



Collective Progress

In partnership and with the support of The Colorado
Department of Early Childhood

Phase Two Report:

Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action: Family Perspectives on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion



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Table of Contents



03	<u>Thank You</u>
04	<u>How to Use this Report</u>
05-10	<u>Summary</u>
11-14	<u>Background</u>
15-16	<u>Framework Description</u>
17-19	<u>Introduction and Methodology</u>
20-48	<u>Findings</u>
21-34	<u>Community Needs to Foster Thriving</u>
35-36	<u>Increasing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</u>
37-38	<u>Family Driven Capacity</u>
39-44	<u>Fostering Trust</u>
45-48	<u>Safe Family Entity</u>
49-67	<u>Recommendations</u>
50-53	<u>Capacity for EDI Implementation</u>
54-57	<u>Community Needs to Foster Thriving</u>
58-61	<u>Increasing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion</u>
62	<u>Family Driven Capacity</u>
63-64	<u>Fostering Trust</u>
65-67	<u>Safe Family Entity</u>
68	<u>Conclusion</u>
69	<u>Member Checking</u>
70	<u>Next Steps</u>
71-78	<u>Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation</u>
79-80	<u>Appendix B: Family Voice Focus Group Script</u>
81-85	<u>References</u>

Thank You!

Acknowledgments

This report was made possible by the expertise of Colorado families and youth. Because of their input, the Framework for Action will be enhanced in a manner that clears the path for prevention work that is more equitable, diverse, and inclusive.

A special thanks to all the mothers, fathers, grandparents, and youth who shared insight on what is needed to build trust and community capacity for child maltreatment prevention. Our intention is to reflect your views accurately. To that end, we are incredibly grateful for the additional time many of you took to provide feedback on the report. Child maltreatment prevention and the families of Colorado will be strengthened *because of you*. This report is a reflection of your leadership and expertise. We hope we honored it well.

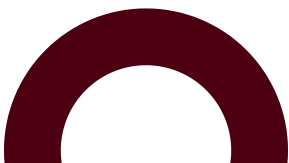
Finally, this report results from the partnership, leadership, and support of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC). CDEC's prioritization of family voice, equity, diversity, and inclusion will advance child maltreatment prevention and support families thriving across Colorado.

Suggested Citation

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed are those of the authors. They are informed by synthesizing prior reports, individual interviews, focus groups, and writer expertise in inclusive and equitable qualitative evaluation and implementation science. They do not necessarily represent the personal views of the Colorado Department of Early Childhood. Recommendations do not represent the budget or legislative agendas of state agencies, the Governor's Office, or other partners. Funding or statutory changes will be developed with the proper stakeholders and move through appropriate processes.





How to Use the Report

Collective Progress is devoted to building the capacity of systems and organizations to implement sustainable change. For that to occur, implementation and all that comes with it (like reports) should be accessible and in alignment with the people most impacted by the change.

This report was designed to provide options for digesting what was learned. Links are included throughout the document for easy navigation. Every page number is a link back to the Table of Contents. In addition, information has been presented in three sections to support different needs:

- A [summary](#) is for those who need the big picture,
- The [findings](#) section features family perspectives prominently. It is a section worth everyone's time.
- The [full recommendations section](#) is intended to support implementation and, therefore, may only be relevant to change agents, and even still, certain areas will be more relevant depending on a change agent's role.



Summary

Real impact and large-scale change require a shared language and understanding of the problem, broadened ownership across various groups and agencies, and investment from local communities up through the Federal Government.

The intention behind the Colorado Child Maltreatment Framework for Action (CMPFA) goes beyond developing a plan that results in collective action; it is a strategy for scaling solutions known to prevent maltreatment and strengthen families. It establishes a ground, creates an identity, and a space for everyone to move forward and make progress together. The Framework for Action has the potential to shed light on both what is needed and what works locally, statewide, and nationally. (Dunn, K, Interview, May 5, 2022)

Integration of diverse family perspectives, and the subsequent revision of the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for action to align with their views, is the natural iteration of the Framework if broad ownership, scalable solutions, and tangible impacts for all Colorado families are to be achieved. The families of Colorado communities shed light on what works locally, statewide, and nationally.

This report integrates diverse family perspectives into the 'what' and 'how' of the CMPFA for equity, diversity, and inclusion.

History and Context

Developed in 2014 and launched in 2017, the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention for Action has been a critical driver for community planning and progress toward strengthening families.

To broaden prevention and family-strengthening work from the current 28 counties to all counties in Colorado and beyond, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood initiated the CMPFA enhancement project to revise the Framework and drive prevention centered on equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).



Summary

Purpose of this Report

The purpose of this report is twofold:

1. To raise the voices of diverse Colorado families concerning child maltreatment prevention and the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action.
2. To provide recommendations that will guide the CMPFA enhancement to address the views set forth by families in a manner that centers and increases equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Goals of the CMPFA Enhancement Project

Increase uptake and ease of use for the Framework for Action and integrate input from families to enhance the Framework in equity, diversity, and inclusion. Four supporting objectives include:

1. Advance equity, increase diversity, and improve inclusion concerning the Framework for Action documents, tools, and planning process.
2. Elevate diverse family perspectives.
3. Increase understanding of what communities need to build trust, engage in community planning, and lead or support change within their communities.
4. Indicate essential activities and resources needed to engage families, maintain family and other planning relationships, and sustain planning and implementation efforts.

Project Description

A qualitative study was conducted to understand families' child maltreatment prevention and strengthening needs and perceptions of CMPFA concerning equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Seventy-five participants engaged in focus groups or interviews representing:

- Latinx, Black, Indigenous, Asian, and White communities
- Bilingual, multilingual, native and heritage Spanish, native Mandarin, and monolingual English-speaking communities
- Urban, suburban, rural, and metro Denver communities
- Lived experience from parents, grandparents, homeless and post-homeless persons, post-incarcerated persons, youth, and family engagement liaisons

Summary

Project Description

Research questions:

1. What do you need in your community for families to thrive?
2. What is needed to make child maltreatment prevention activities more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and supportive of building equity?
3. If you want to or are involved in making your community better for your family, what support, funding, resources, infrastructure, and training would you need?
4. What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Summary of Findings

Focus groups and interviews resulted in the identification of seven unique areas that address family needs and support thriving:

1. Caregiving resources and support
2. Accessibility of childcare
3. Quality and equity of childcare
4. Housing
5. Education and schools
6. Mental health and wellness
7. Criminal justice involvement and family strengthening
8. Barriers to financial stability

A running theme across each category is related to access and availability of high-quality services, and that these problems are more pronounced for BIPOC families. If available, services are not provided in a culturally responsive manner and rarely by people representative of the communities where people live. These disparities have contributed to a growing mistrust resulting in unmet family needs.

Additionally, families struggle to achieve financial, mental, and social well-being or access housing, quality childcare, and education because of significant system barriers. **Systemic structures prevent families from:**

- accessing safe and stable housing because of rules in place that prevent parents with criminal records from living in safe neighborhoods
- saving money when receiving benefits
- receiving quality childcare and education due to funding inequities and school closures
- receiving help for fear of losing their children due to statutes stipulating mandatory reporting

Summary

Summary of Findings

Questions on equity and trust indicated a need for authentic and sustained inclusion. Participants pointed to examples of being asked for input on decisions already made or instances where their input was disregarded.

Empathic and relatable providers (and system leaders) that are representative, consistent in follow through, and client-centered were all common themes and highlighted as key to equity, diversity, inclusion, and trust.

Using cultural brokers and access to a safe family entity arose as key to addressing equity, diversity, inclusion, trust, *and* access to services and support.

Recommendations

To increase uptake and accessibility of the Framework for Action, as well as ensure it advances EDI, families focus the work ahead in four primary ways:

- Capacity building for equity-centered implementation.
- System and community change that addresses family needs and removes barriers to safe and stable housing, financial well-being, and increased access to affordable, high-quality support and services.
- Widespread and targeted investment in organizational changes resulting in equitable services and systems, increased diversity, and inclusive, safe, and trustworthy services, spaces, and relationships.
- Priority funding and support of local BIPOC and lived experience groups and organizations to address their own housing, childcare, mental health, financial, and criminal justice needs.

Both cultural brokers and safe family spaces will be vital to all four focus areas. Conversely, the building of capacity for EDI and implementation will ensure success.

Summary

Recommendations

1. Fund and build capacity for EDI-centered implementation in prevention planning communities.
2. Continue to build tools and resources that support the implementation of the Framework for Action.
3. Integrate EDI and EDI-centered implementation into the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action, Planning Framework Toolkit, and online Toolkit.
4. Align and integrate family input and recommendations compiled here into the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Toolkit.
5. Address the family needs identified here in community planning.
6. Identify policy, systems, and community-level changes that remove barriers to safe and stable housing, financial well-being, and access to affordable, high-quality support and services.
7. Provide guidance, formalize, and incentivize organizational culture change for agencies that interact with families, resulting in a diverse workforce, a culture of inclusion, and equity-promoting policies and practices.
8. Identify funding solutions to increase training and wages. Based on community profile data, target solutions in lower-income and rural areas.
9. Provide guidance, formalize, and support the widespread implementation of cultural brokers in alignment with best practices.
10. Lead a conscious and targeted effort to fund and support local BIPOC and people with lived experience in building capacity to establish agencies and strengthen their communities.
11. Identify goals, indicators, measures, activities, and outputs that will foster trust with communities.
12. Incentivize sustained programs.
13. Measure the experience of client-centeredness, consistency, and trust via family surveys. Develop a plan to incentivize, promote, and share the practices of these providers more broadly.
14. Track and incentivize follow-through on family commitments at state and community levels.
15. Increase integration of community representatives by gathering ongoing and continuous input and standardizing the practice of reporting on how information was used.
16. Center family voice in child maltreatment prevention initiatives, services, and actions. Allocate resources and train people on how to include families. Improve access and ability for families to be able to participate in decision-making.
17. Hire more BIPOC and people with lived experience. Remove barriers to employment by implementing workforce development strategies (such as family leadership training institutes) that support knowledge and skill building for these groups.
18. With the direction of BIPOC and other families with lived experience, build on existing family advocacy and support agencies or develop a new structure that meets the criteria for a safe and trusted family support group or entity.

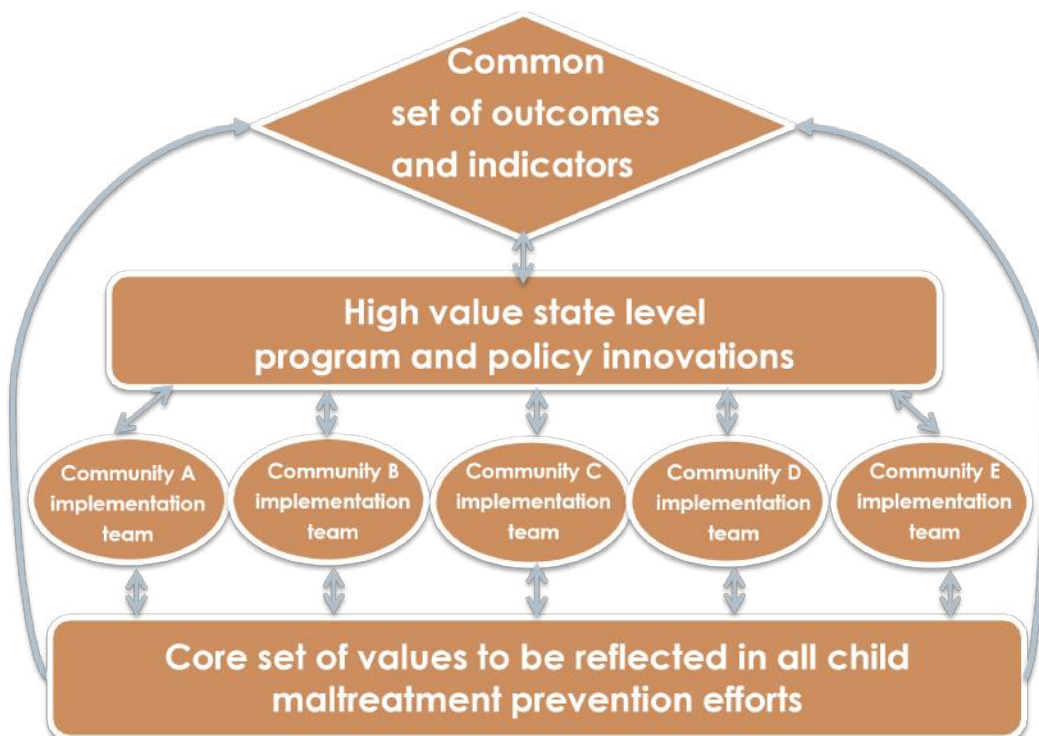
Summary

Conclusion

The Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action connects state-level prevention programs and policy innovations to local collective action with shared values. The families participating in this study shed light on enhancing the Framework so that collective progress is more visible, relevant, inclusive, and tangible for diverse families and communities across Colorado.

The enhancement of the Framework is an opportunity to guide and support community planning from an equity, diversity, and inclusion lens. Additionally, with the integration of information and tools that support implementation and organizational culture change from an EDI lens, communities will be better equipped to engage in planning and solutions that fit the needs of all families while addressing the BIPOC families that have been the most impacted.

Both cultural brokers and safe family spaces will be vital to building capacity for EDI and implementation that results in child maltreatment prevention in communities. Coupled with priority support for trusted BIPOC and lived experience groups and organizations, the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action will be a driving force for strengthening all Colorado families and communities.



Background

"Let us heed the voice of the people and recognize their common sense. If we do not, we not only blaspheme our political heritage, we ignore the common ties that bind all Americans."

~Barbara Jordon



Background

The Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood launched the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework in April 2017. The Framework guides both planning and action at the state and community levels in the service of child maltreatment prevention. This approach establishes shared goal(s), ownership, and collective action vital to strengthening families.

In 2021, Collective Progress partnered with the newly formed Department of Early Childhood to identify enhancement opportunities for equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) for the Framework for Action. Phase one effectively gathered input from various originators and implementers; however, direct family input from diverse backgrounds and experiences is critical to enhancing the Framework from an EDI lens.

In 2022, Collective Progress began listening to families to understand how to enhance the Framework.

