



National Center on  
Parent, Family, and Community Engagement

# Individualizing Economic Mobility Services with Families

Session 2 | May 5, 2021



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## Your Session Console





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# Facilitators



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National Center on Parent, Family,  
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# Learning Objectives

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Explain	Examine	Demonstrate
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Explain the importance of individualizing economic mobility services with families</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Examine lessons from the field about specific circumstances that may make accessing economic mobility services challenging for families</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrate strategies for partnering with culturally diverse and historically underserved families to improve their access to economic mobility</li></ul>

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## Foundations

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Economic well-being is the foundation of child and family well-being.

The pyramid diagram consists of five horizontal layers, each with a different color and text:

- Top layer (purple): Broad wellbeing
- Second layer (green): Social, emotional, academic potential fulfilled
- Third layer (blue): Strong physical, mental, and relational health and skill development
- Fourth layer (orange): Responsive, stimulating, and supportive environments
- Bottom layer (yellow): Fair and just policies and programs that support economic wellbeing, ensure children's basic needs are met, and build human and social capital

Image adapted from Sweetland, J. (2021). Reframing childhood adversity: Promoting upstream approaches.

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# Equity

Tailored services are important for equity.

PROGRAM FOUNDATIONS	PROGRAM IMPACT AREAS	FAMILY OUTCOMES	CHILD OUTCOMES
Program Leadership Professional Development Continuous Learning and Quality Improvement	Program Environment Family Partnerships Teaching and Learning Community Partnerships Access and Continuity	Family Well-being Positive Parent-Child Relationships Families as Lifelong Educators Families as Learners Family Engagement in Transitions Family Connections to Peers and Community Families as Advocates and Leaders	Children are: Safe Healthy and well Learning and developing Engaged in positive relationships with family members, caregivers, and other children Ready for school Successful in school and life

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# Positive Relationships

Tailored services are important for building positive relationships with families.

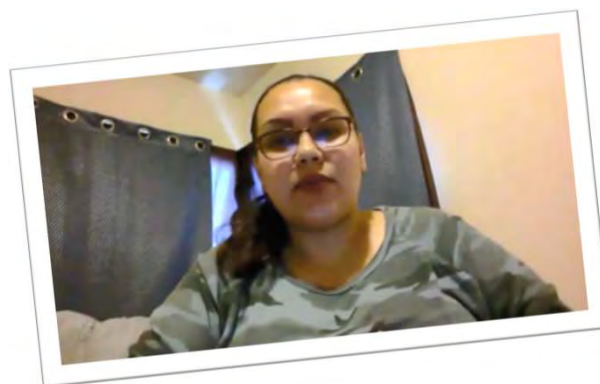
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## One Parent's Story

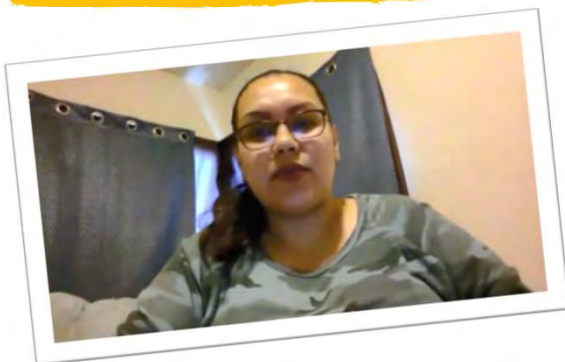


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## Reflection



- What resonated with you about Gabriela's story?
- What else have you heard from families about their needs and challenges during this time?

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Key Takeaway 1

Existence of a program  
≠ access.

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What are  
common barriers  
to accessing  
services?

