Partnering with Parents in Research

Community-Engaged Approaches to Improve Data Collection and Analysis

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As Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) Lead Agencies, you serve thousands of parents[1] each year. You work to provide efficient, effective services to help parents meet their child care needs. Many of you seek parents' views as you think about how to improve your services. Building on your contact with parents, this brief explains how you can use community-engaged methods (CEM) to partner with parents on research

[1] In this brief, we use the term "parents" broadly to include *all* caregivers that fill the role of a parent. This includes
- biological parents,
- parents with shared custody,
- foster or adoptive parents, and
- siblings and extended family members.

and practices that impact their lives. CEM is an approach that includes people with personal, lived experience[2] (such as parents served by CCDF Lead Agencies) in the process of knowledge-building and decisionmaking.

Parents and organizations led by parents hold a deep amount of information and expertise.[3] They have an interest in and a right to be part of the teams that make decisions on research and practices that impact them and their families. Partnering with parents as part of your research process can strengthen the power of your research to improve the lives of the parents you serve. In this brief, we share

- our approach to CEM,[4]
- the benefits of using a CEM approach, and
- how CCDF Lead Agencies and research teams can partner with parents as fellow experts.

BOX 1

How We Wrote This Brief

This brief draws on conversations with five researchers who partnered with parents in research and five parents who have been research partners. Two of the parents also lead parent-trusted organizations focused on early childhood programs. Two Urban Institute researchers, two parents, and an outside university researcher wrote this brief together. As a team, we offer guidance on creating strong partnerships of parents, agencies, and researchers.

We credit the ideas of each person we spoke with. For each person's first credit in the brief, we provide their bio in a footnote. From then on, we credit their ideas, and any direct quotes, by listing their full name in parentheses. We offered each person we spoke with the chance to be mentioned by name in this brief (instead of only giving them the chance to be anonymous). We believe that it is important to attribute ideas to their speakers, when they want to be identified, and model this in the brief. Detailed bios of each cited parent or researcher are provided again at the end of the brief.

What Are Community-Engaged Methods (CEM)?

CEM are an approach to doing research. At its core, research is the process of creating information. In research, we decide on questions, search for answers, and come to results in a precise way. Your agency might use research for a formal study to inform new rules or for operational and planning reasons. We

[2] People with lived experience are people who have had direct, firsthand involvement with your research topic.

[3] We use the term expertise to describe the unique skills and knowledge a person gains through lived experience, training, study, or practice.

[4] We use community-engaged methods (CEM) as a blanket term that includes participatory and CE methods.

define research this way to include the many strategies CCDF Lead Agencies use to factor data and information into their choices.

Traditionally, research is led by people without lived experience in their research topic. And communities the research impacts are often *studied*, rather than being *members of the study team*. This has led to a long history of harmful research. This includes policies and programs not working for the people they are meant to support, and researchers carrying out abuse that has damaged communities, especially Black and Brown communities—for example, the Havasupai genetic research (Sterling 2011), Baltimore lead study,[5] and the Bell Curve.[6] This abuse has caused lasting harm to communities and broken the trust between communities and researchers.

In contrast, **CEM recognize that research, policymaking, and program design is most powerful when people and communities are partners in processes that impact their lives.** These methods emphasize equity (fairness and justice), collaboration (working with each other), education, and action (McCracken 2019). The end goal of CEM is to change the systems, policies, and programs that negatively impact people's lives. (Please see Kurt Lewin, Paulo Freire, and Marja-Liisa Swantz in the further reading section).

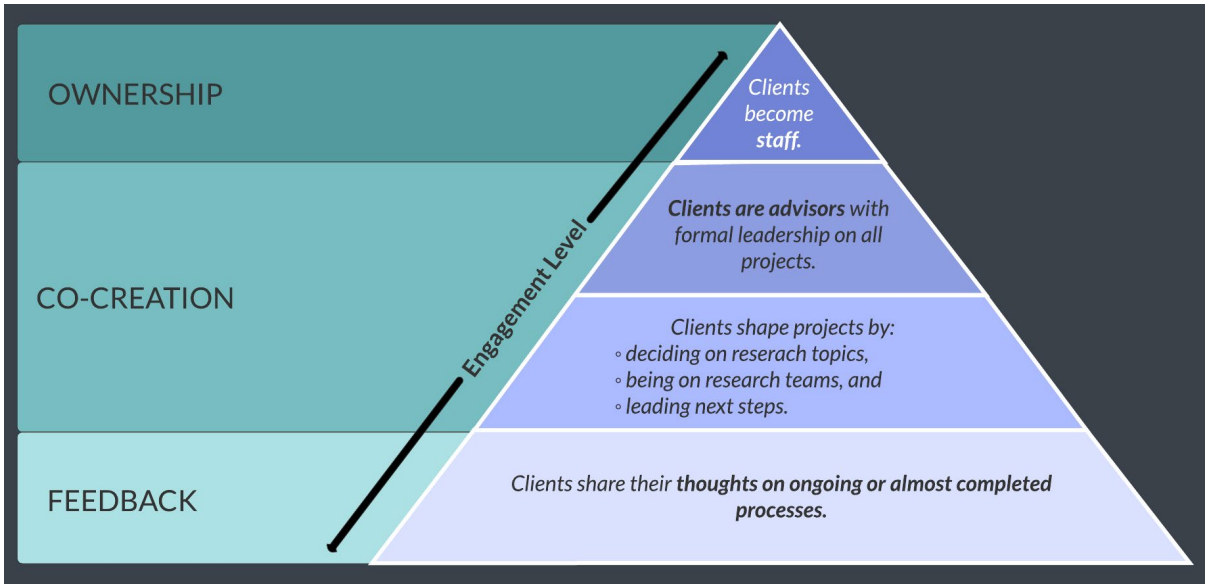
CEM can be used in all stages of research, policymaking, or program building—from coming up with questions to summing up findings and proposed actions. CEM can range from more simple approaches of getting community feedback, where community members provide input on work, to more engaging forms, where community members are leaders from the start of any process.

[5] Tamar Lewin, "U.S. Investigating Johns Hopkins Study of Lead Paint Hazard," *New York Times*, August 24, 2001, https://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/24/us/us-investigating-johns-hopkins-study-of-lead-paint-hazard.html.

[6] Alex Min, "Racist Pseudoscience Has No Place at Harvard," *Harvard Political Review*, November 18, 2020, https://harvardpolitics.com/racist-pseudo-harvard/.

FIGURE 1

Client Engagement Pyramid



Source: Urban Institute, adaptation from Listen4Good.

