Transforming Services
Transforming Lives

Heather McCallum Hahn
Senior Fellow, Urban Institute
3 Questions

• What can you do differently next week?

• What first step can you take now to move toward a longer-term change?

• What do you want to learn today to help you refine and act on those plans?
American Dream

Work hard, get ahead

You do well, your children do better

Today’s Reality

Place matters

Hard work isn’t enough

Children less likely to do better
Chances of moving from bottom 20% as children to top 20% as adults

Note: Green = More Upward Mobility, Red = Less Upward Mobility
Source: The Equality of Opportunity Project
Place matters
NOWHERE in the US can a full-time minimum wage worker afford a 2-bedroom apartment
Hard work isn’t enough
% of children earning more than their parents

Source: Chetty et al. “The Fading American Dream: Trends in Absolute Income Mobility Since 1940”
Children less likely to do better than their parents
Share of workers ages 18-64 who earn low wages

- **White**
- **Black**
- **Hispanic**

Source: US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty calculations. Based on March 2016 CPS-ASEC data.
What would it take to dramatically increase mobility from poverty?
U.S Partnership on Mobility From Poverty
Funded by the Gates Foundation; Supported by the Urban Institute

David T. Ellwood, Chair
Harvard Kennedy School

Elisabeth Babcock
Economic Mobility Pathways

Joshua Bolten
Business Roundtable

Arthur C. Brooks
American Enterprise Institute

William J. Bynum
Hope Enterprise Corporation

Raj Chetty
Stanford University

Rev. Luis Cortés, Jr.
Esperanza

Jennifer L. Eberhardt
Stanford University

Kathryn Edin
Princeton University

Robert Greenstein
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Cheryl L. Hyman
formerly City Colleges of Chicago

Anthony B. Iton
The California Endowment

Lawrence Katz
Harvard University

N. Gregory Mankiw
Harvard University

Ai-jen Poo
National Domestic Worker Alliance; Caring Across Generations

john a. powell
Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society

Cecilia Rouse
Princeton University

Juan Salgado
City Colleges of Chicago

Eldar Shafir
Princeton University

Srinija Srinivasan
Loove

Marta Tienda
Princeton University

Jeremy Travis
Laura and John Arnold Foundation

Roxane White
The Aspen Institute

Hirokazu Yoshikawa
New York University
Site Visits: Detroit
Site Visits: Mississippi Delta
Site Visits: Mayfair, East San Jose
Mobility Definition

- Economic Success
- Being Valued in Community
- Power and Autonomy
Strategies
Narratives are like the air we breathe: It’s the context for everything.

— Ai-jen Poo, Partnership member
Strategies

- Change the narrative
- Create access to good jobs
Create Access to Good Jobs
Strategies

- Change the narrative
  - Create access to good jobs
  - Ensure zip code is not destiny
Ensure zip code is not destiny
Strategies

- Change the narrative

- Create access to good jobs

- Ensure zip code is not destiny

- Provide support that empowers
Provide Support that Empowers
Strategies

- Change the narrative
  - Create access to good jobs
  - Ensure zip code is not destiny
  - Provide support that empowers

Transform data use
Mutually reinforcing strategies + Cross-sector collaboration
US PARTNERSHIP ON
MOBILITY FROM POVERTY

www.MobilityPartnership.org
Dignity
“If [caseworkers] don’t understand why we’re there and coming for assistance, they won’t understand what they need to do to get us out of the situation.”

--parent receiving TANF
• Toxic Stress

• The stress of living in poverty affects:
  - Sense of self (identity, self-efficacy, motivation)
  - Executive function (ability to focus on tasks and goals)
  - Self-regulation (persistence to achieve tasks or goals)

• Toxic stress affects the whole family
Sometimes it’s just about respect

“They don’t treat us like humans. We have feelings and they are hurting us badly.”

--parent receiving TANF
Entrance to state social service office
How do you feel?
Waiting area in social service office

How do you feel?
Waiting area in Tribal TANF office
How do you feel?
Discussion

What are you already doing to understand and respect the dignity of the families you serve?
Transforming Child Support into a Family-Building System
Transforming Child Support into a Family-Building System

HEATHER HAHN, KATHRYN EDIN, LAUREN ABF
The Problem

- False assumptions of fathers as antagonists.
- The system creates a vicious cycle.
- Recoupment diverts family resources
The Solution

1. Empower parents to decide together how best to support their children.

2. Apply reasonable standards to child support orders.

3. End child support as a mechanism to recoup welfare costs.
How Changes To The Child Support System Can Improve Mobility

- increased earnings for noncustodial parents
- greater compliance with child support orders
- improved social, emotional, and cognitive outcomes for children that may eventually boost educational attainment and income
How Changes To The Child Support System Can Improve Mobility

- lower arrearages
- fewer noncustodial parents facing sanctions for failure to pay
- better mental health for parents and children
How Changes To The Child Support System Can Improve Mobility

Non-custodial parents will feel more important in their children’s lives and have higher perceived standing in the community.
Bring it home
Economic Success

Being Valued in Community

Power and Autonomy

Dignity

US PARTNERSHIP ON

MOBILITY FROM POVERTY

Change the narrative

Create access to good jobs

Ensure zip code is not destiny

Provide support that empowers

Transform data use
3 Questions:

1) What can you do differently next week?

2) What first step can you take now to move toward a longer-term change?

3) What do you want to learn in tomorrow’s sessions to help you refine and act on those plans?
You will make a difference in someone’s life.

Make it a positive difference!