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## Three Categories of Barriers

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Barriers to Accessing Information

Barriers to Enrollment

Psychological Barriers

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“In the past few days, I’ve talked to a bunch of folks who are eligible for the monthly child cash allowance. Despite the non-stop news coverage on these benefits, none of the people I talked to **had any idea the money was coming.**”

—National reporter for *The Atlantic*

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**Barriers to accessing information**

- **Learning about a program's existence**
- **Understanding the benefits**
- Self-determining likely eligibility
- Learning how to apply

*Limited availability of information in a family's home language*

*Limited access to public systems or networks through which information is commonly shared*

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**Barriers to accessing information**

- Learning about a program's existence
- Understanding the benefits
- **Self-determining likely eligibility**
- Learning how to apply

*Complex and confusing eligibility rules, especially for households that include immigrants or multigenerational families*

*Unfamiliar systems and application procedures*

*Limited availability of instructions in a family's home language*

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## Barriers to Enrollment

**Pamela Herd** @pamela\_herd · Mar 10  
People who design social welfare systems often assume digital literacy and internet access, but we absolutely know many people lack one or the other, or both.

**Maria Burnett** @\_MariaBurnett · Mar 9  
A thread: My client got out of 30 years of prison about 6 weeks ago. Since then, people have been telling him that forms he needs are on the web or that they would email something to him. A few days ago, he shyly admitted to me that he doesnt understand what any of that means.  
[Show this thread](#)

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## Barriers to Enrollment

- **Providing documentation of one's eligibility**
- Filling out forms
- Following rules and directives for remaining in a program

*Inflexible work schedules*

*Limited access to reliable transportation and child care during nontraditional hours*

*Misinformation about the consequences of sharing personal information with federal agencies*

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### Barriers to Enrollment

- Providing documentation of one's eligibility
- **Filling out forms**
- **Following rules and directives for remaining in a program**

*Limited computer and internet access*

*Limited availability of forms and program materials in a family's home language*

*Rigid requirements that fail to account for specific situations, such as fluctuating incomes*

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### Psychological Barriers

**Don Moynihan** @donmoyn · Mar 9

Different policy area, but @Lollardfish also wrote a compelling piece today about how psychologically exhausting it is to fight for supports you are entitled to

**David M. Perry** @Lollardfish · Mar 9

All the times I've cried because systems demand I dehumanize my disabled son to get him the supports he needs. From @thenation

[thenation.com/article/societ...](https://thenation.com/article/societ...)

[Show this thread](#)

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**Psychological Barriers**

- **Fear, anxiety**
- **Stress, frustration**
- **Mental load**
- Loss of autonomy
- Stigma

*Fear of consequences of accessing services (e.g., due to “public charge” policies)*

*Complex and onerous processes that do not seem to recognize time and resource constraints faced by the families they serve*

*The “bandwidth tax”*

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**Psychological Barriers**

- Fear, anxiety
- Stress, frustration
- Mental load
- **Loss of autonomy**
- **Stigma**

*Complex and onerous processes that prioritize administrative efficiency over human dignity*

*Cultural perceptions about receipt of government assistance*

*Stigma and trauma experienced through the perpetuation of false narratives about benefit recipients*

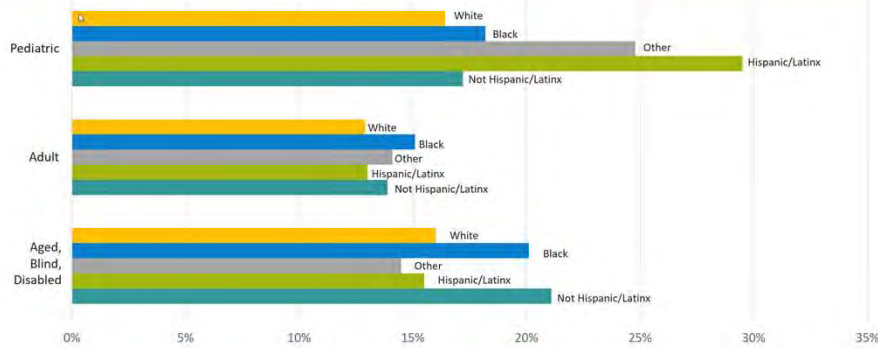
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## Reminder: Barriers Are Not Distributed Equally

Churn Varies by Eligibility Category and Race/Ethnicity



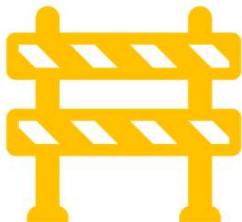
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Duke MARGOLIS CENTER for Health Policy 23

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## Reflection



What are the most common barriers or burdens experienced by the families you work with?