History and Context

A national model to prevent child maltreatment is critical to moving the needle and achieving better outcomes for families. Real impact and large-scale change require a shared language and understanding of the problem, broadened ownership across various groups and agencies, and investment from local communities up through the Federal Government.

The intention behind the Framework for Action goes beyond developing a plan that results in collective action; it is a strategy for scaling solutions known to prevent maltreatment and strengthen families. It establishes a ground, creates an identity, and a space for everyone to move forward and make progress together. This Framework for Action has the potential to shed light on both what is needed and what works locally, statewide, and nationally. (Dunn, K, Interview, May 5, 2022)

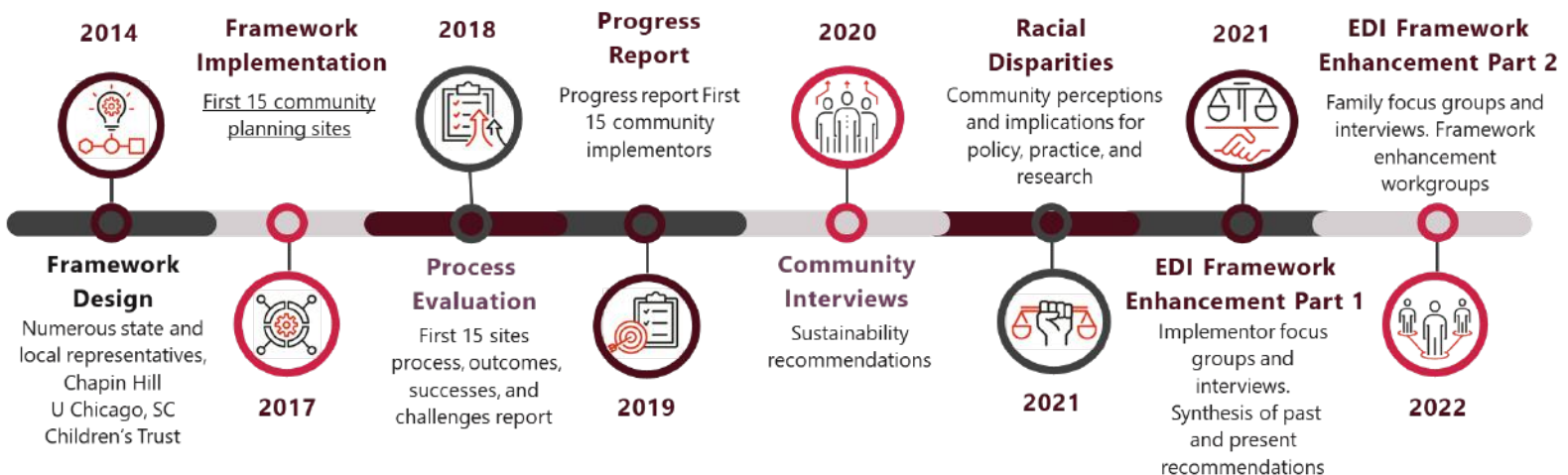
Developed in 2014, the Framework was born out of the collaboration, shared vision, and hard work of many people at the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood, the University of Chicago's Chapin Hall, the Children's Trust Fund of South Carolina, and Colorado state and local partners.

Background

History and Context

Then launched in 2017, the Framework was piloted in 15 communities across Colorado and has since expanded to 28 counties. Each year, the leaders behind the Framework have conducted evaluations to ensure its continuous improvement and alignment with community contexts. Collective Progress has since compiled all of the results and carried them forward into a pathway for enhancement to ready the Framework for broader implementation.

Framework for Action Milestones



The next and most critical phase, captured in this report, is integrating diverse family perspectives into the what and how of the CMPFA. From here, the enhanced framework will be reviewed with on-the-ground providers to collect insights on what is needed to implement the Framework within diverse contexts. The final stage of the Framework enhancement process will include the review, finalization, and launch of the new Framework for Action through workgroups composed of family, community and CMP leaders.

Report Recommendations Carried Forward

- Airozo, A. & Tandon, M. (September 2022). Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Pathway to Enhancement. Collective Progress.
- Early Milestones. (2020). Child maltreatment prevention-community planning interviews.
- McGee, A., Bellamy, J., Dunn, K. (2021). Racial disparities in perceptions of community supports: Implications for policy, practice, and research with children and families. <https://co4kids.org>
- OEC, Early Milestones, Zoma. Planning to prevent child maltreatment. (2019, July). <https://co4kids.org/framework>
- Prendergast, S. (2018). Implementation insights from the Colorado Child Maltreatment Framework for Action Plan.

Background

Problem Statement

The Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action can strengthen families across Colorado. With direct input from diverse families, a framework that reflects their views, and guidance on implementing child maltreatment priorities that accord with equity, diversity, and inclusion, communities are more likely to uptake the CMPFA and reach better outcomes for families.

Project Goal

Increase uptake and ease of use for the Framework for Action and integrate input from families to enhance the Framework for Action in equity, diversity, and inclusion.



Project Objectives

- Advance equity, increase diversity, and improve inclusion with respect to the Framework for Action documents, tools, and planning process.
- Elevate diverse family perspectives.
- Increase understanding of what communities need to build trust, engage in community planning, and lead/support change within their communities.
- Indicate essential activities and resources needed to engage families, maintain family and other planning relationships, and sustain planning and implementation efforts.

Framework Description

The Planning Framework for Action is designed to help states and local communities clarify their priorities, identify key strengths and areas of opportunities, and expand on these opportunities to create a more focused and better integrated plan to prevent child maltreatment and to promote child well-being. (Daro, et al, 2011)

The Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action

The Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action is a guide and set of tools to support state and community planning.

The Framework for Colorado establishes "Overarching Outcomes," "Foundational Principles," and "Channels for Change," along with a planning toolkit and online toolbox to drive community planning and guide collective action.



Task 1.1: Form Core Leadership Group



Task 1.2: Develop Community Profile



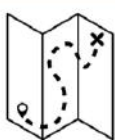
Task 1.3: Secure Parent Input



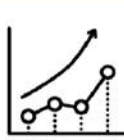
Task 1.4: Catalogue Local Services



Task 2.1: Set Your Priorities



Task 2.2: Outline Your Implementation Plan



Task 3.1: Do it and do it better



Task 3.2: Sustain the Change

Community Planning Toolbox

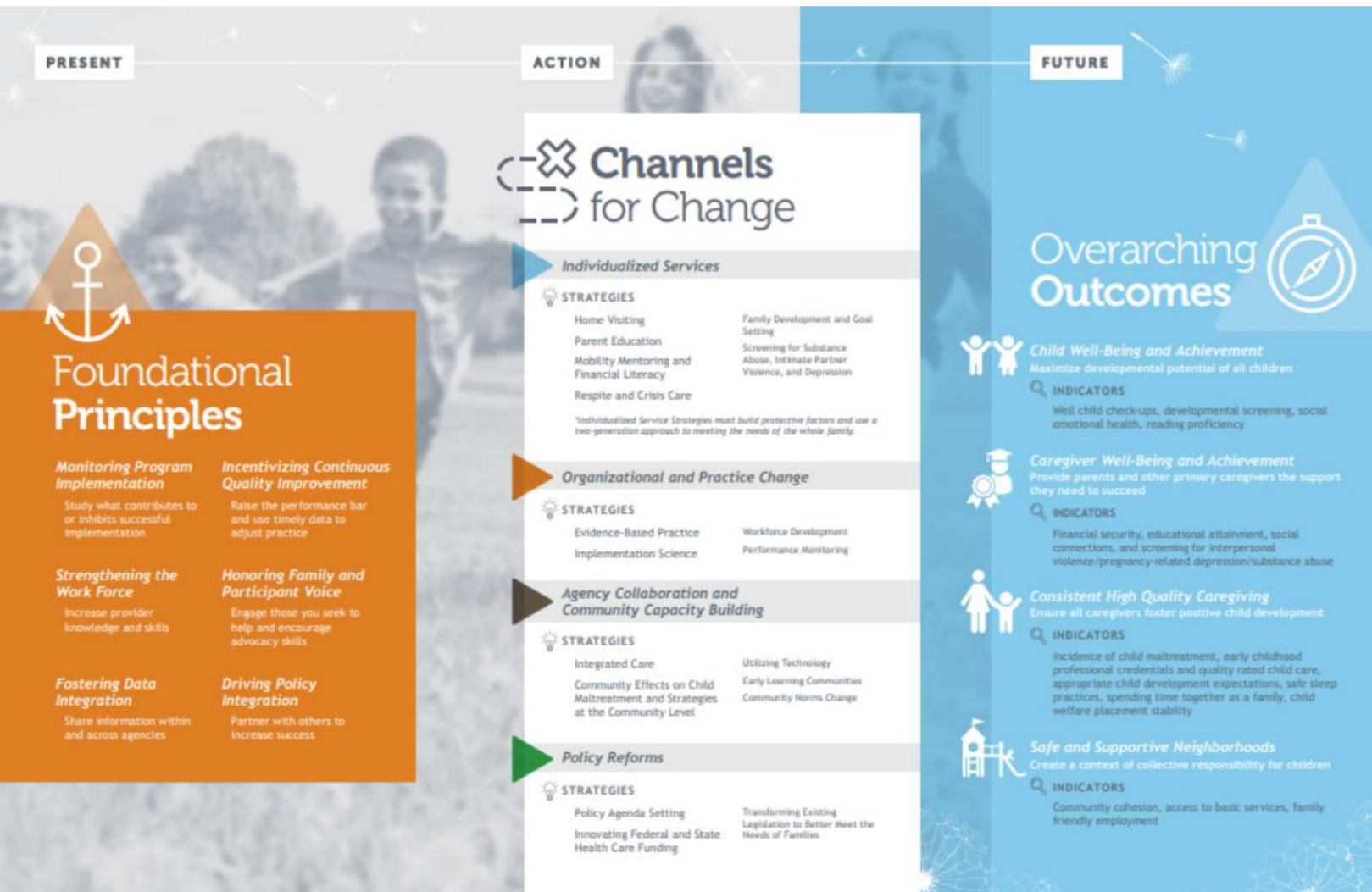
The complete Toolbox includes:

- The Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Toolkit from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago
- The Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action
- Tips for maximizing survey & focus group participation
- Sample parent survey questions & feedback report
- Sample community cafe questions
- Sample parent & community asset survey
- Sample community profile
- Parent & community survey results
- A literature review by Chapin Hall to provide useful guidelines for selecting specific interventions & building an infrastructure to support high quality implementation

This toolbox and other useful resources are available via www.co4kids.org/framework.

Informed by the Framework for Action, community planning is led by a representative group of core leaders. This group is responsible for developing a community profile that captures demographics and trends specific to a community, including health indicators, child maltreatment data, and emerging issues. Family focus groups and surveys inform needs and goals. Leaders then develop a snapshot of the area's critical services and family support. The services review requires understanding the capacity and quality of available service that aligns with the Colorado Framework. Informed by the community profile, family input, and services, core leaders will identify a set of priorities and then develop an implementation plan that addresses goals.

The Colorado Framework for Action





Introduction

Methodology and Data Sources

This qualitative study uses a phenomenological approach to understand the participants' ($n=75$) perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of the policy and action document titled Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action. A phenomenological study aims to describe the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a common concept or phenomenon (Heidegger, 1982; Husserl, 1962). This approach is instrumental when the phenomenon of interest has not been well defined or conceptualized, and the findings become a vehicle to clarify central issues around the phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). The Framework, clearly articulated by Daro, Jarpe-Ratner, Karter, Crane, Bellamy, and Seay (2011), and results from its implementation in community programs, have been empirically analyzed periodically. The phenomenon studied herein is not the Framework itself but rather the perceptions and understanding around its implementation, relevance, barriers, and future adaptations concerning equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Research Questions

1. What do you need in your community for families to thrive?
2. What is needed to make child maltreatment prevention activities more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and supportive of building equity?
3. If you want to or are involved in making your community better for your family, what support, funding, resources, infrastructure, training would you need?
4. What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Introduction

Methodology and Data Sources

Data was collected using focus groups and personal interviews with diverse community and family members as follows:

- Racial representation from Latinx, Black, Indigenous, Asian, and White communities
- Linguistic representation from bilingual, multilingual, native and heritage Spanish, native Mandarin, and monolingual English-speaking communities
- Geographical representation from urban, suburban, rural, and metro Denver communities
- Lived experience representation from parents, grandparents, homeless and post-homeless persons, post-incarcerated persons, youth, and family engagement liaisons

Since phenomenological research aims to gather information about the phenomenon without interference from the researcher, no leading questions were included about Framework in the interview and focus group protocols (Appendix B). This study collected multiple perspectives and understandings around the Framework from seven personal interviews and six focus groups, with a total number of 75 participants. The focus groups were conducted either in person or online.

Table 1.
Data Sources

Type of Data	Year	Number of interviews and participants
Personal Interviews	2022	7 Interviews (n=2)
Focus Groups	2022	6 focus group transcripts (n=68)
Literature Reviewed		
Daro, D., Bellamy, J., Crane, K., & Phillips, J. (2016). Voices from home: perceptions of Colorado caregivers on caring for kids and accessing supports.		
Daro, D., Jarpe-Ratner, E., Karter, C., Crane, K., Bellamy, J., & Seay, K. (2011). Child maltreatment prevention: A planning framework for action		
Early Milestones. (2020). Child maltreatment prevention-community planning interviews.		
Karter, C., & Daro, D. (2016). Planning to prevent child maltreatment: Strategies to support an integrated child maltreatment prevention framework. https://co4kids.org		
McGee, A., Bellamy, J., Dunn, K. (2021). Racial disparities in perceptions of community supports: Implications for policy, practice, and research with children and families. https://co4kids.org		
OEC, Early Milestones, Zoma. Planning to prevent child maltreatment. (2019, July). https://co4kids.org/framework		
Prendergast, S. (2018). Implementation insights from the Colorado Child Maltreatment Framework for Action Plan		
Prendergast, S. (2020). Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action: Prevention Measurement Guide.		
The Pinon Project. Sample profile for Montezuma & Dolores County (n.d.).		

