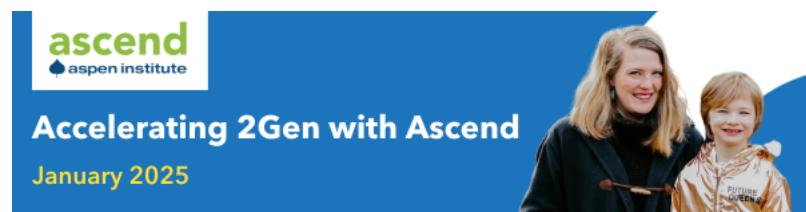


No images? [Click here](#)



Two-generation (2Gen) approaches are paving pathways for children and their families to reach their full potential *together*. This monthly newsletter highlights 2Gen practice and policy breakthroughs and opportunities so you can cultivate innovation, collaborate within and outside your organization, and improve outcomes for whole families.



2Gen at the Federal Level

Philanthropists and policymakers are investing in 2Gen approaches at county, state, and federal levels to improve outcomes for both children and the adults in their lives.

The Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is [forecasting a funding opportunity](#) to conduct and strengthen research on the intentional coordination of human services to support the social and economic well-being of whole families. The Center for Research on Coordinated Service Approaches to Support Whole Families will address a range of relevant issues through a combination of research, research capacity building, and communication activities. The notice is estimated to [post on April 2nd, 2025](#).

[LEARN MORE](#)

Last month, [ACF published a final regulation](#) that makes it easier for state and Tribal child support programs to

utilize federal funding to provide employment and training services for eligible noncustodial parents. Research indicates a direct relationship between a noncustodial parent's employment status and the consistency of child support payments. Offering employment and training services to those parents who are either unemployed and underemployed and have child support obligations help build their financial capacity to meet their children's needs, which benefits both the children and their parents.



Upcoming Webinars & Convenings

Ascend at the Aspen Institute fosters dialogue with communities from across the country to build connections, learn from one another, and document promising practices for whole-family well-being.



Courageous Leadership For & With Families

Thursday, January 16th

4:00 - 5:00 pm ET (1:00 - 2:00 pm PT)

REGISTER

November 2024's elections created a dramatically shifting political context, with voters strongly communicating that they want leaders committed to improving both their economic and daily experiences.

Now more than ever, advocates for families need to lead with families by building trust, leveraging change capital, and elevating concrete solutions that make a real difference for children and the adults in their lives together. Over the course of 2025, Ascend is **hosting a series of monthly webinars** that help leaders across philanthropy, systems, policy, and communities to position data and best practice in ways that build trust and strengthen policies and systems change for intergenerational prosperity.

How can we courageously lead with and for families in order to affect policy, systems, and structural changes in today's new political context? Ascend will convene President & CEO of Future Caucus Layla Zaidane, Hawai'i Rep. Greggory Ilagan (D), and Arkansas Rep. Aaron Pilkington (R) to discuss how advocates for families – across philanthropy, policy, and systems - can lead with conviction to keep society moving forward when our political landscape is in flux.

Starting From a Place of Strength: United Ways Using Data and Messaging to Tell an Impact Story

Tuesday, January 28th

1:00 - 2:30 pm ET (10:00 - 11:30 am PT)

REGISTER

Join the Campaign for Grade Level Reading, Ayeola Fortune of United Way Worldwide, and our Managing Director Marjorie Sims as they spotlight collective caregiving approaches in local United Ways that are driving success in kindergarten readiness, reading proficiency, and parent engagement. With United Way Worldwide Impact Survey results showing remarkable outcomes — like 74% of children meeting key developmental milestones — this session will explore how collaboration, innovation, and effective messaging are transforming lives.

The First 1,000 Days: Family, Kin and Foster Caregivers on the Paths to Recovery

Wednesday, February 12th

3:00 - 4:00 pm ET (8:00 am - 2:30 pm PT)

REGISTER

Join Brazelton Touchpoints Center, an Ascend Network Partner, to explore the full range of experiences of parents living with substance use disorder (SUD), their children and families, and the kin and foster caregivers in their lives. Learn about the policies that shape their paths to recovery.



