

Helping Families Progress Toward Economic Goals Through Community Partnerships

Sarah Spunt: Hi, everyone. Good afternoon. We are excited that you are joining our session today, Helping Families Progress Towards Economic Mobility Goals Through Community Partnerships. Before we dive in to introduce ourselves, I want to go through some of the things that you have in your console to help maximize your experience today. At the bottom of the screen, you will see several engagement tools.

One is the Media Player. You can use this tool to watch presenters and any videos during this session. The next is the Questions for Presenters. You can use this tool to share a question or comment during the session. Next, you'll see the Slides. You can use this tool to display the PowerPoint presentation slides on your screen. We also have a Related Resource link. If we share any resources today in the session, you can use this tool to see the list of resources available for you to download and the helpful links. You can find your slide deck and the session handouts here as well in the Engagement Hub.

The Presenter Bios. If you want to learn a little bit more about myself or my co-presenter, Brenda, you can look inside our bios there and read up on our backgrounds. Last, but probably one of the most things you want to pay attention to, is the Certificate of Attendance. You can use this tool to access your certificate at the end of this session. You must meet the criteria to earn the certificate. These engagement tools are on your console and are resizable and movable. If you minimize any of these tools, you can click the icons at the bottom of your screen and make them appear and reappear and make them sized to your liking.

Now a little bit about myself. My name is Sarah Spunt, and I am with the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. I am the executive director of LIFT-Chicago. We are one of the partners with the National Center focusing on economic mobility. I'm going to pass it over to my co-presenter, Brenda, to introduce herself.

Brenda Eiland-Williford: Hello, everyone. I'm Brenda Eiland-Williford. I'm with the National Center on Parent, Family and Community Engagement. I am the director of early childhood quality and impact with Start Early. Start Early is the organization that was awarded the contract to implement the National Center on Parent, Family, and Community Engagement. We recently changed our name from the Alpha Prevention Fund to Start Early organization. Welcome.

Sarah: Thank you, Brenda. Now I'm going to go over our learning objectives. First is to review best practices for building community partnerships and brainstorm additional partnership ideas. The next is to acquire. We'd like to demonstrate strategies for identifying and engaging effective community partners who have experienced an economic mobility, and explore more examples of referral processes and data sharing. Last, we'd like to examine lessons learned

from our families about ways Head Start program staff can support retention and education and community partnerships.

You can download the Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework in the Tool section. We'd like to highlight the "C" in community for the community partnerships, and we are going to go through some of these tools today. Community partners provide a tangible child development support and resources that families and staff want and need. Community partners expand and enhance services provided by Head Start programs. Programs develop relationships with community partners to ensure quality, comprehensive, and effective services for families.

We want to prioritize attention to these partnerships because oftentimes community partnerships can help families reach their overall goals around economic mobility and family well-being. Community partnerships provide opportunities for follow-up and more timely implementation for services for families. Now I have a few questions for all of you in the audience. The first one is, "Do you currently work with community partners to support economic mobility goals?" I'm going to wait for some of the chat to come in.

Great. Thank you for sharing all of your feedback around what type of partnerships you currently work with. Or it's OK if you are not currently working with community partners right now because we are going to offer some strategies for you to build out these partnerships. Some examples that we have shared so far, our partners focusing on financial goals, specifically partnering with some local banks to give presentations on financial institutions. We also see some people who partner with workforce development programs or local community colleges to help parents work towards their career and educational goals as well. Those are all great examples of community partners that support economic mobility goals.

This next question: "What did you do to develop these partnerships?" I know sometimes that is a longer answer, a few seconds to type in and talk about the process of developing some of these partnerships.

Great. Thank you for taking the time to answer this question, as well, "What did you do to develop these partnerships?" There's a wide variety of ways you can go about developing community partnerships. What I'm seeing is, looking at the different support services that are in your local community, ways through looking through other community-based organizations, local government programs, maybe the local TANF office, and using your own personal network as well. Oftentimes, too, families can help identify different support systems in the community as well. Maybe there's another organization they have worked with or have heard of and wanted to check out. Those are all great ways to start developing partnerships.

