city. Further, Boxx highlighted how Providence's implementation of Evidence2Success differed from traditional top-down approaches: *"We started focused on c-suites…the governor…the mayor…the director and the commissioner"*; over time, Providence put community at the helm of decision-making.

Centering resident voice has become a powerful force for driving change. This narrative highlights the collective efforts of community leaders, residents, and organizations that engaged in Evidence2Success, made sense of various data sources, and achieved measurable change within their community.

Contents Home

THE PROCESS

Shifting Power and Centering Resident Expertis

A key aspect of the initiative's success was the ***deliberate shift in power dynamics*** to center resident expertise and decision-making. It was an early turning point, even as community partnerships grew stronger and more committed. Boxx vividly described when ***residents took ownership***—as when *"things caught on fire."* Seeing the value in this process, residents agreed to be active participants, but with a pointed expectation: *"...you better do it. You better make good on this."* Rebecca emphasized the importance of *"shifting power"* and *"continuing that resident decision-making input expertise... That's expertise that's more valuable than academic expertise in a lot of ways."* The resident focus ignited a sense of ownership and accountability in the community, driving the work forward with energy and purpose.

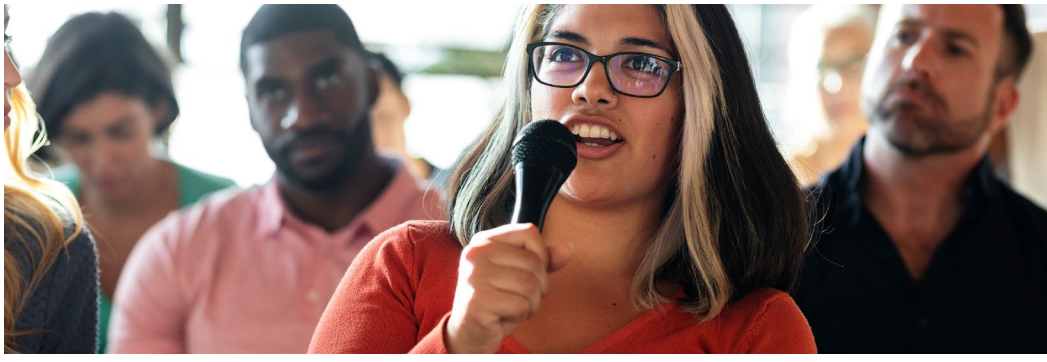
> "...what we learned is that [if] those programs aren't relevant and they're not designed for people, their culture, their experience, it doesn't work."
>
> *— Rebecca Boxx, CYC Providence*

Pronounced ***community engagement*** marked Providence's implementation of Evidence2Success: they touched *"over 1,000 residents in our process of gathering input on priorities and program selection."* Collecting data was about weaving the community's voice into the initiative's very fabric.

Impactful Dialogues, Empowered Leadership, and Authentic Engagement

As Providence moved to prioritizing community engagement and resident input, discussions on the data and programs changed. For instance, key community advocates ***voiced the specific needs*** of communities that have historically not been included at the decision-making table: *"...an immigrant from Dominican Republic... And she said, we don't have anything specifically for our Latino population...."* Events such as the "Know the Data" meetings ***facilitated open dialogue*** among attendees, emphasizing the importance of clear, consistent communication and setting strategic objectives. Providence used the Youth Experience Survey (YES) as a ***unifying force.*** *"The YES data was the universal tool that engaged everyone from CEOs to students,"* explained a participant. The approach leveled the playing field for everyone's voices.

ADOBE STOCK

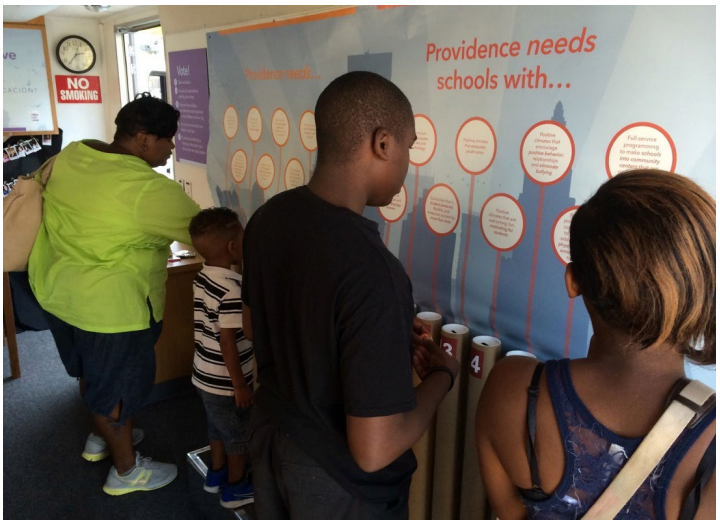


Providence moved to prioritize community engagement and gain resident input.

Contents Home

Building Trust and Cultural Relevance

Actively considering the neighborhoods' contemporary context led to adapting the initiative. Though the coalition was not initially focused on equity, the team encountered issues of structural racism and the mismatch between community and service provider demographics. Boxx noted: *"Providence is like...Rhode Island's sort of urban core, the demographics of our school age kids, there are 80, 90% kids of color, 60% Latinos, 20% African Americans, 8% southeast Asian. But the teacher workforce, the social service workforce is predominantly white and from the suburbs. So what we learned is that [if] those programs aren't relevant and they're not designed for people, their culture, their experience, it doesn't work.*" Beyond solely focusing on fidelity, the team began to prioritize selecting and adapting programs to be culturally relevant and engaging for the community. A community advisory begun in 2017 has taken cultural relevance and trust to new levels, with residents tapping their own networks and both sharing and collecting data that has a direct impact on priorities.



CYC

Providence brought data collection into the community to reach residents where they lived.

As an outsider to the community, Boxx acknowledged the ***challenges in building trust:*** *"Trust...[if] that's not something you acquire, and it's done. And honestly, as a white woman who's not even from this neighborhood, the skepticism is absolutely real. What are you doing here? And we've moved to only implementing programs that are developed by developers of color for communities of color or adapted."* Building trust and cultural relevance faced some challenges:

- **Cultural Mismatch:** The initial implementation of one particular school-based program was described as a "disaster" due to its poor fit with the community context.
- **Balancing Priorities:** Initial tension arose between public systems' focus on the "worst" indicators and the community's focus on issues they felt were more relevant and impactful.
- **Sustainability Concerns:** As the initiative gained momentum, questions arose about long-term funding and program implementation quality.

Providence's response to these challenges—***reviewing available data, receiving technical assistance and coaching, and allowing residents to provide meaningful insights in data interpretation***—set it apart. Actionable insights included:

- **Adaptive Programming:** Instead of giving up on evidence-based programs, Providence worked with community experts and "conveners" to adapt them to fit their context.

Contents Home

- **Nimble Governance:** The large community meetings evolved to a more agile resident advisory group that became deeply involved in data collection and analysis and program recommendations.
- **Strategic Planning:** Providence took a proactive approach to sustainability, continually assessing financial resources and integrating E2S work into regular professional responsibilities.

THE OUTCOME

Meaningful Community Representation

Providence went beyond token representation, as Boxx explains: *"We firmly believe that you can't just say, here's the board of an organization, let's put a youth on it, let's put a community member on it and boom, everything's salt."* Key outcomes from Providence taking stock of ***who was at the table and who was not,*** included creating the community partnership table and the shift in power dynamics:

- **The Community Partnership Table:** This energized group became the beating heart of the initiative, continuously sharing data and reaching out to residents as a dynamic force for change.
- **Shifting Power Dynamics:** Perhaps the most radical aspect of Providence's approach was its commitment to centering resident expertise and decision-making: *"We didn't just add a few community members to a board. We shifted power by truly centering resident voices."*

This approach led to more substantive community involvement in decision-making processes, ensuring that resident voices were truly heard and acted upon.

Tangible Outcomes for Defining and Measuring Success

The team defined success as outcomes that ***directly reflected the community's priorities.*** Boxx proudly shares the concrete results of their efforts: *"We've got measurable increases in parents talking with their kids about risky behaviors. We've got families reporting that the content is relatable to their culture and experience as person of color, as a young person, as an immigrant, we've got reduced PTSD symptoms, we've got improved communication, we've got…."* Money was also considered a measure of success since the community was concerned about *"who's going to pay for this?"* The team's ability to ***shift public funding towards evidence-based prevention programs***, such as Strong African American Families and Familias Unidas, was a significant systems-level achievement. Additionally, the team tracked the financial resources they have been able to direct toward the community's priorities: $2.6 million annually to support the initiative. These outcomes demonstrate the success of Providence's community-centric approach in creating relevant, impactful programs with sustainable funding.

Contents Home

CONCLUSION

Providence's journey with Evidence2Success is a testament to the ***power of genuine community engagement and grassroots involvement.*** By centering resident voices, building trust, and ensuring cultural relevance, Providence has created a model of community-driven change that goes beyond traditional top-down approaches. The story shows that when community stakeholders truly commit to empowering residents, the results can be transformative: programs and outcomes can genuinely reflect and serve the community's needs, strengthen systems, foster enduring collaboration, and leverage public funding.

Kearns, Salt Lake County: Charting a Data-Driven Path to Youth Well-being

A Township's Vision: Kearns's Unique Context

Kearns, a township in Salt Lake County, Utah, was a diverse community of about 36,530. Originally developed as a World War II-era military housing area, Kearns evolved through periods of focused investment—the Utah Olympic Oval was built there for the 2002 Olympic Games—followed with longer periods of neglect. In 2015, Kearns had an overall poverty rate of approximately 9.05%, one of the highest child poverty rates in Utah, and a high rate of intergenerational poverty. Its population tended to be young, and average household size was the largest in the county. The community's ethnic diversity included a significant Hispanic population (31.7%), non-Hispanic White (60.2%), and a mix of longtime residents and newcomers. In Kearns, there was an underlying recognition of the potential for change. A newspaper article noted that the Kearns Community Coalition, later called the MyKearns Community Coalition, led "an extraordinary effort by dozens of government agencies and community leaders to help this working-class township reverse a troubling trend of distressing statistics."

SHUTTERSTOCK

Kearns' population was a mix of longtime residents and newcomers, and a growing Hispanic population.

Before Evidence2Success, decision-making in Kearns was often centralized, with limited community engagement and data use. One community leader noted, *"...when it came to a shared vision, it was more of the vision of we know there's opportunity. How we get there was not necessarily identified...."*

THE PROCESS

Charting the Course: Kearns's Evidence2Success Implementation Process

Evidence2Success brought a new approach to Kearns that emphasized ***community involvement and data-driven decision-making.*** The Kearns coalition, comprising diverse stakeholders, including local leaders, educators, health professionals, and community members, embraced this change. The orientation sessions were a key aspect of this transition. As one community leader, Charles Henderson, noted, *"I think we all trusted each other to want to get it done. I would say when we had some on-site meetings with Annie E. Casey as far as the training, facilitating, talking about the prescribed approach and how we're going to get there, I think that's when we all kind of realized we were in the game."*

> Decisions are made by the board, not in a vacuum, not in an executive room [with an] executive committee making the decisions. It's the board who makes the decision…it's the board that actually manages or runs the coalition, and it's not the executive committee.
>
> *— Charles Henderson, Kearns Evidence2Success*

The board recognized the importance of creating a ***safe space for open discussions.*** As one member explained, *"We created an environment that was safe… There were ground rules, I guess is probably the best way to put it. Establish ground rules on how we're going to check ourselves as a coalition."* The community board successfully established a ***shared vision and built trust*** among its members. They created a ***safe and inclusive environment*** where diverse voices were heard and valued. Their decision-making process reflected the inclusive approach. As Henderson explained, *"Decisions are made by the board, not in a vacuum, not in an executive room [with an] executive committee making the decisions. It's the board who makes the decision…it's the board that actually manages or runs the coalition, and it's not the executive committee."*

Data as the Compass: Kearns's Approach to Measurement and Outcomes

Kearns ***embraced a data-driven approach*** to guide their efforts and measure progress. At the core of their efforts was the Utah SHARP (Student Health and Risk Prevention) survey, a comprehensive youth data collection tool that provided crucial insights into the needs and challenges faced by the youth in Kearns. As Henderson describes, *"Our key performance indicator is the SHARP survey. And so we look at those numbers every two years to see if we impact and had any inroads into addressing the priorities or addressing any of the data components that actually led to our priorities."* Henderson also explained the importance of this data, noting, *"We just recently got SHARP's survey data and we identified priorities. We assessed whether or not we were going to make any changes… One of the ways that I wanted to be able to validate our findings and make sure that we had community participation in the priorities was by holding data parties."* Relying on regular data collection and analysis allowed the coalition to ***track progress and adjust strategies*** as needed.

Two years into their Evidence2Success journey, a technical assistance coach noted this strength, saying, *"Data-driven decision-making is becoming the norm."*

Monitoring Coalition Data and Navigating the Challenges

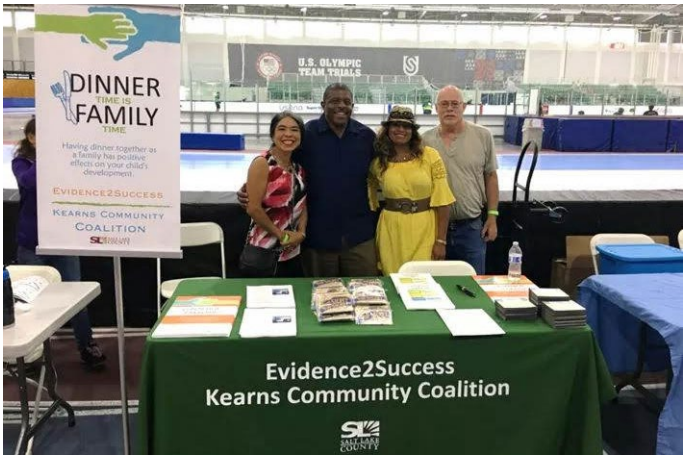
Kearns's review of their coalition member and meeting data revealed that, despite their successes, the board continued to face challenges. ***Engaging and sustaining the participation of community residents,*** particularly those from diverse backgrounds and newer to the community, remained an ongoing challenge. Henderson candidly admitted, *"I know that, yeah, we are not getting the traction with the community because we just have never executed the plan."*

Effectively communicating the work of the coalition and opportunities for involvement also proved difficult. As Henderson reflected, *"I know that we've really not done what we said we're going to do as far as sharing the information about who we are as a coalition, what we're doing and why we're doing it, how they could benefit from it, and how they can contribute to it. We have not done that."* This honest assessment shows how the coalition reflected on its data to highlight areas for continued growth and improvement in coalition membership and participation.