Introduction

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using Provisional Coding (Huberman & Miles, 1994) with a set of a priori codes derived from the Framework. This provisional list of codes generated from the Framework served as a starting point for analysis. It allowed the researchers to explore possible interrelationships between the codes while creating space for them to be modified and expanded. The first step in data analysis was to explore all sources of data for information relevant to the phenomenon--the perceptions and understanding around implementation, relevance, barriers, and future adaptations of the Framework. In the second phase, the selected phrases and themes were grouped according to the a priori codes while ensuring that new and emergent themes were recorded for further analysis. All relevant data was then further analyzed within and across each code and longitudinally across the six focus groups and seven personal interviews. Finally, based on an in-depth analysis of each code, the research team agreed on the findings discussed in the following section.

Sample

The sample for this study was purposive and convenient. Rationale for the purposive sampling was the need to recruit participants who could provide in-depth and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation so that the study's findings could directly inform revisions and adaptations to the Framework. The sample was also convenient as a list of potential participants who could be contacted via email or in person was provided to the research team. Recruitment of persons for focus groups was through emails, phone calls, and text messages. They were persons with a shared lived experience of engaging or working with various agencies connected to preventing child maltreatment. \$50 an hour was paid to participants to compensate for the time and effort participating in this research, except in some instances where participants already receive compensation in their current capacity. Some were familiar with the Framework, while many were not.

Member Checking

Cultural responsiveness increases the truthfulness and utility of the results, which can be maximized through member checking. Member checking involves asking the participants to verify the research team's representations of events, behaviors, or phenomena.¹ We invited some community members who had participated in the focus groups and interviews to review the findings before dissemination. Member checking was carried out on the accuracy of descriptions, explanations, and interpretations.² Member checking is essential for ensuring data credibility and quality and avoiding truncated or distorted conclusions. The results of [member checking](#) are at the end of the report conclusion.

Findings



Findings

The following report details family perspectives on what is needed to create an enabling context supportive of equity, diversity, and inclusion for the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action. Findings are organized by the four research questions explored with families during qualitative interviews and focus groups. A conclusion and recommendations are provided at the end and detail both direct family recommendations and others identified as vital to enhancing the Framework for Action in a manner that aligns with family perspectives.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

- Caregiving and resources
- Accessibility of childcare
- Quality and equity of childcare
- Housing
- Education and schools
- Mental health and wellness
- Incarceration and Family Separation
- Barriers to Financial Stability

Section 2 Increasing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Section 3 Capacity Building for Family Involvement summarizes what families need to build their capacity to lead child maltreatment prevention in their communities.

Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

Section 5 Safe Family Entity is an emergent theme that draws from our research. It addresses family needs, equity, diversity, inclusion, trust building, and family capacity to lead child maltreatment prevention.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Participants responded to an open-ended question about the needs of their communities to foster thriving families and prevent child maltreatment. The participants shared a diverse list of pressing needs, such as childcare, housing, safety in schools, access to mental health resources, and pathways for incarcerated parents to spend time with their children.

Caregiving Resources and Support

Parenting workshops and information about the healthy development of children in various age groups were requested. New immigrant communities specifically requested information about bringing up children in the US and addressing cultural differences in parenting styles. Surveys should be sent to caregivers regularly to understand their interests in training programs.

The participants requested resources and support groups for new fathers, single fathers, young families, and homeless parents. Mediation services to help reconcile children with estranged fathers through sports and visitation were also identified as a need for strengthening families.

Finally, most participants stated a pressing need to build community and for neighbors to get to know and support each other. The sentiment of isolation has increased since the COVID-19 pandemic, and families need to connect with other families and groups. This additional community support would provide moral support to parents, increase the sharing of effective caregiving practices, and increase access to non-traditional childcare and help from other community members.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Supporting Quotes

Caregiving Resources and Support

- How to deal with children's behavior problems. There are better ways to parent children with behavior issues, we just don't know how to do so. I want to be a good parent and him to be a good person. It is lonely and you feel stuck.
- Like availability. For like networking, so, you know, ever since COVID, everything's just been online or you can hop online and do this online and do that, but I personally don't have much interest in engaging in a group discussion online. It doesn't feel good, it just lacks spirit. And so I don't know if there was like, spaces where people could go to be held to be heard, to be seen.
- Yeah, I go to a women's group once a month. That's for women who are pregnant, postpartum, and just women who want to help women through that transition into motherhood. And so that's been nice because it's once a month. It's consistent. Not everybody shows up all the time every month, but they just take three hours and we just sit together as a group of women and we listen to one another, acknowledge one another. And, you know, I guess we seem together and we kind of just have a space where those who need to be helped or are going through a hard time have support. And so this woman's group kind of helps do that, helps us just be able to speak freely without judgment. This is what I'm going through and we all try to offer some reassurance.
- It was just the hands of another person, that neighbor who lent me the breast pumps. She also taught me how to swaddle my baby. So I had a six-year-old and a new baby and all this, and nobody taught me how to swaddle the baby until she came over with the two blankets.
- And so, I think sometimes the dads don't have that motherly instinct, so they might actually need more support in some ways. To support them and I don't know what to ask for on their behalf. But I know they need a lot of education about how to support a woman who's crying and doesn't know why. Or is stressed out and doesn't know what to ask for help.
- Family strengthening programs... If my cup isn't full, and I can't fill another's cup, I need to meet myself unapologetically. And just think like, he's gonna be with you for the next six hours. I need to grab something. And come back and I feel a lot more available for him. I'm trying to escape the present moment, but I want to be in the present moment with him.
- Being a single father, if you're homeless you can't go into a lot of homeless shelters because they're for women and children only. And that's a problem because I know plenty of fathers that would love to be there for their children, but they simply cannot because it is better for their kids to be with somebody else. Just because they can get the resources that they need.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Accessible, Affordable, and Responsive Childcare

Family responses to issues surrounding childcare were complex and analyzed in depth. The participants expressed several needs related to the accessibility and availability of childcare slots. Overall, childcare services need to be provided beyond the standard 7 am to 5 pm hours so parents can run errands, work, or care for other family members. Childcare is needed before, during, and after work hours, evening, night, and extended hours.

Parents need affordable, quality, reliable, culturally, and age-responsive childcare to provide a safe environment for their children. In addition, agencies should be aware that grandparents are raising children, and these families need additional support as the burden of childcare falls on aging persons simultaneously dealing with health and mobility issues.

The work should start with a community forum to assess childcare needs. Then, promote or create pathways for family members, especially grandparents, to receive childcare training, provide daycare, and be paid via state and federal funding. This approach is culturally responsive and beneficial for all involved parties, parents, children, and grandparents. Additionally, resources and funding for a babysitter "co-op" were recommended.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Supporting Quotes

Accessible, Affordable, and Responsive Childcare

- I don't have help with childcare (for doctor's appointments). Even just normal doctor's offices, didn't know what to look for, if they started offering extended services.
- They have a little babysitter Co Op, here. So if you babysat one night, you earn tokens, for one night of babysitting for you equals enough tokens to go out one night to end up being like a small group and then you watch each other's kids kind of like a homeschooling situation where you take a day.
- But DHS wouldn't pay her enough to stay home. So maybe looking at the rate that you pay at a daycare center versus the rate that you pay at an in-home, not a daycare, but just as a relative like grandma. If grandma can make a little bit of money, taking care of the babies in it, and you can support more grandmas than daycare centers. I think we have a winner.
- I can't go to Pueblo West, which is 20 miles out of Pueblo to drop off my child. I live on the east side of Pueblo, my jobs on the east side of Pueblo. You know, I'm low income. Either I drive or I gotta get on the bus. So you know, there's a lot of factors and reasons why I take my child to the Eastside childcare center, and there's a reason why I can't go to the Southside childcare center.
- Our early childhood Council is calling every single day and calling the centers to see what slots they have open to see if we could try to get some of the parents in, some movement to see if we could get them some slots. But I also know it's not working because those parents are right now at the slump level. You know, you found that but that still doesn't do it in the center or the neighborhood or the community that I needed it to be in. So yeah, I think that's another conversation.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Quality and Equity of Childcare

Several participants expressed their concerns about the quality of childcare in their communities, the inequitable distribution of licenses, and the rating system used by the agencies. Several participants thought that early childcare is chronically underfunded; hence, there are significant inequities in availability and quality.

Many participants felt that White families had better and more access to childcare. In contrast, families of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) struggled to access care and were forced to turn to family and friends. One of the reasons for inequitable access was the rating system used by the agencies. According to the participants, the large childcare centers receive favorable ratings. However, they are sometimes riddled with unsafe practices, while small home daycare providers get penalized for having smaller homes even though they provide high-quality care. In addition, low ratings tied to low payments keep providers of color and multilingual backgrounds at the bottom of the rating system.

Surveys should be sent to caregivers regularly to capture the quality, strengths, weaknesses, and cultural responsiveness of childcare programs.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Supporting Quotes

Quality and Equity of Childcare

- So our white families have childcare and our families who are not like them don't have childcare and so they are using family friends and neighbor providers.
- The rating system is that we have a woman from the Philippines go through a rating here. And she lives with her daughter and they sleep with their beds on the floor and they have a small space and they care for kids in that space. And they care well for kids in that space. And her rating was much lower just because she didn't have enough space and because her daughter lived with her. And a lot of our Spanish speaking families are the same. They live with multiple families together. So if they were to go through this process, they would score low on the rating. They don't get paid as well. They're the ones that are actually watching kiddos who are on CCAP. And so then CCAP doesn't pay you as well because you didn't get a high enough rating.
- So it's just all of these things adding up, the same families don't have childcare, and the childcare providers that are actually providing great care are getting rated low because of their different culture. So I don't know if the Office of Early, the Department of Early Childhood has looked into the bias of that rating system or the cultural bias and I think it's time honestly for that to be looked at.
- In Montrose here we have in the last 10 years, there's been two or three big centers and a home provider here who were closed and they were highly rated. They were level four on this high quality rating system and they were closed for maltreatment abusing children. You know, so it's just one of them was giving medicine to children for them to sleep. So things like that where these people are able to get through that system somehow and get a high score, but they're not treating children well and then we know these care providers who are providing quality care for 20 years, can't get a high rating because they couldn't check the boxes.
- It's frustrating, especially like you see those good care providers and how happy those children are in those homes that they're really comfortable and you know, they're not going to rate well and you just know and they're just nothing you could do. You don't want to discourage them. You don't want to say wow, you know, you're not gonna rate really well. But it is discouraging when those ratings come in. It's heartbreaking.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Housing

Affordable housing in Colorado reflects national trends, and almost all the participants in the study mentioned it as one of the biggest problems they have to face and requested robust support for the same. Housing challenges include high rents, low availability, homeless families, unsafe living conditions for children, and the constant fear of becoming homeless.

The disproportionate numbers of BIPOC experiencing homelessness can be directly tied to a history of racially motivated housing and other policies that continue to this day. In a 2020 report by Metro Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI), Black individuals comprise 23.5% of the population experiencing homelessness despite being only 5.3% of the general population in Metro Denver. Native Americans comprise 4.9% of the homeless population despite being less than 1% of Denver's population.³ Meanwhile, Whites make up a decisively smaller proportion of people experiencing homelessness compared to the overall population.

Support could be in the form of homeowner assistance, subsidized rents, and ensuring that families, especially children, do not become homeless. Families need support for staying in homes before they become homeless. Participants shared that displacing children from their homes causes permanent trauma, and they lose their network of friends, acquaintances, and other safe spaces.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Supporting Quotes

Housing

- A lot of places want you to have two and a half to three times the rent to qualify to live there. What I was just like, kind of not really casually, just like looking at apartment pricing around town. And if you're gonna make it, to put it simply right, the rent for a studio apartment, as a single person, you have to make upwards of \$60,000 a year. (Participant from Fort Collins)
- We wait until a person is sleeping in their car to help them, or they are homeless and there's no room in the shelters and we treat the parents like it is their fault and they caused the hardship instead of doing more upstream to keep them in their homes or use money to solve the problem.
- So here's the situation. If you have a family that is on some type of government assistance, whether it be food stamps or something else, they qualify for low income housing. The qualifications for the low income housing are they still want you to make two and a half times to three and a half times the income. But if you work enough to make the money, then you don't qualify for the assistance. So do you want to have somewhere to live? Or do you want to have something to eat? Or do you want a roof over your head or food in your stomach?



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Child and Youth - Education and Schools

School closures around the state due to lower enrollments mean communities are losing teachers and staff, and children are taught by substitute teachers that change daily. All this leads to uncertainty and instability among the school staff, students, and parent communities.

Participants from some parts of rural CO and one Indian reservation stated that schools were dangerous places for their children, with increased violence and bullying and decreased resources for after-school activities, especially for teenagers. Participants in all parts of the state expressed a need for safe, open spaces and parks for children to play with equipment in good condition. Some cited Fort Collins parks as a good model because they are well maintained and conduct several activities for families and children, from kite flying to art walks.

Supporting Quotes

- On that note, we are also losing directors because they are having to go into classrooms and it's just like a domino effect. It's stressful for everybody. It's stressful for teachers. It's stressful for parents. It's stressful for children. And it goes right into that building trust because our children don't know where they're going every single day, and they're moving this kid from this classroom into that classroom. They just don't have that steadiness in their classrooms.
- But when I lived in Denver, I couldn't find a park. There were no swings. There were no teeter-totters. I mean, there was just no place to play. So, I think that's a huge need in a lot of communities, and so are sidewalks.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Mental Health and Wellness

An overwhelming number of participants expressed an urgent need for mental health support and resources for families, parents, and children. The complicated referral system for providers is a barrier to access, as is the scarcity of therapists and an even lesser number of therapists from diverse backgrounds who are bilingual or of color. Participants stressed that there are unmet needs over multiple generations within a family for therapy and medication that impact the children daily. Furthermore, in-person therapy and counseling are preferred as it is difficult for children to connect with online therapists. Generational trauma surrounding many issues, like abuse, drug use, and domestic violence, needs healing. Families requested more information and guidance related to conflict resolution and family strengthening. Another need articulated was more information from a safe and trusted source about what constitutes abusive behaviors, including the availability of a hotline or resource to help people understand their situation better and decide if it is abusive without fear of a report. Alternatively, participants requested the creation of safe spaces to decompress and meet people who can relate and empathize before initiating any action.