When we think about parent, family, community engagement and looking at partnerships, the strategies are systematic, integrated, and comprehensive. When we mean partnerships are systematic, Head Start programs play a vital role in the community. There are many ways to offer support systems. It is important to work with other community organizations, social

services, community leaders to provide services and promote parent, family, and community engagement.

It's also important that we look at ways we can integrate community partners into our program. Within the Head Start community, it's important to work as a team to collaborate within the program to coordinate with community partners and make sure community resources are regularly shared with Head Start programs via team communication channels and staff meetings.

Lastly, it's important that our partnerships are comprehensive. It's important to take a holistic approach and ensure that a variety of community partnerships are in place, and we understand the priorities in the area and the impacts that they make. For example, offering programs of interest to parents, such as addressing family economic mobility, helps increase parental engagement. When we help increase parental engagement, that leads to increased school attendance and increased learning outcomes.

Now I'm going to pass it over to Brenda, and we are going to dive into an example of what it looks like to build a community partnership. Brenda is going to walk us through the different stages, and I'm really excited for her to discuss this community partnership because it's one that we had a chance to build together. Brenda, take it away.

Brenda: Thank you, Sarah. Developing successful community partnerships can be somewhat overwhelming, but don't let that stop you. It is well worth it, and that's OK. Successful partnerships, it takes a lot of communication, information-sharing, and transparency when needing to course-correct and to develop trust.

Now I'm going to walk through how we worked together, myself and Sarah, to build out our community partnership when I was the director of Educare Chicago, which is an Early Head Start Head Start program on the South Side of Chicago, and Sarah was the project director at LIFT. One important thing to note, I want to say here, that outside of our own revenue, there was no funding that backed this partnership. There was a site-based program, which is with the Educare school, and the community-based organization, LIFT, coming together to support parents on their economic mobility goals.

Now this slide talks about identifying collaborative partnerships. How do you go about doing that, when talking about economic mobility for parents? If you don't already have that kind of a partnership, how do you go about getting one of those partnerships? If you do have those partnerships, how did you come about getting the partnership? Here's a few ways to identify potential community partners. Through your community needs assessment – if you're a Head Start/Early Head Start program, you're doing a community needs assessment, and when you're gathering the information and the resources within the communities, potentially, there are organizations and programs that offer opportunities for families to develop economic mobility goals.

Another way is use your own social networks, and engage your community partners that you currently have and asking them what they know about what's available within the community to support parents in their economic goals. Another way to identify collaborative partners is to ask your parents. Your parents are an excellent source of information, and they know what's in the communities in which they live. They have community resources that they're connected to, and they know about community resource outside of what the Head Start program may already find available and valuable. Another way to identify collaborative partners if through newsletters, newspapers, the internet, community newsletters, and the written resources that you may obtain from other community partners or from your parents.

Using funding from the American Rescue Plan, these are funds that have been given to programs and programs may consider using funding from the American Rescue Plan to build new partnerships aimed at supporting families' economic mobility. An example of the way you may use these American Rescue Plans is you may want to hire a part-time person to go out and develop relationships, find out what's in the community, and establish partnerships with potential organizations. That's one way that you may think about using the funds from this American Rescue Plan.

I'm going to walk through the steps outlined in this tool that you see here, Six Steps for Planning Community Partnerships. It's a great resource. It's located on the Office of Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center. I'm going to walk you through the steps outlined in this partnership, and we're going to discuss how we work together to form a partnership that was mutually beneficial to both organizations, and it provided strong impacts for the work that we do with our parents.

The first step that came out of that tool was to define the purpose of the partnership. Think about what you hope to achieve through a community partnership. At our Head Start program, when I worked with our program on the South Side of Chicago, we really emphasized the importance of relationships. We wanted to make sure that any organization that we partnership held those relationships as important and nurtured the relationships.