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Key Takeaway 2

Barriers to access >  
eligibility.

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Key Takeaway 3

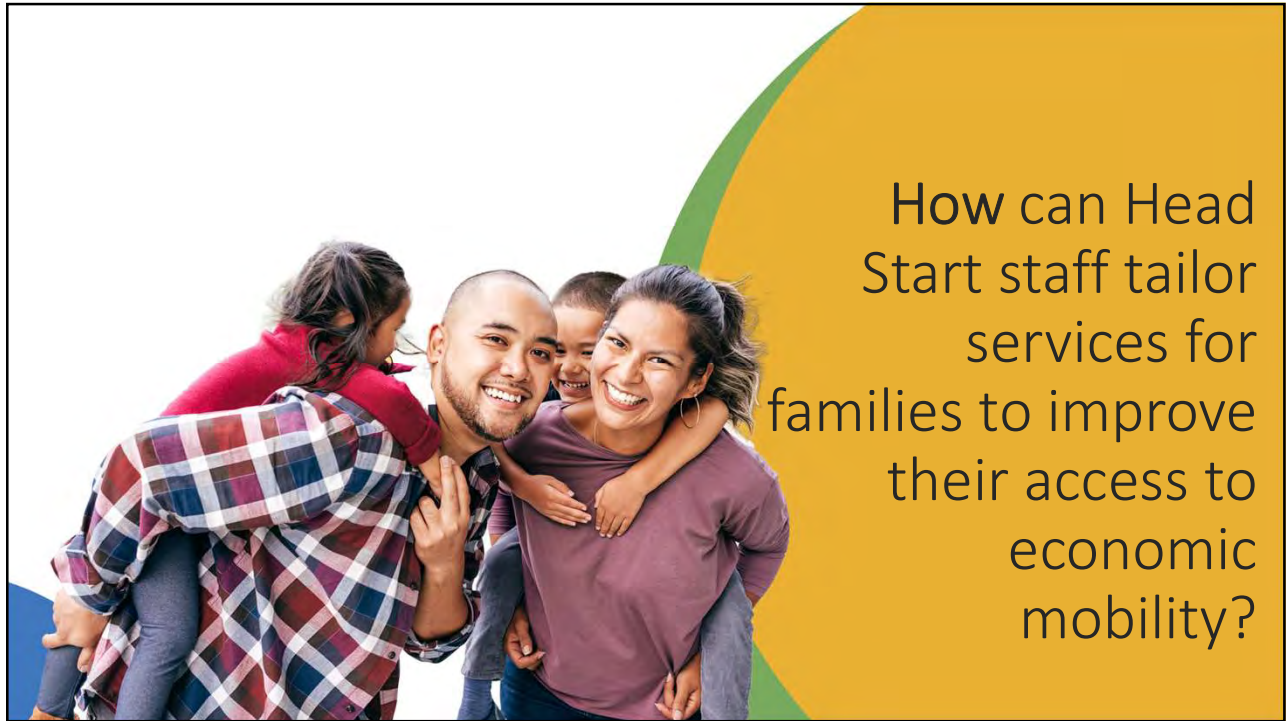
Access is not equal for  
all families.

