

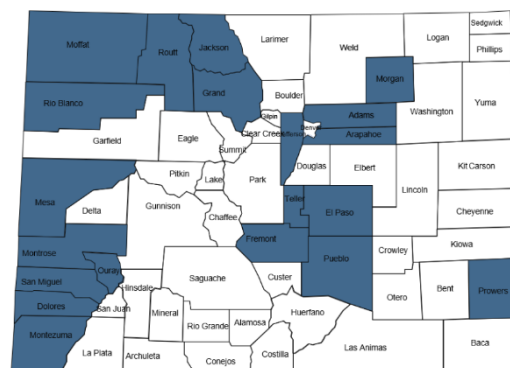
Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention | Community Planning

Findings from the First Cohort

INTRODUCTION

In 2014, the Colorado Department of Human Services Office of Early Childhood in partnership with Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, the federal Children’s Bureau, the Children’s Trust of South Carolina, the Child Abuse and Neglect Technical Assistance and Strategic Dissemination Center, and the Ben and Lucy Ana Walton Fund of the Walton Family Foundation began designing a roadmap to serve as a national model for the prevention of child maltreatment. In April 2017, the **Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action** (CMP Framework) was unveiled. The CMP Framework is the new state plan to prevent child maltreatment and promote strong families. The CMP Framework was designed to help the state and local communities make decisions about which strategies to invest in, how various efforts will align, and how to make the biggest impact on shared outcomes for families across the state. In addition to the CMP Framework, a Community Planning Toolkit¹ was developed to assist counties in developing local child maltreatment prevention plans that addressed their specific needs while aligning with state priorities and identified best practices.

prevention plans specific to their unique communities. Thanks to funding provided by the ZOMA Foundation and the Colorado Department of Human Services, Early Milestones Colorado served as the fiscal agent and provided facilitation and technical assistance support to community champions in the highlighted counties.



Community Planning Tasks

The Community Planning Toolkit provides specific steps communities should follow in applying the state CMP Framework. Planning steps are divided into two broad areas:

Framing the Scope

- *Form a core leadership group* to ensure diverse stakeholder perspectives and encourage new partnerships
- *Develop a community profile* to gain a deeper understanding of local needs and trends
- *Secure parent* input to honor and represent family voice
- *Catalogue local services* to determine capacity of existing services and identify gaps and opportunities

Planning for Action

- *Set priorities and outline implementation plan* to concretize planning tasks to action

Communities had the flexibility to complete tasks sequentially, although most opted to finish planning tasks simultaneously. A process evaluation² was conducted with the first cohort to learn about their experiences,



COMMUNITY PLANNING

Fifteen communities were awarded grants to engage in an eight-month planning process using the CMP Framework and the Community Planning Toolkit to develop local

¹Daro, D., Jarpe-Ratner, E., Karter, C., Crane, K., Bellamy, J., & Seay, K. (2017). *Child Maltreatment Prevention: A Planning Framework for Action*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

²Prendergast, S. (2018). *Implementation Insights from the Colorado Child Maltreatment Prevention Framework for Action*.

specifically which aspects of the planning process worked well, and which could be improved.

CONTRIBUTORS TO TEAM SUCCESS

Leadership Teams identified the following aspects as most important for successful planning.

Formalization of rules/procedures

- Schedule all meetings upfront
- Allow flexibility
- Set ground rules

Group cohesion

- Rapport
- Trust
- Ability to openly share within the group
- Respect for each other's ideas

Membership participation and diversity

- Cross-sector, diverse membership
- Members with decision-making authority

Community Readiness

Most Leadership Teams reported they were prepared for community planning. Teams that reported they were unprepared attributed it to not fully understanding what the process was going to be like beforehand, not having participated in similar planning process previously, and not knowing how much time they would need to invest.

Group Skills

Each team broadly defined the following skills as being important for planning:

- Broad, big-picture outlook on prevention
- Ability to take ideas and fit them into a framework structure
- Understanding of how to measure short- and long-term goals
- Staff time to commit to oversight and ensure tasks are completed
- Prior experience with planning processes
- Understanding of community context (e.g., resources, hot-button issues)
- Data skills

Facilitation Support

All teams discussed the importance of facilitation support to group success. The majority of teams said facilitators should possess skills in both facilitation and expertise in child maltreatment prevention. The most important

aspects of facilitation support were to translate the CMP Framework, keep the team on track, organize meetings, and structure group discussions.

PRELIMINARY OUTCOMES

The post-planning period interviews with each lead organization revealed five major themes.

Consensus on Shared Goals

Planning teams shared they were proud that the planning process resulted in their teams reaching consensus on a set of shared goals.

Practical Tools for Future Use

About half of the teams reported being pleased with the products that resulted from planning (e.g., community profile, resource catalogue, and action plans) and that they would be able to use them in future work.

Better Understanding of Community Needs

Several teams conveyed they have a better understanding of how current services should be adapted based on their assessment of community resources.

Strengthened Connections

About half of the planning teams mentioned that new partnerships provided them with a greater understanding of the resources available within their community and stronger relationships with other organizations they don't typically work with.

Improved Outlook on Planning Process

While a few teams mentioned community fatigue from previous planning processes and lack of trust that planning efforts will lead to community improvements, team members recognized this planning process was different. Major themes for why this planning effort was different than those in the past included the structure of the CMP Framework, the requirement to work with traditional and nontraditional partners, the provision of facilitation and technical assistance support, and local autonomy in the creation of the action plans.

NEXT STEPS

Going forward, additional communities will be supported in prevention planning, funding opportunities will be identified that can help communities implement their plans, and a dashboard will be created to track progress on the shared outcomes utilizing common indicators across programming. Information on this ongoing effort can be found at www.co4kids.org/prevention.