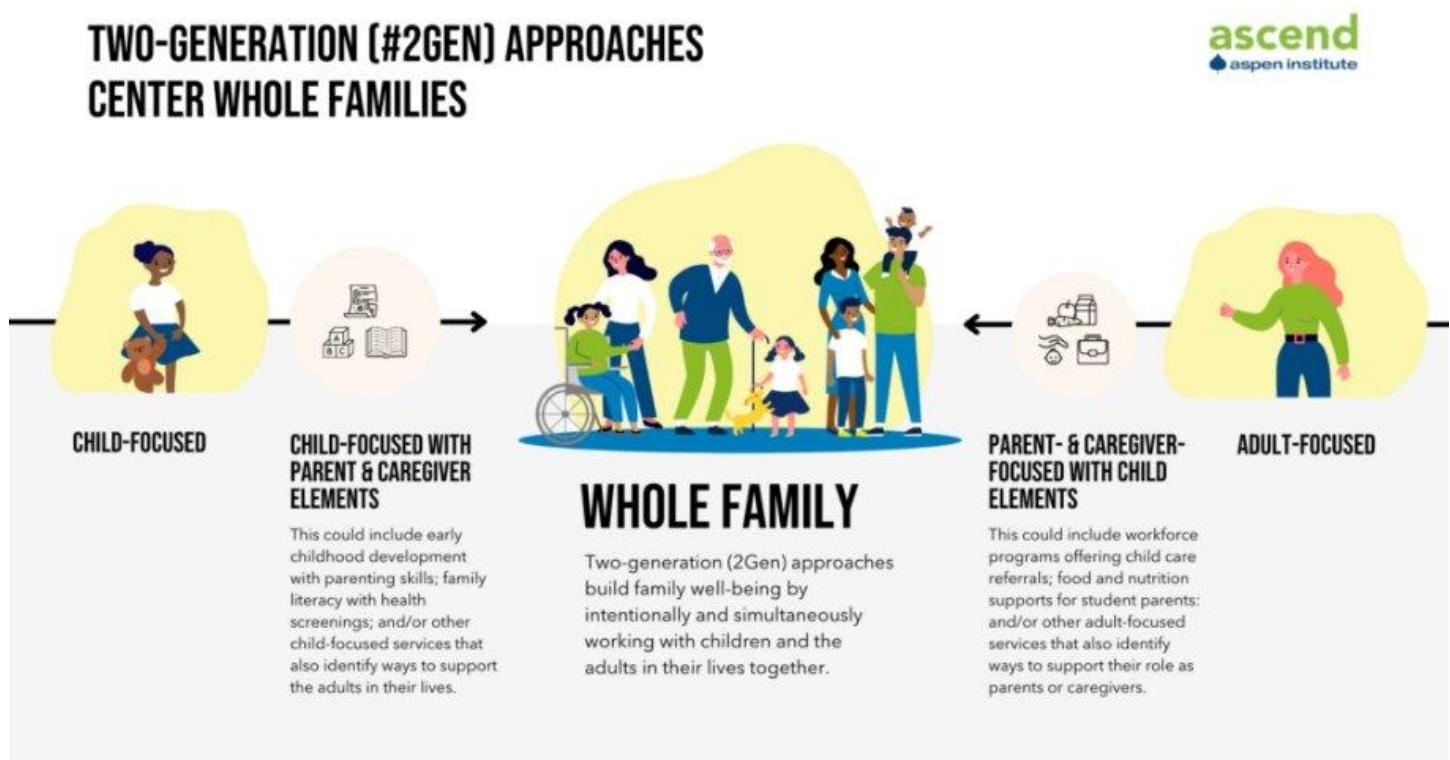


Two-Generation (2Gen) Approach Overview

Overview:

The 2Gen approach, as defined by Ascend at the Aspen Institute, builds family well-being by **intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together**. 2Gen begins with the mindset that by designing pathways to educational and economic success that support children and families together, the resulting structure is stronger and better for both generations. Communities do better as everyone achieves their full potential. As children, parents, and families grow and change across their lifespan, 2Gen approaches align opportunities to help families pursue their goals and thrive, optimizing each person's potential along the way.