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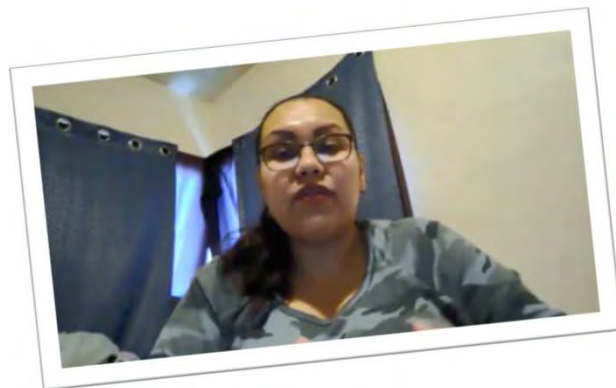




How can Head  
Start staff tailor  
services for  
families to improve  
their access to  
economic  
mobility?

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## Gabriela's Recommendations



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“Connect with  
your families.”



- Take time to know your families and understand their backgrounds and circumstances.
- Understand that communities are heterogenous.
- Engage in active listening skills.
- Personalize your communications with families.
- Communicate with families in their preferred language. Or, if that’s not possible, use an interpreter.
- Follow up with families regularly.

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“Know the  
families you are  
serving.”




- Ensure that families are eligible for the services and resources to which you are referring them.
- Ensure that your reading materials are culturally appropriate, in families’ preferred language, and at a reading level appropriate for the community you serve.
- Be alert to families’ transportation, child care, and work schedule considerations—and to each family’s familiarity with technology.

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“Know the families you are serving.”




A warm-hand off (personally telling families about resources, helping them make initial appointments, etc.) is generally more effective than handing them a resource list.

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“Be sensitive.”



- Create a safe environment in which families are comfortable sharing personal information.
- Realize that, for some families, immigration status may be a concern when sharing personal information in the process of signing up for programs.
- Avoid collecting personal information that is not required for application purposes.

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## Community Resources

Capitalize on existing community resources:

- Partner with well-respected community leaders, and use the social media channels preferred by the community you serve to disseminate information more broadly.
- Encourage parent leadership and social support networks.
- Solicit and be responsive to suggestions from the community.

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## Reflection

Think of a family you have worked with that has faced institutional or structural barriers like those we have discussed.

- How did you navigate those challenges with them in a way that was culturally and/or linguistically responsive?
- Are there some recommendations shared today that you are excited to put into practice with your families?

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## Key Takeaways

- We have a responsibility to elevate every family's potential by tackling factors that limit access to services for certain families.
- Engaging in active listening and focusing on family strengths can go a long way toward building positive relationships with families based on trust and respect.
- Knowing the barriers that tend to affect some families can help us become partners with the families.

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## Resources

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- Building Partnerships with Families Series:
  - Family Engagement and Cultural Perspectives: Applying Strengths-Based Attitudes
  - Partnering with Families of Children Who Are Dual Language Learners
- The Family Partnership Process: Engaging and Goal-setting with Families
- Economic Mobility Toolkit: Resources for Action
- Strategies for Supporting Families Experiencing Homelessness and Housing Instability During COVID-19
- Partnering with Families to Build Economic Security During Emergencies

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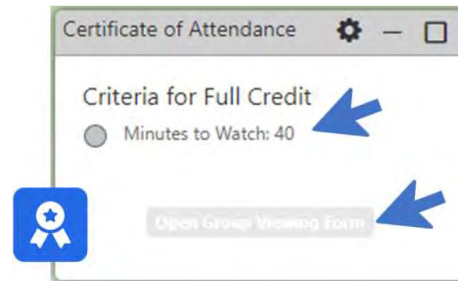


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## Certificates, Session Resources, and Institute Survey

- Download your certificate of attendance and session handouts from the related content tool.
- Complete the Institute Survey at the end of the two-day event.



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**Let's Get Vaccinated!**  
Head Start staff, let's move forward together!