We use the client engagement pyramid, adapted from Listen4Good. It outlines three levels of community engagement: feedback, cocreation, and ownership.

Feedback

Feedback is the first and most simple form of engaging people. Gathering and integrating community feedback on a research project is valuable because it allows your work to be checked against lived experience. This check helps to make sure that you are on the right path. You can gather feedback by seeking the views and insight of community members in response to a current or ongoing process. This can happen in many ways including through public comment forums, focus groups, interviews, and surveys (box 2). However, there is an important distinction between collecting data from parents to understand their perspectives as part of a research study (qualitative research) and using information from parents to shape the research process (community engagement).

BOX 2

Detroit Needs Assessment of Programs, Services, and Support Systems for Fathers

In 2015, researchers from the University of Michigan set out to complete a needs assessment of programs, services, and support systems for fathers in Detroit, Michigan. The goal of the needs assessment was to understand the availability of parenting support services for fathers. The study team hosted focus group sessions with a board of fathers at key points throughout the project to gain guidance on the research efforts. This board of fathers shared feedback on topics for community dialogues, who to include in interviews, revised draft questions for interviews, and reviewed the initial

analysis of findings completed by the researchers. Their feedback was used to ensure that the research was completed in a respectful and contextualized manner.

Source: Lee, Hoffman, and Harris (2016).

Cocreation

Cocreation is the next level for how to engage people in your research. Cocreation means community members are included in the planning and design of a project. This ensures that community members' expertise, needs, and assets shape the course, and impact, of a project. Examples include

- holding workshops where community members are involved in the research project design, data tool creation, and/or data analysis process,
- hiring and training community members to do research,
- setting up medium- to long-term work agreements (e.g., subcontracts or consultants) with community-based organizations and community members, and
- community advisory boards (Arnos et al. 2021; box 3) and Data Walks (Murray, Falkenburger, and Saxena 2015).

BOX 3

Early Childhood Equity Fund Evaluation

In 2019, Oregon State started the Early Childhood Equity Fund Evaluation (ECEFE). The ECEFE gives grants to parent-led organizations for early learning, early childhood, and parent support programs tailored to different cultures. The evaluators of the fund invited all parent organization grantees to join an Evaluation Leadership Group. Parents in this group use their lived experience as parents and their work experience setting up the funded programs to shape the evaluation. These parents offered their thoughts and guidance and decided how data collection, evaluation measures, and reporting should be carried out.

Source: Green et al. (2021).

Ownership

Ownership is the highest level at which you can engage people in research. Ownership is when community members lead projects and are in charge of all research processes. Ownership is the most impactful level of partnership. When community members lead a project, they have the opportunity to gain skills, reputation, and credit that may make it easier for them to serve as leaders in future work. To build ownership, you could procure research from community-led groups, hire clients as agency staff, or ask the community what research they want to do with your agency (box 4).

BOX 4

The Parent Leadership Evaluation Network

Teams of parent leaders and staff from seven parent leadership initiatives (including Parent Ambassadors in Washington State and Parent Voices in California) across the country set out to answer these questions:

- What are the impacts of parent leadership development initiatives on the parents who take part in them?
- What are common actions in these initiatives that bring success?

Parents led the project with members of the research team at NYU Metro Center. They designed the work, gathered qualitative data, reviewed findings, and proposed actions based on the findings.

Source: NYU Metro Center (2019).

Benefits of Using a CEM Approach

Parents can best explain their own experiences and their children's experiences with early care and education policies and programs. You and your research partners can learn from parents about the impact of public systems and programs on parents' and children's growth. The insights below are drawn directly from conversations and the lived expertise of parents, as well as community engagement literature. CEM can

- create more relevant research findings (Forsythe et al. 2016; Han et al. 2021; Kwon et al. 2018; Rollet and Winiarski 2002; Silberberg and Martinez-Bianchi 2019),
- increase impact (Fine et al. 2003; Herzog et al. 2009; Wennerstrom et al. 2018),[7] and
- build community power, autonomy, and trust (Cahill 2007; Freire 2000; Herzog et al. 2009; Schensul 1999).

Create More Relevant Research Findings

When you have better research, you have better data to use to make choices. CEM can create more relevant CCDF Lead Agency study findings by having parents inform how the research is done. This can ensure that

- research is focused on issues that parents value,
- parents can understand the tools used to collect their data (questions on surveys, focus groups, interviews, etc.),

[7] "Morris Justice: A Public Science Project," CUNY Academic Commons, accessed April 1, 2024, https://morrisjustice.org/action/.

- harmful myths, stereotypes, and misconceptions about parents are not spread, [8] and
- findings and proposed actions match what parents have gone through and what their needs are (Herzog et al. 2009).

Increase Impact

Parents have expertise that can improve public policies and programs to work better for their families and communities. Using CEM in the research process

- grounds policies and programs in parents' expertise, insights, and issues (box 5);
- leads to programs that are more prepared to help families (Jennifer Greppi); and
- can produce research that can support more meaningful and relevant policy recommendations (Han et al. 2021).

BOX 5

California Department of Social Services (Cal-OAR) Outcomes

Cal-OAR is an evaluation program that looks at success in the California Work Opportunity and Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKs) program. Before parents were engaged in this program, the work participation rate was the only measure of success for CalWORKs. This meant that many helpful aspects of the program were not being captured or seen by the California Department of Social Services. A group of parents changed the design of this evaluation program. They made tools to engage parents so that California counties could learn *from* parents using CalWORKs. Parents designed focus group questions, survey questions, and other tools for counties to evaluate CalWORKs with their clients (parents). After collecting feedback, the group of parents created 30 measures of success for CalWORKs that reflect and capture what parents experience in the program. Performance measures now look at things such as child care access rate, housing assistance and housing support program rate, and improved literacy.

Sources: "California CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR), California Department of Social Services, accessed September 4, 2024, https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/calworks/cal-oar; "CalWORKs Outcomes and Accountability Review (Cal-OAR) Workplan," California Department of Social Services, accessed September 4, 2024, https://www.cdss.ca.gov/Portals/9/CalWORKs/Cal-OAR/Cal-OAR%20Workplan.pdf?ver=2019-05-28-082351-103.

[8] **Jennifer Greppi** is a former TANF recipient who works as the director of parent policy for Parent Voices California. A vocal advocate for child care over the past 20 years, Jennifer is often in Sacramento with parent leaders from around the state fighting for more equitable and just systems that support families. Jennifer's advocacy is rooted in her strong belief that parents with lived experience are the only ones who can transform the racist and sexist policies that have held them back. Jennifer is regularly sought after in the community for her expertise in child development and advocacy and her work with parents is known nationwide. Jennifer is a proud mother of two adult daughters and a doting grandmother to her 9-year-old granddaughter, Melanie.