> "Our key performance indicator is the SHARP survey. And so we look at those numbers every two years to see if we impact and had any inroads into addressing the priorities or addressing any of the data components that actually led to our priorities." Henderson also explained the importance of this data, noting, "We just recently got SHARP's survey data and we identified priorities. We assessed whether or not we were going to make any changes… One of the ways that I wanted to be able to validate our findings and make sure that we had community participation in the priorities was by holding data parties.
>
> *— Charles Henderson, Kearns Evidence2Success*

THE OUTCOME

While challenges remained, progress was being made in ***raising community awareness*** about the initiative and also ***awareness of community issues and available resources;*** a coach noted improvement in both areas. The community change efforts in Kearns also yielded ***remarkable outcomes for youth.*** Crime rates decreased, including the incidence of gang-related graffiti and tagging. Youth vaping, smoking, and marijuana use also declined. The changes were a direct result of their data-driven approach.



CHARLES HENDERSON

Coalition members committed to get the word out in the Kearns community about programs and coalition work.

Kearns's experience with Evidence2Success demonstrates

Contents Home

the power of integrating a structured, data-driven approach to existing community change efforts, as well as the challenges inherent in such work. By ***establishing clear processes, fostering trust among stakeholders,*** and ***maintaining a commitment to data-driven decision-making,*** Kearns has laid a strong foundation for ongoing community improvement.

Lessons from the Journey: Kearns's Insights for Other Communities

Henderson emphasized open-mindedness and continuing to pursue active community engagement as advice for other communities: "I would tell [them] to take off the blinders and understand really what's going on in their community. Not just their lens, but ask questions of folks. Ask questions of folks that you don't know that are in the community. What's their perspective? Don't assume that you know everything…and have all the answers."

CONCLUSION

Kearns's Ongoing Transformation

The Kearns Community Case Study exemplifies the ***power of data-driven, community-led interventions to address complex social challenges.*** By embracing data as a guiding compass, fostering inclusive engagement, and remaining adaptable in the face of challenges, the Kearns Community Board charted a new course for their community. Their journey demonstrates that meaningful change is possible when the community comes together with a shared vision, guided by data and a commitment to continuous improvement. As Kearns continues to evolve and grow, the foundations laid by this data-driven approach promise to support ongoing efforts to improve youth outcomes and break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

An Insider's View: Tips for Adapting Your Systems Change Effort to Your Community's Culture and Context

If you're wondering how to make this happen in your community, you've come to the right place. Adapting a systems change process to the unique context and culture of your community is certainly a complex process, especially when your effort prioritizes a prevention approach that uses data and evidence-based programs for youth well-being. In this section, you will get practical insights about what works, what to prioritize, and how to adapt from those who actively used and adapted a systems change effort to the needs of their community using Evidence2Success tools and processes.

But first, as discussed in the last two action guides and echoed in the preceding case studies, *building trust is foundational;* it is woven throughout the recommendations that follow. If trust is not attended to and nurtured, your whole change effort is likely to falter. While there are many ways to build trust, at the top of the list, according to practitioners, is *listening intentionally* to the people who live in the community, *believing what they tell you* about their experiences, *making decisions* informed by this information, and *following through* on what you, as a coalition, say you will do. This may require growing trust where it has been absent, disregarded, or betrayed. It means *becoming trustworthy*—over and over again, over time and through repeated and demonstrated words and actions.

It's your turn. The Key Benefits section shows that using a community-centric approach to a systems change effort is possible and can be transformative for your community. Successful efforts maintained a diverse coalition that prioritized the inclusion of resident voice and racial and ethnic equity, spent time centering the socio-historical/political context of the community, and actively used community-level data to support transformation efforts.

Now we invite you to reflect on four areas in light of how communities cultivated a community centric approach to adapting community change efforts in a way that can serve your local efforts:

1. **Take stock of the socio-historical/political context of your community.**
2. **Equip your team with the language and tools necessary to name structural and systemic inequities.**
3. **Establish a process to routinely monitor progress.**
4. **Reflect routinely on the current situation and be prepared to flex for emerging needs and priorities.**

Take time to answer the questions that follow with your community context in mind. Then, read real stories from community stakeholders about strategies and tools that can facilitate the work.

Take Stock of the Socio-Historical/Political Context of Your Community

Actively and collectively acknowledging past trauma and socio-political dynamics is critical for understanding some of the most powerful forces that have shaped the people and families in your community. Coalitions that look squarely at the history of the neighborhood or region position themselves to have conversations that illuminate personal experiences of structural harm. Openness to new ways of approaching the current moment can develop. "Taking stock" as a coalition can foster trust by signaling to those whose experiences have been previously devalued and whose voices have been unheard that they are now valued and heard in this coalition. Essential questions to ask include:

- ❑ In what ways has our coalition directly examined the context in which residents in this area live, work, and play? What norms, attitudes, actions, or barriers have previously prevented or limited this examination?
- ❑ Has our coalition explicitly acknowledged and addressed structural and systemic inequities in our work together (e.g., in meetings, among leaders, during decision-making, etc.)? If so, what has worked? What are potential areas for growth? If not, how might coalition members respond to a discussion that explicitly centers race and ethnicity?
- ❑ What resources are available that may help our coalition effectively and adequately reflect on and center an understanding of the historical narratives and socio-political dynamics in our community for the work we are doing now?
- ❑ How will we communicate with and prepare chairs and coalition attendees before meetings during which data that is disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status will be shared and discussed?
- ❑ How can trained, experienced external facilitators assist our coalition to have conversations that include difficult topics like discrimination, oppression, and structural racism? What background will we provide during presentations to look at disaggregated data? How will we pose directed discussion questions to draw people in to share their experiences in a safe space, rather than making more general requests for comment?

[2]See the second action guide in this series for a comprehensive section on *Cultivating Trust in Key Relationships* (starting on page 17).

- How will we prioritize including residents and their points of view?
  - How will we ensure that members of minoritized communities have safety, time, and space to actively identify and reflect on issues they view as important to the health and well-being of youth in their area?
  - What are the opportunities for elevating the lived experiences of current residents in ways that relate to the socioeconomic realities of our area and region of focus?

Identify Community Norms about Discussing Race and Ethnicity, Prepare Leaders Ahead of Pointed Discussions

Different communities and groups have varying levels of experience and comfort with talking openly and explicitly about differences among racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic populations—especially when group participation spans multiple races and ethnicities. Discussions can elicit strong emotional responses including anger, shame, guilt, and skepticism; therefore, preparing anticipatory activities is critical. Discussing results in small groups and providing reflection questions that invite responses can help attendees process data and find ways to use the results to support the work and goals of the coalition.

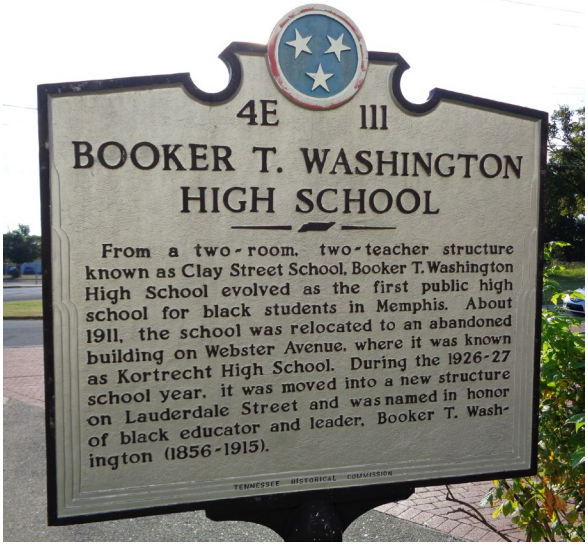
In Mobile, the results of first-year interviews were presented at a meeting of 15 coalition members, 84% of whom reported being "very" or "extremely" interested in the interview results. Yet there was very little discussion during the meeting about the results, which included *disaggregated data* wherein responses to some questions were broken out separately by race and ethnicity to examine differences. The evaluation of the meeting described *"awkwardness or reluctance among those present to talk about the race differences."* Anecdotally, an observer recalled that at least one Black attendee shared with the group that the data reflected her everyday reality. Meanwhile, a White attendee privately shared his worry that the conversation seemed to be *"trying to start something"* and that disaggregation created conflict within their multiracial board. The evaluation attributed the lack of conversation to *"participants not being prepared, or [not] knowing how to talk about the race difference."*

In Selma and Dallas County, the coalition noticed that *"perceived racial discrimination"* was much higher than was reported in other Youth Survey results. When the coalition's coordinator, Astrid Craig, who was not native to Selma, asked residents why they thought it was so high, the adults were surprised by the question. Due to cultural norms that limited frank conversations about race, they were reluctant to say more or talk directly about it with students. As Craig later reflected, *"Part of the obstacle is trying to put it into words. Even though you know about it, there's a difference between knowing it innately and also vocalizing it and voicing it to make it concrete."* Over the years, some residents have begun to engage more openly. Meanwhile, Craig deliberately keeps it as *"an issue that we have on our task list that we kind of keep having those conversations about."*

Recognize and Remove Barriers to Resident Involvement

Bringing resident voices to the table means having an awareness of why residents have not come to the table before and working to change the context to make their participation possible.

All six communities prioritized holding meetings within a focus neighborhood. ***In Memphis,*** before the COVID-19 pandemic forced meetings to occur virtually, meetings were held at the culturally significant neighborhood-based Booker T. Washington High School. ***In Selma and Dallas County,*** meeting locations were intentionally rotated: to a church, then a school, then another space. This was done, according to Craig, *"So it wasn't just our work. It would belong to the community work as a whole."*



STEVE MASLER OF MEMPHIS, TENNESSEE

Early on and before the pandemic, Memphis held community board meetings at the historically and culturally significant Booker T. Washington High School.

In Providence, members of the Citywide Partnership prioritized *"creating a context which is supporting of genuine, authentic community involvement and participation."* One way the coalition did this was by sending out a bus to share the data with the community at large. This innovative way of sharing data and soliciting feedback returned the data that had been collected from the community directly back to the community. By creating a new context that moved the data and analysis to the people, the coalition shifted the usual dynamic of residents having to come to the data.

In Miami, the leadership team used learnings from a training to engage youth in focus groups about health priorities for Liberty City teens. Hearing *"how they were really feeling"* moved the organizations to work more closely together. According to then-Site Coordinator Misty Brown, *"...it was a strong cry for help from adults that say that they are working on their behalf...I think that literally that was the linchpin that brought us together."*

Equip Your Team with the Language and Skills Necessary to Name Structural and Systemic Inequities

Having a common language for discussing inequities can be empowering and clarifying for members of a coalition working on community change. It is important not to assume that those who have experienced racism or discrimination are already fluent; indeed, some Black and Brown attendees of trainings in Evidence2Success communities said this was their first exposure to some of the terms. Naming and defining can offer validation and insight; it can also elicit discomfort and more questions. Acting with intentionality is key. Essential questions to ask include:

Contents Home

- ❑ Do all coalition members share a common language, including terminology and definitions, that can facilitate discussions within the coalition about systemic and structural inequities, such as racism and discrimination, and how they impact the work?
- ❑ What tools or processes (e.g., backmapping, racial equity analysis tool, disaggregating data by race and ethnicity, socioeconomics, etc.) will we use to acknowledge, analyze, and integrate the impacts of systematic and structural oppression within our community into current planning and decision-making related to youth and family priorities, programs, and well-being?
- ❑ What organizations can provide training and tools to our coalition to help us integrate an understanding of racial and ethnic equity, inclusion, and belonging into our work? How will we incorporate regular training into our coalition operations both to benefit new members and to update and refresh knowledge for longtime participants?
- ❑ How do we imagine training in structural and systemic inequity might impact the following within our coalition: representatives of different sectors? Individuals of different races and ethnicities? Residents and those who live outside of the community? How will the coalition process the experience and follow up afterward with support?

Use Practices like Disaggregating Data or Backmapping to See the Evidence of Racial Inequity and Begin to Develop a Plan that Integrates That Awareness and Reality

In Memphis and Miami, coalitions underwent training in *backmapping* to look at root causes of current-day inequities in their communities. In follow-up interviews, attendees agreed that using backmapping could help *"create a plan to advance racial equity"* in their communities.

In Mobile, Coordinator Jeremiah Newell understood that asking evaluators to disaggregate data could help the coalition dig into deeper levels of data that were important for understanding current issues.

In Kearns and Salt Lake County, the coordinator had anticipated discomfort among participants after a racial equity and inclusion (REI) workshop, but it did not come. Instead, the board used the training as a springboard for discussing *"whose voices are currently missing from the table."* They strategized how to recruit those voices, focusing on creating *"a welcoming and inviting space where folks want to gather,"* and later planned a workgroup-style meeting to *"get a deeper REI lens to the work."*

You can use "From Thinking To Doing: A Centering Community Exercise" (in Appendix) to practice key activities that shift the perspective towards placing community at the center.

Recognize That Advancing Racial and Ethnic Equity Is Difficult Work Requiring Ongoing Support

In Memphis, the coalition engaged in a backmapping process to look at root causes of disparities in the data with help from outside experts. When attendees were asked to consider changes they could make in their home organizations, one observer described that some participants appeared *"overwhelmed."* She acknowledged later that championing change can feel fraught with uncertainty, especially when asked to be the one to introduce the change. In retrospect, she recognized the situation as a missed but *"awesome opportunity"* to provide support to bring back the language and learnings to a coalition member's workplace.

Establish a Process to Routinely Monitor Progress

We saw in Key Benefit 1 that communities were able to start quickly in the first phase of work. Early on, momentum runs high in new community initiatives! But how do you keep the work going when that enthusiasm wanes? Having an established process to navigate next steps and monitor how you're doing can be extremely helpful as you continue moving forward. Essential questions to ask include:

- ❑ What tool(s) will our coalition agree to use to track decisions and activities and to both guide and measure progress as it occurs? Who will take charge of this responsibility, and how will we archive records?
- ❑ What data will we use to gauge progress and determine current priorities?
- ❑ What timeline will we establish, and who will enforce it?
- ❑ How will we continuously ensure that resident voices are informed about and involved with processes that involve data review, priority setting, and program selection?
- ❑ How will we develop and implement practices to consider new data and an evolving context?
- ❑ What networks can our coalition plug into to receive feedback and support? How can we learn from and with others engaged in similar community change efforts in their own communities?

Establish Timelines and Assign Responsibilities for Reviewing Data

Building out a reliable schedule and framework to guide your coalition's activities can keep the work organized and moving forward.

In all six communities, coalitions used a *Milestones and Benchmarks* rating tool to guide activities and to reflect upon the degree to which they were meeting milestones to fulfill larger goals. They completed the rating exercise every six months over at least four years.

In Kearns and Salt Lake County, the coalition established a quarterly meeting of the data review committee that pulled the most recent data and checked it against their goals and activities. The committee then made recommendations to the full coalition. Embedding the practice in routine operations gave the coalition a real-time understanding of progress and challenges and allowed it to make informed decisions to adjust midcourse as needed.

Engage with Other Communities in a Community of Practice

Staff and leaders from the six communities have met about quarterly with each other and with technical assistance coaches via Zoom to learn about topics of participant interest. In addition to acquiring new skills or content, such as how to visualize data or what goes into a communications plan, participants often have noted that conversations and interactions with other coordinators, finance leads, data partners, and attendees from different communities are invaluable. At times, these interactions have led to offline calls to build ideas and share support.