Our parents, as the first educators, made it clear that they wanted the partnerships to be partnerships that they felt comfortable with. It was clear to us that LIFT shared those values of investing in parents, developing those relationships, and maintaining opportunities for parents to get to know the staff and the program. They believe in putting parents into the driver's seat while working on their economic mobility goals. It was important for us and for our partners to have those shared values because it means that the core of our works were in alignment. It was also important to our partnership that we recognize and we highlighted the parents' strengths and where they were in their progress towards economic mobility.

The partnership had to be open to feedback from parents, feedback from our partners, and feedback from program staff to course-correct, to learn from our mistakes, and to do more of what works, and to expand upon our services.

Step Two. Part of the process in establishing partnerships that work is to assess the environment and our partnership capabilities. We designed, between LIFT and our program, an embedded partnership where our community partner came on site to provide these services. That created many strengths for our families, including meeting our parents where they were at, and in terms of helping the parents feel that our partnership embraced the rhythm of their lives. For example, meeting right after drop-off or right after pickup. LIFT was always willing to volunteer at family events, like our family carnivals, attend parent breakfasts, community resource fairs, our parent community meetings, and to truly become part of the fabric of the center where parents participated on a day-to-day basis.

There were, however, to be honest, some barriers that we had to overcome. We had to continue to discuss the role of the LIFT support staff versus the role of our family support staff and ensure that there was clear communication so that LIFT's direct service workers and our family service workers were working in tandem to help families and not feel that they were stepping on each other's toes.

It was important to ensure that our services were not duplicative, that LIFT was not offering a meeting or support that the family service staff had set up for the parents. It was important that parents were directed to the appropriate staff or the appropriate partner for supports, concerns, and follow-up. Meetings and events did not overlap and did not conflict with the family schedule so that families could attend what they wanted to attend and didn't feel that they had to give up something in order to attend a particular meeting from the partner or from our program staff.

All of this was important because at our Head Start events, we wanted to ensure, through our parent breakfasts, our meetings, resource fairs, that parents – we were able to recruit parents to be a part of this partnership that we have provided within the program. Now, Sarah will share some key points for step number three, as identified here: establishing the partnership's goals and expected outcomes.

Sarah: Thank you for that, Brenda. One of the things that is really important to both Head Start and us as a community partner was making sure that parent voice was at the center of our program and at the center of our partnership. When we, LIFT, and Brenda at Educare were discussing how we wanted to roll out this partnership, the goal was to roll it out in the fall of 2016. We started some prework with a cohort of parents in the summer of 2016 before the new school year. We were able to identify six parents who were interested in participating in what we called a peer learning group.

Throughout the six weeks, we facilitated a workshop and provided content, resources, and shared learnings within the parents. Then directly from that, got feedback from the parents of what they would like to see more of, what resonated with them, what didn't resonate with them. If we were to build a partnership focusing on educational goals or focusing on financial goals, what additional support and resources would the parents need, and how often would they like to meet one-on-one with someone helping them with their economic mobility goals.

We were able to gain a lot of great insights on how we could support the parents and build an effective partnership within the Head Start community and Head Start Learning Center.

The next thing that we learned, too, from the parents was – and working with the family support staff and the family support workers – was the importance of making sure our progress to goals for the parents were communicated and who wanted to communicate that. Some parents wanted to update their family support staff, and some parents wanted LIFT to do that. We came up with an agreement that LIFT would provide a monthly report, with the consent of the parents, on the progress that they are making on their career, financial, and educational goals, how often they met with their LIFT coach, and if they attended one of the workshops that we facilitated, either onsite at the Head Start Center or offsite. That way the family support staff could track engagement in their system as a community partner and an embedded partner on their site.

