

Cradle to Career

a project of the Center for Transformative Action

Award amount: \$20,000

Common Agenda

Overall Vision:

All youth and their families have what they need to ensure that our children and youth, pre-birth to age 24 are successful at every stage of development. This means that they are physically and emotionally healthy, active community members and on-track for living wage employment.



Desired Outcomes

- **Belong.** All residents feel valued, safe, included, and able to participate in shaping community decisions.
- **Learn.** All children and adults have the knowledge and skills needed to build a good life for themselves and those around them.
- **Work.** All residents who wish to work have adequate opportunities for meaningful employment at an income sufficient to sustain themselves and their families.
- **Flourish.** All children have a safe, nourishing childhood. All individuals and families are able to meet their basic human needs, enjoy life and achieve their full potential.
- **Sustain.** All our behaviors and decisions ensure that we can restore and preserve the natural world.

Need:

- This age group represents almost 40% of the county's population
- 40% of students in public school receive Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL)
- 20% of children under 18 are food insecure
- Academic performance gaps among low income and students of color (e.g. on 3-8 ELA proficiency by race/ethnicity/SES Asian -61%, White-41%, Multi-Racial 38%, Black 23%, Not economically disadvantaged 55%, economically disadvantaged 20%)
- Over 60% of single moms of children under five live in poverty
- We lack up to accessible, affordable childcare for as many as 3,000 children.

Common Agenda

For Families:



- **Quality and universal Pre-natal care**
- **Quality and universal child care**
- **Nutritional Needs Met**
- **Stable housing (safe, affordable)**
- **Living wage income**
- **Advocacy and support**
- **-all families have the advocates and supports needed to thrive**
- **Adequate, safe, affordable transportation**
- **Health care needs met (including dental and mental health needs)**

Common Agenda

For Schools:



- Ready for all kids
- Cultural Competency-All staff are culturally competent and culturally responsive
- Adequate resources to provide all students with 21st Century learning skills
- Community connection and support
- -All families engaged in supporting education of children
- -community support for providing needed resources

Common Agenda

For Organizations Serving youth and families:

- **Cultural Competency**
- **-All staff are culturally competent and culturally responsive**
- **-Organizational policies and procedures are culturally competent**
- **Adequate resources**
- **-organizations use available resources effectively to achieve mission and serve youth and families effectively**
- **Coordinated web of services and support to youth and families**
- **-All families and youth are able to find and receive the services and resources they need**



Common Agenda

For the Community:



- **Clear vision**
- -There is a clear vision in our communities of what success with our youth looks like
- -each community has a strategy for achieving that vision
- **Commitment to the goals**
- -community leaders are committed the identified strategies

Participation

- -There is participation from government, schools, non-profit organizations, the business community and residents in deciding on and implementing the strategies.
- **Full access to relevant data and activities**
- -Any interested person or organization can find and use the relevant data toward implementing the strategies identified
- -Any interested person or organization has access to information about what others are doing and how they can be involved

Common Agenda

For Employers and Local Business Community



- **Early access to youth as potential future workforce**
- **Commitment to the goals**
- **-employers understand and support reaching the identified goals**
- **Participation in activities to reach goals**
- **-employers encourage employees to participate in the identified strategies**

For Local Government

- **Clarify role of government**
- **Achieve commitment by local governments to Goals – Using Achieving Youth Results as a Framework**

Some Examples of Mutually Reinforcing Activities

- **P-Tech Academy**
- **Youth Employment Resource Team (YERT)**
- **Mama's Comfort Camp**
 - Mama's Comfort Camp has benefited immensely from Cradle to Career. The monthly meeting allowed us to get exposure for our services, begin collaborations with other organizations in the room, and receive mentoring and support for grant writing and organizational development. But most importantly, we have been able to expand the views of those present in the room, to take into account the needs of the parents in decisions that are meant to support children. Yael Saar
- **Be The One Campaign**

Key Activities

- Community Platform (citompkins.org)
- Be The One Campaign
- The Raising of America
- Youth interviews and focus groups
- Design Thinking Workshops
- Youth Summit Planning Group
- Monthly Meetings of Leadership Group and Working Groups
- Continued support for Mama's Comfort Camp

What We're Learning

- How much the issues (e.g. poverty, transportation, housing, mental health, food security, etc.) are interconnected and how important it is to organize ourselves in a way that breaks down the silos between people and organizations working on these issues.
- Both the importance and the difficulty of communicating across the various sectors and across the county.
- Difficulty of determining what authentic engagement even means.
- The challenge of balancing the need for action to meet immediate needs against the need for not acting until all voices are fully engaged and included and we fully understand the nature of the systems that are in the way of progress.
- How important it is to work together across sectors and organizational boundaries.
- How much, and how many people care about making things better.

Future Plans

- Support the “Be The One” Campaign
- Support Achieving Youth Results Action plan
- Set specific desired outcomes (e.g. Achieving Youth Results, mentoring, childcare, housing, income etc.)
- Continue to work on community platform and developing effective communication systems (e.g. network hubs)
- Continue to develop action strategies especially for beyond high school and single moms in poverty
- Host community gatherings this fall and next spring (e.g. Be The One Summit, Youth Summit, Raising of America, MBKI)
- Continue to work on increasing engagement (particularly of the business community and context experts)
- Engage youth in the leadership group
- Continued support for Mama’s Comfort Camp
- Increase collaboration with higher education institutions (Cornell, IC, TC3)

Anyone can get involved by supporting the work of any of the partners or attending working group meetings (e.g. Leadership Group, Youth Engagement, School Readiness, Childhood Nutrition Collaborative)

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