Consider Engaging Coaching or Other Technical Assistance Providers with Expertise in Systems Change Work

Coaching from an outside advisor with skills in social development strategy or other systems change models can offer strategy-building support to coalitions. These specialized TA providers and coaches can inform a coordinator and other leaders with knowledge about how change at the community and systems level works. Note that these TA providers differ from program-specific TA providers, who support implementing a particular curriculum with quality and fidelity. Instead, systems change specialists can help navigate and adapt strategies for the overall effort and serve as neutral brainstorming partners for addressing challenging situations as they arise that may demand a shift.

SHUTTERSTOCK

Connecting regularly with peers engaged in community change work can build support and promote idea sharing.

All six communities used TA providers with expertise in systems change work.

In Memphis, Coordinator Amber Moore credited coaching she received from a TA provider with a background in community change work to her rapid onboarding to her new role. It is important to note that the coach had also worked with Moore's predecessor, which also supported continuity.

Contents Home

Reflect Routinely on the Current Situation and Be Prepared to Flex for Emerging Needs and Priorities

It is said that the only constant is change. Using data and input from community members and sector participants can yield a solid plan that still will likely need to change. Factors beyond our control and vision can have a massive impact, like a pandemic that leads to a global shutdown. Other factors on a smaller scale can still require a shift—like low attendance at a program you selected based on youth data. Reflecting on what the situation demands, recognizing what you have and what you need, and considering ways in which you can flex to meet the current moment are all important. Over time, a reflective practice can grow into reflexive practice in members and in the coalition collectively, which looks like intuited assessments and actions based on a deeper understanding of its role relative to coalition priorities. *Reflective practice* refers to looking retrospectively at what went well or did not go well and determining how to adapt for future practice. *Reflexive practice* goes beyond reflection and describes pursuing a deeper level of analysis that asks why things are the way they are, and that considers how one's own, or the coalition's, experiences and perspectives contribute to the current situation. Together, these practices shape and support one another to enable continuous learning, critique, and responsive change in coalition efforts. Essential questions to ask include:

- ❑ What is significant about this situation? How does the situation align with the goals and overall vision offer the coalition? What needs to shift to accommodate new information or circumstances? What are we unwilling or unable to change?
- ❑ Are the people at the table right now who have the skills, expertise, and insights that can help inform the work in this context? If not, who will reach out to them? What will we ask of them as we invite them into the work?
- ❑ How will we check our coalition's collective positionality in new situations? How will we ensure that our actions are responsive to core priorities? What benchmarks will we use to reevaluate our priorities and consider changes to core commitments?

Assess the Environment: What Does This Situation Call For?

In Kearns and Salt Lake County, a program that was selected because it addressed priorities was struggling to attract participants. Was the program wrong, or was something else at play? Along the way, the coalition recognized that most participants who did attend spoke English as a second language, while the facilitator was an English-only speaker. When the inaugural facilitator left the role, the coalition hired an engaging Hispanic facilitator who spoke Spanish. Attendance quickly reached and sustained new heights.

In Miami, a review of data gained from focus groups with teens gave the coalition insight into mental health as a priority that they had not anticipated. The coalition looked around the table and realized that no one from the health sector was represented. According to Finance Lead Andrew Britton and Coordinator Brown, *"Jesse Trice is renowned as the sort of epicenter of community health in Liberty City."* So, they reached out and invited a representative from the federally qualified health center to join the coalition. This mental health counselor quickly became *"a prominent voice in the community group."*

Forward Progress Does Not Always Follow a Straight Line

We saw this trend in the Key Benefit 1 data, in the dips and plateaus in progress among communities in Phases 4 and 5. Yet, all communities moved forward. This is important to keep in mind when progress seems to slow or even tumbles a bit in a downward direction.

In Mobile, the coalition experienced turnover in coordinators; in the third year, the finance lead stepped up to take on the coordinator's responsibilities in addition to filling those of his existing position. Activities took longer to complete, and the work stalled when he left the role. The coalition decided to pause and reflect on the direction of the work before restarting again in ways that fit the coalition better.

In Miami, a change in the lead organization for the coalition was followed by a succession of coordinators. As a result, the work started, stopped, and restarted over a couple of years. Before Misty Brown assumed the role of coordinator, Finance Lead Andrew Britton described *"trials and tribulations"* that delayed arriving at consensus about *"the priorities that would drive the work that we were there for."*

Make Good on Your Promises

This is all about trust building, which began this section. The flip side of making good promises is being careful about making promises in the first place. Be clear about what your coalition can do and what it cannot do before making an unrealistic promise.

In Providence, the coalition recognized that a long history of community neglect could not be overcome by a single activity to solicit input or by a single win. Working with, listening to, and taking direction from residents had to become the way of doing the work over the long haul. According to longtime director Rebecca Boxx, that meant the coalition had to follow through on whatever they said they were going to do. She observed that people put in the work if you *"do what the people tell you to do"* and *"make good on your promises."* It can take a long time, but it can happen. *"I don't think folks believed until we actually basically got money and showed that this was going to be real."*

What's Next? Let's Think About Systems Integration

As coalitions embark on change efforts that increasingly adopt a community-centric lens, they value local wisdom, historical context, and the potential of existing structures. This perspective invites you to reimagine how public systems, sectors, and residents can work together, not just in silos alongside each other, to create a nurturing environment for youth. By integrating systems, coalitions can unlock synergies, address root causes more effectively, and cultivate resilience within the community. In this section, we explore how *recognizing value, building capacity,* and *engaging strategically* can transform fragmented efforts into a cohesive force for positive change.

THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION FOR A GREATER MEMPHIS

Connecting regularly with peers engaged in community change work can build support and promote idea sharing.

Recognizing Value: Understand the Value of Each Public System

Public systems hold significant potential and responsibility to support youth well-being, across all populations and despite current shortcomings or mistrust. When trust between public systems and community residents is cultivated, systems have the capacity to support the *continuum of wellness*—from promotion to prevention to treatment—that can serve the health and wellness needs of the entire population. You can learn what resources public systems bring to the table that can help sustain your efforts when you:

- **Recognize the inherent value and potential of these systems despite underperformance.** By identifying and appreciating the core strengths and potential contributions that systems can offer, stakeholders can work collaboratively to enhance their effectiveness and address existing gaps and misunderstandings. This perspective encourages a proactive approach to system improvement, leveraging existing assets for greater impact.
- **Acknowledge systems' responsibility to address various aspects of children's lives.** Public systems play a critical role in supporting different facets of a child's development, from education to health and social services. Recognizing this responsibility involves ensuring that these systems are equipped and motivated to meet the diverse needs of all children in the community.
- **Cultivate a culture that celebrates the unique facets of different systems and what each one brings to the table to promote whole community wellness.** Communities can encourage collaboration and innovation when fostering a culture that values these differences. This approach enhances the effectiveness of individual systems while also promoting a more integrated and holistic approach to youth and community health.

- **Build trust between public systems and minoritized communities to expand focus on the wellness continuum.** Trust is a foundational element in the relationship between public systems and the communities they serve. It is important to recognize that trust has been lacking between public systems and residents in many communities for a number of reasons. Building trust requires consistent, transparent communication and a genuine commitment to addressing community concerns. As trust grows, systems can more effectively engage with communities to support a continuum of wellness that includes prevention, intervention, and treatment.
- **Connect this approach to financial strategies to alter resource allocation and utilization.** Aligning financial strategies with community goals is essential for effective systems integration. See Action Guide 2 for a full treatment of finance strategies, such as fundmapping, that can prepare communities to ensure that financial investments support strategic priorities determined by the community.

Building Capacity: Take a Community-Historical Whole Systems Perspective

Transitioning from mere knowledge to a deeper understanding of community impacts is essential for building capacity. This involves developing a *shared language* that allows stakeholders to articulate and engage in dialogue about systemic inequities effectively. By *cultivating compassion for the lived experiences* of cultural groups, communities can foster empathy and understanding, acknowledging the impact of historical traumas and ongoing challenges. This shared understanding fosters the conditions necessary for diverse groups of stakeholders to "play in the sandbox" together, facilitating meaningful dialogue and collective action toward positive change. Here are some key steps:

- **Develop a shared language.** This involves creating a common vocabulary that effectively articulates and addresses systemic inequities, establishing terms that accurately reflect both historical and current challenges faced by the community. This language must be inclusive and respectful of all cultural groups, fostering understanding and collaboration across diverse community members.
- **Cultivate compassion for lived experiences.** Compassion is crucial in community change efforts. It involves fostering empathy and understanding of the diverse experiences of various cultural groups within the community. This process requires acknowledging the profound impact of historical traumas and ongoing challenges on different systems and subgroups within the community. To facilitate this understanding, it's essential to create safe spaces where coalition members can freely share their stories and perspectives, promoting mutual respect and deeper connections among diverse groups.
- **Recognize historical legacies and current realities.** Make a deep examination of the community's historical context, including past injustices and their enduring effects. Seek to understand how these historical legacies shape present-day community and system dynamics. This process will call to attention ways that systems may perpetuate

present-day inequities among subgroups of the population. It's crucial to identify both the strengths and the vulnerabilities that have emerged from the community's history, which can provide insights for addressing contemporary challenges.

By following these steps, communities can move to deeper work that is rooted in the local narrative. This serves as a foundation for building the capacity needed to address systemic inequities and work collaboratively toward positive change.

Engaging Strategically: Recognize, Invite, and Engage Relevant Systems

Recognizing, inviting, and engaging relevant systems in the work is crucial for effective systems integration to achieve collective community transformation for youth well-being. This diversity of perspectives leads to *holistic problem-solving,* which happens when different systems provide unique inputs on the challenges faced within a community and generate systems-based solutions, leading to more effective and innovative solutions. The synergy of resources and expertise that emerges from this collaboration amplifies the potential impact of community initiatives. Engaging relevant systems also fosters a sense of *shared accountability,* which emerges when multiple systems are meaningfully engaged, and the collective work creates a sense of shared responsibility for improving youth outcomes.

Involving diverse stakeholders that reflect the intricate dynamics of community systems yields a collective responsibility for outcomes, leading to more sustainable and far-reaching changes. Authentic systems integration helps break down traditional silos that often hinder progress, allowing for a more fluid exchange of ideas and resources across different sectors of the community.

This process begins with identifying the power structures that need to be addressed and understanding where silos and access barriers exist. Beyond this, it forges a collaborative environment where diverse systems can imagine and co-create a better future together.

- **Recognize the systems involved in this work.** This begins with acknowledging and understanding the local power structures and ensuring that stakeholders have a shared grasp of the dynamics. By proposing solutions and pinpointing the main problems, a community can determine how these issues connect to the systems that need to be engaged. This involves not only identifying but also actively inviting and involving these systems in the collaborative effort.
- **Reduce access barriers so that all relevant systems may be effectively integrated into the initiatives aimed at improving youth well-being.** By fostering an inclusive environment where diverse systems are engaged, communities can create a cohesive network of support that addresses the multifaceted needs of youth. Reducing access barriers emphasizes equitable collaboration and shared responsibility, paving the way for sustainable systems-level changes.

Contents Home

- **Recognize how a network of engaged individuals and systems can promote the *bridging and linking* of a community's social capital to support youth well-being.** [6] Developing connections across diverse groups within the community (bridging) and establishing relationships between community members and institutions of power (linking) are core to promoting social capital. Building social capital enables a community to leverage a wider range of assets, amplify its collective voice, and create more equitable pathways for youth development. You can read more about how social capital strengthens a community's capacity for change and responsiveness to diverse needs in this article https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/pdfdirect/10.1002/jcop.23034.

Fostering social capital can help a community build a more robust and resilient network that supports youth well-being.

- The Appendix includes an example of what this work might look like in practice, using the implementation of community gardens in food desert areas.

In conclusion, it is important to continually evaluate and refine what systems integration looks like in practice. A comprehensive approach to systems integration emphasizes recognizing value, building capacity, addressing power structures, and creating holistic, community-centered solutions to support youth well-being.

Conclusion

Throughout this action guide, we've seen that the path to meaningfully enhancing youth well-being lies in harnessing the collective wisdom and experience of those who know their community best, those who call a place home. By embracing a process that honors local culture, context, and lived experiences, communities can unlock their transformative potential and cultivate conditions that lead to lasting, positive change for young people

In the six Evidence2Success communities, a community-centric approach to adapt the change process to local culture and context created initiatives that work and resonate deeply with the people it serves. Collaborative processes helped the coalitions adopt initiatives that went beyond addressing symptoms to tackling root causes. While success was defined differently in every community, each one deployed a framework that turned obstacles into opportunities to deepen community engagement, understanding, and learning—where the journey itself, with all its twists and turns, proved as valuable as the destination.

In the field of coalition change initiatives, we've witnessed well-intentioned efforts that have fallen short, leaving us to wonder what's missing. The answer lies not in boardrooms or academic theories but in the heartbeat of the community itself. This is the art and science of community-centered coalition work, where every resident can be a changemaker, and every neighborhood holds the key to its own transformation. As you embark on your own journey, remember that *the process is as valuable as the destination.* Embrace the challenges and celebrate the victories. Be patient and persistent. Above all, trust in the collective power of your community, which holds the key to its own transformation.

SHUTTERSTOCK

The art and science of community-centered coalition work are based on the fact that every resident can be a changemaker, and every neighborhood holds the key to its own transformation.

Contents Home

Acknowledgments

We thank the many individuals involved on the project development and implementation team at the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Social Development Research Group, and Mainspring Consulting, plus many other individuals and groups who lent expertise in activities and planning groups early on: for their patience in coordinating with our team, and for being open to whatever results we find in the course of conducting the implementation evaluation.

We thank the partnership members from Providence, Dallas County and Selma, Salt Lake County and Kearns Township, Mobile, Miami, and Memphis for their full support of and participation in the implementation evaluation, and we thank all the individuals who participated in the evaluations described in this report.

We are grateful for the time, attention, and critical feedback given to the review of this guide by project staff of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Evidence2Success leaders who facilitated community engagement activities, and external experts in community-engaged research and evidence-based program implementation—specifically, Rebecca Boxx, Andrew Britton, Misty Brown, Astrid Craig, Charles Henderson, Patria Johnson, Surayyah Johnson, Amber Moore, and Jeremiah Newell; and Phillip Graham, Cassandra Pinkston, Madelyn Roman-Scott, and Nicki Thomson.

Francisco Villarruel, team member and co-author, is from Michigan State University, Human Development and Family Studies, University Outreach and Engagement.

Thank you to Sara Brennen of the Penn State PRC, for communications expertise. Thank you to Joni Bumbarger for designing the guide. Thank you to Courtney Hartzel for copy-editing expertise.

This evaluation was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the author(s) alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

This project was also supported by the Penn State Clinical & Translational Research Institute, Pennsylvania State University CTSA, NIH/NCATS Grant Number UL1 TR000127 and TR002014.

