

ACTION 2.2

Invest in treatment and services that focus on creating opportunities for and addressing the needs of both children and the adults in their lives together.

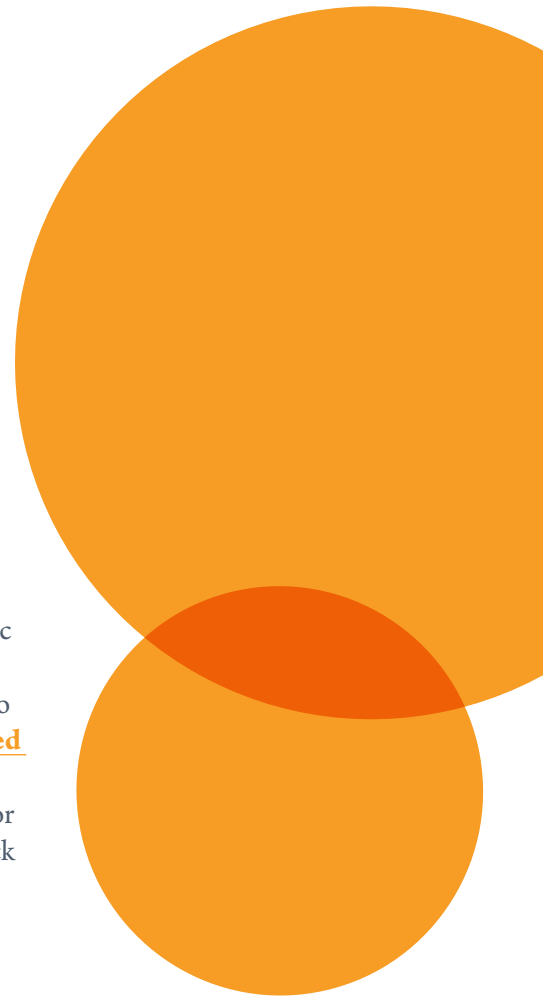
INVEST in TWO-GENERATION INTERVENTIONS

Two generation approaches are centered around the principle that outcomes for children are closely related to the well-being of their families and caregivers. And likewise, parents' abilities to create positive change in their own lives often relies on the availability of safe and reliable care for their children. Two generation interventions recognize the interdependence of families and children, often with a focus on interrupting generational cycles of poverty. Interventions combine physical health, social-emotional health, child development, parenting education and social support and address issues such as substance addiction, child abuse and neglect prevention, family planning, and supporting families of children with disabilities.

WHAT WE KNOW

Two-generation approaches can be particularly beneficial for families that face systemic barriers, particularly members of communities of color who face disproportionately high rates of poverty. As stated by Areeba Haider, a research associate for the Poverty to Prosperity Program at the Center for American Progress: **“Child poverty in the United States is persistent, it’s structural. But it’s also really solvable.”** Two generation programs help to reduce poverty by simplifying access to various forms of assistance for families in crisis while simultaneously addressing the root causes of poverty such as lack of educational and employment opportunities.

Those providing care are often themselves in need of care—with child care wages averaging \$12 per hour, **TOO MANY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATORS, DESPITE WORKING FULL-TIME, ARE FINANCIALLY INSECURE** and struggling to support their own children.



There is strong evidence that parents' wellbeing, from mental health to economic security, strongly influences children's development by providing the foundational developmental environment—both physical and emotional. Similarly, healthy child development supports parents' economic and mental health because needing to take time off to care for sick children can cost parents' their jobs and can take a toll on their wellbeing. Two-generation policies that recognize this reciprocal relationship are needed to address the needs of both parents and children in tandem. Research demonstrates that [successful two-generation approaches](#) seek to improve access to opportunities for improving family economic security, improve access to high quality care and education for children, and increase access to programs, services, and networks that help parents understand and advocate for their children's healthy development.

Dive Into the Data

Family Support Programs can increase family engagement, parents' knowledge of child development, and support connection initiatives with learning from families. Home visiting programs are one piece of this infrastructure and their availability varies greatly by county. For example, Guilford county has [15-20% of their population](#) served by home visiting programs and Lincoln county has less than 1% of their population served. Explore other North Carolina early childhood data indicators on the [Pathways Data Dashboard](#).

WHAT WE NEED

The [2Gen Resource Library](#) provides numerous evidence-informed materials to advance the development of social support programs that build whole family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together. Their 2Gen model is based on five key principles, such as simultaneously accounting for outcomes for both children and their parents, and aligning and linking systems and funding streams to simultaneously provide services to parents and their children.

There are [effective two-generation family self-sufficiency programs](#) in North Carolina that are operating in [Asheville](#), [Charlotte](#), [Durham](#), and [Greensboro](#). These programs use a combination of coordinated services and supports from community partners and an escrow savings account to help participants grow their earned income and savings and increase their financial well-being. Case managers help families with complicated lives link to child care, a critical component of facilitating workforce involvement. These initiatives need support from state and local policymakers to ensure they are sustained and expanded.



HOW TO SUPPORT

Support is needed for low-income families, including low wage early childhood educators. As noted above, early childhood educators' low wages present a barrier in their ability to achieve financial stability, and those of them who are parents are often left unable to pay for quality childcare environments that would support the wellbeing of their children. Two initiatives, the [Infant Toddler Educator AWARD\\$ program and WAGE\\$](#) seek to redress this specifically as it occurs for this group through financial incentives and opportunities to grow professional skills and knowledge.

Children's wellbeing thrives when their caregivers are well-supported and likewise, parents thrive when their children are well-equipped to succeed.

INITIATIVES WORKING IN THIS AREA



Book Babies

[Book Babies](#) partners with families of Medicaid eligible children to develop their child's early language and literacy skills. An evidence-informed literacy coaching partnership, Book Babies begins when a baby is born and is sustained over five years. The organization builds rich relationships and provides families with the information and resources they need to develop the foundation for their children's school readiness and school success.



[Durham Children's Initiative's](#) cradle-to-career pipeline is designed using a holistic model that focuses on the entire family. They offer two-generation supports that can take the form of employment and vocational supports, family stability interventions and support, parent education, and technology support. Families who enter the pipeline during the stage of early childhood are offered interventions such as kindergarten readiness preparation, parent education and support, and access to childcare.



[Charlotte Bilingual Preschool](#) prepares Spanish-speaking children for success in school and life by providing superior dual language, multicultural early childhood education. Charlotte Bilingual Preschool provides a suite of two generation programs, including a four-year pilot of the national home visiting program ParentChild+. Early Learning Specialists hired and trained from their family community support quality parent-child interactions, connect families to resources, and equip them with skills to support kindergarten readiness at home over two years of twice-weekly visits while children are two to four years old.

[Visit the Pathways Action Map](#) to learn more about these and other initiatives leading efforts in this area.