Additionally, participants requested better access and coverage for speech-language therapy and behavior therapies for children and online gym access for caregivers. Finally, a single entry point for all services was noted as an easier and more accessible option over multiple entry points.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Supporting Quotes

Mental Health and Wellness

- It is horrible, our families cannot get mental health to save their lives. We have health solutions here. I have a daughter that's 30. I fancy myself to say that I'm halfway smart. And I can't give my daughter mental health help.
- Also, as a white family, I was able to get mental health for my child but I still had to know the right numbers to call and who to ask for. We're still paying \$100 every time she has to go see someone so I can't even imagine a family who couldn't afford that being able to get the mental health taken care of for their own children.
- I want to talk to a black therapist, or maybe even the white therapists who maybe grew up black you know, just somebody from where I'm from, you know. At least close to there. Yeah, it's so much more. I feel like the stress is really immeasurable, the stress and anxiety that comes with being black.
- And if you just had somewhere to go, that you knew was safe (a community space that is by and for a cultural group that supports needs specific to that group) you could go and be there and be safe. I feel like that gets rid of a lot of that. In turn, it affects your health and mental health, physical health, spiritual health, emotional, whatever it is.
- Parents are losing or giving up on therapies as they are mostly online and not effective as children do not want to engage with a device, adding to the stressors for parents.
- Finding out if something is actually considered emotional abuse, physical abuse, or psychological abuse. I have not found a single organization or individual in Colorado other than maybe talking to a therapist who can answer that and therapists don't often know. One thing that occurred to me that might actually be helpful in this regard is could there exist a hotline of some kind. I know that there exists report hotlines, but what about getting information, and educating the public?
- A one-stop for all things related to services instead of going to different agencies for different benefits, homelessness, addiction, mental health, disability, etc.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Criminal Justice Involvement and Family Strengthening.

Several participants in the study had lived experience with being incarcerated or had a member of their immediate family who is or had been incarcerated. Incarcerated parents immediately lose the ability to parent their children, which causes lasting harm to families and impacts their children. In addition, parents echoed widely-known challenges with the criminal justice system. Some parents in the focus groups had been incarcerated for drug offenses and shared that prison does not offer rehabilitation support or the knowledge and skills required to stay sober. Furthermore, the prison setting makes it difficult to maintain sobriety, thus leading to a cycle of drug abuse and incarceration while separating the families. These participants felt that parents in prison should be allowed to spend time with their children regularly.

One of the consequences of drug abuse is the need to find foster families for infants, especially those born with drug exposure. Out-of-home placement leads to children being frequently transferred from one home to another and sometimes out of the city. Affordable drug and alcohol rehab programs are challenging to find and access for parents with addiction issues, thus making it harder for them to reunite with their children. Additionally, there is a need to share information and knowledge about birth control, especially among drug users, which is not a generational practice in some families. Accessible local counseling and rehabilitation facilities would also help limit the number of babies born with drug exposure.

The second issue related to incarceration is coping with life outside prison without adequate skills, resources, and tools. People released from prison have been removed from reality and do not know how to cope and manage with only a few dollars in their pocket or find a place to live. Some parents become homeless post-incarceration and then lose access to their children, which is difficult for families. People with felonies have minimal housing choices, and families with non violent felonies are placed with those with more serious offenses. The result is children of parents with felonies are housed next to sexual predators and more violent offenders on the same premises.

Two significant changes advocated by the participants that would positively impact children were that there should be no limitations on housing for non-violent offenders and that people with felony records should be able to apply for services and benefits.

There is a shortage of research based on gender-responsive approaches in criminal justice, which needs to be addressed. Between 1980 and 1995, the incarceration of women in US prisons increased by 460%, and between 1986 and 1991, for Black and Hispanic women, 828%. Drug and drug-related charges are the most frequent conviction for women. Unique issues for women include motherhood and extensive trauma history.

Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

Supporting Quotes

Criminal Justice Involvement and Family Strengthening.

- Since you are paying for them to live in prison, it is better to pay for them to live in rehab.
- If parents have a criminal record or a felony, they have very limited housing choices and are often surrounded by other ex-felons, which is an unsafe situation for children. There are sexual predators and offenders in the same housing as single mothers with children.
- It is hard to find housing in a safe neighborhood if you have a felony and you are stuck in felon-friendly housing. The state knows our history and the types of crime, but even if we have been non-violent, we have limitations on housing.
- It is a vicious circle if you are a felon, it follows you around your whole life and leads to a feeling of depression because you feel like you will never break out of it.
- Recidivism programs allow for people who have served their time to be able to come out into the world and have some sort of stability, but it is enough of a culture shock to be in prison or jail for even just a year and then come out and prices have gone up 20 bucks since you were last out in the public. And then also employment restrictions, rent, cost of food, you know, even to just buy a pack of six white t-shirts is \$26 at Walmart.
- To give you \$100 (post-release from jail) and not expect, I don't understand how they would expect anybody, any person to come out of a situation like that. You get thrown back into the world with no resources, not even a sense of direction.
- It is hard not having my father, him being homeless. It's hard because him coming out of prison and me finding out two weeks after and not being able to see him and him being held back and not being able to see me is hard on the both of us.



Section 1 Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families

What do you need in your community for families to thrive and prevent child abuse and neglect?

Barriers to Financial Stability

Another issue frequently stated by the participants was the need to build savings without losing benefits. Families and their advocates could not stress enough the need to build up to at least \$5,000 in savings for emergencies ranging from car repairs to rent. Building up savings means families lose support from agencies such as food stamps, rent subsidies, and public transport passes. Families are penalized for having a small amount of savings, insurance, tax refunds, or stimulus funds.

Supporting Quotes

- A car is not a luxury. You need one to transport yourself and the kids. You need car insurance and repairs. It's as if the state does not want us to get out of our situations.
- Professionals get paid to solve our problems, but they do not want to reimburse us for our experiences and time, and if they do, we wind up losing our food stamps or services, or rent goes up because we made a little more money.
- We penalize people for saving and building a small buffer for emergencies. Everyone should have at least \$5000 in savings for rent and car repairs, but if they do, we stop their benefits. We all need a salary and stability without worrying about services being cut off.

Section 2 Increasing Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity



What is needed to make child maltreatment prevention activities more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and supportive of building equity?

While equity is an ongoing endeavor, some things can be tackled more quickly than others through sharing power and prioritizing family voice. Empathy and relatability while working with agencies are essential factors for the participants. People who can relate to families and their experiences in a non-judgmental way are foundational to trust building. Some parents and families want to be involved more and proactively work with agencies to increase outreach at schools and other family-oriented organizations. Communities felt that there needed to be more transparency around data collected by the agencies as, sometimes, this data was vital to the safety of children and youth. For example, sharing specific information with communities promptly about cases of human trafficking in the area, bullying, gang and drug activity, or the opening of new homeless shelters would be helpful. If communities and families are aware of the risks in their communities, they can work together to protect their children.

Some participants recruited as cultural brokers or persons with lived experience expressed disappointment in being tokenized and marginalized. Their opinions were solicited but either only after the fact or wholly disregarded. They felt that the outreach to their communities was superficial, and the feedback was not considered while making policies.

Section 2 Increasing Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity



What is needed to make child maltreatment prevention activities more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and supportive of building equity?

Supporting Quotes

Increasing Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

- It is more important to have empathy, and it is not always possible to find a social worker who has the same ethnicity or even understands people's lived experiences. We need to look at where the person comes from and try to understand their culture. I feel that agencies do the least possible thing.
- More training and let us have the tools or knowledge to know what we can or can't do.
- As a person with lived experience, I am often asked to co-design systems, but it is not genuine co-designing. You cannot change systems without walking with the people who use the system. The language they use is of entitlement, and the verbiage is atrocious.
- They sent me the flier. It wasn't in Arabic; they had already translated everything, and I thought they wanted me to ask the community for their input. What do you think about it? Then, when the meeting started, to my surprise, they had already made the decision, so why are we participating in something that you already made the decision? You are asking us about if it will work or not. So, I really felt like they disrespected the community because they did that already without asking. Then they bring in the community to just inform them that this is the decision they have already made, and you cannot do anything. You just take it, and this shocked me, too.



Section 3 Capacity Building for Family Involvement

If you want to or are involved in making your community better for your family, what supports, funding, resources, infrastructure, training would you need?

Building more agency among parents and communities through training, knowledge sharing, and equitable partnerships was the most common suggestion made by the participants. Participants requested space, training, information, facilitation, mediation, and funding to strengthen their communities and establish their own agencies and groups that provide a nurturing environment for children. Additionally, family members requested leadership and advocacy training for caregivers that would enable them to connect and form advocacy groups.

BIPOC participants stated that agencies must lead a conscious and targeted effort to encourage non-profit organizations led by and for BIPOC. Dedicated spaces for BIPOC support groups were identified, specifically for parents, fathers, youth, single mothers, and incarcerated families. Especially in areas with low and high BIPOC populations, there is an acute need for community and connections with people who can relate to their unique experiences. These support groups and BIPOC organizations would provide a space for sharing problems and experiences of growing up BIPOC in the US around racism, microaggressions, inequities, and racial bullying. They would facilitate the exchange of strategies to cope with them. Creating spaces for BIPOC populations will allow them to build and strengthen their financial, spiritual, educational, emotional, and intellectual resources.

Education and information for parents about several topics were requested, such as child development, childcare, prevention, diet and nutrition during pregnancy and breastfeeding, mental health, and postpartum depression. Additionally, popular requests included workshops, skill building, and vocational training for parents on budgeting and finance, leadership, getting licensing for childcare, American Sign Language, and how to homeschool children. Workshops for navigating systems and accessing resources through different agencies, online and in person, were also specified.

Section 3 Capacity Building for Family Involvement

Supporting Quotes

Capacity Building for Family Involvement

- Because, as a nonprofit and grassroots nonprofit, we can't thrive because I don't have my own space. Not everybody wants to come to (a community church), a space we are borrowing. You know, this is not our space. We're sharing it, and when we talk about trying to liberate ourselves from white supremacy and white spaces, we have to start there. I feel like these chairs would be full up if they were black-owned and black-led. And that's the truth.
- As a black parent, there are no spaces for me. There's no nonprofit that I can go to that has a person who looks like me and understands my type.
- Sitting down with someone who doesn't look like me. And knowing that there's trauma that goes on in our city, in our country, I would have a hard time. Like literally, I would have a hard time because I'm sitting there like, you have no idea, and you're asking me all these questions, and I'm bothered, you know, that goes on inside. But we do this code-switching where, you know, we got to be on the up and up. I can't always be the angry black woman. I have to sit at the table, and those tables ain't always pretty; it gets to be triggering, and it sucks the soul out of you.
- I grew up in a rural area and was a biracial child who had white grandparents who had sole custody. Having space is incredibly important because my white parents had no idea what to do with my hair. How to coach me through when somebody was intolerant of me because of my race, how to emotionally support me when another kid poked fun at my hair or about the way that I smelled. The way that I looked, the fact that I didn't have my actual parents with me. So having space would have been incredibly helpful to me as a child, just to be able to know even from my grandmother; I think about the position that she was put in, not having a space where she knew that there were black people that she could take me to so I didn't feel so out of place.
- So having that space isn't just about, you know, as much as it is about community building. It's also about making sure that these future generations have the tools necessary to be socially and emotionally responsible young adults.



Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Data revealed a generational mistrust of government systems, agencies, and their representatives. Most participants stated that contacting agencies for help or intervention happens at the risk of family separation. Sometimes, families do their utmost to avoid contacting the agencies, even if the help would have been vital for the safety of their children. In addition, the various agencies coordinating child safety in the state are perceived as needing more empathy, cultural responsiveness, trust, and confidentiality. BIPOC participants stressed that breaking the cycle of mistrust based on race is imperative, and the agencies must make pointed efforts towards that goal. Some factors that contribute to building trusting and positive relationships are outlined below.

Representation

Representation of people at the agencies who look like them, have similar lived experiences, and know the community well as insiders is an essential factor in building trust. Additionally, historical white privilege and marginalizing practices of BIPOC cultures need to be recognized, and more efforts should be made to understand them. The unfortunate consequence of this disconnect and lack of communication between cultures contributes to child maltreatment as children (and adults) are reluctant to share what is *really* happening to them at home or school and do not receive the services they *really* need, such as therapy. Most interactions with agencies are characterized by a fear of being reported, exposed, incarcerated, or separated from families.

Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

Supporting Quotes

Representation

- When you live in the community, you know their needs and challenges and also how to approach each family based on their diversity. If you are from the community, you learn how to respect their cultures.
- The child support enforcement did not tell me that my children's father had his license taken away for non-payment of support. This is dangerous because now he is driving my children without a license.
- So, you're going to attack or penalize me for the way I was culturally raised? And this is how I raised my children. White folks are fortunately a little bit more privileged with less stress. So, it's easy for them, you know, the kids.
- Like how do we shift that mindset and that culture that breeds a new generation of white people or that we're raising it to these newer generations of white people, that we come from a place of empathy, as opposed to this place of perception.
- Yeah, but let my kid call you and say, hey, my mom just slapped me. Not because you probably said F-U, Mom. Or you know you were full of yourself, and you got your mouth knocked in. But as soon as you make that call, "I'm a kid. They hit me." They coming to get that parent.



Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Consistency

The participants stated that there needed to be consistency with the family engagement liaisons. They should be a part of the community instead of an outsider, preferably someone who understands their culture. Since trust is built slowly over time, the agency representatives should have the time and space to get to know the families and communities. The agency representatives should receive training in equity, diversity, and inclusion to grow their ability to be non-judgmental about different lifestyles. If the agency representatives are of a different race or ethnicity than the families, they should be able to respect others and accept differences. When the families trust the agency representatives, they have confidence in their abilities to secure the help and support they need.

Additionally, communities have heard varied definitions of abuse and neglect. Open and frank dialogue must be initiated between agency representatives across the system to reach a collective consensus. This joint definition must be widely shared and known by individual families and providers everywhere.

Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

Supporting Quotes

Consistency

- Family engagement liaisons must have the ability to meet families where they are at, let go of their own agendas, and not be judgmental about the different and unique lifestyles they encounter. Also, they must know when to push and when to fall back if families are not ready to accept services. If it is not neglect or abuse but just a different lifestyle that you are not used to, you need to step back.
- We need to work with people who can relate to us and our experiences, without judgment, accepting our pasts, and who believe that we want the best for our children.
- It is more important to have empathy, and it is not always possible to find a social worker who has the same ethnicity or even understands the lived experiences of people. We need to look at where the person comes from and try to understand their culture. I feel that agencies do the least possible thing.
- I feel like respect is a big thing. I feel like once I have respect for someone, they have respect for me, then that trust can start to build with that person.



Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Client Centeredness

Some participants stated that their interactions with the agencies felt disrespectful and demeaning. Therefore, the staff and agencies need training on respect and courtesy. Some qualities that encourage trust building with communities are frequent and two-way communication, transparency, sharing negative and positive information, data sharing, confidentiality and privacy, consistency, availability, being respectful, meeting people through someone they already know and trust, being authentic and vulnerable, relatability, and seeing one's diversity reflected in the agencies.

Often, BIPOC community members are asked for feedback and opinions by different agencies about relevant policies and issues. However, the community members are made to feel like tokens and that agencies are merely checking boxes when asking for opinions. Instead, communities prefer more authentic, ongoing, and deeper working relationships with agencies and reimbursement for their time.



Section 4 Fostering Trusting Relationships

What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Supporting Quotes

Client Centeredness

- I've been greeted by a person who just treated me like yesterday's trash. I feel like that has to change. We do not treat people with dignity and kindness.
- I don't need someone to come and tell me how to solve my problems or to solve my problems. Sometimes, I just need someone to listen. And so, coming in with that mentality as your agenda is either fulfilled or is not going to be fulfilled. So don't come with an agenda.
- They look at me and see nothing past my skin and accent. I don't want that when I come to these organizations. I'm giving my opinions because I look like this. I'm just a big mom, but it doesn't matter because I'm still taking care of the kids for the future. For me, all those years going to school, all those years doing all these efforts, learning how to manage through special ed services, how to manage through their companies, hospitals, doctors, it's a lot of stuff. I need to feel appreciated. And that they're not just looking at me like she's Hispanic, like I speak perfect English for what I know. And when I come to someone and they start by looking me up and down, that annoys me.
- Well, if there's something going on in the home, you know, I can't trust that if I say something to somebody, it's not going to make it worse. I can't trust that other teacher or therapist or something that somebody's going to be pulled from my home. The police are going to come and take some money from me.



Section 5 Safe Family Entity

Cultural Brokering, Linkage, and Ombudsman Services

A significant finding of this research was a gap in the services provided by various agencies working towards child maltreatment prevention. Data showed that communities and families want to work with a body, a group of persons, or an entity that could help them process information and situations, explain the pros and cons of initiating action, and list the consequences and possible solutions to their problems.

Families going through stressful situations need a safe, impartial, and non-judgmental space to sit down and talk with someone about what they are going through, seek advice in evaluating the situation, and explore the options and resources available. Although there are roles within current systems intended to support this end, participants indicated they could not and would not utilize them because of the genuine risk of reporting. Families need all these discussions to occur in a safe space and not trigger reports to the agencies. Additionally, families want to work with someone from inside the community instead of an outsider, someone who understands their culture, needs, and challenges to help assess their situation and receive some feedback. Families worry that even if they are merely trying to get more information about a 'how to' question, it will result in a report or complaint when sometimes all they need to know is a process or their options.

Unfortunately, this need for reassurance is often unmet. There is also underlying fear and stress about the 'what ifs' with the ultimate fear of losing custody of their children. Overall, families have a deep mistrust of the state and a constant fear of being separated from their children, which leads them to conceal reality, resulting in their being deprived of the services they need.

Even if a family is not in a stressful situation, they would appreciate a safe space where they can meet with representatives of agencies to understand if there is a possibility of receiving help instead of waiting for months to get an answer via online applications. Undocumented families are generally more reluctant to reach out for support and would be more willing to access such a safe space to explore their options. In addition, parents often did not get the whole picture from agencies about conflicts within the family when it came to shared parenting during a custody case. Discussing with a neutral 'mediator' would help clarify the next steps.

Agency representatives also voiced the need for a safe entity as sometimes they do not have the information or authority to decide if a situation warrants an action. Below are a few supporting quotes from them.

Section 5 Safe Family Entity

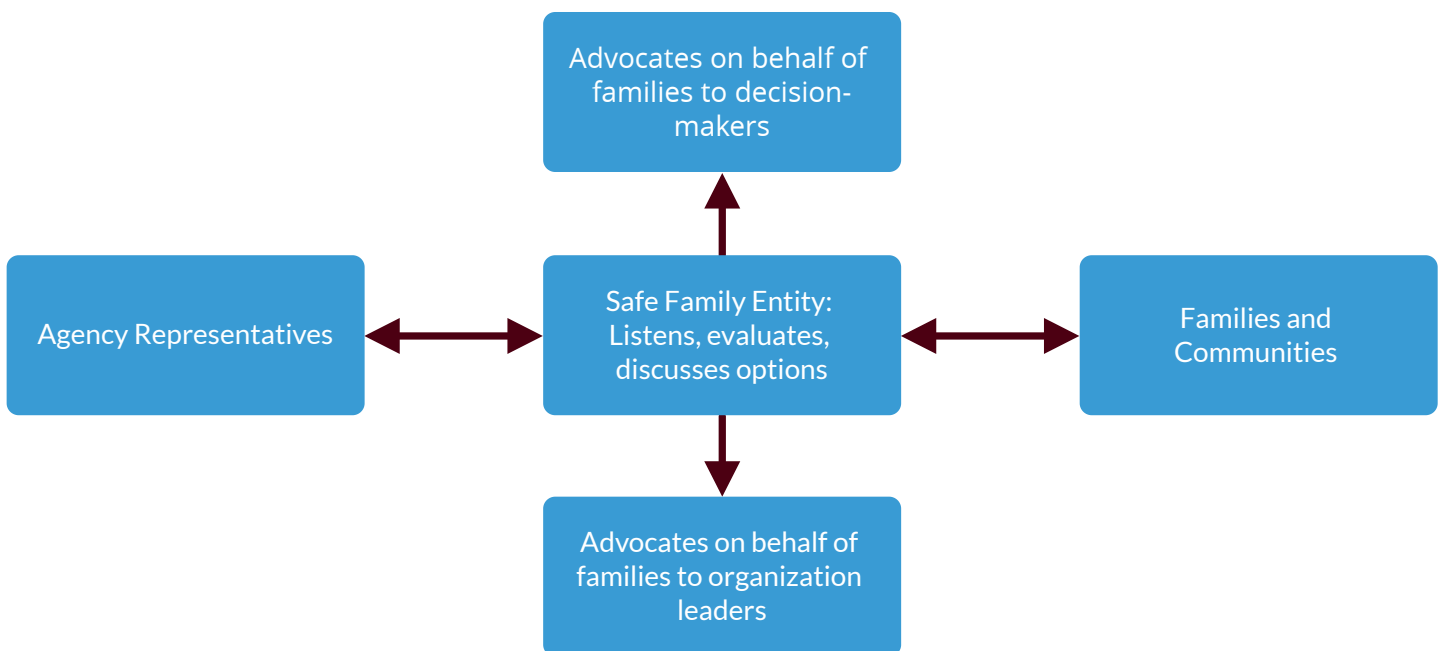
Supporting Quotes

Safe Family Entity

- I don't know where to send someone for reassurance or support. I only know where to send them to file a complaint when they're sure they want to. So, some way of addressing that, I think, is a prerequisite to trust.
- One of the things that I have found challenging is sometimes when trying to determine if something is an area of concern, either for myself or someone else. That question is seemingly impossible. I have called a wide range of different groups within Colorado to find out if this situation, whatever that situation, is an area of concern. Is this considered reportable or actionable? Or does this not cross that line?
- I think we need to have a standard of training and understanding of what to report and when. So that there is less disparity there. But ultimately, I mean, it just sounds like what we're doing right now just isn't working.
- But to be able to have the option to seek something where you know, you're not being turned in. I worked for a nonprofit which has an advocacy program. And so, I think just having someone to talk to and we really in the program, we focus on providing a relative space. And so then having a person that they would treat the advocates would treat the participant or the client just like a relative you know, we always provided a safe, confidential space. Children are always welcome. They put on different events for families to interact to support the families to just a place that was safe for the whole family. And I think that's where a lot of people get confused and don't reach out for services because they are afraid of getting a CPS case and being turned in to law enforcement. And that's why most cases aren't burning. Most people aren't seeking services.
- They offer you respite care, things like that, like that's not offered to people that really need the help. Maybe if they had that respite care or those services, they would not have had a case opened. So, I know that's not really the question, but just going off of that, I wish that there were more of those types of services available without a case being opened because that just puts the family through a lot of stress. And it was the last thing I would want to do again if I needed help

Section 5 Safe Family Entity

Cultural Brokering, Linkage, and Ombudsman Services



Although cultural brokers are not new and are widely researched and documented in various human services domains, a need for a safe entity or ombudsperson has arisen from the conversations and discussions with the participants. This safe entity would need a depth of knowledge and some authority to evaluate situations objectively and suggest solutions or appropriate actions to the families and other agency representatives. The safe entity should be independent, impartial, confidential, informal, and voluntary. The services offered include being a sounding board, discussing possible options, communication coaching, policy assistance, resource information, and education and outreach.

Section 5 Safe Family Entity

Supporting Quotes

Safe Family Entity.

- If someone is genuinely helping me, I don't mind sharing information, but if you try to use it against me, it does not build trust. If you dig for information to take my kids away from me like a counselor did, it does not make us trust them. We need privacy and confidentiality when we share information. Trust is built over time.
- I won't open up to social services because they're not here for your benefit or good. They use your kids against you. If they (social services) made the ground rules clear about what will happen if certain keywords are used (suicide, drugs, etc.), then we can plan for resources around that.
- Peer-to-peer coaching is important. People need to build honest relationships without the fear of being reported or exposed. This fear starts a chain of stress that people do not need. We could save more money in the long run and help more people and women from being in bad situations.
- Someone to talk to and assess the situation that is not social services. Calling social services can trigger events that we don't need, but we need another person/service that can help us.
- CPS does more harm than good, and if you have a record, they judge you and make you feel like it is all your fault.
- I called the mobile center hotline a couple of times to de-escalate situations and help talk us down, and I just kind of needed a mediator between us because we would get so lost and angry. Anyway, long story short, if there was another tool between the crisis center and the police, we needed something that just hadn't been invented. If there was just something between those things that could help.
- Now he got charged, and that doesn't feel right. Yeah, if there was just a place we could have gone to sit down and talk to somebody. Like without judgment, you know, it wasn't like a psych evaluation, just a counselor that we could have set up to talk. All that just became such an obstacle, and I couldn't happen. We need to go somewhere. Talk through something that somebody with, you know.
- So, as far as what I feel like is necessary for families to thrive, is some sort of liaison whether it be a person or program between, you know, housing, essentially for the tenant. This (mediation) should be community-based and not with CPS because that means your family will be automatically divided.



Family Recommendations

The needs indicated by families have been highlighted in several reports.^{5,6,7,8,9,10,11,12,13,14} Some respondents indicated they had shared these views before and had not seen progress. Additionally, leaders all across the state are working diligently to address these very needs.

This research did not intend to revisit what is already known. However, to get at the question of how to improve the framework from an EDI lens, it was necessary to first connect with families within the context of their reality. Family thriving needs are indicators for understanding what and how the framework drives prevention and equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Family input confirms the purpose of this research in that there are various opportunities to increase equity, diversity, and inclusion in the CMPFA.^{10,11} However, the results also indicate a need for greater alignment between family needs with system and community priorities, along with robust implementation, if overarching outcomes are to be realized. Family views, EDI, and implementation science need to be built into prevention activities and continually reinforced by the child maltreatment prevention framework to ensure sustained outcomes.

The recommendations below include direct guidance from families and additions informed by EDI and implementation so that family input can result in intended outcomes. Many recommendations require deep and widespread changes to address ways of thinking, relationships, and system structures that maintain barriers and slow progress.¹⁵ These changes require significant buy-in and sustainable investment across and along all systems levels.

Even so, the needs expressed here, and the recommendations included below should inform a conversation grounded in what *is* possible *and* essential to building a pathway for addressing the systemic problems that impede family thriving, in addition to addressing the actionable recommendations that will enhance the framework from an EDI lens.

Recommendation Categories

1. Build Capacity for EDI-Centered Implementation
2. Community Needs to Foster Thriving Families
3. Increasing Inclusion Diversity, and Equity
4. Capacity Building for Family Involvement
5. Fostering Trusting Relationships
6. Safe Family Entity

Section 1 Recommendations to Build Capacity for EDI-Centered Implementation

Primary Recommendations

1. Fund and build capacity for EDI-centered implementation for prevention planning communities.
2. Continue to build tools and resources, like the World Café Guide¹⁶ that support the implementation of the Framework for Action.
3. Integrate EDI and EDI-centered implementation into the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Planning Framework Toolkit and online Toolkit.
4. Align and integrate family input and recommendations compiled here into the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Toolkit.

The following includes recommendations to support the enhancement of the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Planning Toolkit and Online Toolkit.

Recommendations for building **EDI and EDI-centered implementation** into the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action.

- Develop and promote a supporting document to the Foundational Principles that clarifies practices and tools that would result in equitable data practices¹⁷, a culturally responsive workforce, increased family engagement, and collaboration.
- Develop and promote a supporting document for organizational change practice.
 - Provide a framework or models for EDI-centered implementation and create an accompanying implementation manual.
 - Develop a list of evidence-based practices (EBP) known to be effective with diverse groups and/or a guideline for adaptation so that EBPs still result in outcomes for diverse groups.
- Promote and incentivize EDI organizational change.
- Promote and incentivize organizations run by BIPOC and people with lived experience.

Section 1 Build Capacity for EDI-Centered Implementation

Recommendations for building capacity for **EDI-centered implementation** into the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action [Planning Toolkit](#).

STEP 1 and Ongoing: **Develop shared knowledge.**

- For Core Leadership groups and other decision-making bodies working toward child maltreatment prevention, provide guidance, tools, and facilitation that build shared knowledge in group process, collaboration, and decision-making.
- Provide guidance, tools, and facilitation that develop a shared understanding of implementation, equity, and how to lead change.
- Ensure the Core Leadership team and those implementing prevention plans have a sufficient understanding of the programs and practices they are implementing.
- Ensure the Core Leadership team and those implementing prevention plans learn about the populations impacted by decisions. Change agents should understand the everyday realities, disparities, preferences for approach, and needs of the diverse populations in one's community.

STEP 2 PLANNING Task 2.1: **Strengthen readiness language.**

- Include a readiness assessment task between key data lessons and priority setting.
- Include language encouraging planners to identify ways to leverage facilitators, address barriers, and incorporate strategies into the implementation plan based on assessment results.