The COVID 19 vaccine is:


- Safe for adults
- Effective
- Available in your area

#SleeveUp4HeadStart

A vibrant graphic for a vaccination campaign. The background is yellow with white polka dots on the left and blue with white polka dots on the right. At the top, the text "Let's Get Vaccinated!" is written in large, bold, blue letters with a white outline. Below it, "Head Start staff, let's move forward together!" is written in a smaller, blue font. In the center, a man in a light blue polo shirt is holding a young girl in a yellow dress. Both are flexing their right biceps. To the left, there is a cartoon illustration of a woman in a blue uniform and a face mask, also flexing her bicep. At the bottom left, there is a logo with the text "#SleeveUp4HeadStart" and a small graphic of a person in a blue uniform.

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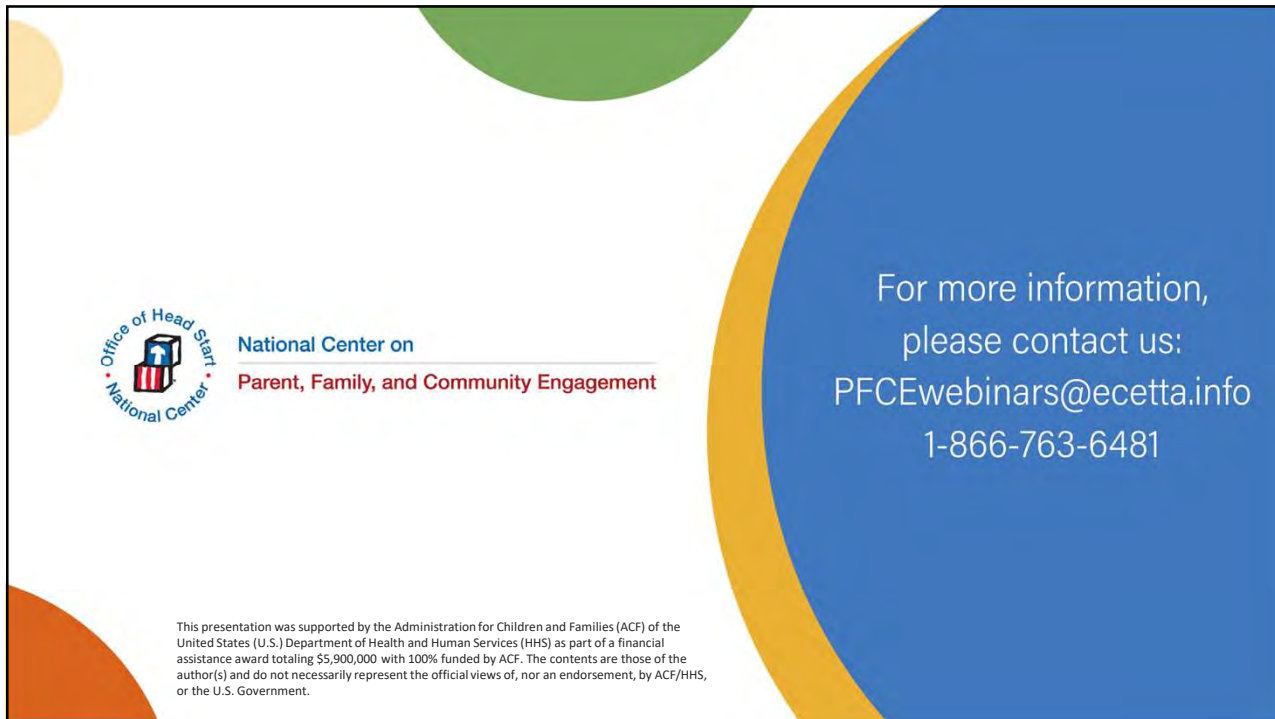
# Self-care Break

Join us in the  
Engagement Hub.

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For more information,  
please contact us:  
[PFCEwebinars@ecetta.info](mailto:PFCEwebinars@ecetta.info)  
1-866-763-6481

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