There were two types of ways that we aligned our partnership goals in that way. The first one, like I said, was elevating parent voice and parent feedback and making sure that parent voice was at the front and center of the work that we were doing in this partnership. Two, continuing communicating on shared goals with the family support workers through monthly reports. Then eventually, we also established quarterly meetings as well. Now I'm going to pass it back over to Brenda to take us through the final steps.

Brenda: Thank you, Sarah. Step number four wanted to make sure that we explore and select strategies for supporting the partnership work. Sarah identified several strategies within what she just shared in terms of how we helped to ensure that this partnership worked, and that is so important when we're wanting to ensure that parents have an effective partner to work with.

Some of the strategies that we created to help ensure that the partnership worked was to create partnerships agreement – we created partnership agreements. Partnership agreements really outline what the work would be and how parents would be involved, and opportunities for parents as well as staff and the partner to share any feedback based on what we identify within our partnership agreements.

We also held quarterly meetings between staff and partners, and monthly reports were sent that outline and identify the engagements that were held with the parents throughout the month. Those were important for staff to read as well as for our partners to become involved in sharing throughout our partnerships.

We monitored our progress towards our goals and worked on making sure that we were retaining parents within the programs and understanding what parents needed in order to remain within the partnership. We monitored goal attainment through our work with our parents and through our work with our families and with our family support staff on the family partnership agreements that parents created within the partnership with the staff.

We held an annual meeting to set the priorities, to review our goals, and to make sure that our community partnership agreement was working and to add any changes or revisions that we needed to make. There were monthly reports from LIFT to Educare to update Educare on parents' progress and to also receive additional feedback. We obtained permission from our parents to share data back with Educare and to add additional information if parents wanted to add additional information to share with our partners. All of these were ways that we felt were very important to keep the lines of communication open and to ensure that we were meeting the goals and meeting the expectations of our parents through our partnership.

Step number five: develop a plan of action. Our plan of action were our community partnerships, as well as our memorandums of understanding. We created these to set clear expectations and to make sure that we were all in agreement and that we were all in alignment with what this particular partnership would offer and provide for parents.

We established patterns of communications that were clear. These patterns of communications were consistent. They were inclusive and engaged the voices of our parents, engaged the voices of our staff, and engaged the voices of our partners to ensure, again, that we were meeting the expectations, expectations were clear, and that parents were getting what they needed from this particular partnership.

Step Six: We wanted to make sure that we were considering opportunities for community impact. As I mentioned earlier, sometimes, when creating partnerships, it can be a little bit overwhelming, and it takes a lot of work. But the work is truly necessary, and the work makes such a difference in what parents, staff, children get from the partnership. Some of the things that this particular partnership created for us, it created family stability. Families were able to meet some of their financial goals and were able to obtain the kinds of jobs or obtain the kinds of economic mobility that they needed that would advance themselves within their families.

This partnership improved child outcomes. Parents felt more successful in their own lives and their own ability to become successful financially, which helped them to work better and have better engagements with their children, which helped improve child outcomes. This partnership increased revenue within the community. Families were able to obtain jobs within the community. They were able to work with community partners to secure services and funding that they needed that would advance their economic mobility.

It definitely increased mental health and well-being for families. Families felt good about opportunities that they were given, and they felt that they were being competent and successful in reaching some of their financial goals. And it created for some parents higher future expectations. Parents felt like they could achieve more, they could advance in their careers, and they had the supports in which to do this.

Now, I think this next part will be very important and interesting. It's near and dear to my heart, because you'll hear from one of the parents in our program from Educare. She will share her story of how our partnership supported her economic goals, and some of the things that she was able to succeed in, as well as some of the challenges that she faced. But through the

partnership, she was able to reach some of her goals. I'd like to have Sarah to share some of the information that's in this story of Humu's story.

Sarah: Great. Thank you, Brenda. We're so excited to share Humu's story because, as Brenda mentioned, it highlights some of the things that Humu worked on and overcame throughout her time working within this partnership. It also shows how we worked onsite, too, at Educare and how that came about. We're just excited to share this live example for you that was built on the six steps that Brenda just walked you through.