Build Power, Autonomy, and Trust

Lived experience is a key form of expertise that comes from being directly involved in or impacted by something. Parents have lived experience with the day-to-day matter of trying to access and use child care. Having parents with lived experience in CCDF programs involved in research

- supports parents as leaders in coming up with ways to solve problems they see in their lives,
- builds parent power, autonomy, and belonging in research and making policy choices (Bogle 2020),
- moves forward community civic engagement and helps parents become leaders,
  - » supports "parents' access to tools, such as being able to get data and information from behind paywalls, [which] leads to feeling empowered to advocate on behalf of their community" (Dr. Brittany Murray, researcher),
- shows parents that CCDF Lead Agencies are there to support them, and
- builds trust and supports strong, long-term bonds between agencies, researchers, and communities—a crucial aspect of community-engaged research.

How Can CCDF Lead Agencies and Research Teams Partner with Parents in the Research Process?

Ultimately, you will choose the ways you partner with parents based on your research purpose and the limits you face. Those limits may include

- the amount of time you have to gather feedback and work with each other,
- the funds you have to support your efforts,
- the skills of your team or the outside people you hire, and
- other state or local needs (Derrick-Mills 2021).

You may be able to reduce such limits by knowing how to partner with parents; we hope this brief helps you plan for that. In this section, we share five steps for how to partner with parents in the research process:

1. Prepare yourself and your organization to partner with parents.
2. Define the "parent community" you want to partner with.
3. Find parent-led organizations to partner with.
4. Build trusting relationships.
5. Partner with parents for research.

These suggested steps are based on conversations and the expertise of parents and researchers who have partnered in research contexts, and written by two Urban Institute researchers, two parents, and an outside university researcher. Each step will be helpful as you work with parents in a deeper way to make choices about the research that impacts them and their families.

Step 1. Prepare Yourself and Your Organization to Partner with Parents

Before you start a research project or collect data from or with parents, you should prepare yourself and your organization to engage in authentic communication and partnership.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Answer a set of questions about your partnership. This includes listing out

- what your goals are for partnering with parents,
- how the work will help the parents or community, and
- how your identity (as a person and as an agency) will impact how you work with each other as partners (e.g., addressing positionality, as is mentioned next).

Address your positionality (Daly et al. 2023). Positionality is the process of learning about your social standing, identity, and how these shape your views and life experience. Positionality is all of your identities and experiences combined. This includes who you are, the powers and privileges you hold, and all you have gone through.

Learning your positionality will help you see how you and your parent partners are different or similar. This can help you learn how power affects the way you work with each other. For instance, if you have never worked at a job without paid leave, you may not know or think about all that a parent with that type of job may need in order to apply for your subsidy program. You may know the state laws and regulations of your subsidy program very well, but if you have never applied for child care subsidies, you won't know the exact issues parents face when they apply. Identifying, unpacking, and keeping your positionality in mind throughout the research process is an important part of equitable partnership. **The questions below will help you reflect on how your identity might impact how you and parents work with each other:**

- **What are the features of your identity** (gender, race, age, class, parent status, disability, sexuality, etc.)? How do they impact your life? How is what you've gone through in life **similar to or different** from the parents and families you work with?

- **How do community[9] members view your agency**? What is the history of your agency in your state and in communities that have not received enough services, or received them inequitably, within your state?
- **How do community members view the state or local government**? Is there historic tension between the community and the government? Does that tension remain? Is there current mistrust of the government and/or researchers in the community? Has the government harmed the community?
- **What is the history of research in the community** (and not just in the child care or early education space)? Have research teams studied parents in this community before? What questions have parents been asked before? **Has the community been harmed by researchers**?
- **How do people work with each other within the community?** Are certain voices heard more often than others?
- **How might the above factors impact how parents connect with your agency or researchers?** How can you frame the ways you reach out to and work with parents to build trust?

Set what you and your agency expect from parent partners ahead of time. It is crucial for your agency or project team to agree on the role each partner will play. This will allow you to be transparent with parents rather than overpromising on the extent of their role. Your agency should also consider if there are any hurdles to overcome or needs to meet in order to engage parents in your state. Asking these questions will help ensure your agency is prepared to partner with parents:

- How will parents be part of the project? For instance, through feedback, cocreation, or ownership? Will parents have a final say in what is part of the research? Will parents get to make choices for or give advice on the research? How can you communicate those roles and boundaries clearly?
- Are there any local, state, Tribal, or federal hurdles to overcome or needs to meet to engage parents? Is there a certain place you should look for that information in your state?

Step 2. Define the "Parent Community" You Want to Partner With

In CEM, it is very rare and most often not possible to engage each person that a policy or topic impacts. Which groups of parents you engage in your research will depend on what you are trying to learn. For this reason, it is crucial to define the **types of lived experiences** important to the policy or topic you are learning about. When making these choices, it helps to think about different aspects of identity and lived experience.

[9] In CEM, we use the term "community" to describe a group of people who share a common place (country, state, region, neighborhood, etc.), lived experiences (parenthood, justice involvement, etc.), identities (age, race, gender, sexuality, disability, etc.), and/or a combination of the three.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Reflect on what group of people to focus on. Consider these questions to define what lived experiences are a priority to represent through parent-partnerships:

- What questions are you trying to answer?
- What policy, program, or service are you focused on? Who is impacted by the policy, program, or service of focus? For instance, are you focused on all parents seeking child care or only parents seeking child care subsidies?
- Are certain groups marginalized or excluded, hard to reach, or not often engaged in research or policy work?
- What is the place of focus? You may want to focus on a higher level (state, territory, or Tribal community) or drill down to a certain region, county, or city. Are you focused on urban and/or rural areas?
- Looking at agency data, do you see trends by place or group of people? For example, do you see trends in race or age in who can access your program? Consider the factors of diversity discussed below and other factors in agency data trends, such as
  - » what groups of people are and are not accessing your program,
  - » child or provider turnover,
  - » child development results, and
  - » quality of care.

Ensure families with different needs or barriers to access are included. In this brief, we use the term "parents" to include the whole group of caregivers that fill the role of a parent. This includes biological parents, parents with shared custody, foster parents or parents who adopt, and siblings and extended family members. Beyond how they relate to the children in their care, parents are a diverse group of individuals with varying identities and experiences. As you begin to figure out your parent group of focus, it's crucial to include parents whose views vary. Think about the mix of parents you will work with. They bring varied cultures, races and ethnicities, communities, and views of the world (e.g., family member, child care provider, community member). These varied aspects of their lives impact what it's like for them to take part in early care and education programs and how related policies affect them. We recommend that you focus on identifying and including families that have different kinds of need or barriers to access. If we fix issues within the system for as many types of people as possible, especially for people who face the most hurdles, we can work toward a system that works for and supports *all* people (Jennifer Greppi).