STEP 2 PLANNING Task 2.2: **Integrate Implementation Science into planning templates.**

- Determine a framework or model of implementation.
- Ensure implementation plans address key implementation components such as communication and engagement, leading change, people development, infrastructure and resources, and performance management.

Step 3: ACTION: **Address capacity challenges upfront.**

- Ensure those responsible for implementing have the commitment, knowledge, skills, time, and resources to be successful. Incorporate strategies to address these in the implementation plan.
- Include ways to measure both the process and effectiveness of priorities. (e.g., family input on how an effort facilitated trust and safety.)

Section 1 Build Capacity for EDI-Centered Implementation

Recommendations for aligning and integrating **family input and recommendations** into the Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action [Planning Toolkit](#).

STEP 1

TASK 1.1 Form a Core Leadership Group

Ensure the leadership group is equally weighted between community leaders and diverse family representatives.

- Prioritize community leaders who represent trusted local agencies.
- Establish power-sharing practices and processes for maintaining inclusion. AVOID tokenizing members.
- Pay people for their time and expertise.
- Provide childcare or childcare stipends for families.
- Address technology or transportation access barriers upfront.

TASKS 1.2-1.4

Task 1.2

Develop a plan for identifying and engaging those most unheard in a community (likely BIPOC, immigrant, undocumented, youth, and justice-involved populations).

Task 1.2-1.3

- Where relevant, focus data collection in the areas identified by families in this report.
- When securing diverse family input¹⁸, commit to hosting listening events. Ensure events are accessible (e.g., translation and interpretation) and safe for diverse groups. This step is vital to establishing ongoing relationships with community members and initiates trust-building and transparency.

TASK 1.4 - Catalog of Local Services: When reviewing available resources, prioritize identifying organizations and people trusted by diverse groups.

New TASK - 1.5 Uncover and acknowledge current and historical events that have caused racial trauma, marginalization, and barriers to economic advancement and thriving.

STEP 3

TASK 3.1 - Identify measures and indicators addressing the family needs and recommendations in this report.

Section 1 Build Capacity for EDI-Centered Implementation

Recommendations aligning and integrating **family input and recommendations** into the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action [Online Framework Tools](#).

- Revise the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action Prevention Measurement Guide to include measures and indicators to address family needs and recommendations this report identifies.¹⁹
- Revise the Facilitator Checklist to mirror the suggested revisions to the Planning Toolkit below.
- Revise the Family Focus Group Guide to align with EDI practices.
- Include EDI and family-driven as critical criteria in the Prioritization Rating Tool.
- Review and revise the Community Action Template to address implementation science.
- In the Sample Cafe Questions, include questions on equity, diversity, inclusion, trust, and safety.



To support capacity building for implementation. An overview of Implementation and Equitable Implementation is in [Appendix A](#). In addition, there are many other implementation frameworks and models to choose from outside of what is included below.



Section 2 Recommendations for Community Needs to Foster Family Thriving

The following includes direct guidance from families on what they want to see in their communities. It contains additions informed by EDI and implementation so that family input can achieve intended outcomes. Although less directly related to the enhancement of the Framework, additions may be a valuable reference for community planning.

Primary Recommendations

1. Align and integrate family needs and recommendations identified here into State and community planning.
2. Identify policy, systems, and community-level changes that remove barriers to safe and stable housing, financial well-being, and access to affordable, high-quality support and services.



Caregiver Supports and Childcare

Overarching Outcome: Caregiver Well-being and Achievement

► **Individualized Services: Parent Education Strategy** - Increase parent education access and availability.²⁰

- Increase the availability of parenting workshops.
- Provide tablets to new parents pre-loaded with educational content.
- Topics requested by families: pregnancy, birth control, child development, raising children in the US and the cultural differences of parenting, drug abuse and impacts on infants, conflict resolution, and family strengthening topics.

Foster Family Connections

- Provide infrastructure and resources for families to connect. Host support groups, online Facebook groups, and community events with activities geared to matching families with shared needs.
- Prioritize and protect spaces for BIPOC support groups, specifically for new parents, especially new or single fathers, young families, youth, single mothers, and homeless parents.
- Increase awareness and access to free online and local gym/recreation centers.

Section 2 Recommendations for Community Needs to Foster Family Thriving



Accessible, Affordable, and Responsive Childcare³

Overarching Outcome: Consistent High-Quality Caregiving

- Conduct community forums (i.e., listening events) to assess childcare needs.
- Fund, resource, and monitor the practice of regular community forums.
- Increase availability, awareness, and access to Family, Friend, and Neighbor (FFN) care pathways.^{21,22,23,24,25,26}
 - Prioritize and set benchmarks for increasing FFNs in BIPOC communities.
 - Provide information to families and develop solutions that better direct federal and state funds to pay FFNs.
- Provide infrastructure and resources to support and increase availability and access to babysitting co-ops.
- Prioritize BIPOC communities when addressing the availability and affordability of childcare.^{27,28,29}
- Increase professional development of childcare providers in culturally and age-responsive childcare.
- Incentivize extended/after-hour childcare.



Quality, Equitable Childcare³

Overarching Outcome: Consistent High Quality Caregiving

- Assess the nature of and revise rating systems so rankings are more equitable and inclusive of diverse cultures and contexts.²⁹
- Survey families regularly to capture the quality, strengths, and weaknesses of childcare programs.

Housing

- Increase awareness, access, and availability of housing case managers who understand and are responsive to the needs of diverse families.
- ▶ **Individualized Services: Home Visiting** - Ensure case managers can identify risks to losing housing. Provide them with information on how to link with housing supports and mediate with landlords.
- Increase awareness, access, and availability of income support options for families, including rental assistance, to prevent homelessness from occurring.³
- Prioritize solutions for post-incarcerated and BIPOC families to access safe, stable, and affordable housing, including pathways to ownership.^{3,30}

Section 2 Recommendations for Community Needs to Foster Family Thriving



Child and Youth Support - Education and Schools

Overarching Outcome: Child Wellbeing and Achievement

- Increase in-school youth engagement and programming that addresses healthy school culture and climate (anti-bullying and empathy skill-building).
 - Identify and target schools with higher rates of bullying and violence.³
- Identify areas with limited access to open and safe spaces for children. Address safety and access barriers for youth and children.
- Increase before and after school youth engagement and programming: tutoring, extracurricular options like Playworks, or Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and library services. Prioritize rural and under-resourced communities.³¹
- Identify and address school funding inequities. An initial step may be the Kids COUNT! Recommendation: “Accurate and holistic measure of students experiencing economic disadvantage to inform school financing. State funds to address low and high-wealth districts.”³



Mental Health and Wellness

Overarching Outcomes:



Child Wellbeing and Achievement and Consistent High Quality Caregiving

- Align systems and committees working on access and entry. Explore the option for a single point of entry.
- Work with existing workforce committees and groups to address mental health service and workforce shortages identified by families below.
 - Speech, language, and behavioral therapies for children
 - In-person children’s mental health and occupational therapies
 - Access for low-income and rural communities
 - Recruitment and retention of BIPOC employees
- Prioritize rural and BIPOC communities when addressing shortages in services and the workforce.³²
 - Identify opportunities to bolster funding for areas identified by families.
 - Share strategies across prevention communities.
- Identify trusted mental health providers, programs, and nonprofits.
 - Increase awareness of these providers.
 - Develop a strategy to fund and increase the availability of these providers' effective approaches.
 - Identify and build awareness of mental health resources (mental health applications, hotlines, websites, support groups), both locally and beyond, that BIPOC and other diverse family populations trust.
- Increase availability and access to safe BIPOC spaces in communities.
 - Identify best practice models for establishing safe spaces for BIPOC members.

Section 2 Recommendations for Community Needs to Foster Family Thriving



Criminal Justice Involvement and Family Strengthening

Overarching Outcomes:



Child Wellbeing and Achievement and Consistent High Quality Caregiving

- Increase child access to incarcerated parents.^{33,34}
- Identify, increase awareness, access, and availability of support for parents with felony records.
- Remove barriers for safer housing for parents with non-violent felony records.³⁵
- Increase availability and accessibility of substance use disorder treatment and recovery support services for parents and caregivers, especially pregnant and postpartum women.^{14,36}
- Increase availability and access to family treatment courts, including collaboration with family strengthening programs and providers, child welfare, mental health providers, and natural family supports.^{37,38,39,40}



Barriers to Financial Stability

Overarching Outcome: Caregiver Well-being and Achievement

- Address the Cliff Effect through policy change. Remove penalties and obstacles to saving money. Consider escrow accounts to promote savings for families in ways that will not impact benefits.⁴¹
- Identify ways to incentivize lived experience expertise in ways that will not impact benefits. Consider rental subsidies over stipends or gift cards.

► **Individual Services: Mobility Mentoring and Financial Literacy** - Increase workforce knowledge and family access to financial health development resources.

Section 3 Increase Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Recommendations



Primary Recommendations

1. Provide guidance, formalize, and incentivize organizational culture change for agencies that interact with families, resulting in a diverse workforce, a culture of inclusion, and equity-promoting policies and practices.⁴²
2. Identify funding solutions to increase training and wages. Based on community profile data, target solutions in lower-income and rural areas.
3. Hire more BIPOC and people with lived experience. Remove barriers to employment by implementing workforce development strategies (such as family leadership training institutes) that support knowledge and skill building for these groups.

Organizational Culture Change

► Channel for Change: Organizational and Practice Change

- Provide guidance and resources for increasing BIPOC and people with lived experience providers.
 - Identify and reduce barriers to developing BIPOC and people with lived experience family members into service roles.
 - Explore the pros and cons of building internal professional development programs by organization versus a centralized resource for training, technical assistance, and professional development.
 - Prioritize the development of practitioners who can serve children, are bilingual, and are willing to work in person.
- Require a minimum number of training and ongoing EDI capacity-building activities as part of funding requirements. Consider client-centered practices, implicit bias, and cultural and trauma responsiveness.
- Build provider knowledge of historical white privilege and marginalizing practices of BIPOC cultures into onboarding and training.

Section 3.1 Increase Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion via Cultural Brokers

Primary Recommendation

1. Provide guidance, formalize, and support the widespread implementation of cultural brokers in alignment with best practices.

Cultural brokers are vital to increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion for Colorado family strengthening and child maltreatment prevention. The following includes:

- Best practices for establishing cultural brokers categorized by implementation components. The information provided can inform the design of cultural broker pilot(s), which can serve as an initial step in identifying core components that can be used to build evidence for a cultural broker model.^{43,44}
- A separate [Cultural Broker Guide](#) that synthesizes the history, role, and best practices for cultural brokers is included. The guide provides a sample job description and a list of potential professional development opportunities.



Leading Change

Anyone who can influence a program's success should be informed of their role as a leader. Include funders, policymakers, middle managers, and staff interacting with brokers and community members.

- Gather internal investment and buy-in for establishing cultural brokers and the organizational changes that will be necessary to ensure they are part of an inclusive and equitable culture. This includes:
 - Organizational and fiscal commitment to EDI practices.
 - Widespread commitment to carrying out the guidance of brokers.
- Form an implementation team of community and agency representatives responsible for leading the implementation of cultural brokers.
 - Co-create the cultural broker program's values, philosophy, goals, and policies.
 - Coalesce around minimum soft skills, attributes, and hard skills vital to cultural brokering.
- Develop a plan to leverage facilitators to address gaps and barriers based on enabling context needs.
 - Conduct asset mapping internally and with community leaders.⁴⁵
- To lead the establishment of cultural brokers, change agents must recognize the existence of white supremacy and systemic oppression.
- EDI training should include mirrors, windows, and lens exercises. Examining oneself and one's identity is known as mirror work while understanding the perspectives of others is known as windows work. Seeing the world through an equity lens means identifying current structures, thinking, or related factors contributing to inequity while identifying opportunities to shift them.
- The essential component of cultural broker activities is relationships. Ensure caseloads are manageable and incentivize this part of the role.
- Ensure that cultural brokers can be present at all decision-making meetings and ensure they see this as part of their role.

Section 3.1 Increase Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion via Cultural Brokers



Communication and Engagement

- Plan and thoughtfully market a community forum that results in broad representation from diverse community groups.
- Hold a forum with community and agency stakeholders.
 - Facilitate engagement and buy-in for cultural brokering.
 - Elicit input on cultural brokering needs and what it should look like for that community.
- Establish regular check-ins (events, meetings, and surveys) to develop a shared vision, elicit commitment, and ensure continued alignment.
- Develop an outreach and engagement strategy for identifying and engaging cultural brokers.
- Promote awareness and excitement for cultural brokers, their work, and the approach's benefits. Host and fund regular events with cultural brokers to showcase their work and value to the community.
- Develop a communication and engagement plan that establishes feedback loops and communication flows from families up to decision-makers and back down.



People Development

- Train leaders, staff, and cultural brokers to promote and facilitate power-sharing.
- Build a professional development model that includes onboarding, training, coaching, and supervision that promotes and establishes core knowledge and skills.
 - Training topics like Motivational Interviewing, financial health, and client-centeredness may be of value. Consult brokers before making decisions.
- Build capacity for hiring managers in EDI-centered recruitment and retention.
- Build organizational knowledge of the history in your area, and the experience of communities served.
- Engage all staff in mirror work before hiring brokers.
 - Develop a list of activities, readings, and or training.^{46,47}
 - Develop and/or verify the ability to sit with conflict, especially when a person expresses anger about racism or trauma.
- Ensure management personnel have the knowledge and skills to perform staff-centered supervision, cultural responsiveness and brokering, trauma-responsiveness, and promoting self-care.

Section 3.1 Increase Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion via Cultural Brokers



Performance Management and Monitoring

- To design a cultural broker program, learn from established cultural brokers.⁴⁸
 - Identify shared activities, effective practices, barriers, and challenges. Compare and align with literature on best practices.
 - Understand what culturing brokering looks like across various communities and ask them to guide the formalization of the practice.
- Assess the enabling context needs at systems and agency levels to engage effectively with cultural brokers.
- Designate a person responsible for supporting and monitoring cultural brokers/programs at all system levels, including a state role.
- Based on community forum input, identify or build indicators and measures to demonstrate effectiveness, learn cultural broker support needs, and inform coordination efforts within and across agencies.
- Monitor the process of finding, developing, and supporting cultural brokers' needs.
- Track and continuously improve onboarding, training, coaching, and supervision practices.
- Track the advancement of cultural brokers.
- Integrate indicators and measures into a current data system or develop spreadsheets and a means for data management.



