Investing in Children and Parents: Opportunities and Challenges Facing Dual-Generation Strategies in the US

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2020 VISION

- **Policymakers** at all levels will routinely think and plan beyond their traditional silos so as to implement quality early learning (PK-3rd grade) and leading-edge workforce and education strategies thoughtfully and systemically.

- **Practitioners** at the state and local level will routinely implement dual-generation strategies in which children and their parents simultaneously learn and acquire workforce skills leading to family economic success.

- **Researchers** will more fully understand the synergistic impacts of dual-generation strategies and the mechanisms through which they occur.
PROJECT GOALS

1. To deepen our understanding of dual-generation strategies involving high-quality early childhood education (PK-3\textsuperscript{rd} grade) and their parents’ workforce development and education.

2. To foster dual-generation strategies through policy and program development.

3. To create a policy framework for diffusing and enhancing the use of dual-generation strategies.

4. To identify and suggest legislative changes at the federal and state level to facilitate the implementation of dual-generation strategies.
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK*

Components

Child
- Quality Early Education (PreK-3rd Grade)
- Family Support Services
- Leading-edge Postsecondary Education & Training plus Adult Ed, ESL & Wrap-around Services

Parent

Short-term Outcomes

- Early literacy & math preparation
- Improved attendance
- Career exposure
- Social/emotional readiness for K-3rd grade
- Understanding relationship between own and child’s education
- Motivation to pursue postsec. education, training & careers
- Defined E&T and career goals
- Higher rates of postsecondary education and career training enrollment and persistence

*Building on Chase-Lansdale et al. (April 2011).
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Components

- Child
  - Quality Early Education (PreK-3rd Grade)
  - Family Support Services
- Parent
  - Leading-edge Postsecondary Education & Training plus Adult Ed, ESL & Wrap-around Services

Mid-term Outcomes

- Academic success in elementary school
- Improved social adjustment in elementary school
- Higher rates of adult basic education (including ESL)
- PSE credit accumulation
- PSE persistence
- PSE completion
- Improved parent/child interaction

*Building on Chase-Lansdale et al. (April 2011).
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Components

Child
- Quality Early Education (PreK-3rd Grade)
- Family Support Services
  - Leading-edge Postsecondary Education & Training plus Adult Ed, ESL & Wrap-around Services

Parent

Long-term Outcomes

- Increased academic performance in middle and high school
- Increased rates of PSE enrollment, persistence and completion
- Increased emotional well being
- Greater life stability
- Career advancement
- Improved employment, earnings and family incomes

*Building on Chase-Lansdale et al. (April 2011).
Dual-generation strategies can be initiated either …

1) From workforce development, building in quality early learning (PreK-3rd grade) programs for the children of parents pursuing or seeking to pursue high-performance sectoral training;

2) From quality early childhood learning (PreK-3rd grade), building in sectoral workforce training and other needed services (e.g., Adult Ed, ESL) for the parents of children enrolled or enrolling in them; or

3) From excellent workforce and early childhood programs, building explicit connections between them where few or none existed before.
Dual-Gen Program Components

- Quality early learning (PreK-3rd)
- Sectoral job skills training
  - Postsecondary education
  - Workforce intermediaries
- Wrap-around & family support services
  - ABE, developmental ed, ESL
  - Career coaching
  - Peer community-building
  - Conditional cash transfers
  - Asset development & financial ed
  - Transportation assistance
Major Challenges

- Policy and program inertia
- Differing provider cultures and ‘baggage’
- Absence of high-level policy coordination
- Conflicting goals and performance expectations
- Differing structures and loci of decision-making
- Varying funding mechanisms
- Resource limitations
- Conflicting timelines and schedules
Major Opportunities

Challenges notwithstanding, there are some very real opportunities.

• Commitment to evidence-based policymaking and program design
• Federal legislative reauthorizations
• Sources of flexible funding
• Supportive state policy structures
• Innovative local dual-generation initiatives
• Federal and philanthropic interest
Sectoral Workforce Program Interest, by State

Sources: Sector Skills Academy; Insight Center for Community Economic Development.
State-Funded Pre-K Availability and Quality, by State

Innovative Local Initiatives

Annie E. Casey Foundation Civic Sites in Atlanta, Baltimore & New Haven feature varying dual-gen strategies supported by AECF’s Family Economic Success Success Initiative.

Jeremiah Project, a place-based PSE effort operating in Minneapolis and St. Paul (MN), Austin (TX) and Fargo (ND) for single mothers and their children.

Tulsa’s CareerAdvance® Initiative, providing sectoral job training (nursing, healthcare IT), career coaching, peer supports, conditional cash transfers and other supports for the parents of Head Start/Early Head Start kids.

Can build out from quality adult PSE/skills training or from quality early childhood education.
Federal & Philanthropic Interest

Strong, growing interest from:

- Federal agencies (esp. HHS, Education), and
- Foundations (e.g., GKFF, Gates, AECF, Kellogg), including those supporting the Aspen Institute’s Ascend Initiative.

Emerging evidence on the effectiveness of dual-generation strategies, whether from focus groups, outcomes analysis or impacts, may be driving this.

Translating interest into resource and policy commitments will be key.
Outlining a Dual-Generation Agenda

Dual-generation strategies are all about intentionally, systematically connecting adult/child investments for larger, longer-term impacts on family economic success.

Policy Elements

• Supportive Federal Policies & Leadership
• Policy coordination supporting dual-gen strategies at the highest levels
• Supportive State Policies & Leadership

Policy Elements (discussed earlier)
Dual-Generation Agenda…

Research Elements

• Ongoing implementation studies in varying contexts to identify added challenges and necessary and sufficient conditions for operations

• Longitudinal qualitative and quantitative studies to better understand the mechanisms supporting dual-gen strategies and to document their joint outcomes and impacts

• Long-term analysis of the benefits and costs of dual-gen strategies in varying operating environments
Next Steps

Additional “conversations” with Federal and state policymakers and practitioners to flesh out dual-gen understanding and commitment, followed by:

• NGA State Academy-type process with considerable “faculty” support where state and local area participation recruited, or

• Direct demonstrations of dual-generation strategy alternatives.

Either should be coupled with investment in an expanded network of dual-generation researchers. Many aspects need more research.
For More Information

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