2Gen Stories & Accomplishments

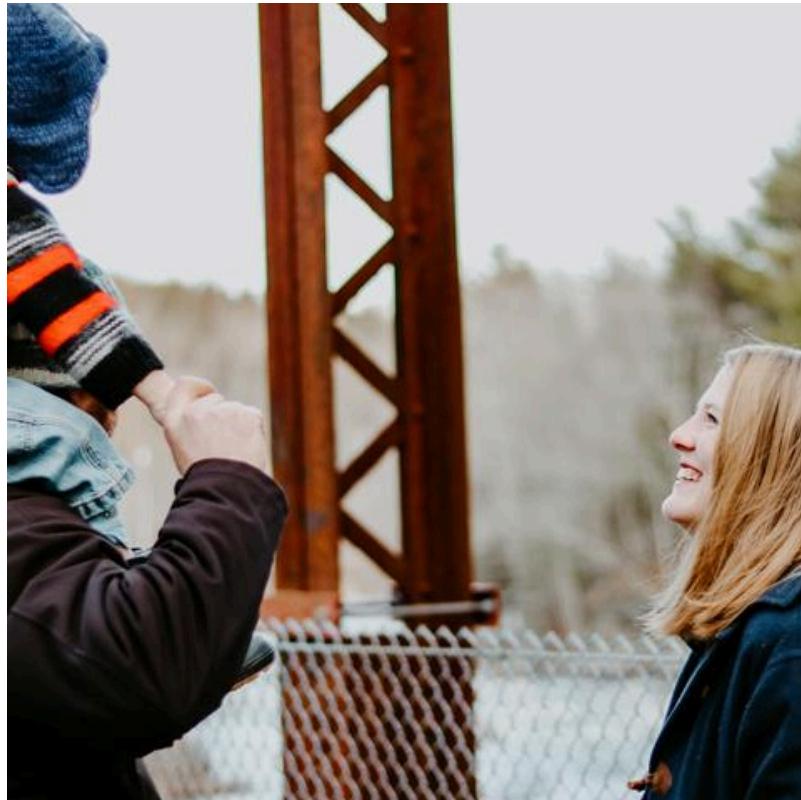
Check out these new stories to inspire and advance how you partner with families.



A 2Gen Approach to Ending Homelessness in New Mexico

Ascend Network Partner Saranam offers housing, a supportive community, and trainings to families experiencing homelessness. Learn more about their program in this *KUNM* story, and hear about how this program impacted Leighann and her son Ozzy.

LISTEN



Savannah's Dream & Journey to Homeownership

Savannah Steiger, an Ascend Parent Advisor and mother of two, achieved homeownership through a series of supportive programs in Maine, including Family Futures Downeast. Her success is part of a broader model of financial coaching, homebuyer education, and rental assistance that is proving effective in helping families build wealth and long-term stability.

READ



An Ohio Head Start Center's 2Gen Approach

In this New America brief, learn about the history and future of East Dayton and their 2Gen collaborative of organizations and community leaders - including Ascend Network Partner Learn to Earn Dayton - working to build trust amongst the community and shape systems that take seriously the importance of engaging both parents and children.

[READ MORE](#)



Kalamazoo Grants \$1,500 Payments for 200 Pregnant Families

The City of Kalamazoo, an Ascend Network Partner, the Kalamazoo Community Foundation, and Rx Kids are partnering to launch a five-year pilot to provide a one-time \$1,500 payment to all pregnant families as well as \$500 a month throughout the infant's first year. Learn more in this *MLive* article.

[READ MORE](#)