[Video begins]

Humu: When I first realized that I was pregnant, I knew that I wanted to give my daughter the life that my mother couldn't give me. Once you hear that child cry for the first time, like, "Oh, my God! My baby! I created this baby!" It just opens your eye like you are the protector, the provider. That was the moment I knew this is what I have to do. I had to plan out my future. I had to have a goal just to make sure that I do give my child the best.

It was rough at first because I felt like I didn't have the support that I needed. It was a struggle. But I knew that I wasn't going to let this stop me. But I didn't know about how to have this support system. I didn't know about money management. I didn't know how to be stable for my child. I was tired of living paycheck after paycheck. It was so overwhelming.

Sarah: I first met Humu at a parent breakfast at Educare. At that time, she was working two part-time jobs, just managing a lot of debt. That's where LIFT was able to step in to help her fully articulate the goals that she has and then develop a plan with her that would help her step-by-step to get there.

Humu: I signed up. They followed up with me. In the first meeting, they asked me, "What is your goal? What do you want?" It wasn't about the program. It was about me. I was like, "Well, I've been struggling trying to go back to school." My other goal was fixing my credit, getting a good job.

Sarah: A lot of the coaching sessions are looking at some of the barriers to achieving those goals and brainstorming, how are we going to overcome them?

Humu: If my goal is to fix my credit, OK, which one? Let's focus on one thing, one credit card, and let's aim to fix that.

Sarah: We provide the tools and the resources and the support, but really looking at what are the parent's strengths? They know what is best for them and their children. Really just providing a listening ear.

Humu: She had a lot of empathy. She understood. She didn't look down on me. Sometimes, I just want to say this, when I'm meeting with Sarah, it's like I just figured out myself. She's guiding me towards to be more independent.

Sarah: Over the past 18 months, I've seen her pay off over \$6,000 worth of debt. She has found a full-time job with benefits, and she started a child savings account for Samia.

Intergenerational work is so important because it allows parents to stabilize right now so their child has a shot of economic mobility. It's really powerful for Humu to be chasing after her educational dreams while Samia is watching her do that, and just being able to set that example of "Humu values education," and "Samia, I want you to do that."

Humu: Without LIFT, my life would be nothing. I wiped out all my credit debt because of LIFT. Yes. What kept me going was my daughter. She was my motivation.

[Humu reading to Samia] That's what she used to pick up the salad, and she's pouring all over your ...

Samia: That's tomato.

Humu: Yea, that's the tomato.

What I see for us in the future is I'm having a career. She's attending one of the best schools, and just for her to grow into this wonderful young lady, respect herself, and just be the best that she can be.

[Video ends]

Sarah: Before we jump into the family feedback section, I want to discuss Humu's video a little bit and just hear some of your reactions. Using the chat box, what were some of the feedback, if you remember, that Humu shared that helped her towards her economic mobility goals? I'll give you one example. She talked about the program focusing on her and not a program. Really putting Humu and her family and her goals and her dreams at the front of everything, where, as Brenda said earlier, putting her in the driver's seat. It was about Humu and not necessarily the program itself. That was one insight that she shared. I'd like to see if there's any others.

Yes. One about the connection between Humu's goals and her daughter's goals. Right? And looking at intergenerational work and intergenerational support. One of my favorite statistics that I have seen in recent studies over the years is the impact of economic mobility and increasing income for parents and the impact on their children. If a parent increases their income by \$3,000, that will yield a 17% increase in lifelong earnings for that child. When you think about that, the \$3,000 increase in their income has the potential to increase the child's lifelong earnings by 17%. That's thousands upon thousands of increased earnings for that child. We're looking at long-term economic mobility for children while also [Inaudible] parent economic mobility right now.