Glossary

BACKBONE ORGANIZATION

A separate organization with staff and specific skills that position it to create and manage an entire collective impact initiative, including coordinating with the other participating organizations and agencies within the initiative.

BACKMAPPING

A method that begins with a racial disparity on a specific indicator (e.g., staff retention rate, program participation, health status, unemployment). Then, based on race-informed research, the perspective of those most affected by the issue, and practitioner perspectives, users ask questions of the data and create a visual narrative with answers that yield insights into the causes at the root of the disparity. The process aligns with the Evidence2Success framework's key tenets of adopting a science-based approach to decision-making and embedding REEI principles in the work. [28] [49]

CAPACITY BUILDING

The idea that empowering communities to build the ability to carry out the work promotes long-term sustainability. [6]

CASE-STUDY APPROACH

A process of research learning in an in-depth way about complex issues and their associated dimensions as they occurred in a real-life context. [13]

COALITION

A voluntary, formal arrangement between groups or sectors of a community in which each group retains its identity but all agree to work together toward a common goal with the coalition serving as a catalyst for change (e.g., building a safe, healthy, and drug-free community [Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), 2024]). In prevention, community coalitions are citizen driven and involve citizens at every step of the problem-solving process. [22]

COMMUNITY BOARD

The Evidence2Success Theory of Change identifies the community board as the cooperative governance structure responsible for leading the collaborative community change initiative focused on child and family well-being, as a coalition. Duties include creating and implementing an action plan, getting broader buy-in and engagement in ways that partner effectively across systems and planning bodies, and engaging those who live, work, play, and worship within an initial community of focus. The community board identifies governance and funding infrastructure and conducts strategic financing.

COMMUNITY CHANGE

Refers to shifts in system-level practices and finance reforms within a community based on the use of local data that alter how decisions are made about the selection of and investment in priorities, programs, and policies affecting youth and families. In Evidence2Success, prevention and early intervention strategies are elevated over remediation for reasons of cost and efficacy. [19]

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

A change in mindset about the way things have been done. [50]

CONTEXT

Circumstances that surround a community where culture takes place, including the sociopolitical and historical landscape. Multiple subgroups and subcultures can exist in one community, varying by the people who reside in a community, and shaped by history and policies.

COORDINATOR

Known in Evidence2Success communities as the "site coordinator," this individual leads the community board through the five phases of Evidence2Success in both operations and decision-making. In this role, the coordinator facilitates workshop presentations of materials to the community board and workgroup activities. The coordinator supports the community board to identify priorities in youth data and to use that data to choose and work toward implementing appropriate evidence-based programs that promote youth and family well-being. [22]

CULTURE

Behaviors, customs, norms, and knowledge that a group of people practice and pass on from generation to generation.

DATA

Raw facts, figures, or information that can be collected, analyzed, and used to draw conclusions or make decisions. It can exist in various forms, such as numbers, text, images, or sounds, and can be quantitative (measurable) or qualitative (descriptive). [32]

DISAGGREGATING DATA

A practice of dividing or breaking down amassed groups of data into smaller information units, enabling a deeper dive into data to discover issues that relate to particular subgroups and dimensions of a whole that can be helpful in the identification of vulnerable subgroups. Examples of smaller units for disaggregation may include dividing data by age, race, ethnicity, gender, urban/rural residency, or socioeconomic variables. Disaggregated data has been used to generate information about everything from students' biggest academic struggles to the uptake of vaccination group by group during a pandemic. [16] [30] [42] [57]

EQUITY

Often synonymous with fairness and justice, equity in action seeks to dismantle structural and systemic barriers that prevent individuals from having full, healthy lives. Evidence-based programs and practices address those barriers to promote positive health development. Racial and ethnic equity refers to understanding and addressing structural and systemic barriers that prevent racial and ethnic minorities from accessing resources in a fair and just manner. [28]

EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAM

Evidence-based programs and practices generally have one or more rigorous outcome evaluations that demonstrate effectiveness by measuring the relationship between the program and its intended outcome(s). This includes measuring the direction and size of a change in outcome and the extent to which a change may be attributed to the activity or intervention. The methodology of the evaluation should rule out, to the extent possible, alternative explanations for the documented change. [46]

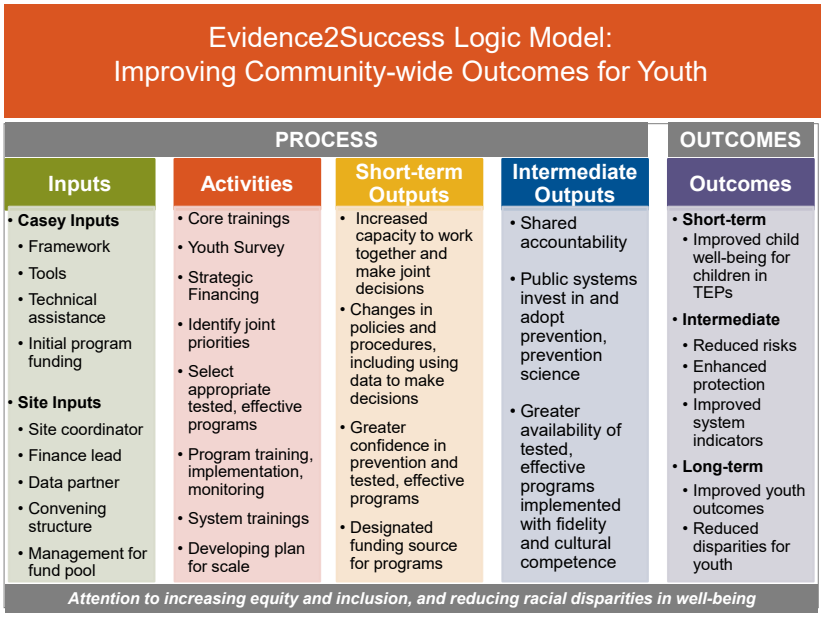
EVIDENCE2SUCCESS FRAMEWORK

A service-delivery system that brings together stakeholders in systems and communities to select and integrate tested and effective programs into communities based on youth-reported risk and protective factors, and outcomes, developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation and partners. [56]

EVIDENCE2SUCCESS LOGIC MODEL

This theoretical logic model, which drives the five-phased approach (see above), divides the Evidence2Success framework into five sections: Inputs, Activities, Short-term Outputs, Intermediate Outputs, and Outcomes. Using the inputs, communities perform the activities in the Framework, thereby producing short-term and intermediate outputs and, eventually, outcomes. The process and outcomes have a foundation of attention to racial and ethnic equity and inclusion that prioritizes reducing disparities. [43]

Evidence2Success Logic Model, 2018



FAMILIAS UNIDAS

Familias Unidas is a family-based intervention to empower Hispanic immigrant parents to build a strong parent-support network and help their adolescent children respond effectively to the risks of substance use and unsafe sexual behavior. Developed and owned by the University of Miami. [48]

MILESTONES AND BENCHMARKS

A tool outlining the key steps and sub-steps of the Evidence2Success process in a checklist format that allows users to track percent progress toward completion and fidelity to the process. It is designed to assist the coordinator, working with the community board, to track several different streams of effort across five phases of work. In Evidence2Success, the Milestones and Benchmarks tool helped communities determine when to transition to the next phase. Sequential, actual implementation may vary due to local conditions, culture, or other contextual factors. [20]

POSITIONALITY

A reflexive process of understanding one's own biases, values, and experiences that shape one's worldview. Social identifiers like gender, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, age, etc. shape how one views the world. People who come together to make decisions about their community bring with them their worldview, biases, values, and experiences. It is important to reflect on individual and collective positions in community change efforts to ensure that the efforts also reflect the community's wants and needs. [12]

PREVENTION SCIENCE

Prevention science "focuses on the development of evidence-based strategies that reduce risk factors and enhance protective factors to improve the health and well-being of individuals, families, and communities. Prevention science draws from a diverse range of disciplines… to understand the determinants of societal, community, and individual-level problems (e.g., trauma, poverty, maltreatment). The promotion of health equity and reduction of disparities are a central tenet. It has yielded practices and policies that improved countless lives throughout the lifespan by avoiding negative health and social outcomes (e.g., substance use disorder, academic failure, violence, mental illness) and strengthening conditions that enable individuals, families, and communities to thrive." [18] [41]

PROCESS EVALUATION

Determines whether program activities have been implemented as intended and resulted in certain outputs. [7]

RACIAL EQUITY IMPACT ANALYSIS TOOL

Provides guidelines for undertaking a systematic assessment of how different racial and ethnic groups have been or can be affected by existing or newly implemented policies, practices, programs, and systems. By examining critical questions regarding how institutional and structural conditions can differentially impact certain subgroups, the community board is better able to delineate how specific decisions and activities can result in unexpected consequences within and across community contexts. [28] [34]

REFLECTIVE PRACTICE

A retrospective approach to professional development that involves analyzing past experiences, identifying successes and areas for improvement, and using these insights to modify future approaches. While essential, this method is primarily passive and occurs after events have transpired. [33]

REFLEXIVE PRACTICE

A more dynamic and transformative approach than reflection, this involves real-time analysis and adjustment, coupled with a deeper level of self-awareness. Reflexive practitioners can assess and modify situations as they unfold, while also examining the underlying causes and their own role in shaping outcomes. This approach leads to more immediate and profound learning and adaptation. [33]

SCALE

The WHO defines scale as “deliberate efforts to increase the impact of successfully tested health innovations so as to benefit more people and to foster policy and program development on a lasting basis.” [52] Weber and colleagues posit that scale goes beyond reaching more people to include “creating healthy environments and fostering sustainable implementation that is capable of addressing this challenge.” [59] Within the Evidence2Success strategic financing process, the finance plan may include a program’s target scale, which is the percent of the eligible population to be reached by the program. [21]

SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY (SDS)

A prevention science approach that builds protection and prevents problem behaviors among youth. In practice, SDS recognizes that community, family, and school teach youth behaviors and values. It also recognizes that each community faces systemic inequities that uniquely shape that community’s context. Coaches and technical assistance providers using the SDS approach allow room for flexibility in recognizing the uniqueness of each community and its impact on youth. [5] [29]

STRONG AFRICAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

Strong African American Families (SAAF) is a seven-session, group-based parenting program designed for families with youth ages 10–14. SAAF aims to build on the strengths of African American families to prevent substance use and other risky behaviors. The program focuses on strengthening parental monitoring and involvement, improving communication about sex and substance use, and providing positive racial socialization. SAAF promotes youth goal-setting and attainment, resistance of risky behaviors, and acceptance of parental influences. Developed and owned by the University of Georgia (Gene Brody, PhD) and based on research conducted by the University of Georgia's Center for Family Research. [10]

SUSTAINABILITY

Refers to the continuation of goals, funding, resources, infrastructure, and activities of a project or effort that ensures the well-being of the community indefinitely. [46] The Centers for Disease Control adds that sustainability includes "creating and building momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources" and "institutionalizing policies and practices within communities and organizations" (Batan, n.d. #35). With Evidence2Success, the development of the finance plan promotes sustainability by clearly defining and prioritizing strategies over time to fund selected programs and the infrastructure that supports them. Further, Evidence2Success suggests that funding six key infrastructure capacities is necessary for sustainability, as it creates a cycle that leads to effective implementation, which then helps influence and build a stronger case for funding and support. These six capacities are partnerships, data and evaluation, continuous quality improvement, strategic finance planning and administration, advocacy and communications, and project management. [25]

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)

A form of implementation support, often within a broader infrastructure, that individuals or organizations receive in order to improve operations and achieve high-quality delivery of evidence-based programs (EBPs). [24] [35] [36] [51] Typical TA services include coaching, training, consultation, problem-solving, feedback, and assistance with program evaluation. [35] [63] TA is usually ongoing following an initial period of training. [15] TA providers aim to build general and EBP-specific prevention capacity among program implementers while supporting the quality delivery, fidelity, and long-term sustainability of EBPs [8] [9]. Other areas of TA focus may include administrative processes and fiscal management [23], policy development [45], and organizational development and systems change [1] (Aarons, 2009 #90; Saldana, 2012 #61). TA providers come from different places and have various backgrounds. Some are evidence-based program developers and those that disseminate evidence-based programs; statewide, university-affiliated, regional-level, or even national organizations, sometimes referred to as an intermediary or center of excellence; and independent consultants. Some individuals and organizations charge a fee to provide TA. Some provide training and TA for free. Other times TA is provided as part of a community-systems change grant program (for example, by a public or private funder).

Appendix

Table 1: Demographics of the Evidence2Success Communities and Neighborhoods Initially Involved in Evidence-Based Programming

	Smallest	*Medium*		*Large*		*Largest*
Note: The community information is presented in size order, from smallest community population (left-most column) to largest (right-most column).	**Selma City, Dallas County, AL**	**Providence, Four-cluster*, RI**	**Mobile, Three-cluster*, AL**	**Memphis and Shelby County, South City, TN**	**Kearns, Salt Lake County, UT**	**Miami-Dade County, Liberty City, FL**
Population						
Community	**37,196**	**179,883**	**188,720**	**937,166**	**1,160,437**	**2,716,940**
Focus Neighborhood	**17,231**	**37,978**	**27,300**	**5,865**	**36,330**	**136,293**
Primary Racial/Ethnic Groups						
Community (Percent)						
White	27.6	54.2	44.8	40.9	87.1	79.0
Black, African American, or African	70.7	16.0	50.6	54.3	2.2	17.1
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	1.2	43.0	2.6	6.6	18.8	69.4
Focus Neighborhood (Percent)						
White	17.0	11.3	n/a	12.5	66.6	23.6
Black, African American, or African	81.5	18.9	81.0	84.0	1.0	72.7
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin	1.0	60.5	n/a	n/a	35.3	27.6
Financial Indicators						
Community						
Median Family Income	$31,602	$42,158	$40,588	$49,782	$71,230	$48,982
Poverty	31.4%	26.0%	22.0%	21.7%	9.0%	16.0%
Focus Neighborhood						
Median Family Income	$24,820	$31,231	n/a	$11,350	$61,924	$21,539
Poverty	41.0%	35.5%	37.3%	64.6%	9.9%	22.8%

^ These data are reported from 2020, when the third cohort of two communities was underway and two other cohorts of a total of four communities had completed the start-up period with Foundation support.

* Providence and Mobile designated clusters of three to four neighborhoods as their areas of focus.

n/a = Data not available; the geographic area is not a census-designated area, or the boundaries are not well defined such that archival data from the census, American Community Survey, or other city or county websites could not be located.

Regarding demographic percentages: Since individuals may select more than one ethnic or racial category, the percentages do not necessarily total 100%, as with Kearns, Salt Lake County data, and, notably, Miami-Dade County and Liberty City.

Data was sourced from (for focus neighborhoods) site applications to Evidence2Success, http://www.city-data.com, and the U.S. Census Bureau, including (for communities): https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/ (accessed July 2020).