The below list of factors does not have all aspects of diversity or barriers to access that may be useful to include in the parent groups you partner with. You should think more about your state, territory, or Tribal community's context to figure out which factors matter most for the study. First, you should reflect on the questions and aspects of diversity below. Then, you can start to define the parent group you should engage based on what you know. The first draft of how you define your parent group

will help you figure out what organizations and intermediaries you might be able to partner with to help reach your parent group.

- **Race and ethnicity.** How do race and ethnicity impact your topic of study? Will you include Black, Indigenous, Latinx, and/or Asian American and Pacific Islander parents? How is their access to programs and services impacted by experiences of discrimination?
- **Child characteristics.** What are the ages of the children you want to learn about? Are the parents seeking care for infants and toddlers, preschool children, and/or school-age care? Do they have children with disabilities?
- **Eligibility for funds to help pay for child care.** Will you focus on parents who receive child care subsidies right now? Or do you also want to partner with parents who may be eligible but have not yet applied? Will you partner with families across a wide range of family incomes?
- **Work and student status.** How do work and student status show up in your current data? Are there groups of parents who are not often part of the data or do not receive as many benefits? Are these parents working full time, working part time, out of work and seeking work, or in school? Are they seeking care during normal hours or nontraditional-hour care?
- **Child care setting.** Do you want to engage parents who are using a range of care types? Does that range include center-based and home-based care? Licensed and license-exempt care? Public prekindergarten programs and Head Start?
- **Language spoken.** How does language impact your topic of study? Are there certain languages spoken in your state that are not used when reaching out to parents, in applications, or in child care services?
- **Parent age.** How does age impact your topic of study? Is it crucial to include younger parents who may need more support? Do you want to include older parents who may have varied comfort levels with technology?
- **Education level.** How does education level impact your topic of study? Will you include parents with lower levels of education? They may face hurdles when they try to access technology or read content used to describe programs.
- **Whether they are first-time parents or have more than one child.** Do you want to learn about what your topic is like for first-time parents? First-time parents may know less about what public benefits and programs for early care and education they can access. They may also need more support to research and find child care programs.
- **Family structure and relationship status.** How do varied family structures, such as grandparents as primary caregivers, two-parent and single-parent households, and single-

gender and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) parent households impact your topic of study?[10]

BOX 6

Best Actions to Take in Hiring Others to Do Community-Engaged Research

As CCDF Lead Agencies, you are not always able to partner with parents directly in your research. You may need to hire outside organizations to do this work. This guide will support your agency in using community engagement with your research partners and staff. These proposed actions are for those of you who will hire outside support rather than doing the research in-house.

- Think about the best actions to take when hiring (in the field, this is called procuring) research and evaluation services as you come up with a call for proposals (Derrick Mills, Reginal, and Isaacs 2020).
- Include relationship building and sustainability in the project time frame (in the field, this is called the period of performance) and amount of funding the project has. Here's how that could look:
  - » You could use a grant structure that has more than one phase. For instance, you could have a five-year grant with one year for planning, two years for research, and two years for sustainability work. A grant structure with many phases can give research teams and parent partners more space to figure out the research design with each other and build trust before research begins.
  - » You could allow for more wiggle room in how detailed the research design is at the time of the proposal. This gives projects the chance to partner with parents on the design of the evaluation.
  - » You could make small amounts of funds available for grantees to explore and build parent partnerships.
- Think broadly about who might be able to do this work. Parent-led organizations and parent leaders have the skills, expertise, and current relationships with the community needed to lead research. Think about funding a parent-led organization as the main project leader (the prime) and hiring a research firm as a support partner under the prime (the subcontractor).
- Design the application in a way that asks people to show how they will engage parents. Here's how that could look:
  - » Ask those you might hire to say how they plan to include parents in the work. Ask them to be direct about whether parents will give feedback or be engaged as fellow experts on the research team.
  - » Ask those you might hire to divide resources fairly. You could do so by asking for their budgets to show that resources are reserved for parent-led organizations. You could also set a minimum hourly pay rate for parent partners.
    - For instance, you could require a line item in the budget for parent-led organizations. Research bids could earn more points (in the scoring system) if the bid includes a named partner and clear effort to ensure the team will engage parents.
  - » Require several community engagement actions throughout the project.

[10] Family structure and parent relationship status differ among families and can impact how parents are able to find their way through public systems. These affect how parents can apply for and take part in public programs.

Step 3. Find Parent-Led Organizations to Partner With

Good partnerships are the basis of all community-engaged work. If you invest in long-term, equitable partnerships, your work will be easier, more transparent, reflect community needs, and have greater impact (Shakesprere et al. 2021). When you partner with an organization that parents trust, parents feel more at ease, assured, and prepared to take part in your research.[11]

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Find parent-led organizations. Parent-led organizations often serve as key points for agencies and parents to connect. Take, for instance, Washington State Parent Ambassadors and California's Parent Voices. These organizations are led by parents who have used early education and child care subsidies. They are often asked by agencies in their state to recruit and prepare parents to take part in research and policy processes. Beyond this work to recruit parents, parent-led organizations should be partners in parent research because they have deep expertise, have already successfully spearheaded work with their parent community, and have built trust with their parent community (Jennifer Greppi). It is crucial to find parent-led organizations that are involved with the parent community you have chosen to engage (step 2).

Here are key questions to think about when you choose organizational partners:

- How long have they been doing this work in the community?
- Who are their parent members and clients? Does their parent base fit with the community of parents I have chosen to engage?
- What are their values? How do they live their values?
- How are they making it possible for parents to thrive (Jennifer Greppi)?

