

## Outcome #3

### Health and Family-Focused Human Services Shift Resources Toward Prevention

Too often, health and human service systems in low-income communities are not organized to promote optimal health and development. The largest share of health and human service expenditures are invested in systems designed to assist children and families with serious problems or in crisis, such as child welfare, juvenile justice, and mental health systems. Shifting resources in these systems toward prevention requires change in policy, practice and training, coordinated state and local action, strong partnerships between public sector and community leaders – and time, patience and commitment.

Key steps that community leaders can take to ensure health and human services shift towards prevention are:

1. Define prevention in a way that focuses on strengthening families and promoting healthy development for children and youth at all stages of their development.
2. Identify how current systems that deal with the most severe problems of children, youth and families can begin to shift toward earlier interventions and focus on healthy development.
3. Increase investments in genuinely integrated and coordinated community systems that are high quality, pro-active, oriented to healthy development, culturally competent and community-based.
4. Develop consistent, well-supported strategies to ensure consumer engagement in improving services delivery.

#### **PROMISING PRACTICES AND STRATEGIES**

#### ***Shifting Resources to Earlier Interventions and Prevention in Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems***

Strategy	Examples
Promoting strong families and children's healthy development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthening Families Initiative (SFI), Illinois <a href="http://www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org">www.strengtheningfamiliesillinois.org</a></li> </ul>
Using differential responses to support families through earlier interventions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Differential Response in California</a> – California Health and Human Services</li> </ul>
Creating community partnerships to ensure children's safety, permanence and well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Healthy Families/Thriving Communities Collaboratives, Washington D.C. <a href="http://dccollaboratives.org?page?id=96">http://dccollaboratives.org?page?id=96</a></li> </ul>
Shifting juvenile justice resources toward prevention and earlier intervention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative (JDAI) <a href="http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative.aspx">www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/JuvenileDetentionAlternativesInitiative.aspx</a></li> </ul>
Restructuring state/county fiscal incentives to promote earlier and more preventative approaches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maryland's Opportunity Compact; this policy goal provided alternative support to drug addicted parents. <a href="http://www.PolicyforResults.org">www.PolicyforResults.org</a></li> </ul>

## **Creating Seamless and Durable Local Services Systems that Strengthen Families and Promote Healthy Positive Development for Children and Youth**

<b>Examples</b>
Los Angeles' <i>Magnolia Place</i> : an initiative of Children's Bureau of Los Angeles, combines health care, parenting supports, early care and education/school readiness services and economic development services with the goal of enhancing families capacity to meet the needs of their children. <a href="http://www.all4kids.org/magnolia-place-community-initiative.html">http://www.all4kids.org/magnolia-place-community-initiative.html</a>
<i>The Palm Beach County Children's Service Council (CSC)</i> : The CSC views its task as integrating previously separate systems of care and bringing together community partners, including health, mental health, education, child protection and housing and employment agencies. <a href="http://www.cscpb.org">www.cscpb.org</a>
<i>Children's Services Network</i> , Tulare County, CA: A multidisciplinary network made up of representatives from juvenile justice, education and early learning, child welfare, mental health, health, community-based organizations, and faith-based organizations to support local children. <a href="http://www.tccsn.org/">http://www.tccsn.org/</a>

### **Strengthening Families' Economic Security**

<b>Strategy</b>	<b>Examples</b>
Linking Families to Needed Supports and Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Work Advancement and Support Centers</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">The Ohio Benefit Bank</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">EarnBenefits</a>, a program of Seedco</li> </ul>
Preserving families' assets and building wealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Lawrence Community Works, Family Asset Building</i> – Lawrence, MA <a href="http://www.lcworks.org/page.aspx?page_id=4">http://www.lcworks.org/page.aspx?page_id=4</a></li> </ul>
Promoting employment for low wage workers and youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White Center, King County, WA <a href="http://www.wccda.org">www.wccda.org</a></li> </ul>
Supporting engagement of clients and consumers to improve service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Center for the Study of Social Policy – <a href="#">customer satisfaction framework</a></li> </ul>

### **MEASURES OF PROGRESS**

- All families have access to coordinated health and human services (including public benefit programs) through community portals such as schools, family resource centers and other community institutions.
- Human services systems and providers use a whole family-centered approach that recognizes the role of fathers, mothers, grandparents, extended family members and other caretakers in the lives of children, and that creates partnerships between families and providers.
- Broad alliances of public systems and community organizations partner to promote full and healthy child development and to strengthen families; they work together to strengthen social networks and informal supports and to build community cohesion.
- Child welfare and juvenile justice systems promote early intervention and the least intrusive kind of intervention that will be effective, through community partnerships and collaboration that link youth and families with appropriate health and social supports, including informal supports, and that increase investments in earlier interventions and supports.
- Health and human services financing systems reimburse and promote prevention strategies, without requiring children to have a diagnostic label before they can qualify for benefits, and where possible create financial incentives for greater investment in prevention.
- Employment and asset development systems partner with health and human services to address more fully the needs of low income and chronically unemployed families; they address the health issues of jobseekers as well as building their assets and wealth.