

## OPPORTUNITY TO ADVANCE STATE POLICIES THAT HELP CHILDREN AND PARENTS SUCCEED TOGETHER

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States interested in more efficient ways to meet the interrelated, often complex needs of low-income families are considering “two-generation” approaches to provide appropriate, coordinated, and seamless services to both the adults and the children in those families. These strategies have garnered increasing interest in recent years and build on a long history of family-centered policies, from the 19th-century settlement houses to the creation of Head Start.

The National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP) are launching an initiative to help up to five states develop and implement a two-generation state plan. With generous support from the Annie E. Casey, W.K. Kellogg and Doris Duke Charitable foundations, this effort will provide up to two years of intensive technical assistance to help selected states achieve statewide systems change, building upon gubernatorial interest and emerging policy opportunities in workforce, human services, education, health, child care and early childhood education.

### What We Mean by “Two-Generation State Policy” and Systems Change

Broadly speaking, “two-generation state policy” refers to action taken by state officials designed to improve outcomes for both parents and their children. While designing this project, the NGA Center/CLASP team is consulting with researchers, policy experts, state leaders, and other stakeholders to answer key questions about the best approach—for example, what range of two-generation policy strategies might be most beneficial, what policy areas present the greatest opportunities, and what are reasonable expectations for statewide systems change.

Based on the design parameters, and in partnership with gubernatorial leadership, selected states will embark on an effort to identify and implement strategies that hold the greatest promise for improving outcomes for low-income families in their states. Adopting a two-generation lens to serving low-income families does not necessarily require new laws, new money or new programs; rather, governors can focus on aligning current policies, streamlining current practices and strengthening links among existing programs in the child- and adult-focused service delivery systems. Such changes—when taken collectively—are expected to lead to statewide systems change. The project team will work to apply a racial equity lens throughout the project and will help states evaluate the implications of their proposed two-generation strategies for families of color, given that these families are most likely to suffer from poor outcomes. The team will seek applications from a wide range of states, with the goal of broadening the reach of two-generation strategies.

### What Types of Assistance Will Be Provided?

Participating states will receive consultation from the NGA Center, CLASP, other national experts and state leaders already working on two-generation state policy to help them design and implement their state plans. The technical assistance team brings expertise in relevant funding streams, state and national policies and regulations, and on-the-ground implementation, as well as experience working closely with state leaders on the challenges posed by change management in complex statewide systems. Technical assistance will be tailored to the states’ needs and will begin with an assessment of each state’s strengths and weaknesses in its policies and service delivery systems. Technical assistance will likely include site visits, all-state meetings, webinars, and one-on-one consultations. Selected states will also receive direct financial assistance to support their work – for example, resources to staff the policy work, support data analysis, or bring state teams together.

### Who is Eligible to Apply?

All states, commonwealths, and territories may apply. The NGA Center will accept only one application per state, and submissions must come from the governor’s office. States need not have attended the NGA Center’s 2016 Two-Generation State Policy Forum in Salt Lake City to be eligible.

### How Do We Apply?

The NGA Center will release a request for applications in early summer 2016, with applications due in late summer 2016. It is expected that three to five states will be selected through this competitive process, but the final number has not yet been determined. If you have questions about this upcoming opportunity, please contact: Sharon McGroder, Program Director for Human Services; Economic, Human Services and Workforce Division; NGA Center for Best Practices ([Smcgroder@nga.org](mailto:Smcgroder@nga.org), or 202-624-5374).