Recent Research & Reports

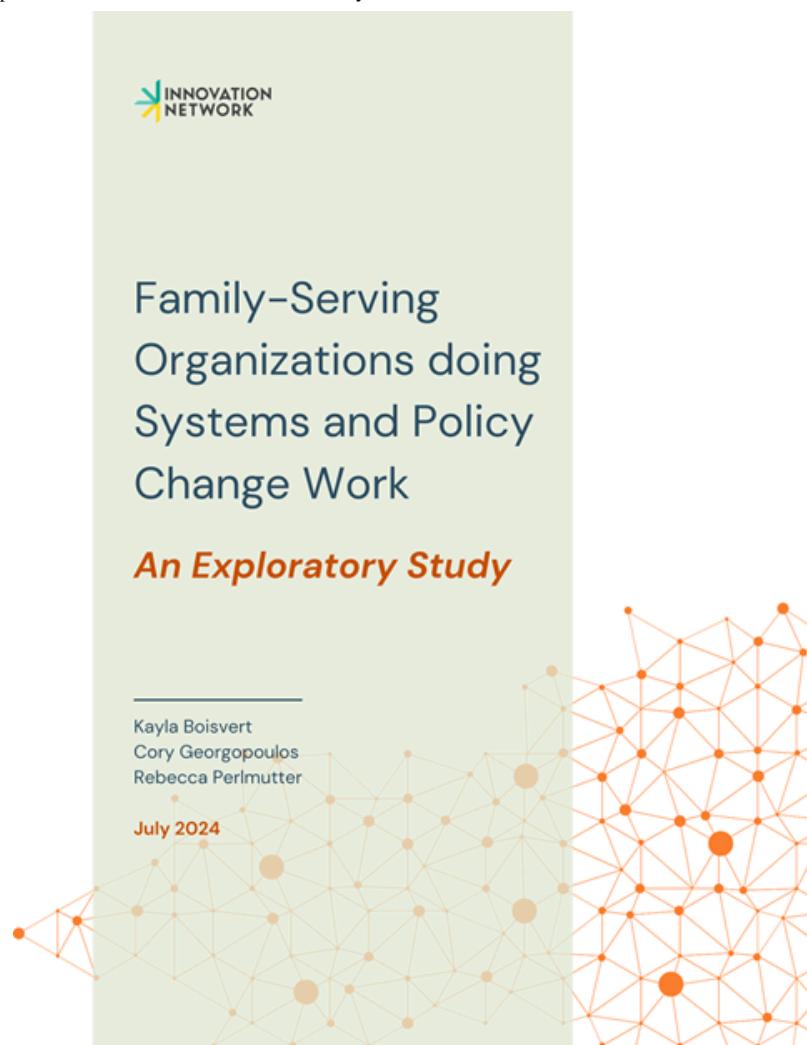
Our [2Gen Resource Library](#) has hundreds of free and evidence-informed materials to advance your 2Gen work. Read these new resources about building whole family well-being.



Where America Agrees: The 2Gen Approach Unites Voters for Families

Key data and analysis on 2024 presidential election exit polling from Ascend at the Aspen Institute, carried out by the bipartisan team of Lake Research Partners and The Tarrance Group. You can also hear more insights from our [November webinar](#), featuring Celinda Lake and Anne Mosle.

[DOWNLOAD](#)



Family-Serving Organizations Creating Systems and Policy Change

Innovation Network recently released an important overview of Family-serving organizations—or FSOs, which have a unique role to play in ensuring policies reflect families' lived realities and often take a 2Gen lens.

Developed with support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the report offers a comprehensive scan of FSOs, their capacity to influence policy change, and the conditions and dynamics that impact that capacity. As Ascend prioritizes 2Gen policy and systems change in 2025 and beyond, the report highlights important opportunities to harness data and best practices for county and state shifts for families.

[READ THE REPORT](#)

Contribute to the 2Gen Movement

Embedding family voice and community input are core to making a 2Gen approach relevant, accessible, and effective. Help us learn from your work and elevate your community's expertise on a national level.

We invite you to share your 2Gen news and reports with us so we can share with the broader field in future. Email us your insights and impact so we can spread the word.

SUBMIT IDEAS

The [Aspen Institute Ascend Network](#) is a community of more than 600 organizations from across the US and beyond that uses 2Gen approaches in their work so that children and families can reach their full potential. The Ascend Network connects leaders from across sectors with diverse areas of expertise so that we build relationships, spark connections, and co-create innovative solutions that lead to better outcomes for families. If your organization isn't already in the Network, take a 15-minute survey to join.

JOIN THE 2GEN NETWORK

Want to learn more about the 2Gen approach and mindset? Check out our website!

LEARN ABOUT 2GEN

Thank you for all the work you do to improve outcomes for children and their families.

Best,



Sarah Haight

Director, 2Gen Practice
Ascend at the Aspen Institute



Stephanie Brueck-Cassoli

Senior Program Manager,
Ascend at the Aspen Institute



Jordan Colvin

Program Associate, 2Gen Practice

Ascend at the Aspen Institute



Ascend at the Aspen Institute

2300 N Street NW, Suite 700

Washington, DC 20037

Personal data contained in our database is processed under the lawful basis of legitimate interest and is typically included in our database either because you previously subscribed to a newsletter to receive information about our activities or you registered for a recent event. For more information, please refer to the [Aspen Institute's privacy policy](#).

You are receiving this email because you are subscribed to receive updates from Ascend. Want to change how you receive these emails or have a colleague subscribe? Update your message preferences below. If you were forwarded this email, [sign up here](#) to get Ascend updates sent directly to your inbox.

[Preferences](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)