Table 2: Data Used in the Analysis

Method	*Sample*	*TIme Period*
Implementation Progress Interviews / Surveys		
Wave 1 / Year 1		
In-person Intvw.*	Providence – Citywide community board members and key leaders	Sep – Dec 2012
Paper Survey	Providence – Local community board members	Jun – Jul 2013
In-person Intvw.	Dallas County – Community board members and key leaders	May – Jun 2016
In-person Intvw.	Salt Lake County – Community board members and key leaders	Jun – Jul 2016
In-person Intvw.	Mobile – Community board members and key leaders	Sep – Nov 2016
In-person Intvw.	Memphis – Community board members and key leaders	Nov – Jan 2019
Phone/web Intvw.	Miami Dade County – Community board members and key leaders	Dec – Jan 2021
Wave 2 / Year 2		
In-person Intvw.	Providence –Community and regional community board members and key leaders	Mar – Jun 2014
In-person Intvw.	Dallas County – Community board members	May – Jun 2017
In-person Intvw.	Salt Lake County – Community board members	Jun – Jul 2017
In-person Intvw.	Mobile – Community board members	Sep – Oct 2017
In-person Intvw.	Memphis – Community board members	Jan – Feb 2020
Phone/web Intvw.	Miami Dade County – Community board members	Feb – Mar 2022
Wave 3 / Year 3		
In-person Intvw.	Providence – Community and regional community board members	May – Jun 2015
In-person Intvw.	Dallas County – Community board members and key leaders	May – Jun 2018
In-person Intvw.	Salt Lake County – Community board members and key leaders	Jun – Aug 2018
In-person Intvw.	Mobile – Community board members and key leaders	Sep – Nov 2018
In-person Intvw.	Memphis – Community board members and key leaders	May – Jul 2021
Interviews		
Zoom Intvw.	Structured conversations with Evidence2Success community leaders	May – Jun 2024
Milestones and Benchmarks		
Excel Spreadsheet	Minimum of twice-annually by leadership from each community	Jun 2013 – Dec 2018
Online Reporting Tool	Twice-annually by leadership from each community	Jun 2019 – Dec 2023
Meeting Evaluation		
Online Reporting Tool	Mobile—Community board members, staff, observer, and evaluator	Feb – Mar 2017

*Intvw. is the abbreviation used to indicate “Interview” in this table.

Table 3: Phases of Evidence2Success's Community-Centric Approach, with Grasstops and Grassroots Elements

Phase	Community-Centric Approach:	Grasstops (structured, research-based expertise):	Grassroots (community-based, resident-driven expertise):
Phase 1: Get Started	Form a diverse coalition that is responsive to local leadership structures and system dynamics, ensuring that the community's voice is prioritized in decision-making processes.	Provide guidance and best practices for establishing a coalition that effectively engages stakeholders and fosters a collaborative environment.	Empower local residents and youth as drivers of change, recognizing that different systems may operate independently but can be aligned for greater collaboration.
Phase 2: Get Organized	Tailor data collection to the community by using standardized tools that also incorporate community-specific indicators, allowing community to adapt youth surveys with locally relevant questions to capture unique challenges and strengths.	Utilize data-driven decision-making by collecting and analyzing data to understand the community's needs and strengths.	Leverage the expertise and lived experiences of community members to drive priorities, with local stakeholders interpreting data and actively participating in decision-making processes.
Phase 3: Develop a Community Profile	Implement an accommodating systematic approach that considers unique local assets and dynamics, using customized resource mapping to flexibly identify and leverage community resources while encouraging creative use of existing infrastructure.	Provide access to broader funding opportunities through the Framework and strategically evaluate existing resources to identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.	Empower community-driven decisions on resource allocation, ensuring local voices guide the distribution and utilization of resources.
Phase 4: Create a Plan	Accommodate adaptable program selection by offering evidence-based options that allow for culturally relevant choices, enabling community to select programs that best fit its needs while also supporting cultural adaptations, when necessary, without compromising program integrity.	Choose evidence-based programs and strategies that have been rigorously tested and proven effective, providing a structured framework for community action.	Select programs that respond to residents' needs and reflect what residents want and deem relevant, ensuring community preferences guide program choices.
Phase 5: Implement and Continuously Evaluate	Establish a community of practice for continued learning and adaptation, with flexible implementation timelines that accommodate local events, priorities, and challenges. This approach allows a community to pace implementation according to its readiness and capacity, providing guidelines that are responsive to community pacing and priorities while continuously evaluating program impact to ensure they meet community needs and achieve desired outcomes.	Utilize structured evaluation processes with tools that reflect those used in research trials, ensuring consistency and reliability in assessing program effectiveness.	Incorporate ongoing community feedback, reflection, and adjustments, using diverse data forms such as storytelling and personal communication to capture community insights and inform program refinement and success.

KEY BENEFIT 1

Figure 4: Average Completion of Community Change Tasks by Phase: All Communities and Mean

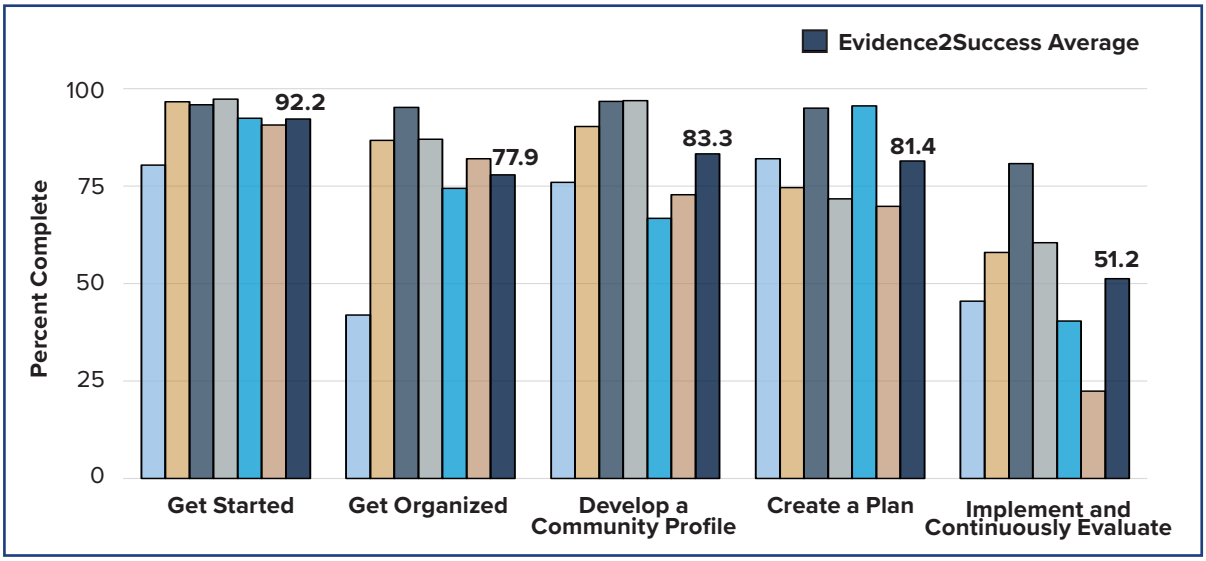
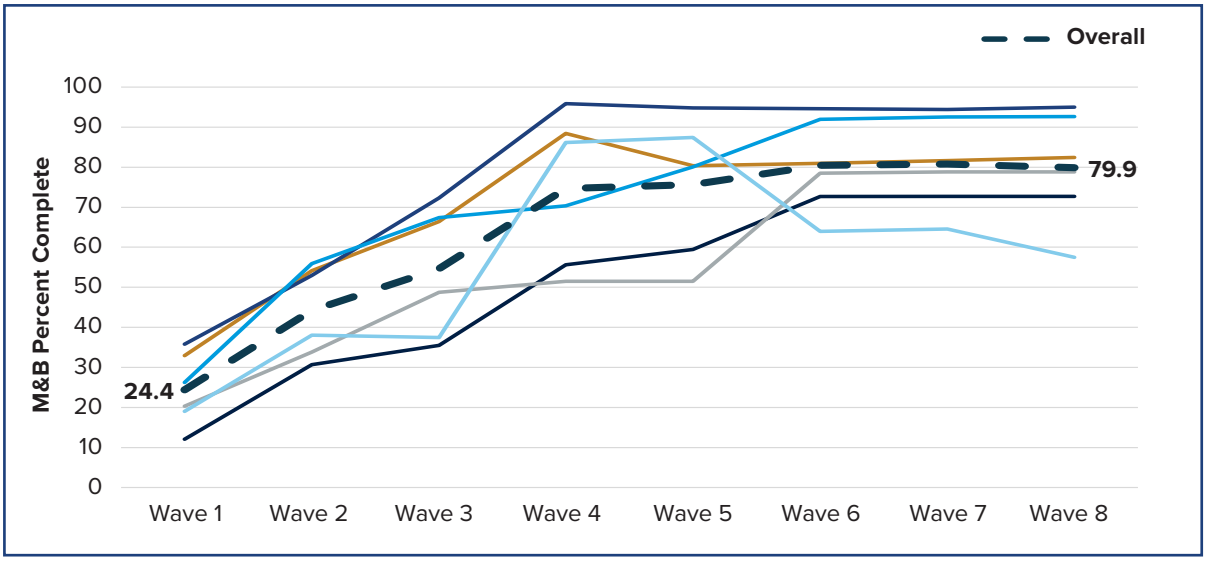


Figure 5: Completion Rates for Community Change Tasks over Time



Note: For Figures 4 and 5, each different color anonymously represents data from one of the six Evidence2Success communities. The darkest color bar (Fig. 4) and dotted line (Fig. 5) represent the overall average of all six Evidence2Success communities.

Figure 6: Phase 1: Get Started

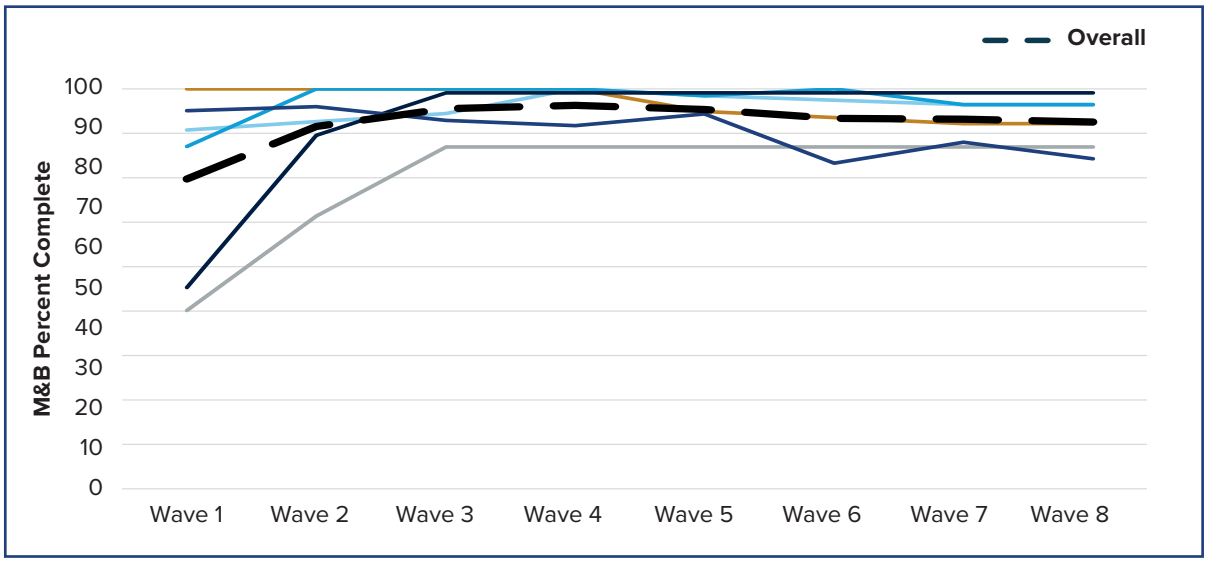


Figure 7: Phase 2: Get Organized (Form a Coalition)

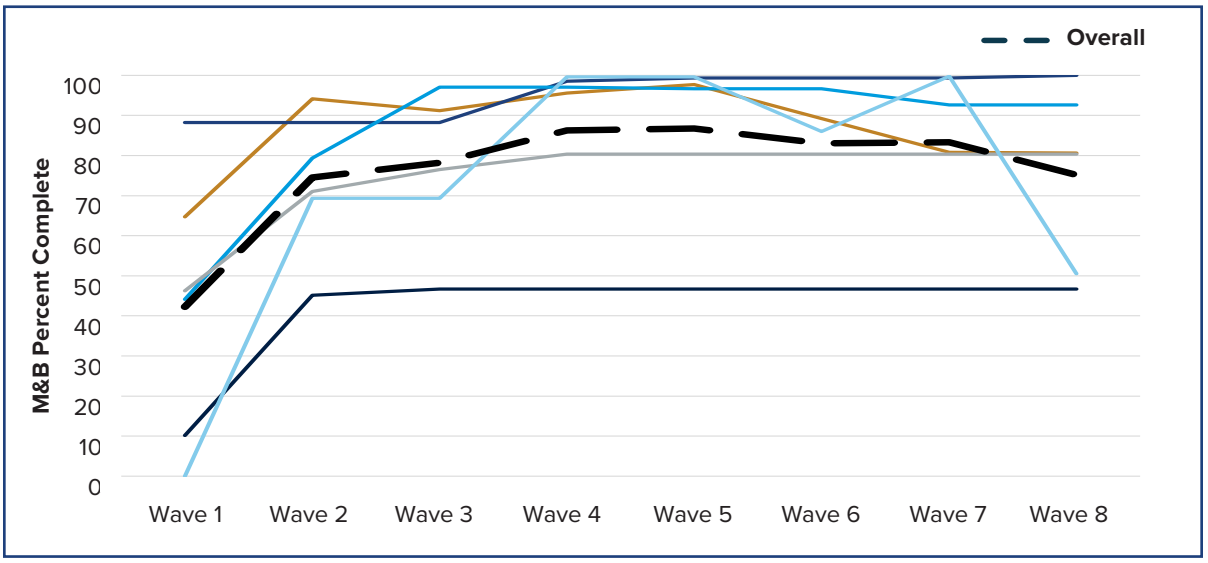


Figure 8: Phase 3: Develop a Community Profile (e.g., Assess and Identify Priorities)