Partner with organizations that parents trust. Organizations that parents trust do the following:

- Provide expertise and skills because they have taken part in public programs, changing systems, and supporting families:
  - "[As parent-led organizations], we want to be respected and valued as real partners in this work. When we talk about parent engagement, we want it to be parent partnership. We want to be engaged early and often, we should be cobranding, part of getting the grants, really partnering. We are capable of being partners; we are invested and want to do the

[11] **Sonja Lennox** is the federal advocacy and parent coordinator for the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP parent ambassador. She has been part of the Parent Ambassador program since being an ambassador in 2011, a mentor in 2012, and a parent coordinator beginning in 2013. Sonja says, "I have been with the program for 13 amazing years and would not be where I am today without the Parent Ambassador program. My favorite part of staffing the program is helping parents find their voice and realizing they are worthy, and they do matter. When parents realize they can make a difference they start being seen as a role model and the 'go-to' person. I also feel an important aspect of the yearlong Parent Ambassador program is the sense of being a part of a family and being part of something bigger than themselves." Sonja lives on a small farm in Tacoma and has two children, Randi, age 23, and Danner, age 13, who have both gone through the Head Start program.

work. We want to have a real say in what the research looks like. We want to bring our wealth of knowledge to the table; it can be frustrating when we are just asked for parent connections" (Jennifer Greppi, parent and parent organization lead).

- Bridge gaps in communication and culture. These organizations can translate between groups and help others see how power affects group dynamics.[12] For instance, after research meetings, parent-trusted organizations will ask parents if there were things they didn't grasp or things they wanted to say but didn't feel like they could share. The organizations then share this feedback with the research team.
- Can help recruit more parents and engage parents better over time. Trust from parents is much higher if the person they are speaking with has lived through the same things as them (box 7).[13]
  - » "I'm more willing to give you all of the information and input, knowing you come referred by someone I trust rather than a stranger" (Kimberly Salazar, parent).

To find out which organizations are trusted by parents, look for those that

- have a large base of parents and families that they work with and support,
- have long-term relationships with the parents within the community or state, and
- are led by parents with lived experience (Jennifer Greppi).[14]

[12] **Dr. Brittany Murray** is a Malcolm O. Partin assistant professor of educational studies and political science at Davidson College where her research investigates relationships between families and educational policies, school resource allocation, and the distribution of learning opportunities in US public schools. She uses mixed methods and has a special interest in leveraging administrative data to gain unique analytical perspectives on school and community contexts. She teaches courses on the social foundations of K–12 education, research methods, and critical approaches to policy analysis. She also partners with community-based organizations to create more equitable engagement practices and more inclusive access to educational decisionmaking for nondominant families and communities.

[13] **Dr. Autumn Green** is an applied sociologist and interdisciplinary scholar who engages a wide range of methods to impact social change through policy, systems, practice, and data strategies. She has led and contributed to numerous collaborative projects impacting change in higher education across the United States, including The Family Friendly Campus Toolkit, The Campus Family Housing Database, and The Find Your Way Project. She is currently a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute and the 2023 Twink Frey visiting scholar-activist at the University of Michigan focusing on support for student caregivers. Dr. Green started her own scholar-activist journey as a student mother, and her projects work to engage pregnant and parenting students and alums as research and action partners, emerging scholars, and impact leaders.

[14] **April Messenger** is the former director of family engagement and advocacy for the Washington State Parent Ambassador Program housed by the Washington State Association of Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. Her own lived experience, advocating as a parent and finding passion in helping others do the same, led her to this work.

Dr. Beth Green has focused on conducting community-based research and evaluation that informs policy and improves programs for children and their families for more than 20 years. Her experience includes evaluations of numerous home-visiting and early learning programs, including Early Head Start, Head Start, Healthy Families Oregon, Relief Nurseries, and other programs designed to prevent child maltreatment, improve school readiness, and support family and child well-being.

Pay the parent-trusted organizations you work with. When parent-led and trusted organizations are asked to be part of research or to help recruit parents, they often do work behind the scenes to prepare parents to engage in the process (Jennifer Greppi; April Messenger). In any partnership with these organizations (from recruitment support to coleadership of a project), it is crucial to pay for the depth of their work and expertise. Talk with parent-trusted organizations to find out what the work entails and the correct level or rate of pay.

BOX 7

Early Relational Health Project (ERHP)

The ERHP worked to learn how doctors can teach and promote early relational health in Oregon. Early relational health is the relationship between parents and their infants and is vital to the growing child's overall health. The project wanted to learn what hurdles doctors face when giving this kind of health care to families in communities of color. This was crucial to study given how racism shows up in medical spaces. The research team partnered with organizations that had deep relationships within communities of color. The team hired people from each organization to be partners on the research team who could connect with people in the community. The community liaisons and organizations were paid for the full extent of their work on the project. Their work as leaders helped ensure that parents and families taking part felt like they could engage in the process.

Sources: Willis (2020); Center for Improvement of Child and Family Services (2020).

Step 4. Build Trusting Relationships

When you partner with the right parent-led and trusted organization, you help people in the community trust your agency. However, each staff member or researcher reflects your agency to the parent group. By building trust throughout a project, your agency will have more meaningful relationships and investment from parents in current and future projects. Strong research-community relationships are built when both sides can be open with each other, people spend time with each other, and both sides want to know each other (Sonja Lennox).

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Support parent-led work. One of the first steps in building trust is showing parents that you share the same values and goals as them. It's crucial to show that you care about and want to support their work and goals. This includes "seeing what parents are already doing within their organizations and investing in what is already happening" (Beth Green, researcher). It also includes getting more involved in the community or organization's work that you want to partner with (Dr. Brittany Murray). Here's how that could look:

- Ask how your project can help their organization. Also ask if there are certain pieces of information that would be helpful for them to learn or certain skills their staff want to gain (Dr. Brittany Murray).
- Attend community events.

- Put aside time and funds to build relationships with community members in project timelines and budgets. For instance, plan dinners or online meetings to get to know each other before a research task (Sonja Lennox).

Learn about and begin to fix past harms. Another key part of trust is to learn about past research or governmental harms and ask how you or your organization can repair those harms (Dr. Beth Green). In doing so, you could offer resources to support community partners in the long term.

Commit to being open. Being open and transparent is key to any trusting relationship. It should be part of each stage of the project from early project planning to carrying out the research and gathering findings. Here are some of the best ways to do that:

- Be open about what your grant requires. Most of the time, researchers have been given clear limits around what is allowed in the work. What their funder requires is often set before they engage with the community. When this happens, "don't pretend the boundaries don't exist" (Dr. Beth Green, researcher). Instead, tell community members what is required and how the project can work within that. Do not promise more than you are sure you can provide (Sonja Lennox).
- Be clear about what you intend to do, such as
  - how you plan to do the research,
  - where information will be shared, and
  - how people will receive credit for their work (Sonja Lennox).
- Work with each other on or discuss the budget openly.
- Set clear roles and duties.
- Set a process for dealing with mistakes and when people get upset (Shakesprere et al. 2021).

