



NGA Roundtable Recommendations for States (June 2017)

These recommendations reflect the ideas and expertise of community leaders and national advisors of the of the [Mobilizing Action for Resilient Communities](#) Initiative (MARC), a learning collaborative of 14 communities across the United States (U.S.) with cross-sector networks organized around reducing adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and promoting resilience through system and policy change; members of the policy committee of the Campaign for Trauma Informed Policy and Practice (CTIPP); and leaders of the ACEs Connection Network.

1. Develop funding approaches that recognize the impact and prevalence of trauma on children and families, promote trauma informed care and practices across generations, and decrease silos which are antithetical to approaches that fully address childhood adversity

- Allow states to use local data to identify the drivers of ACEs in their communities and then use their federal grant funding in flexible creative ways to address those specific drivers.
- Have the NGA develop a model program directing state employees to approve local initiatives to pool funds for integrated, cross-sector trauma informed programs. Consider the successful “Performance Partnership for Disconnected Youth” as a model program.
- Include language in NOFAs or RFPs that elevates the value of trauma-informed practices and culture change within entities who apply for and receive state funding.

2. Create structures (e.g. Children’s Cabinets) to foster better coordination and collaboration across state agencies

- Create a state level governmental body (e.g., WI Office of Children’s Mental Health or Children’s Cabinets) charged with tracking and coordinating cross systems initiatives to improve the integration of services to children and families across state agencies. Funding for and attention to data integration should be included.
- Create a state-level workforce, including state officials and employees, that is knowledgeable about the science of ACEs and trauma-informed and resilience-building practices. Integrate ACEs in human resources practices, and articulate how ACEs will be operationalized internally with staff and externally with “customers.” A number of states including Illinois and Wisconsin have undertaken this goal as well as both urban and rural communities around the country. Diverse states such as California and Wisconsin have passed resolutions that establish this as an explicit goal for the state.
- Create a state-level cross-sector agreement on a common agenda to prevent, address, and heal ACEs across the life spectrum, with common language, goals, and indicators that bring together key sectors, including health care, justice, education, social services, and others. Such a cross-sector collaborative to develop the common agenda needs to be diverse, inclusive, and representative.

- Allocate a small percentage (3%) of contracts for services to establish and sustain multi-sector networks engaged in broader community work on ACEs reduction and community capacity building/mobilizing resilience.

3. Provide cross-system training, technical assistance on ACEs, trauma and brain science in order to develop competencies necessary to shift to a trauma responsive service system

- Require every state agency that works directly with the public, and every staff member in those agencies, to have a foundational understanding of adverse childhood experiences, brain science, trauma-informed practice, and social determinants of health that includes an understanding of the role of race and ethnic group differences in trauma exposure.
- Provide technical assistance and training (especially in learning collaboratives) and modest amounts of flexible funds that can be used to convene, facilitate, train, consult, and support change efforts. Use the Washington State Family Policy Councils as a model -- ask states to provide local communities with education and support and then empower (and fund) them to identify high priority needs, and use ACEs, trauma, and resilience brain science to design and evaluate local solutions.

4. Promote authentic community engagement in all policy making

- Support mechanisms to ensure authentic engagement of diverse community members when shaping programs and policies. Examples of programs and practices that include community voice are: Trauma Informed Community Schools and the Community Member Planning Institute- that seeks to engage the Justice Department and community members.
- Require that parents and youth who have been involved in system activities be included in all policy discussions. Provide support and training on how to effectively participate and be heard in the legislative process, stipends for travel, childcare, and other facilitative support.

5. Strengthen economic supports for families

- Mandate paid family leave for state employees as a starting point.
- States can modify how Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits are affected by child support payments. In many states, the child support payments are used by the state to reimburse itself, but states may also elect to allow some or all of the child support payment to be passed on to the custodial parent and child without any reduction in the TANF benefits.
- All states could enact Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).
- Maximize families' engagement with all state benefit programs through proactive enrollment and use of income data for one program qualifying families for others (e.g. SNAP, Medicaid). Remove barriers, such as overly burdensome protections against fraud and abuse, that minimize enrollment and maintenance of benefits programs.
- Use the U.S. Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) money to improve housing mobility.
- States can elect to raise income threshold limits to expand eligibility and consider household expenses when calculating eligibility for child care subsidies.

Additional resources consulted to develop and support these recommendations:

Fortson, B. L., Klevens, J., Merrick, M. T., Gilbert, L. K., & Alexander, S. P. (2016). [Preventing child abuse and neglect: A technical package for policy, norm, and programmatic activities](#). Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Performance Partnership Pilots: An Opportunity to Improve Outcomes for Disconnected Youth Starting Now: A Policy Vision for Supporting the Healthy Growth and Development of Every California Baby Top 10 for 2Gen](#)