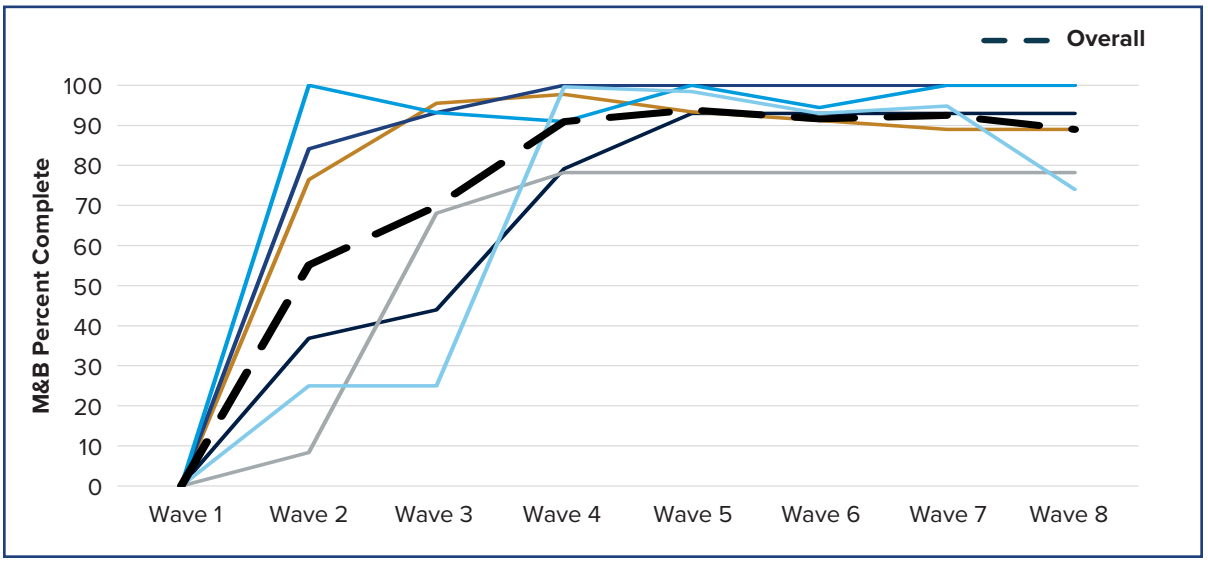


Figure 9: Phase 4: Create a Plan (e.g., Select Programs)

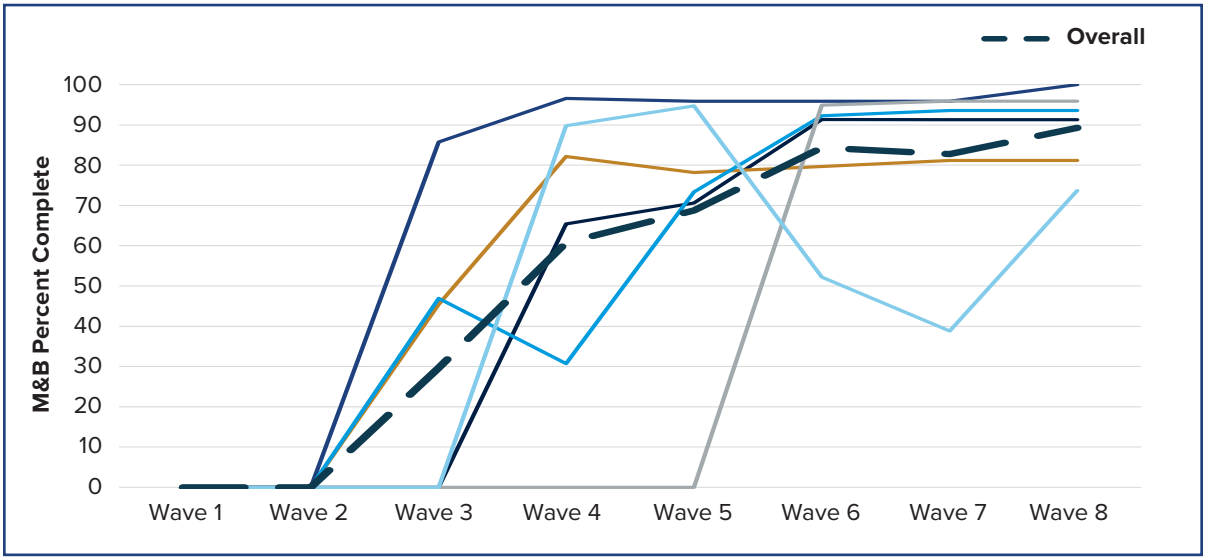


Figure 10: Phase 5: Implement and Continuously Evaluate

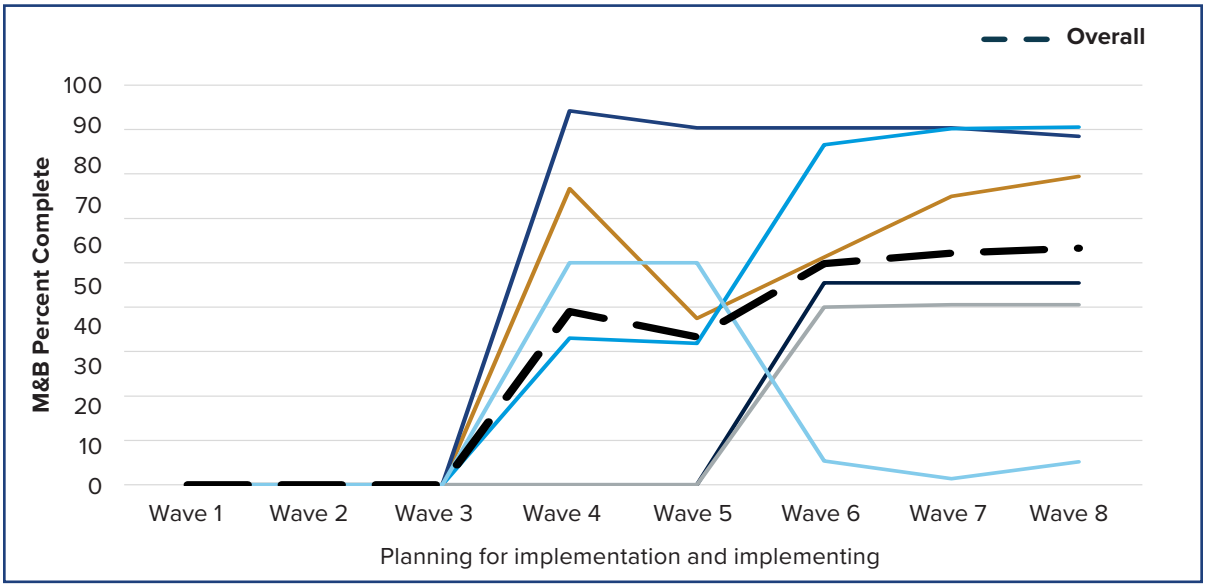
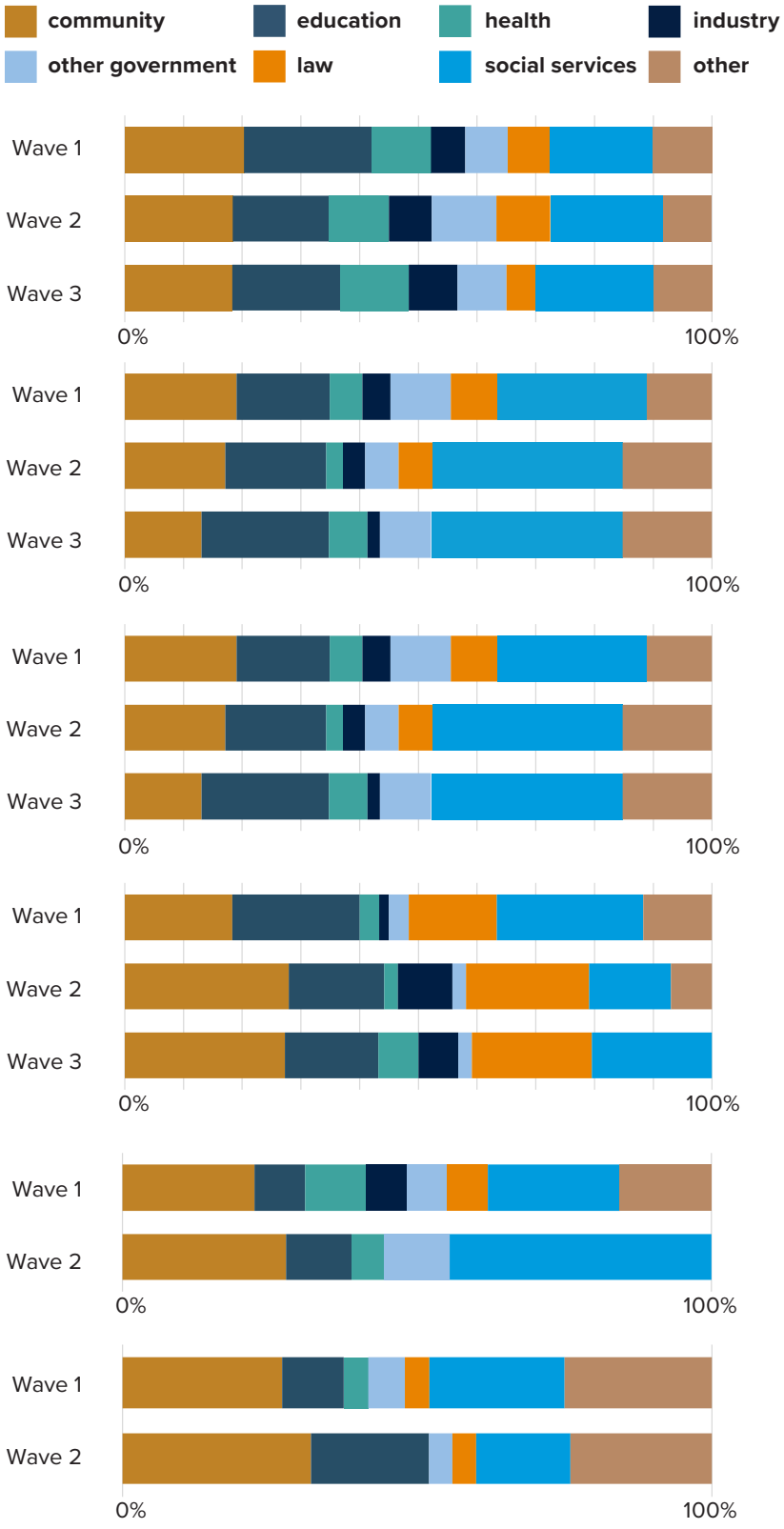


Figure 11: Across All Waves and All Communities, An Average of 7.5 of 8 Sectors Were Represented, With At Least 5 of 8 (62.5%) Represented in Each Community At Each Wave.



Time Point	Number of Sectors
W1	8
W2	8
W3	8
W1	8
W2	8
W3	7
W1	8
W2	8
W3	7
W1	8
W2	8
W3	7
W1	8
W2	5
W1	7
W2	6

Figure 12: Racial and Ethnic Demographics in Coalitions Were Closer to Census Data* for the Region Than the Focus Neighborhood.

***Note:** Census data is drawn from the closest decennial year to the start year and is repeated at all waves.*

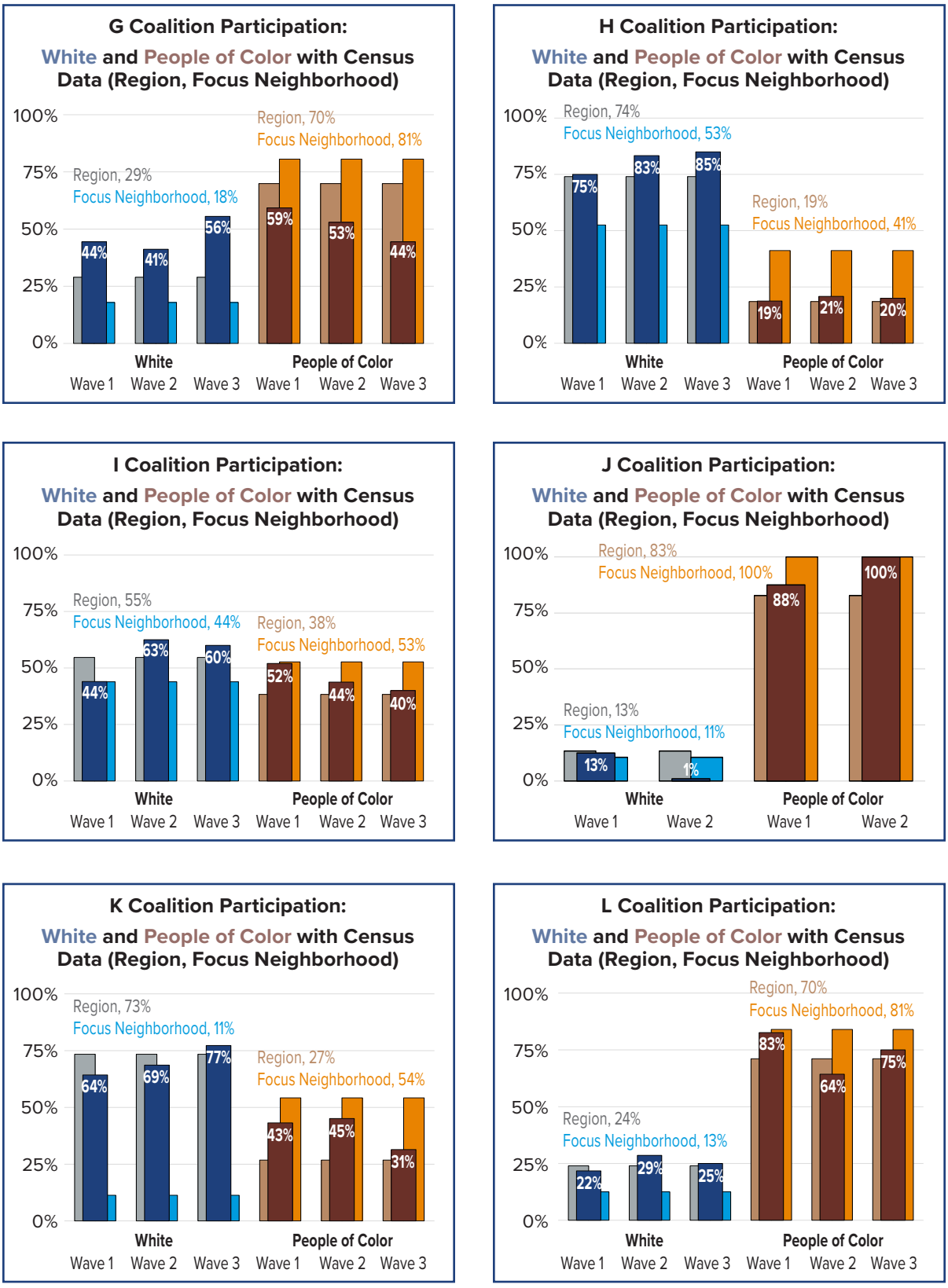
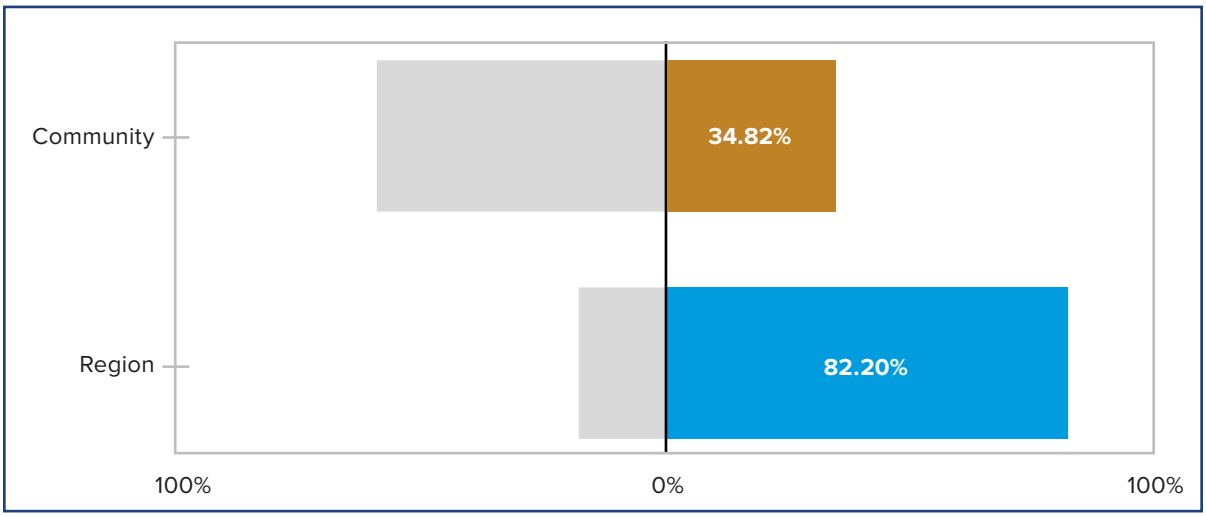