Step 5. Partner with Parents for Research

Once your organization has defined the parent group, chosen parent-trusted partners, and begun to build trust with parents, you can move to the research stage. Parents bring an equally valuable, unique set of experiences and expertise to any research team**.** However, they are often treated as less important, seen as an afterthought, or not included at all on research teams.

Below we share proposed actions to move from feedback to cocreation and ownership. Each proposed action can foster fairness and equity with partners. But you do not need to carry out these actions all at once to connect well with partners.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Engage parents early and often (Jennifer Greppi). Engage parents as early as you can in the research process. Try to engage parents in the proposal and research development process. Once the research begins, use a process where parents are engaged in making choices in many ways and many times over the course of a project. Here's how that could look:

- Hire parents as members of the research team and meet weekly.
- Create a parent community advisory board that meets every two months (Arnos et al. 2021).
- Make space in the project timeline to touch base with parents when you need to make key choices. That could include parents giving input on data collection tools, reviewing first findings, choosing ways to share the research with the public, and so on.

Pay parents as experts. One of the biggest imbalances in the way that community partners and agencies are treated in research is in their pay. Agencies and researchers will often give stipends ($15–$25) or other rewards to community members for taking part in the research. But this amount of pay is far less than what researchers are paid (Dupont 2008). The expertise parents bring to the table is as critical to the work as that brought by researchers or other project staff. It is a good rule of thumb to pay parents at the same rate as you would compensate any other expert. Here are three key things to think about when you discuss pay:

- **You are not just paying one person. You are paying a family.**[15] Because parents are recruited and provide information to a project based on their family experiences, their compensation is for the contributions of multiple members of their household.
- **You aren't just paying people while they're in the room** (April Messenger). Pay should include solving or easing problems parents face when joining a meeting (Zero to Three and NCIT 2021). Here are a couple of options:
  - » For any meeting that is in person, consider providing funds for parents to travel to the meeting (public or private transport), hire child care, and get food.
  - » Think about what other forms of pay you can offer. Ask parent partners if your agency can offer intern support, meeting space, platforms to publish work, and communications experts that would be helpful (Dr. Brittany Murray).
- **Benefit cliffs.** Benefit cliffs refer to the sudden (and often hard to foresee) decrease in public benefits that can occur with a small increase in earnings. When pay for taking part in research is counted as income by the government, it may put parents over the income limit for their

[15] **Caroline Ano** is a first-generation Guatemalan American, based in Southern California. She is a social worker by trade and calling, with more than 17 years of child welfare experience in family reunification, foster care, resource family approval licensing, parent and community engagement, and education. She has a bachelor of arts in psychology from Biola University and a master of social work from California State University, Fullerton.

Kimberly Salazar is the mother of a 6-year-old and is currently working toward a bachelor's in sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. She conducted independent research via the Undergraduate Research Apprentice program, Millers Scholar program, HAAS program, and senior honors thesis at Berkeley studying student-parents' experiences navigating both CalWORKs (California's Welfare-to-work program) and four-year universities. She was awarded a summer stipend grant to assist in Dr. Yu-Ling Chang's current research project investigating racial equity and CalWORKs reforms in California in the context of the global pandemic. She also is a recipient of the Patsy Takemoto Mink Education Support Award and was a part of the Leadership Council for Student Parent Families at the Urban Institute. Kimberly has maintained a 4.0 GPA while attending UC Berkeley and is currently both a parent advisor for the Aspen Institute's Postsecondary Success for Parents Initiative and a STAR fellow for the Data-to-Action Campaign for Parenting Students.

benefits. Parents may no longer be able to access their benefits and may lose out on the programs they need to survive. CCDF lead agencies already have the ability to define what counts as income and may want to consider opportunities to address this problem. However, the parents and families that you serve may be receiving benefits that are outside of your agency's purview and may benefit from action at a larger scale. For example, in Washington State, parents campaigned for and passed a bill in protecting research or advocacy work from affecting state-level benefits (April Messenger).

Include parents as leaders and decisionmakers. Include parents on teams that inform, guide, and come up with ideas for research and policy design (box 8). When parents are on research teams but not part of final choices, those teams may be tokenizing parents. Tokenizing parents is when you make it look like parents are included by putting them in the room, but they do not get to have a real say in how things are done. As Autumn Green (parent researcher) describes this, "You want our voice but not our vote." It is *not enough* to simply get parent feedback. To truly include parents in deciding how the research is done, you should consider these things:

- **Respect parents' expertise and skills.** Parents can tell when they are being judged or not valued (Caroline Ano). When you engage parents, ensure that they feel heard by
  - » using their input,
  - » speaking *with* them instead of at them, and
  - » knowing that parents' lived experience is vital for figuring out how to change systems (Sonja Lennox; Kimberly Salazar). "We want to share our lived experience. We are a community of wisdom and information. It's a matter of being given a safe enough platform to share our experiences and do this work" (Kimberly Salazar, parent).
- **Credit parents and show that you see all they are giving to the project.** Agree on how you will decide who's an author or gets credit for work at the start of the project. There are countless stories from parents where they played a large role in research and did not get credit for their work (Dr. Autumn Green).

BOX 8

Racial Equity Implicit Bias

The California Department of Social Services is working with a group of parents who have accessed their programs and services to build a statewide training in Racial Equity and Implicit Bias (REIB). This work builds on a previous project where parents shared their experiences of racism with staff. The training will be used to improve equity and fairness as parents try to access benefits and services.

Source: "CalWORKs and CalFresh Racial Equity and Implicit Bias Statewide Initiative," California Department of Social Services, accessed January 3, 2024, https://www.cdss.ca.gov/inforesources/reib-initiative.

Put sustainability first. You have limits on your time and resources. But in an ideal world, parents should not be engaged as a one-time event. Putting sustainability first is when you commit to improve the long-term well-being of the people in the community you work with. The goal should be to build long-term bonds with parents who can guide future research on early childhood and parents (Sonja Lennox). Your first steps of community-engagement work may be small sessions with parents or town hall meetings with parents to listen to them. But when you keep checking back in, building relationships, and working to engage parents, you can partner with the community again in future work (Sonja Lennox). Here are key aspects of sustainability:

- making good on what you promise, no matter how small that is (Sonja Lennox)
- making time to connect and learn from community leaders (Brittany Murray)
- working to find solutions, not only name problems (Jennifer Greppi)
- looking for chances to build a new project to partner with parents after one is done (box 8)

Make the process easy to access. Accessibility is the way we make sure we include all people. Here are key ways to make it easy for parents to take part in the research:

- **Meet parents where they are.** Think about the rooms, times, and places you are asking people to come to and make sure they are comfortable for parents (Caroline Ano; box 9). This includes meeting parents in spaces they visit a lot and at times that work well for them (before- and after-school drop-off, late into the night, etc.) (Kimberly Salazar). When meeting in person, there should be nearby rooms where parents can nurse with ease (Caroline Ano).