Infrastructure and Resources

- Identify budget needs and a funding strategy to ensure a sustainable, effective cultural broker program.
 - Build a budget that includes funding for relationship-building activities.
 - Reimburse coffee and lunches.
- Establish an accessible model.
 - Hire brokers willing to drive, take the bus, or use an agency car to meet people where they are. (schools, coffee shops, homes, libraries, etc.)
 - Provide online meeting options and the equipment necessary for Brokers to meet people online.
- In the case of independent contractors or partner organizations, develop fair and equitable Memorandums of Understanding (MOU).
 - Develop an (MOU) template for agencies to use.
- Develop policies, procedures, and codes of conduct that maintain accountability for equity, diversity, and inclusion.
- Develop EDI-centered recruitment, hiring, and onboarding practices.
- Collaborate with key community constituencies to identify and access non-fiscal resources to support the program (e.g., physical settings, marketing, and communication).
- Build career pathways for the advancement of cultural brokers within the organization and beyond.



Section 4 Capacity Building for Family Involvement Recommendations

Primary Recommendation

1. Lead a conscious and targeted effort to fund and support local BIPOC and people with lived experience in building capacity to establish agencies and strengthen their communities.

BIPOC and Family-Lead Organizations and Groups

► Agency Collaboration and Community Capacity Building

- Provide funding, infrastructure, and security for BIPOC spaces.
- Provide funding for training, workshops, and communities of practice to develop as community leaders.
 - Consideration: This may mean expansion of the Family Leadership Training Institute (FLTI) and its curriculum. Allow BIPOC community leaders to inform whether and how trusted resources like FLTI will be leveraged.
 - Training requested: leadership and advocacy.
 - Workshops both online and in person requested:
 - Skill building and vocational training
 - Budgeting and finance
 - How to get licensing for childcare
 - American Sign Language
 - How to homeschool children
 - Navigating systems
 - Accessing resources through different agencies
 - Provide infrastructure and resources to support information exchange.
 - Establish and guide equitable partnerships.



Section 5 Fostering Trusting Relationships Recommendations

Primary Recommendations

1. Identify goals, indicators, measures, activities, and outputs that will foster trust with communities.
2. Incentivize sustained programs.
3. Measure the experience of client-centeredness, consistency, and trust via family surveys.
Develop a plan to incentivize, promote, and share the practices of these providers more broadly.
4. Track and incentivize follow-through on family commitments at state and community levels.
5. Increase integration of community representatives by gathering ongoing and continuous input and standardizing the practice of reporting on how input was used.⁴⁹
6. Center family voice in child maltreatment prevention initiatives, services, and actions. Allocate resources and train people on how to include families.
7. Improve access and ability for families to participate in decision-making.⁵⁰

Trust Building Qualities Identified by Families

Frequent and two-way communication, transparency, sharing negative and positive information, data sharing, confidentiality and privacy, consistency, availability, being respectful, meeting people through someone they already know and trust, being authentic and vulnerable, relatability, and seeing one's diversity reflected in the agencies.

Section 5 Fostering Trusting Relationships

Recommendations



Leading Change

- Create a shared definition of neglect and abuse across systems to ensure all providers and families know it.
- Assess family engagement and centering, then develop a strategy for improvement.
- Integrate trust-building into agency values and practices.
- Acknowledge historical white privilege and marginalizing practices of BIPOC cultures.
- Model commitment to building safety and trust by checking in with staff about their experience of safety and trust within the organization or system.



Communication and Engagement

- Learn what safety and trust looks like to the families interacting with the organization or system.
- Increase information sharing about risks and prevention efforts in local communities.
- Increase transparency by sharing data with communities.
- Establish a process for open and ongoing dialogue with communities.



People Development

- Train Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action planning facilitators in equity, diversity and inclusion practices, trauma responsiveness, and client-centeredness.
 - Reflect on bias and ways white supremacy or systemic oppression may be perpetuated.
 - Learn how to take an EDI lens to actions and decisions.



Performance Management and Monitoring

- When conducting surveys and focus groups with families, inquire about what trust looks like. Integrate trust-building approaches into prevention plans.
- Identify indicators and ways to measure trust.
- Standardize the practice of checking in with family about safety and trust during family interactions.
- Track training and development of facilitators and other prevention stakeholders on equity, diversity, and inclusion, trauma responsiveness, and client centeredness.



Infrastructure and Resources

- Create safe spaces for *informal* chats and discussions with families.

Section 6 Safe Family Entity Recommendations

Primary Recommendation

1. With the direction of BIPOC and other families with lived experience, build on existing family advocacy and support agencies or develop a new structure that meets the criteria for a safe and trusted family support group or entity.

Like cultural brokers, a Safe Family Entity is vital to increasing equity, diversity, and inclusion for Colorado family strengthening and child maltreatment prevention efforts.

The following are key considerations categorized by implementation components. It is not an exhaustive list for each implementation component. Families should define the Safe Family Entity.



Leading Change

- Identify the groups and/or programs doing similar work (Circle of Parents, Family Ombudsman, Behavioral Health Administration, for example.)
- Identify current family-led councils or develop a family-led steering committee established to inform existing efforts or guide the development of a Safe Family Entity based on the criteria outlined in this report.
 - Verify whether current efforts address the needs identified here.
 - Troubleshoot why current activities are/are not addressing the needs identified here.
 - Guide integration of criteria into current models or when establishing the Safe Family Entity.



Communication and Engagement

- Build awareness of existing safe family spaces or the new Safe Family Entity.
 - Make it explicit that families will be anonymous.
 - Provide widespread and continuous reassurance that participation will NOT trigger a report.
 - Market the Safe Family Entity and related resources in multiple languages.
 - Make it accessible to caseworkers (they have asked for this safe resource, too).

Section 6 Safe Family Entity Recommendations



People Development

Consideration: The cultural brokers discussed above may be ideal candidates to serve as providers at the Safe Family Entity.

- The Safe Family Entity will need the ability to influence decision-makers, and potentially advocate for or fund work that supports safe family spaces.
- Identify insiders part of various communities that are considered safe and trustworthy. Train these individuals to serve as Safe Family Entity staff.
- Work with families to determine the expected skill sets and knowledge areas vital to serving as Safe Family Entity professionals. The following may be relevant based on the family input provided.
 - Professional Training: Counseling, system navigation, Motivational Interviewing, equity, diversity, and inclusion practices (e.g., implicit bias)
 - Skills: Active listening, problem-solving, navigation and linkage, interpretation, and translation.
 - Responsibilities:
 - Guide: helps families explore options, weigh the pros and cons of decisions, and identify actions, consequences, and next steps.
 - Mediator: assists families in looking at all sides, processing information and situations, and coming to a resolution.
 - Attributes: embedded in community, purveyor of hope, authentic, reassuring, trusted - someone with lived experience, confidential, impartial, and empathic.
 - Knowledge
 - Significant knowledge of the systems being navigated.
 - Shared culture and experience with circumstances faced by families they represent (substance use, justice or child welfare involvement, mental health, immigration, undocumented, etc.).



Performance Management and Monitoring

- Review and compare Safe Family Entity criteria with best practices and current Colorado structures. Align and integrate criteria and best practices with existing safe family structures or the New Safe Family Entity.
- Develop hiring practices, interview questions, family feedback surveys, performance plans, and other methods for identifying and supporting the right people. Identify indicators that point to:
 - Attributes: Empathy, approachability, trustworthiness, authenticity, integrity, ethics, transparency.
 - Effective skills: listening, linkage, problem-solving, and mediation.
 - Knowledge: community, culture, systems, and resources.
- Monitor training, practice, and coaching feedback.
- Survey families on their level of reassurance, sense of safety, and whether needs were addressed.

Safe Family Entity Recommendations



Infrastructure and Resources

- Determine the structure of the Safe Family Entity: cross-site groups, spoke and wheel, brick and mortar locations vs. online. Determine whether staff will be embedded in the community, housed in a central intermediary, or both. Consider whether centralized or decentralized leadership, training, monitoring, and hiring will be most effective.
- Identify access points for first upstream contact (in-person, online, phone, electronic).
- Provide structure, process, and resources for professional development, including training, coaching, and communities of practice.
- Establish a data management system for data collection and performance monitoring.
- Establish both policy and practice methods for maintaining anonymity and non-reporting.
- Provide physical or online space for families to connect.
- Maintain easy access; no forms, IDs, or hoops.
- Auntie's Kitchen Table: Provide an atmosphere like visiting a family or friend for advice and comfort.
- Provide open houses where people can meet and greet in a neutral, comfortable place and get questions answered about eligibility, process, or options.



Conclusion

The Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action connects state-level prevention programs and policy innovations to local collective action with shared values. The families that participated in this study shed light on enhancing the Framework so that collective progress is more visible, relevant, inclusive, and tangible for diverse families and communities across Colorado.

Results from families

- indicate family needs and gaps and inform prevention efforts,
- demonstrate that needs and gaps are more pronounced for BIPOC families,
- provide tangible ideas for raising the visibility of EDI in the Framework for Action.

Their guidance

- informs *how* strategies (within the Channels for Change) should be approached to fit diverse communities better,
- and *how* community prevention planning efforts can advance equity, diversity, and inclusion directly.

Finally, the perspective of families

- clarifies that each foundational principle must be practiced to increase diversity, improve inclusion, and center equity.

To increase uptake and accessibility of the Framework for Action, as well as ensure it advances EDI, family perspectives focus the work ahead in four primary ways:

- Capacity building for equity-centered implementation.
- System and community change that addresses family needs and removes barriers to safe and stable housing, financial well-being, and increased access to affordable, high-quality support and services.
- Widespread and targeted investment in organizational changes resulting in equitable services and systems, increased diversity, and inclusive, safe, and trustworthy services, spaces, and relationships.
- Priority funding and support of local BIPOC and lived experience groups and organizations to address their own housing, childcare, mental health, financial, and criminal justice needs.

Both cultural brokers and safe family spaces will be vital to all four focus areas, and conversely, building capacity for EDI and implementation will ensure their success.



Member Checking

Quotes from families and community members:

- You have hit a lot of the areas right on the head but there's still this area of distrust or disconnect to get the work done, we need people to tell the people and not a messenger through a mediator.
- You need to empower the community to moderate the community instead of outsiders coming in to moderate it, show me how to do it, we can do it ourselves.
- Implicit bias starts at the top and trickles its way down, we need to acknowledge that it is there.
- There's so much to be gained from vulnerability and these families come to you because they are vulnerable and they are exposed, but the institution isn't exposed.

Quotes from members in leadership positions:

- I mean, you know, something that needs to be done and it's not implemented. It's not really helpful. It's just, it's just to put it down on a piece of paper. Whereas if you're in tune with the information, you know, it gives you the ability to really really change the outcome.
- I think that [the report] will really have a huge amount of benefit to both the families and the people that work with the families because I think that it's empowering, it's empowering, it's empowerment. Just to be able to have the recognition that yes, you know, I see that this is a problem.

Process

All participants were invited to engage in the member-checking process. At least two outreaches were made to all council leads or interview participants. Three family voice councils and one interviewee responded to the invitation; the total number of participants in the member-checking process was 35 ($n=35$). The Collective Progress team sent the executive summary of the reports and the entire report to the respondents at least one week in advance. A minimum of thirty minutes of the meeting time was devoted to member checking during the council meetings—a project recap, including the role of community members and significant findings, was included. The rest of the time was dedicated to allowing participants to openly discuss, provide comments and clarifications, and give feedback. Spanish-speaking participants were given interpretation and translation services for the project recap and report.

Findings

The family voice councils have representatives from diverse Colorado communities: parents, grandparents, caregivers, elders, and leaders. Overall, all the participants agreed with the findings and reiterated the need to provide communities with the resources to organize and represent themselves. Participants also stated the need for decision-makers to continually engage in diversity and implicit bias exercises to ensure communities have an empathic audience. Most participants hoped the report would be completed promptly and shared extensively. They viewed the report as an essential way to make their voices heard and respected and also serve as a guide for the next group of communities as they create their child maltreatment prevention plans.

Next Steps



Pathway to Enhancement

System leaders in every family-serving sector (behavioral health, criminal justice, education, early childhood, child welfare, housing, and employment) have established workgroups and initiatives committed to resolving the needs expressed by families. In addition to enhancing the Framework toolkit and toolbox, there is an opportunity to collectively address systems issues with other system stakeholders engaged in similar work. System coordination and planning may raise the framework's visibility, support the spread and scale of prevention efforts, reduce duplication, and advance a more cohesive system for families. The following outlines a pathway for enhancing the framework, supporting its implementation with cross-system leaders, and facilitating collective impact on the larger issues outlined by the families in this study:

Phase 1 and ongoing

Enhance the Framework for Action by integrating:

- Family needs
- EDI-centered implementation
- Guidance on cultural brokering

Garner final feedback from family participants and finalize the Framework.

Phase 2

Obtain consultation and buy-in from local implementers.

- Review Framework enhancement recommendations
- Understand needs of on-the-ground leaders and practitioners to implement Framework enhancements.

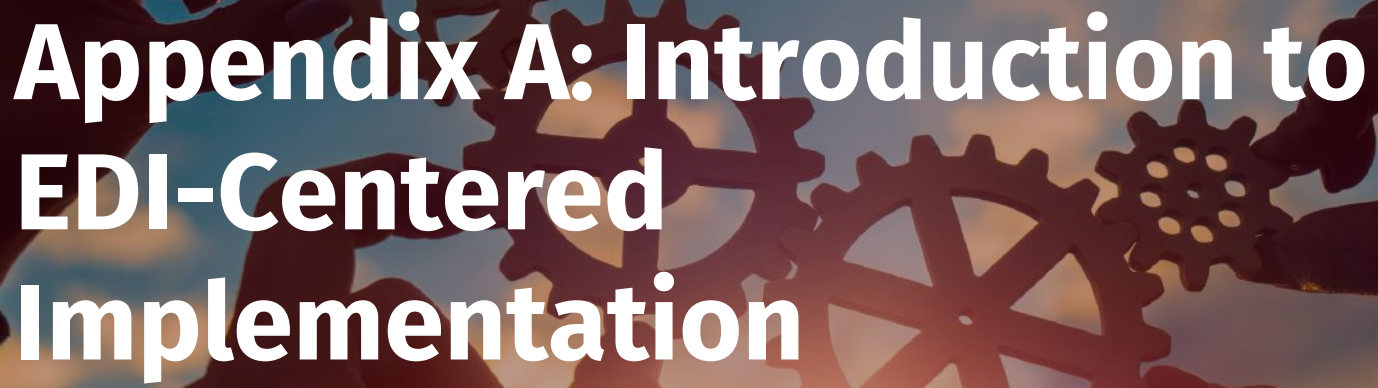
Identify stakeholders and workgroups in other systems with shared objectives.