Figure 13: Among People of Color Participating in Evidence2Success Coalitions, Average Percent Who Were Residents of the Focus Community or Region Versus Non-Residents, Across Waves



KEY BENEFIT 2

Table 14: Three Examples of Coalitions That *Observed - Reflected - Incorporated Context* to Shift Coalition Decision-making

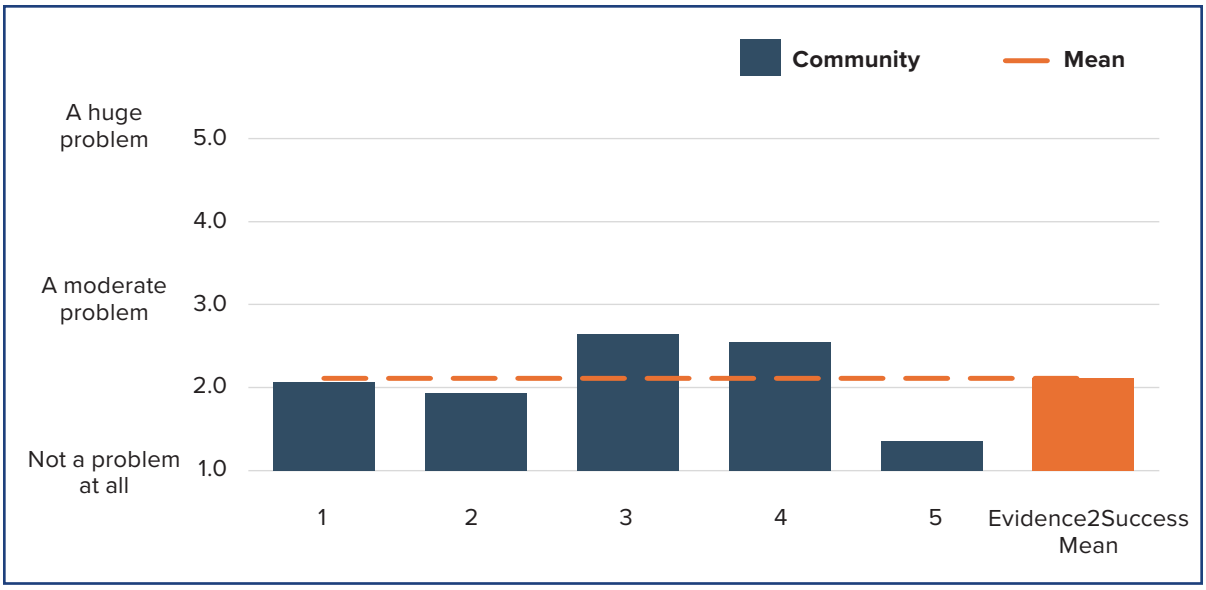
Example	Coalitions observed who/what was and was not at the coalition table.		Coalitions reflected on the composition and dynamics of this table.	Coalitions incorporated their particular local context in decision-making.
	Who was at the table?	*Who was missing from the table?*	*What is the story? What's happening at/with this table?*	*What shifted in the coalition, especially in decision-making?*
A	Public system lead; partners from other systems (e.g., school district, child welfare)	(Trust of) resident families	Families' deep distrust of public systems stems from *"turmoil"* experienced by families, e.g., arrest into juvenile justice system, child welfare monitoring	-More coalition understanding of local power dynamics -More consideration of residents' lived experience -Increasing shift in focus from punitive to preventative
B	"We" = system leaders, youth center programs, community organizations	*"People from the neighborhood"*	During *"conversations about 'what's best' in these targeted neighborhoods,"* a recognition: coalition did not include true neighborhood representation	*"...truly it requires more than one voice."* -Recognized *"imbalance"* at table talking about "what's best" -Asked for and got help from neighborhood leaders to identify resident participants
C	Public systems (e.g., school district, child welfare), systems, nonprofits	*"residents became integrated"* (they were not before)	*"That's when things caught on fire in a good way because these were the folks who were really like, these are our kids, these are our families, these are our neighborhoods..."*	*"...we had huge participation in priority setting... and in program selection."* -Listening to resident voices

Table 15: Item Text and Response Options for Barriers to Implementing Evidence2Success, from Implementation Progress Interviews (Community-Rated)^

Item	Question Text	Response Options
d2_grp_division	Certain barriers may exist in different communities that prevent them from implementing Evidence2Success. Thinking over the past year, how much of a problem was... in [d2_ppt_region] / [d2_community]? ***...divisions among racial, ethnic, or other groups?***	1 = Not a problem 2 = A slight problem 3 = A moderate problem 4 = A big problem 5 = A huge problem

^Methodology: See Table 2 above

Figure 16: Across five communities, division among racial and ethnic groups was rated as a slight to less than moderate barrier to Evidence2Success systems change work.



Figures 17–21: At Wave 2, Five Communities Were Asked About Change After One Year. Highest Reports of Change Were in Procedural Activities as Compared to Policy Changes.

Figure 17: H Coalition at Wave 2

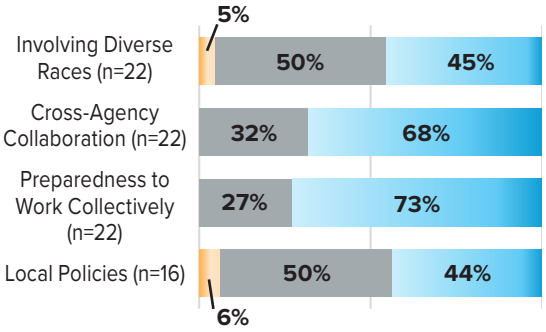


Figure 18: I Coalition at Wave 2

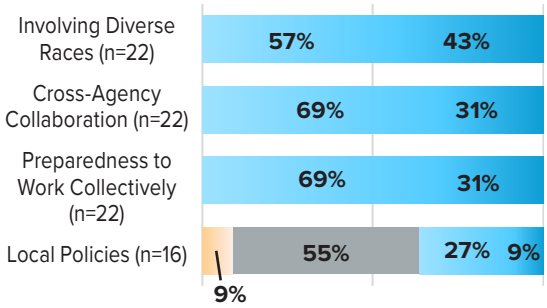


Figure 19: J Coalition at Wave 2

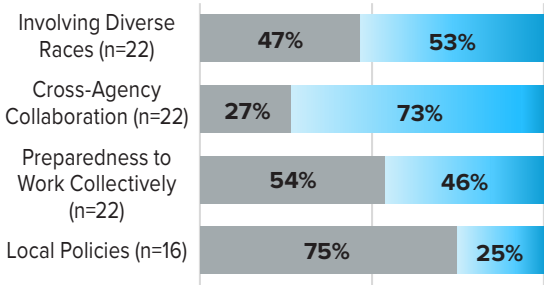


Figure 20: K Coalition at Wave 2

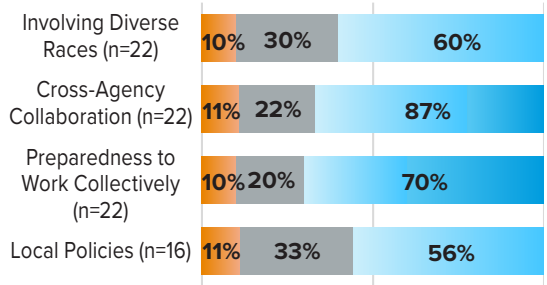
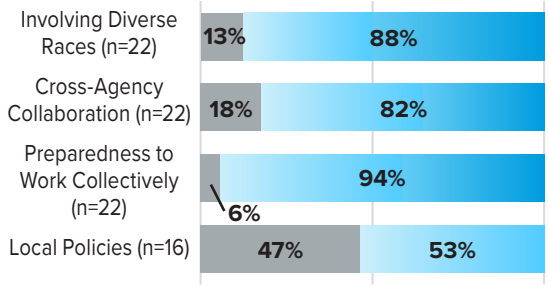


Figure 21: L Coalition at Wave 2



Box 22: Item Text for Figures 17-21

As a result of the Evidence2Success efforts, please tell me how each of the following areas have changed in [d2_ppt_region].

...involving people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds in planning and decision-making

...cross-agency (public health, child welfare, juvenile justice, education) collaboration

...people's preparedness to work collectively on community issues

...local policies within schools, juvenile justice, or other agencies that serve youth

Response options: 5=Much better, 4=A little better; 3=No change; 2=A little worse; 1=A lot worse

Moving From Thinking to Doing:

A "Centering Community" Exercise

Imagine you are part of a coalition that aims to reduce childhood poverty in a focus area that truly involves the community. What do you do?

1) ***First, you consider history's lasting impacts.*** Maps from the 1930s may seem like ancient history, but the ones created by the Federal Home Owners Loan Corporation (HOLC) are relevant today. The map shows that your coalition's focus area is located in the middle of a "redlined" area that was issued a lowest-level rating of "D," or "hazardous." Areas with populations of "Negro," "Oriental," "Mexican" [sic], and other minoritized races and foreign born ethnicities drew this rating. Banks used a "D" rating from HOLC to deny mortgages in cities across the country until the practice was outlawed in 1968.

   In your city, you learn that 46 acres were razed within the redlined area in the name of "slum clearance," despite the protests of Black resident homeowners, business owners, and churches. A public housing complex replaced what had been single-family homes; recently, it was razed. This history of structural destabilization based on race denied economic opportunity and ignored resident voice. How do you move forward in ways that recognize and do not repeat this history?

2) ***Also, you seek out multiple sources of data and listen to residents.*** What are the youth and residents telling you today about the issues that concern them? Use locally collected youth data or collect your own with a survey like the Youth Experience Survey (YES). Publicly available data from the U.S. Census, and archival data from other local agencies or public institutions, can supplement. Of critical importance is seeking out testimonies from people who live in the community. Consider focus groups with teens and community forums that invite conversation about rates and trends.

Go to Preview Guide

<u>Ask residents:</u>

- How do you view, create, and experience life right now in this community?
- How do you interpret collected data? How does that differ from other interpretations?

<u>Ask the coalition:</u>

- How will residents' experience and interpretations of data shape decisions about priorities, activities, and programs?
- How will we build capacity to elevate resident voice and decision-making in this coalition?
- Your coalition decides to use the YES in neighborhood schools to ensure access to data from children actually living in the community of focus, using additional data to supplement. You reach out to a community-based organization working with teen residents to get their perspectives. You share data with families who give insight into their experiences about what worked in a program.

3) ***Use these together to move forward.*** When you look at and listen to the whole of what the data from the community tell you, you are on the right track—though the work does not end there! It can be a shift in mindset to continually put community at center. You have to commit to continuously involving, asking, listening, and drawing on the community to ground and direct decisions as your coalition prioritizes, plans, and determines activities and next steps. Evaluate each activity and program to get feedback. Build and embed resident leadership to direct where the work is going. Together, you will draw a new, ever-evolving map for the community's present and future.

Note: Creative license was taken to create this story, but it is inspired by the work of the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis, which leads an effort to reduce childhood poverty in South City and surrounding areas through its Vision 2025 strategic plan.

ADOBE STOCK

Gardens became a place for collaborative problem-solving, a source of nutrition, and a space for education and social interaction.

What's Next? Let's Think About Systems Integration

From Deserts to Gardens: Bridging Systems for Community Wellness

In many communities grappling with the challenges of food deserts, a transformative initiative began with the establishment of community gardens. The community garden initiative emerged as a beacon of hope and sustainable change previously unrealized within these communities. These gardens were not just about growing food; they represented a holistic approach to whole community health and wellness. Recognizing that addressing food insecurity required more than just providing access to fresh produce, the initiative considered multiple individual factors (such as calorie intake, sedentary lifestyles, exercise, and meal timing) and the inherent embedded systems and structures where people live, grow, and operate.

The gardens became a focal point for collaborative problem-solving, where community members, local government, and nonprofit organizations came together to identify and address the community's needs. This multi-system cooperation ensured that the gardens were not only a source of nutrition but also a space for education and social interaction. Workshops on healthy cooking and nutrition, as well as exercise classes, were held regularly, providing the context needed for individuals to achieve their health goals. These initiatives exemplified the value of systems integration by recognizing the inherent potential of public systems, building capacity through a community-historical perspective, and engaging relevant systems in collaborative efforts.

1. Understanding the Value of Each Public System (Recognition):

The community garden initiatives began by acknowledging the potential of local public systems, such as schools, parks, and health departments, to contribute to the project. By recognizing the unique strengths and resources each system could offer, the initiative leveraged these assets to create a comprehensive support network. Schools provided educational programs on nutrition, parks offered land and resources for gardening, and health departments facilitated workshops on healthy living. Enabling factors such as community engagement and support from local businesses played a crucial role in the gardens' success. By incorporating social, structural, and systemic drivers of health and by considering their impact, the initiative ensured that the gardens supported a "wellness journey" for all community members. The gardens became a symbol of resilience and empowerment, demonstrating what systems integration can achieve when all pieces come together to address complex community challenges.

2. Focus on Community-Historical Whole Systems Perspective (Building Capacity):

The project embraced a community-historical perspective by understanding the historical context of food insecurity in the area. This involved acknowledging past injustices and systemic barriers contributing to the current food desert situation. Community stakeholders could carefully attend to the social, structural, and systemic drivers of health and consider their impact; the initiative ensured that the gardens supported a "wellness journey" for all community members. By building capacity through this lens, the initiative fostered a sense of ownership and empowerment among community members, encouraging them to actively participate in the gardens' development and maintenance.