BOX 9

OKFutures Needs Assessment

Oklahoma won a federal grant from the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) to create OKFutures. OKFutures helps families, communities, public agencies, and private organizations learn how to give children from birth to age 5 fair and easy access to the physical, emotional, and educational supports they need to thrive. The idea for OKFutures came from a team that researched parents' needs in Oklahoma. That research used many methods and data sources, such as focus groups with parents that the program would affect. For their focus groups, the research team wanted to make sure they were held in easy-to-access, safe, and comfortable places for parents. In the end, they reached out to different community organizations to serve as hosts for focus groups so families and community members would feel at ease taking part.

Source: "OKFutures Needs Assessment: Oklahoma's Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five," Urban Institute, accessed January 3, 2024, https://www.urban.org/policy-centers/center-education-data-and-policy/projects/okfutures-oklahomas-preschool-development-grant-birth-through-five.

- **Offer many ways to give input.** Make it as easy as possible for parents to share their thoughts by setting up many ways for them to give feedback (box 10). These could include meetings, emails, phone or video calls, text messages, or voice recordings (Jennifer Greppi; Dr. Beth Green). Speaking options are useful to offer as some parents may shy away from writing or worry about their grammar or spelling (Jennifer Greppi).

BOX 10

North Douglas County Community Health Needs Assessment

In February 2016, North Douglas County in Colorado began a Community Health Needs Assessment planning process, focusing on children from birth to age 8 and their families. The program included many ways for parents to partner with the research team and give their input. Parents could do so at a community kickoff event, on a community steering committee, and in Community Cafes (where community members shaped the planning process). In the end, parents shared what services they thought funders should invest in first.

Source: Lambarth, Reid, and Green (2016).

- **Prepare parents for success.** Here are some ways to prepare parents to engage in research:
  - » Make sure they know the spaces they are entering. For instance, that could mean how formal or casual the meeting will be, what they should wear, and what the focus of the meeting will be.
  - » Have a trusted person that they can reach out to if they didn't grasp something.
  - » Follow up after any event to make sure parents are staying up to date about how their work is being used.
  - » Ask parents what they need to feel like they are doing well and feel assured about their role on a project (April Messenger).
- **Language access.** Make sure you engage parents in the languages they use, from reaching out to them (flyers, social media, etc.) to sharing the research (meetings, Data Walks, fact sheets, etc.). If communication is not done in the community's language, then the community members won't attend (Jennifer Greppi). Here's how parent engagement could look:
  - » Partner with a community organization that has close connections to the people and speaks the language of the those you are hoping to engage.
  - » For online meetings with partners, divide the people into breakout groups for different languages. Each person who leads a breakout group should have the same meeting plan. But the person leading each group talk should speak the native language of those in the group (Dr. Beth Green).

Practice mutuality. Mutuality is when all partners gain something from the research at hand. Here are some ways it can be achieved:

- **Create new spaces and pathways for parents' expertise and skills.** People's lived experiences are a piece of research that can't be replaced (Jennifer Greppi). But parents' expertise and skills are often dismissed. Instead, your work should lift up parents' expertise and treat it as professional knowledge. This can look like creating new opportunities to use their valuable expertise, including hiring parents as part-time staff or making long-term plans to hire parents as research and agency staff (Dr. Autumn Green; box 11).
- **Make sure the research questions address what the community needs and cares about.** For instance, have parents create the research questions or research topic.
- **Share community input back with the parents.** Here's how that could look:
  - » Check in often that you are hearing parents right. For instance, you could ask, "Here is what we think we heard from you in the last meeting. Here are the changes we made in response. Did we do this right? Did we capture things as you meant them?" (Dr. Beth Green).
  - » Share back how parents are making an impact on the research. This could include when you can't do something they proposed and being open about why.
  - » Give each person the chance to review and give input on the findings before you publish them (Dr. Beth Green).
  - » Make sure that any data you receive from parents is given back to them in a useful form that they can act on (Dr. Brittany Murray).
- **Expect changes and allow space for them in the work.** Parents are busy and schedules often need to be changed when working with them. Make it clear from the start that schedule changes are okay. Put making sure that they can participate first when it comes to choosing meeting times. Avoid just doing what would be fast and easy (Kimberly Salazar).

BOX 11

Student Parent Action Research Collective (SPARK)

SPARK is a program where student parents are members and leaders of research project teams. The program created the Skills and Training in Action Research (STAR) fellowship. STAR hired two student parents as project team members within the Urban Institute. The STAR fellows are

- paid,
- work on many research projects, and
- take part in two-way learning where they provide their expertise to the research team and the research team provides support on building research skills.

Source: "The SPARK Collaborative," accessed January 2, 2024, https://studentparentaction.org.

Conclusion

Parent partners offer crucial insights for research, policy, and program design. Their views and expertise support creating an impact on the issues that affect their lives. When you partner with parents in research, it can

- help you know how to improve early childhood programs and policies,
- help contextualize your research findings and support developing more actionable recommendations, and
- make your work more sustainable by bringing in current leaders and organizations who are experts in early childhood and parent topics.

We shared what CEM are, how they are helpful for CCDF Lead Agency research, and the five stages for how to partner with parents in the research process. We also offered ten examples of parent–researcher partnerships. We hope you use this guide to learn about

- how to engage and support parents as you work with each other,
- the mutual trust and careful focus that you must give to partners, and
- the benefits and success that can flow from these partnerships.