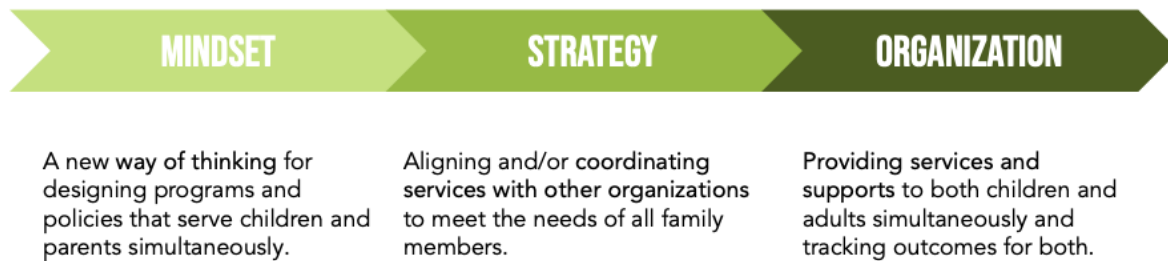
Available Support and Technical Assistance:

To support the successful design and implementation of 2Gen approaches in alignment with community needs, the grant will include the following technical assistance:

- Access to learning resources developed by Ascend at the Aspen Institute (i.e. Parent Voice Principles Guidance)
- Two training sessions for grantees implementing 2Gen approaches offered by Ascend.
- Up to two team members will be invited to attend the Aspen Forum on Children and Families in Spring 2027 during the planning year.

2Gen Implementation:

The following depicts the developmental pathway to implementing a 2Gen approach.



2Gen begins by embracing a mindset of whole-family services (2Gen mindset), then implementing efforts to better align and coordinate services for all family members (2Gen strategy) and finally infusing 2Gen strategies into all aspects of their organization and tracking outcomes accordingly.

Tracking outcomes for both children and the adults in their lives differentiates full implementation of a 2Gen approach from similar approaches. **However, a 2Gen approach does not require a single organization to provide and track services for all members of a family. A 2Gen approach may also be achieved through intentional partnering with other community organizations, agencies, and stakeholders that share in the mission of partnering with families to achieve economic security and mobility.** Although the Request for Proposal (RFP) requires a lead organization, partnership is encouraged and the awarding of sub-contracts to partners for shared funding is allowable.

A more in-depth description and samples of each part of the 2Gen pathway are below to enhance understanding of how the approach might be implemented.

- **Mindset:** Intentional focus on viewing children and the adults in their lives holistically with a particular focus on economic mobility. Adopting such a mindset, and the way programs and policies are therefore designed, results in organizational culture change. This may include:
 - Staff training to deeply understand the 2Gen approach
 - Internal assessment of programming, where the potential for integration of a 2Gen approach is possible. Many think a 2Gen approach looks like having a child enrolled in an early childhood learning center and including parental/caregiver involvement. Although both generations are present, this is not looking at the needs of the caregiver. Instead, it should be asked how the needs of the caregiver impact the development of the child enrolled. This type of question, and continued related questions, support a shift to embodying a 2Gen mindset.
- **Strategy:** Includes putting plans in place to coordinate services within or across organizations to meet the needs of all family members. This includes considering the services (either within your organization or through intentional partnerships) that are offered to both the child and the adult(s) in their life and the intended outcome that will improve with linked services. Samples of what this might look like include:
 - In the previous mindset example, in an early childhood learning center, the focus is on child development. With a 2Gen mindset and strategy, there is a belief that child development is better supported with an intentional 2Gen approach that links

services for both the child and the adult because when the adult does better so does the child, and vice versa.