Some other things that I'm seeing come in was focusing on one thing at a time, looking at progression of goals and how goals can stack on each other. Trying to tackle one thing at a time instead of everything at once and prioritizing those goals. A good way to do that is just asking

parents and families what they think is most achievable first. Sometimes, “What do you get most excited about?” Right?

It might not be that this goal is the easiest to achieve, but if there’s a lot of excitement and a lot of passion and energy around that goal, parents are more likely to work and make progress through their goal because that’s where they feel the most energy and the most connected about. Asking parents, what do they think is the most achievable, what is the thing that is exciting them the most right now, is really important, as well.

There’s some other great insight in here, too. It was clear that the program is listening to her, and she appreciated that. As Brenda said earlier, parent voice and the feeling that you are heard is so – so important. I think any one of us can relate with that. Whether it’s working one-on-one with someone or in a program, or even in a staff meeting, the value of being heard and feeling like you are important is so crucial for just overall well-being and success.

The importance of, while working one-on-one with families on their economic mobility goals, that they are heard and that they are valued and that their opinion matters, and putting that at the front of it is so important because it creates a connection and ownership. The family, this is their dreams that they’re chasing after, and not something being told that they should be doing, as well.

Let me see if there’s anything else before I dive into the next part. Very similar things. Just the power of connection, power in relationships. You all know, the importance of that.

As family workers that are in the Head Start community, we value relationships and family voice. Obviously, those things shine through, and why what’s important is the shared values of the two organizations, especially with the parental voice, and driving on the importance of relationships rooted in dignity and respect. Because I think those two shared values between LIFT and Educare is what built a successful partnership, not just for the parents that we served, but for us as community organizations and community leaders able to have that trusting relationship and partnership was really important as well.

Thank you all for your insights and your reflection on the parent, on Humu’s story. Now, I’m going to transition ... We just got one question, which actually, I’m glad this question just came in because it sets up the transition perfectly. The question says, “So you’re saying that we as Head Start programs can help families similar to how LIFT helped Humu?”

I would say, yes. That’s exactly what we are saying. It could be done in a few ways. One, it could be done in terms of the goals that family workers and Head Start staff set with families. It can be done with partnering with community organizations to help families work on their economic mobility goals. It could be done in a combination of it, of both working with the Head Start family staff or a community-based organization.

Oftentimes, we know there’s a lot of different ways people can go about reaching their goals, and different resources working together is a strong way to help families. But to answer your

question specifically about how can Head Start staff help families reach their economic mobility goals, we went to the experts themselves. We asked some parents, and we asked them directly, “How can Head Start programs help you reach your economic mobility goals?”

We got a lot of answers directly [Inaudible]. I just want to ... I’m not going to sit here and read them to you all, because you all have the slides and you can digest this. But I want to point out something that I found really exciting – exciting for what the parent said in the second paragraph was, “As career, education, and financial goals go, gauging the actual and realistic benchmarks will need to be present.” I think that goes back to the comment earlier that was made about prioritizing goals one at a time, or seeing what is a reasonable timeline to achieve the goal, and working with the parent to establish what are those benchmarks, what is a reasonable goal to look at.

If it is a parent’s goal to get their associates degree, and they currently don’t have a GED or high school equivalent, what would be a reasonable goal for that family? And looking at, “OK. Let’s explore some GED programs together.” That would be Step One instead of just jumping straight into, “Well, how do you think or when do you want to finish your associates degree,” if they aren’t even in the space just thinking about enrolling into a degree program. That’s where the suggestion of looking at different resources in the community, where community workforce development and educational programs come into play, and having those partnerships to help connect the parents in those steps.

Another thing that I found very interesting about this quote from a parent is, “If financial goals were tied with lifestyle goals, that we can add perspective to families on the way they want to live versus the cost of living needed for those financial goals.” Really looking at what were the families’ desires and what is it that they would like to achieve? Then how do you set the benchmarks to getting to those goals? Instead of saying, “This is how much money you need to earn for this.” But really seeing what does the family want, and then what does it take to get to that level of financial security or mobility that the family is looking for?