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Further Reading

"Action Research and Minority Problems" by Kurt Lewin (https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.1946.tb02295.x)

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire (https://envs.ucsc.edu/internships/internship-readings/freire-pedagogy-of-the-oppressed.pdf)

"Participatory Action Research as Practice" by Marja-Liisa Swantz (https://methods.sagepub.com/book/the-sage-handbook-of-action-research/d8.xml)

"Why Am I Always Being Researched?" by Chicago Beyond (https://chicagobeyond.org/researchequity/)

"Community Voice and Power Sharing Guidebook" (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/community-voice-and-power-sharing-guidebook), including the following:

- "Fostering Partnerships for Community Engagement" by Jessica Shakesprere, Matthew Mizota, Rod Martinez, Hannah Daly, and Elsa Falkenburger (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/fostering-partnerships-community-engagement)
- "Community-Engaged Surveys: From Research Design to Analysis and Dissemination" by Eona Harrison, Matthew Mizota, Hannah Daly, and Elsa Falkenburger (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/community-engaged-surveys-research-design-analysis-and-dissemination)
- *Tools and Resources for Project-Based Community Advisory Boards* by Diane Arnos, Edward Kroll, Emma Jaromin, Hannah Daly, and Elsa Falkenburger (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/tools-and-resources-project-based-community-advisory-boards)

"Mending Harmful Family Fees: Expanding Possibilities for California Families" by Laura Pryor, Erik Saucedo, and Parent Voices (https://calbudgetcenter.org/resources/mending-harmful-family-fees-expanding-possibilities-for-california-families/)

Changing Power Dynamics among Researchers, Local Governments, and Community Members: A Community Engagement and Racial Equity Guidebook by Sonia Torres Rodriguez, Mikaela Tajo, Shamoiya Washington, and Kimberly Burrows (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/changing-power-dynamics-among-researchers-local-governments-and-community)

"Guide to Data Chats: Convening Community Conversations about Data" by Mychal Cohen, Amy Rohan, Kathleen Pritchard, and Kathryn L. S. Pettit (https://www.urban.org/research/publication/guide-data-chats-convening-community-conversations-about-data)

Parent and Researcher Contributor Bios

Sonja Lennox is the federal advocacy and parent coordinator for the Washington State Association of Head Start and ECEAP parent ambassador. She has been part of the Parent Ambassador program since being an ambassador in 2011, a mentor in 2012, and a parent coordinator beginning in 2013. Sonja says, "I have been with the program for 13 amazing years and would not be where I am today without the Parent Ambassador program. My favorite part of staffing the program is helping parents find their voice and realize they are worthy, and they do matter. When parents realize they can make a difference they start being seen as a role model and the 'go-to' person. I also feel an important aspect of the yearlong Parent Ambassador program is the sense of being a part of a family and being part of something bigger than themselves." Sonja lives on a small farm in Tacoma and has two children, Randi, age 23, and Danner, age 13, who have both gone through the Head Start program.

Dr. Brittany Murray is a Malcolm O. Partin assistant professor of educational studies and political science at Davidson College where her research investigates relationships between families and educational policies, school resource allocation, and the distribution of learning opportunities in US public schools. She uses mixed methods and has a special interest in leveraging administrative data to gain unique analytical perspectives on school and community contexts. She teaches courses on the social foundations of K–12 education, research methods, and critical approaches to policy analysis. She also partners with community-based organizations to create more equitable engagement practices and more inclusive access to educational decisionmaking for nondominant families and communities.

Dr. Autumn Green is an applied sociologist and interdisciplinary scholar who engages a wide range of methods to impact social change through policy, systems, practice, and data strategies. She has led and contributed to numerous collaborative projects impacting change in higher education across the United States, including The Family Friendly Campus Toolkit, The Campus Family Housing Database, and The Find Your Way Project. She is currently a nonresident fellow at the Urban Institute and the 2023 Twink Frey visiting scholar-activist at the University of Michigan focusing on support for student caregivers. Dr. Green started her own scholar-activist journey as a student mother, and her projects work to engage pregnant and parenting students and alums as research and action partners, emerging scholars, and impact leaders.

Kimberly Salazar is the mother of a 6-year-old and is currently working toward a bachelor's in sociology at the University of California, Berkeley. She conducted independent research via the Undergraduate Research Apprentice program, Millers Scholar program, HAAS program, and senior honors thesis at Berkeley studying student-parents' experiences navigating both CalWORKs (California's Welfare-to-work program) and four-year universities. She was awarded a summer stipend grant to assist in Dr. Yu-Ling Chang's current research project investigating racial equity and CalWORKs reforms in California in the context of the global pandemic. She also is a recipient of the Patsy Takemoto Mink Education Support Award and was a part of the Leadership Council for Student Parent Families at the Urban Institute. Kimberly has maintained a 4.0 GPA while attending UC Berkeley and is currently both a parent advisor for the Aspen Institute's Postsecondary Success for Parents Initiative and a STAR fellow for the Data-to-Action Campaign for Parenting Students.

Caroline Ano is a first-generation Guatemalan American, based in Southern California. She is a social worker by trade and calling, with more than 17 years of child welfare experience in family reunification, foster care, resource family approval licensing, parent and community engagement, and education. She has a bachelor of arts in psychology from Biola University and a master of social work from California State University, Fullerton.

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Lauren Farrell is a policy associate in the Justice Policy Center and deputy director of the Community Engagement Resource Center at the Urban Institute. Her research focuses on community engagement and participatory methods. She works closely with young people, community leaders, and people at the

intersections of racism, sexism, and ableism to ask what research can do for them. She holds herself accountable to the people who are most impacted by research and believes expertise and skills come from lived experience.

Eleanor Lauderback is a former research associate in the Center on Labor, Human Services, and Population at the Urban Institute. Her research focused on child, youth, and family well-being and community engagement in the research process, with an emphasis on relationship building and repairing past harms to communities. She was part of Urban's Community Engagement Resource Center, developing approaches to systematically include community-engaged methods at the organizational level.

Jennifer Greppi is a former Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) recipient who works as the director of parent policy for Parent Voices California. A vocal advocate for child care over the past 20 years, Greppi is often in Sacramento with parent leaders from around the state fighting for more equitable and just systems that support families. Greppi's advocacy is rooted in her strong belief that parents with lived experience are the only ones who can transform the racist and sexist policies that have held them back. She is regularly sought after in the community for her expertise in child development and advocacy, and her work with parents is known nationwide. She is a proud mother of two adult daughters and a doting grandmother to her 9-year-old granddaughter, Melanie. We note that in addition to being an author, Jennifer contributed to this brief through a consultation in which she shared her experiences with parent-researcher partnerships.

Dr. Beth Green has focused on conducting community-based research and evaluation that informs policy and improves programs for children and their families for more than 20 years. Her experience includes evaluations of numerous home-visiting and early learning programs, including Early Head Start, Head Start, Healthy Families Oregon, Relief Nurseries, and other programs designed to prevent child maltreatment, improve school readiness, and support family and child well-being. We note that in addition to being an author, Dr. Green contributed to this brief through a consultation in which she shared her experiences with parent-researcher partnerships.

April Messenger is the former director of family engagement and advocacy for the Washington State Parent Ambassador Program, housed by the Washington State Association of Head Start and Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program. Her own lived experience, advocating as a parent and finding passion in helping others do the same, led her to this work. We note that in addition to being an author, April contributed to this brief through a consultation in which she shared her experiences with parent-researcher partnerships.

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