3. Recognize, Invite, and Engage Relevant Systems in the Work (The Doing):

The success of the community gardens hinged on their ability to engage a wide range of relevant systems. Local government agencies, nonprofit organizations, community groups, and residents were invited to collaborate, each bringing their expertise and resources to the table. By involving relevant systems like parks and recreation, local schools, health organizations, and local residents, communities were able to address contextual factors that contributed to the food desert problem and identify culturally relevant solutions to improve community wellness. This collaborative problem-solving approach ensured that the gardens addressed not only food access but also broader social, structural, and systemic drivers of health, such as education and community cohesion.

Through this holistic approach, the community gardens became more than just a source of fresh produce; they were catalysts of community-wide transformation.

ADOBE STOCK

Citations for the Illustrative Example

Alaimo, K., Packnett, E., Miles, R. A., & Kruger, D. J. (2008). Fruit and vegetable intake among urban community gardeners. Journal of nutrition education and behavior, 40(2), 94-101.

Corrigan, M. P. (2011). Growing what you eat: Developing community gardens in Baltimore, Maryland. Applied Geography, 31(4), 1232-1241.

Ghose, R., & Pettygrove, M. (2014). Urban community gardens as spaces of citizenship. Antipode, 46(4), 1092-1112.

Gittelsohn, J., & Trude, A. (2017). Diabetes and obesity prevention: changing the food environment in low-income settings. Nutrition reviews, 75(suppl_1), 62-69.

Litt, J. S., Soobader, M. J., Turbin, M. S., Hale, J. W., Buchenau, M., & Marshall, J. A. (2011). The influence of social involvement, neighborhood aesthetics, and community garden participation on fruit and vegetable consumption. American journal of public health, 101(8), 1466-1473.

Okvat, H. A., & Zautra, A. J. (2011). Community gardening: A parsimonious path to individual, community, and environmental resilience. American journal of community psychology, 47(3-4), 374-387.

Teig, E., Amulya, J., Bardwell, L., Buchenau, M., Marshall, J. A., & Litt, J. S. (2009). Collective efficacy in Denver, Colorado: Strengthening neighborhoods and health through community gardens. Health & place, 15(4), 1115-1122.

Wang, H., Qiu, F., & Swallow, B. (2014). Can community gardens and farmers' markets relieve food desert problems? A study of Edmonton, Canada. Applied Geography, 55, 127-137.

References

1. Aarons, G. A., Green, A. E., Trott, E., Willging, C. E., Torres, E. M., Ehrhart, M. G., & Roesch, S. C. (2016). The roles of system and organizational leadership in system-wide evidence-based intervention sustainment: a mixed-method study. Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 43, 991-1008.

2. Akaka, G., Daniels, S., Davis, K., Dillard, A., Farrar, K., Goebert, D., Howard, J., Kaio, C., Makahi, E., & Inada, M. (2023). Prioritizing connection and centering on community: Take your shoes off and don't put your feet on the furniture. *Hawai'i Journal of Health & Social Welfare,* 82(10 Suppl 1), 10.

3. Allen-Meares, P., Shanks, T. R., Gant, L. M., Hollingsworth, L., & Miller, P. L. (2017). Lessons learned: Stream of thought. In A Twenty-First Century Approach to Community Change: Partnering to Improve Life Outcomes for Youth and Families in Under-Served Neighborhoods. Oxford University Press.

4. Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2005). Engaging youth in community change: A Making Connections peer technical assistance match between Hartford, CT; Providence, RI; and Boston, MA. aecf.org. https://www.aecf.org/resources/engaging-youth-in-community-change

5. Cambron, C., Catalano, R. F., & Hawkins, J. D. (2018). The Social Development Model. In D. P. Farrington, L. Kazemian, & A. R. Piquero (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Developmental and Life-Course Criminology* (pp. 0). Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190201371.013.13

6. Castañeda, S. F., Holscher, J., Mumman, M. K., Salgado, H., Keir, K. B., Foster-Fishman, P. G., & Talavera, G. A. (2012). Dimensions of community and organizational readiness for change. *Progress in community health partnerships: research, education, and action,* 6(2), 219-226.

7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (n.d.). *Types of evaluation.* Violence Prevention. https://prevention-collaborative.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/CDC_2017_Types-of-Evaluation.pdf

8. Chilenski, S. M., Welsh, J., Olson, J., Hoffman, L., Perkins, D. F., & Feinberg, M. E. (2018). Examining the highs and lows of the collaborative relationship between technical assistance providers and prevention implementers. Prevention Science, 19(2), 250-259.

9. Chilenski, S. M., Gayles, J., Luneke, A., Lew, D., Villarruel, F., Penilla, M. L., Henderson, C., Wilson, H., & Gary, L. (2023). Understanding community – and system – capacity change over time: A close look at changing social capital in Evidence2Success communities. *Journal of Community Psychology, 51*(7), 2989-3011.

10. Clearinghouse, T. I.-E. P. S. (2022). *Strong African American Families.* Title IV-E Prevention Services Clearinghouse. https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/programs/592/show

11. Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA). (2024). *What are community coalitions?* https://www.cadca.org/coalitions/

12. Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2017). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches.* Sage publications.

13. Crowe, S., Cresswell, K., Robertson, A., Huby, G., Avery, A., & Sheikh, A. (2011). The case study approach. *BMC Medical Research Methodology, 11*(1), 100. https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2288-11-100

14. Ding, Z., Zheng, H., Wang, J., O'Connor, P., Li, C., Chen, X., Li, R., & Ouyang, Z. (2023). Integrating top-down and bottom-up approaches improves practicality and efficiency of large-scale ecological restoration planning: Insights from a social–ecological system. *Engineering, 31,* 50-58.

15. Durlak, J. A., & DuPre, E. P. (2008). Implementation matters: A review of research on the influence of implementation on program outcomes and the factors affecting implementation. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 41*(3-4), 327-350. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10464-008-9165-0

16. EDNY. (2025). *The importance of disaggregating.*

17. Eicken, H., Danielsen, F., Sam, J.-M., Fidel, M., Johnson, N., Poulsen, M. K., Lee, O. A., Spellman, K. V., Iversen, L., & Pulsifer, P. (2021). Connecting top-down and bottom-up approaches in environmental observing. *BioScience, 71*(5), 467-483.

18. Evidence2Success. (2012, November 28). *Introduction to strategic financing: Evidence2Success finance subgroup orientation [PowerPoint Slides].* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

19. Evidence2Success. (2016). *Phase 2 user guide: Community board orientation.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

20. Evidence2Success. (2018). Milestones and benchmarks for phases 1-5. In: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

21. Evidence2Success. (n.d.-a). *Phase 4 user guides meetings 1-6.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

22. Evidence2Success. (n.d.-b). *User guide for new coordinators.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

23. Fischer, L., Ellingson, K., McCormick, K., & Sinkowitz-Cochran, R. (2014). The role of the public health analyst in the delivery of technical assistance to state health departments for healthcare–associated infection prevention. *Medical care,* 52, S54-S59.

24. Fixsen, D. L., & Blase, K. A. (2009). Technical assistance in special education: Past, present, and future. *Topics in early childhood special education,* 29(1), 62-64. https://doi.org/10.1177/0271121409333795

25. Flynn-Khan, M., Tiede, L., & Gaughen, K. (2021). *Funding prevention in communities: Lessons from Evidence2Success.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation. https://www.aecf.org/resources/funding-prevention-in-communities

26. Foster-Fishman, P. G., & Behrens, T. R. (2007). Systems change reborn: Rethinking our theories, methods, and efforts in human services reform and community-based change. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 39,* 191-196.

27. Gant, L. M. (2017). Community development and place-based neighborhood change. In *A twenty – first century approach to community change: Partnering to improve life outcomes for youth and families in under – served neighborhoods.* Oxford University Press.

28. Gayles, J. G., Chilenski, S. M., Penilla, M. L., Lin, S., Schmidt, D., Villarruel, F., & Luneke, A. (2021). *Evidence2Success®: Racial and ethnic equity and inclusion: Reflections on framework design, implementation, and Memphis's community experience.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

29. Group, S. D. R. (2019). The Social Development Strategy. Washington.edu. https://depts.washington.edu/sdrg/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/RB23-The-Social-Development-Strategy-201905.pdf

30. Health, N. C. C. f. I. (2009). *The Importance of Disaggregated Data.* https://www.nccih.ca/docs/context/FS-ImportanceDisaggregatedData-EN.pdf

31. Israel, B. A., Schulz, A. J., Coombe, C. M., Parker, E. A., Reyes, A. G., Rowe, Z., & Lichtenstein, R. L. (2013). *Methods in Community-Based Participatory Research for Health* (2nd ed.). Jossey-Bass.

32. Jain, S. (2025). What is Data vs. What is Information. https://bloomfire.com/blog/data-vs-information/

33. Keevers, L., & Treleaven, L. (2011). Organizing practices of reflection: A practice-based study. Management Learning, 42(5), 505-520. https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507610391592

34. Keleher, T. (2009). *Racial equity impact assessment.* Race Forward: The center for racial justice innovation.

35. Kenworthy, T., Domlyn, A., Scott, V. C., Schwartz, R., & Wandersman, A. (2023). A proactive, systematic approach to building the capacity of technical assistance providers. *Health Promotion Practice, 24*(3), 546-559.

36. Le, L. T., Anthony, B. J., Bronheim, S. M., Holland, C. M., & Perry, D. F. (2016). A technical assistance model for guiding service and systems change. *The journal of behavioral health services & research, 43,* 380-395.

37. Lee, J. Y., Clark, J. K., Schmiesing, R., Kaiser, M. L., Reece, J., & Park, S. (2024). Perspectives of community members on community-based participatory research: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Urban Affairs,* 1-20.

38. Lucko, J. (2024). Centering community voice and knowledge through participatory action research. *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 30*(1).

39. Marmot, M. (2005). Social determinants of health inequalities. *The Lancet,* 365(9464), 1099-1104. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(05)71146-6

40. Minkler, M., & Wallerstein, N. (2011). From Process to Outcomes. In *Community-Based Participatory Research for Health.* Jossey-Bass.

41. National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives. (2019, April). *What is prevention science?* National Prevention Science Coalition to Improve Lives. https://www.npscoalition.org/_files/ugd/773dc1_0a8e24aa6e794231adce127ee935379e.pdf

42. Organization, P. A. H. (2020). *Why data disaggregation is key during a pandemic.* https://iris.paho.org/bitstream/handle/10665.2/52002/Data-Disaggregation-Factsheet-eng.pdf?sequence=19

43. Parker, C. J., Eisenberg, N., Chilenski, S. M., Haggerty, K., Steel, B. (n.d.). *Introduction to Evidence2Success: An enhanced prevention framework based on evidence-based atecendents.* The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

44. Paula Allen-Meares, T. R. S., Larry M. Gant, Leslie Hollingsworth, and Patricia L. Miller. (2017). Lessons learned: Stream of thought. In *A Twenty-First Century Approach to Community Change: Partnering to Improve Life Outcomes for Youth and Families in Under-Served Neighborhoods.* Oxford University Press.

45. Peckham, S., Hudson, B., Hunter, D., & Redgate, S. (2022). Policy success: What is the role of implementation support programmes? *Social Policy & Administration, 56*(3), 378-393.

46. Prevention, O. o. J. J. a. D. (n.d.). *Evidence-based Programs.* U.S. Department of Justice.

47. Prevention, U. S. D. o. J. s. O. o. J. J. a. D. (2021). *A Sustainability Framework for the National Forum on Youth Violence Prevention.* Youth.gov. https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/resources/sustainability-planning-guide-for-healthy-communities

48. Programs, B. (n.d.). *Familias Unidas.* Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development. https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/programs/436999999/familias-unidas/

49. Race Matters Institute at MDC. (2023). *The power of creating a racial equity backmap.*

50. Sabatier, P. A. (1986). Top-down and bottom-up approaches to implementation research: A critical analysis and suggested synthesis. *Journal of public policy, 6*(1), 21-48.

51. Scott, V. C., Jillani, Z., Malpert, A., Kolodny-Goetz, J., & Wandersman, A. (2022). A scoping review of the evaluation and effectiveness of technical assistance. *Implementation Science Communications, 3*(1), 70.

52. Simmons, R., Ghiron, L., & Fajans, P. (2010). *Nine steps for developing a scaling-up strategy.* World Health Organization. https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/44432/9789241500319_eng.pdf?sequence=1

53. Singer, J., Bennett-Levy, J., & Rotumah, D. (2015). “You didn’t just consult community, you involved us”: transformation of a ‘top-down’ Aboriginal mental health project into a ‘bottom-up’community-driven process. *Australasian Psychiatry, 23*(6), 614-619.

54. Snow, L. K. (2001). *Community transformation: Turning threats into opportunities.* ABCD Institute. https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/publications/Documents/Workbooks/CommunityTransformation.pdf

55. Stone, W., Billings, M., & Boxx, R. (2021). Community takes the wheel. *Stanford Social Innovation Review, 19*(3), A11-A14. https://doi.org/10.48558/MTXD-P493

56. Summers-Gabr, N. M., Sato, M., Chilenski, S. M., Villarruel, F., Smith, P., Henderson, C., Newell, J., Wilson, H., & Craig, A. (2024). Discriminatory Experiences Among Black Youth: How Encounters and Expectations Explain Emotional Well-Being. *Prevention Science, 25*(1), 31-43. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-023-01540-2

57. The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2016). *By the numbers: A race for results case study.* https://www.aecf.org/resources/a-race-for-results-case-study-2

58. Turner, S., Merchant, K., Kania, J., & Martin, E. (2012). Understanding the value of backbone organizations in collective impact: Part 1. Stanford Social Innovation Review. https://ssir.org/articles/entry/understanding_the_value_of_backbone_organizations_in_collective_impact_1

59. Weber, P., Birkholz, L., Kohler, S., Helsper, N., Dippon, L., Ruetten, A., Pfeifer, K., & Semrau, J. (2022). Development of a framework for scaling up community-based health promotion: A best fit framework synthesis. *Int J Environ Res Public Health, 19*(8). https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19084773

60. Welsh, J., Chilenski, S. M., Daniels, A.-M., Letcher, A., & Garcia, A. (2024). Evidence-Based Program Implementation Variability in New Contexts: The Head Start REDI Program. *Early Childhood Education Journal,* 1-13.

61. Wexler, L., White, L. A., O'Keefe, V. M., Rasmus, S., Haroz, E. E., Cwik, M. F., Barlow, A., Goklish, N., Elliott, E., & Pearson, C. R. (2024). Centering community strengths and resisting structural racism to prevent youth suicide: Learning from American Indian and Alaska Native communities. *Archives of suicide research,* 1-16.

62. Williams, D. R., & Jackson, P. B. (2005). Social sources of racial disparities in health. *Health affairs,* 24(2), 325-334. https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.24.2.325

63. Yazejian, N., Metz, A., Morgan, J., Louison, L., Bartley, L., Fleming, W. O., Haidar, L., & Schroeder, J. (2019). Co-creative technical assistance: essential functions and interim outcomes. *Evidence & Policy, 15*(3), 339-352.