On this next slide, this is a great reflection from the parent, and this one I’m actually going to read verbatim and then we can discuss it a little bit. “Head Start helped me as a parent in many ways. First, it helps the children be connected with other kids and prepare them for school. For as my career, Head Start helped me free up my time to focus, prepare, figure out decisions for my family. Financial, it was huge help. I didn’t have to pay expense fees. My children were still able to receive their healthy meals throughout the day. They even assisted after hours. Head Start community was amazing, meeting different types of families and their dedication to the program as a whole.”

Some reflection I’ve had in this – and I would love to hear your reflections from this quote as well – was just the way Head Start met families where they were at and adapted different resources for the family. Making sure that the kids’ physical and emotional needs from it, but then also adjusting and providing support after hours if needed, and brainstorming with families on how that support would look like to make sure that parents felt like they could continue to make progress to their goals, even if it required additional support outside of the

Head Start community. I would love to hear other people's thoughts in the chat, too, about ways the Head Start programs can help families reach economic mobility goals or reflections from some of the parent feedback.

Great. Thank you all for your responses.

I'm going to go over some resources that are in the resource link, as well. First is the "Head Start Parent, Family, and Community Engagement Framework." Then, as you dive a little bit deeper, the "Engaging Community Partners to Strengthen Family Services" series. Then specifically, the "Tools for Planning Community Partnerships," that will go through the six steps that Brenda outlined for us in terms of things to consider while building out community partners and things like that. We also have "Community Assessment: The Foundation for Program Planning in Head Start," very specifically, the introduction section on getting started with community assessments.

We want to emphasize the community assessment part in getting started because that also shows the strengths of the community and what community organizations are already out there for developing partnerships as well. As Brenda stated earlier as well, the importance of making sure workstreams align with being able to build out family partnerships, particularly through the suggestion of using the American Rescue Plan funding.

If your Head Start supports [Inaudible] additional funding through the American Rescue Plan, using some of that funding to outline [Inaudible] a new hire or part-time person [Inaudible] or someone already in the organization to build out those community partnerships and have that be a part of their workflow.

Let me go on to this next slide. First, some key takeaways. The three key takeaways: Community partnerships expand and enhance the services provided by Head Start. Tools for Planning Community Partnerships contain six steps for engaging community partnerships that strengthen family well-being in ways that support program goals. And community partnerships that support family economic mobility can be developed with a variety of organizations: financial education partners, educational institutions, job training, employee partners, and more.

Some of the takeaways I am seeing in the chat, "Liking the idea of Head Start staff sitting down with families to talk through goals. Then they have the idea of what partnerships could be beneficial for families." Then some other ones: "Sometimes we just need a cheerleader to help us meet our goals. The Head Start staff can help families and also help each other meeting their goals." I think that is a great takeaway.

It's important for us to work with the families, but also to connect with each other and share ways within our Head Start program or other Head Start programs within our area of how you all are working with each other and community partners to help families reach their goals. Those are some great takeaways I've seen in the chat as well.

Brenda: Another key takeaway, if you don't mind my sharing, Sarah, from Humu's story and so near and dear to my heart. It was important that the partnership that we created not only helped Humu to reach her economic mobility goals, but it was also about not just getting a job but getting a career, and the things that we could help through the program and through our partnership to help Humu along her aspirations of obtaining a career and not just a job.

I think that particular partnership that Sarah and I held together through LIFT for the parents not only allowed them to go out and get a job, but also to aspire to get a career and to really move out of the income levels that they were in to higher income levels. That was so important for this partnership.

Sarah: Yes. Brenda, I'm really glad you raised that because one thing that I didn't share for where Humu is now [Inaudible] that we started this partnership in 2016, and Humu was one of our first parents. When she was completing her time with LIFT and Educare, she completed her bachelor's degree. She then went on to enroll in a master's in social work program, where she's currently enrolled now. And she's still working full-time at her job while in graduate school, getting her MSW.