Co-create a set of tools and resources with other system stakeholders to align efforts across systems and support implementation.

Phase 3

Connect with other system stakeholders to facilitate collective impact on more significant systems issues.

- Consistent, shared definitions of neglect and abuse
- Safe Family Entity
- Workforce shortages and tenure
- Housing access and affordability
- Financial barriers and the Cliff Effect
- Availability, access, and affordability of childcare
- Culturally responsive childcare ratings
- Availability, access, and affordability of mental health care
- Implementation funding and capacity
- Data-sharing and infrastructure



Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

We are constantly asking underfunded and low-resourced systems to make widespread changes. These agencies are experiencing record-high turnover while serving increasingly diverse populations with complex lives. For better policies and practices to make an impact, and for innovation to take hold, the gap between theory and the real world must be accounted for and addressed.

1. Identify tools that assess community context in a culturally responsive and equitable way.
2. Formalize the use and the sharing of data learned across systems so that decision-makers and stakeholders can be informed about what is possible and apply this knowledge when making decisions.
3. Address commitment, time, knowledge, skills, and resource needs, not just to perform the innovation, but to implement from an EDI stance.

Preparation for any change requires the professional development of change agents. It is often assumed that people leading a system or organizational implementation are well-versed in a new practice and know how to lead through change. In reality, competence varies.

1. Build knowledge around group process, collaboration, and decision-making.
2. Develop a shared understanding of implementation, equity, and leading change.
3. Develop a shared understanding of the innovation. *
4. Learn about people served, including everyday realities, disparities, needs, preferences for approach and service models
5. Assess readiness. Be clear about the barriers and facilitators within organizations and communities that will enable (or impede) a change process.

**Innovation.* The solution identified to address a need, or through its use, produces a specific outcome that an organization or system seeks to attain. Innovations are tangible products or services grounded in research and put into practice through implementation. According to the National Implementation Research Network, an innovation must be operational, meaning it must be teachable, learnable, doable, and assessable across various contexts.⁵¹

Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

Introduction to Implementation

We have all been through change that does not stick—the reasons why are often evident in hindsight. Funding was unavailable to organizations for training or tracking data. After launching a new initiative, supervisors never brought up the change again. Reporting expectations on implementation of performance were not required or funded beyond a pilot, so people prioritized other tasks and forgot what was learned.

Without effective implementation, 14% or less of changes will be sustained.³² Implementation practice assesses and addresses factors like the above so that change is more likely to stick. Implementation ensures the innovation achieves intended results because practitioners have the skills and support vital to practicing the innovation as intended.

Successful implementation culminates in the right innovation, implementation practice, and a hospitable environment.⁵³ A hospitable environment includes organizational culture, staff motivation, communication, leadership, resources, and organizational capacity.

Tips

- Develop a targeted plan for middle managers. The success and failure of implementation depend on these stakeholders.
- Inform people about implementation concepts.⁵⁴
- Allocate capacity and funding for change.

Tools & Resources

- [Six-minute video on Active Implementation](#)
- [Extensive list of implementation strategies](#)
- [Implementation Brief in the Education Sector](#)
- [Guide to Implementation Concepts and Frameworks](#)
- [Free online Introduction to implementation training](#)

Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

Implementation Components

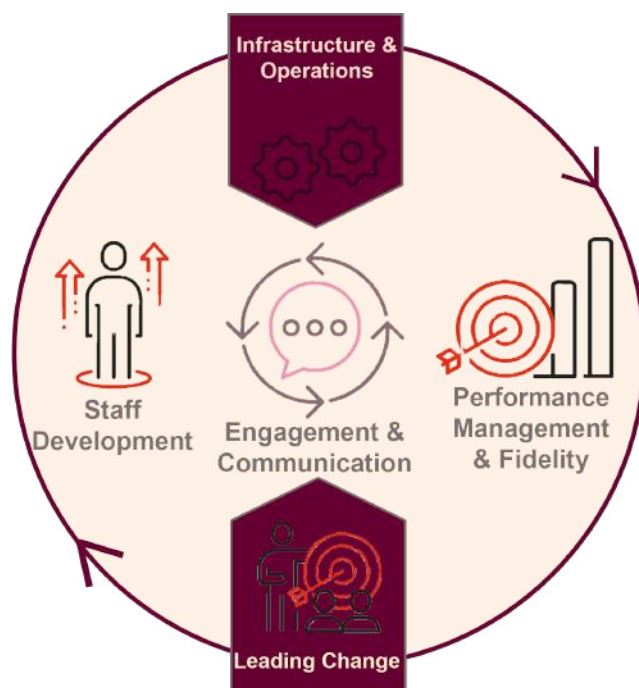
Implementation Science has identified several effective approaches that ensure an innovation is practiced as intended and sustained over time. In addition, there are a variety of frameworks that configure these categories of determining factors in differing ways.⁵⁵

Referred to as **Implementation Components** here, they are sorted into categories that often align with organizational department divisions and important implementation roles.

No system or organization executes Implementation Components perfectly. For example, a strength in staff development can compensate for challenges in leading change. On the other hand, when we silo implementation, such as when leaders fail to promote a change, then implementation is likely to fail. The National Implementation Research Network refers to this as **integrated and compensatory**.⁵⁶

Each component must align and integrate goals, vision, and process. For example, an evaluation specialist will be involved in planning training to ensure staff learns documentation requirements while gaining clarity on data tracking needs.

1. **Engagement and Communication:** Identify representative stakeholders and their level of involvement. Develop a plan that maintains regular interaction and feedback loops. Build knowledge and motivation at all system levels.
2. **Leading Change:** Gather representative stakeholders to develop a vision, establish implementation teams to drive the work, assess organization(s), and make implementation plans. Guide the implementation process and lead the way with sponsorship. Address challenges and maintain momentum through the long hall. This component includes problem-solving at a systems level (legislation and advocacy) and alignment between policy and practice.
4. **People Development:** Build knowledge and capacity for leading implementation. Provide training, coaching, and practice groups to drive practice change for the innovation.
5. **Performance Management & Fidelity:** Identify the data to be collected (including fidelity components and measures), collect and analyze the data, report, and make continuous improvement decisions.
6. **Infrastructure & Operations:** Infrastructure and processes are critical for driving change, managing performance, communicating, and developing staff. Modify policies, build workflows, and establish data systems to maintain adherence to the change.



Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

Equitable Implementation

For implementation to be equitable, intentionally include those impacted from the start. This includes front-line staff and supervisors. Equitable implementation happens when we pay explicit attention to cultures, values, history, and the needs and resources of a community. It happens when we integrate them into our implementation frameworks.⁵⁷ Part of this process includes creating awareness around our biases and noticing how they impact our processes and decision-making. **The original intention of implementation science was to bridge the gap between research and practice; however, until recently, cultural contexts still needed to be considered and addressed. Historically, evidence-informed interventions have not been adapted to fit the needs and lives of the people in the communities where they are delivered, creating even more significant gaps between research and practice.**

Frameworks for equitable implementation are still emerging, so we have the opportunity to apply what we know about inclusive practices, anti-racist and anti-bias approaches, and combating systemic oppression to our work. Together, we can build pathways to future equitable implementation in our communities.

In addition to critical factors identified by researchers that contribute to successful, equitable implementation, there are some foundational steps we can take as individuals and teams to center us in equity as we move forward.

Tips

- **Learn terminology around equity, diversity, inclusion, and other related language and concepts, including anti-racism, critical race theory, and intersectionality.** Speaking the language will help naturalize these values in our workplace and increase awareness in our community interactions.
- **Conduct a cultural awareness self-assessment.** Encourage partners to do so.
- **Adopt an approach for operationalizing equity in your organization.** Clear, concrete steps and guidelines can facilitate a process where equity is central to organizational policy, practice, and implementation.
- **Facilitate ongoing discussions about equity, diversity, and inclusion among staff and leadership.** Explore and address biases. Create learning opportunities and discuss who is impacted in your organization and the communities served. Explore how to address access to opportunities and services. Engage in conversation about people's unique roles in social change.



Equitable Implementation at Work, Metz, Woo & Looper, 2021

Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

Equitable Implementation Continued

Tips

- **From the start, ensure that everyone involved or impacted by an innovation or practice is at the table.** Continually reassess to ensure that all voices are included and heard. Consider compensating people for their time to contribute; those critical to the process are usually not paid staff.
- Develop authentic relationships with people and communities. Continue to build trust, finding ways to include voices without tokenizing. Remember that people and communities are not monolithic. Each person's perspective and voice are unique; don't rely on one person to represent all people with whom they culturally identify.
- When exploring implementation solutions, follow a basic framework of questions to guide your work:⁵⁸
 - Are all groups affected by the policy, practice, or decision at the table?
 - How will the proposed policy, practice, or decision impact each group?
 - How will each group perceive the proposed policy, practice, or decision?
 - Does the policy, practice, or decision ignore or worsen existing disparities?
 - Based on the responses to the questions above, what revisions to policies, practices, or decisions are needed?

Tools & Resources

- [Is My Implementation Practice Culturally Responsive](#)
- [Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity](#)
- [Equity at the Center of Implementation](#)
- [Equitable Implementation at Work](#)
- [Equity is Fundamental to Implementation Science](#)
- [Bringing Equity to Implementation: Incorporating Community Experience to Improve Outcomes](#)
- [The Anti-Racism Implementation Plan](#)
- [Centering Equity in Collective Impact](#)
- [Mapping Our Roles in Social Change Ecosystems](#) and [Social Change Ecosystem Map Definition of Roles](#)
- [Building a Race Equity Culture](#)

Appendix A: Introduction to EDI-Centered Implementation

The success of an evidence-based practice relies not just on the effectiveness of the practice, but on the implementation of that practice. It can be helpful to consider key implementation components when planning for a change.

The following provides an example of activities identified to support the planning and implementation of a parent workshop. The activities are broken down into five components of implementation. The following page includes a template that can be used when planning for a prevention effort.

- **Leading change:** Select the parent workshop topics based on diverse family needs. Engage a diverse group of families and leaders to guide the work. Assess readiness and fit for a parenting workshop program. Address barriers and sponsor the change over the long haul.
- **Communication and Engagement:** Develop a plan for reaching and engaging diverse families. Learn their needs and preferences for safety, trust, workshop content, attendance, and continued engagement. Ensure the plan includes feedback loops and strategies for ongoing communication, transparency, and relationship building.
- **People Development:** Ensure implementers learn about EDI approaches and practices and EDI-centered implementation. Identify evidence-based models that include parenting workshops (Parent-Child Development Center⁵⁹). Review information about the community and organization to determine fit or needed adaptations. Identify facilitators with knowledge and/or experience on parenting workshop topics, knowledge and skills in facilitation, and mediating difficult conversations about racism or other forms of marginalization. Better practice: Train trusted cultural brokers in parenting topics and facilitation.
- **Performance Management and Monitoring:** Determine what will be tracked about parenting workshops. When, where, and attendance may inform the best times for parents. Participant surveys can inform quality, content revisions, and approaches to align with family needs, EDI principles, and practices.
- **Infrastructure and Resources:** Establish the workshop format (online or in-person) and location based on diverse family input. Clarify how the data on performance will be collected and used. Identify policies and expectations that need to be in place to ensure workshops are conducted in alignment with laws, confidentiality, agency, and EDI values.

Implementation Components Planner

Prevention Priority

--

Leading Change

Activities

Lead

Deadline

--	--	--

Engagement and Communication

Activities

Lead

Deadline

--	--	--

Staff Development	Activities		Lead	Deadline

Performance Management and Fidelity	Activities		Lead	Deadline

Infrastructure and Operations	Activities		Lead	Deadline

Appendix B: Family Voice Focus Group Script

Introduction

Hello, we appreciate all of you taking the time to talk with us today. My name is XXX, and I will be leading the discussion. We are interested in learning about your perceptions, perspectives, and understandings of the policy and action document titled Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action. Your perceptions and understanding around its implementation, relevance, barriers, will help make adaptations concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion.

We will be taking notes to ensure we don't miss any of the important things you say. For our analysis purposes, we will be recording this session.

A few things that I would like to state upfront are:

57

1. We are aware other evaluations may have taken place, and we invite everyone to build on this with their insights.
2. We are also aware that some of the participants have been peripherally involved while others were more in touch.
3. All data will be aggregated and de-identified.

We will follow a whip-around protocol to ensure every participant has an opportunity to share their thoughts. Please feel free to share your thoughts even if you think they are different from what others might say. We want to hear lots of different perspectives and ideas. The first time you share your thoughts, please introduce yourself, and state your name and your role, if applicable.

Questions in order of priority:

1. What do you need in your community for families to thrive?
2. What is needed to make child maltreatment prevention activities more inclusive, respectful of diversity, and supportive of building equity?
3. If you want to or are involved in making your community better for your family, what support, funding, resources, infrastructure, and training would you need?
4. What is important to you to build trusting relationships?

Probes:

1. What does a safe space look like for you? Think in terms of sharing your voice with the county and State about child maltreatment.
2. What should accountability look like for you in preventing maltreatment?
3. Can you share your level of awareness around working with state and county organizations related to child maltreatment prevention? Do you know who to contact or where to find the information to reach out for support or information related to child maltreatment prevention?

Appendix B: Family Voice Focus Group Script

Closure

Because I want to ensure that we capture everything you said, I would like to ask if there are any topics that we need to follow up on before we conclude the focus group.

Please share the focus group and our information with people who you think we should talk to.

That brings us to the end of our time together. I want to thank you for your time. We will be looking at the information you and the others have given us and utilizing it to develop a plan to improve the Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action. Thank you for making time for this today. Your voice is important!

57



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