

A Two-Generation Vision for Austin

Parents Work. Children Learn. Families Thrive.

Intergenerational poverty threatens the well-being of Austin's citizens and its economy. While there are many good programs addressing this issue, most focus solely on low-income adults or solely on their children, ignoring the fact that economic and social challenges affect whole families. Two-generation programs are one new and promising strategy. By intentionally focusing on both generations, families are more likely to break the cycle of poverty. Both the federal government and prominent foundations are working to promote two-generation approaches across the nation, and we hope to build on this momentum.

41,000+

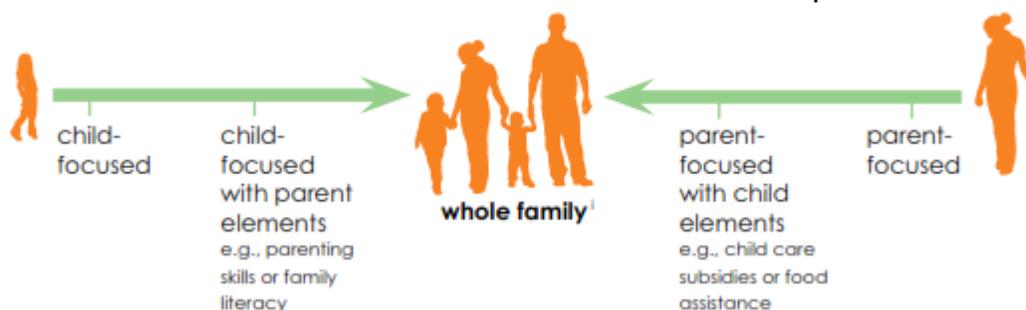
Families with school aged children in Travis County are low-income*

What are Two-Generation Programs?

Two-generation programs explicitly target low-income parents and children from the same family, providing **intensive, high quality** services for both, leading to family stability and self-sufficiency. Programs can include:

- *For children:* health and education services, home visiting, early childhood education, out-of-school programs
- *For parents:* education for parenting, literacy and basic educational skills, as well as workforce training for jobs that pay well and offer opportunities for advancement.
- Strong connections and coordination between the services for parents and children making it easier for families to participate and succeed.

Two-Generation Continuum from Ascend at the Aspen Institute



How 1 + 1 = 3: The Promise of the Two-Generation Approach

Research shows that improvements in the abilities and/or situation of one generation have a profound positive affect on the outcomes of the other. For example:

- Advances in parent education or family income during the first few years of a child's life have a particularly powerful effect on that child's development.
- Reliable and high quality childcare increases the likelihood that parents will enter the workforce or pursue their own education

When services for children and parents are coordinated, children benefit from the improved environments provided by both parents and early education settings, and parents' motivation and workforce participation increases as they see that they can be models for their children. When children gain from early education with enhanced language and behavioral skills, the adults around them respond with increases in cognitive stimulation and reductions in punitive parenting.

As a result, two-generation programs are likely to achieve better results for both children and adults as the benefits from each component multiply to produce a whole greater than the sum of its parts.

*American Community Survey, 2013 1-Year Estimates