Most exciting is she got accepted into a home buyership program and will be closing on her home in October. She's excited about that because of some of the financial work that we did together to help set her up for a strong financial future as well, helped qualify her for that home buyership program. Just looking at things, when we think of goals and goal setting, too, it's not just for while the parents are in our program, but also to set the mindset of goals and goal-setting for after exiting and completing programs as well, so they can continue to set goals for themselves as continue to move through economic mobility as well.

Those are just some exciting ways foundational level support then helps overall long-term career and financial trajectory for families as well. Thank you for sharing those insights because it reminded me to share the Humu updates. All right.

Now, for the certificate for this session, as well, you can download your Certificate of Attendance and session handouts with the Related Content tool. Complete the institute survey at the end of the two-day week. I just want to make sure I am not forgetting any notes on how you get this survey. You can click on the blue certificate in the attendance icon and a message will appear on your screen. If you've met the criteria, a certificate icon will appear in the tool window, allowing you to download the certificate. Clicking the icon will open the certificate as a PDF in a new browser tab.

You can either save it to your computer or print it out, but we recommend saving it to your computer. If you attended the session with several of your colleagues, and you have all met the full credit criteria, the group leader can add other viewers by opening the Group Viewer Form.

Don't forget to download the resources in the Resource Center in the Helpful Links section of your account. These resources are available in your Engagement Hub. Then please, please,

please complete the survey at the end of the two-day institute because your feedback is very, very valuable to us.

Now, just a little plug. We know you're all eager to resume full and in-person services for children and families. The great news is that the Biden Administration has prioritized teachers, early educators, and child care staff to receive their COVID-19 vaccine. To learn more about the vaccine, we have information available in the Engagement Hub to help you become confident in making the right decision for yourself.

Brenda, do you want to take us through some recap of the Institute for today and what to look forward to tomorrow?

Brenda: Yes. Thank you, Sarah. I want to thank everyone for your attention. I hope that the information we provided motivates you and inspires you to continue to develop those partnerships and go out and to add more partnerships because they are truly transforming when you talk about parents' lives.

That old saying "it takes a village" is so true when you talk about the unique position that Head Start, Early Head Start programs are in. When we combine our efforts and our support with wonderful community partners, we can do a lot to support what parents are striving to do within their financial goals and opportunities for their families. I hope we were able to provide you with some information that can launch you into creating those wonderful partnerships and sustaining those partnerships.

I kind of want to just wrap up today. This session wraps up the Day One of our Institute. We started out today with a wonderful message from Dr. Futrell to put us in the right mindset. We learned how relationships are the foundation for meaningful conversations, especially when those conversations can be quite challenging.

We explored some new tools to help identify families' strengths, their priorities, and their goals. We heard a powerful story from a Head Start parent, who has lived the experiences of being able to access resources for her family during the pandemic. She provided great examples about how staff can work with families to identify their specific needs and then to link them to services that can really provide supports. We reviewed tools to stress a family's readiness to explore career goals. Finally, we discussed the importance of joining with community partners to strengthen your family economic mobility efforts.

What a great day of learning together. If you missed any of today's sessions, they will be available in your On Demand. You can use the registration link to enter the Engagement Hub and to access the sessions that were provided. There are resources and self-care, meditation, and yoga activities, and there's other information just waiting for you in the Hub. Don't forget to take some time to explore the Hub.

We have a great Day 2 for you with some exciting topics. Some of these topics include having conversations with families about money, budgeting and saving, understanding credit and debt, and the American Rescue Plan. Another session will be moving families out of poverty.

We hope you continue to practice self-care this afternoon and come back energized for Day 2. Have a good evening, everyone, and we will see you tomorrow at 11 o'clock am, Eastern Standard Time. Join us in the Engagement Hub for a self-care break, and get ready for your next sessions. Thank you for your attention and your focus.