- Changes in staff roles for positions that already exist or with new positions, that intentionally link services for children and the adults in their lives. This might look like a case manager role previously focused on the adults in a household's shifting to a child and family specialist/case manager role that integrates the needs of both child and adult(s) into service delivery is added.
- If the 2Gen approach includes intentional community partnerships, a shift in staff role could look like a partnership coordinator and spearheading the shared evaluation framework.
- **Organization:** Full adoption of the mindset shift associated with a 2Gen approach and staffing/partnership adjustments to ensure intentional implementation. This stage includes implementing and collaborating with other organizations *and* tracking both organizational and client (child, adult, family) outcomes for continuous quality improvement. Samples of what this stage might look like:
 - A database (in the early days this may look like many spreadsheets) that includes linked data for children and the adults in their lives to enable tracking of changes at the individual and family level. This includes synthesizing correlative data to understand how individual changes impact the whole family and their movement toward economic mobility.
 - Pulling the early childhood learning center example through, an organization at the 2Gen organization stage would be delivering services to both child and adult, and tracking outcomes. In this particular sector, continued tracking of child outcomes on child development would be layered with additional tracking of economic mobility and well-being measures for the adult in the household, and a database capable of linking these outcomes to one another.

Program Components:

The 2Gen approach recognizes that well-being is a multifaceted process and lifelong pursuit and Ascend at the Aspen Institute has identified six key components of 2Gen approaches. The components and examples are included in the graphic below to support an understanding of the approach. Grantees may propose projects aligned with any of the components of the approach inclusive of activities not specifically listed within one of the components.

THE SIX KEY COMPONENTS OF TWO-GENERATION APPROACHES

Two-generation approaches (2Gen) build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together.

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION

- Head Start
- Early Head Start
- child care partnerships
- preK
- home visiting
- Family, Friend, and Neighbor Care (FFN)

K-12

- kindergarten ready
- 3rd grade reading skills
- parent engagement
- graduation and postsecondary prep

POSTSECONDARY & EMPLOYMENT PATHWAYS

- community college
- training and credentials
- workforce partnerships
- employer partnerships

SOCIAL CAPITAL

- peer and family networks
- coaching
- cohort strategies

HEALTH, INCLUDING MENTAL HEALTH

- mental, physical, and behavioral health
- coverage and access to care
- adverse childhood experiences and toxic stress

ECONOMIC ASSETS

- asset building
- housing and public supports
- financial capacity
- transportation



Program Requirements:

1. Adoption of a 2Gen mindset and commitment to work towards a 2Gen strategy and organization.
2. Commitment to the 2Gen Principles
 - a. Measure and account for outcomes for both children and adults:** Grantees will be required to measure outcomes at multiple levels – for individuals, key family relationships (parent-child, co-parents), and families. Examples of these metrics may include: client trust, feelings of hope, child's education progress, or a family's income.
 - b. Engage and listen to the voices of families:** Parents/adult caregivers are the experts when it comes to what their families need to thrive. Grantees should embed their wisdom and experiential knowledge in the design, implementation, and evaluation of their 2Gen approach.
 - c. Ensure racial, gender, and economic equity:** 2Gen approaches should evaluate and fix structural problems that create gender and/or racial and ethnic disparities in all aspects – from programs and services to day-to-day operations to relationships with families.
 - d. Foster innovation and evidence together** Approaches should encourage the integration of innovation into emerging evidence and evaluations of effectiveness.

e. Align and link systems and funding streams

Grantees must consider opportunities to align and link systems at the state and community level to build sustainability.

3. Grantees **must include a parent advisory committee** to support the co-design and implementation of their approach.

Implementation Examples:

To support understanding of what the 2Gen approach might look like in practice, brief summaries of two sample projects are below. These projects intentionally link the needs of both generations and intentionally evaluate outcomes for children and the adults in their lives. The samples provided are as a reference only and do not represent the full range of the projects eligible for consideration. Applicants are encouraged to propose innovative, community-driven projects that reflect the unique opportunities and priorities of their community.

- **Centering family voice:** In Jackson, Mississippi, Springboard to Opportunities shifted from offering mental health-focused parenting classes to launching the first guaranteed income program in the United States after hearing directly from caregivers in focus groups. The program tracks caregiver outcomes related to economic and physical well-being, as well as related effects on their children.
- **Integrating housing and childcare:** In Denver, Colorado, Warren Village combines a 2Gen approach with Mobility Mentoring and on-site Early Learning Centers to provide housing-based supportive services for adults and children. Its data system tracks economic mobility outcomes for parents and well-being and education outcomes for children. Together, these co-located services address the needs of both parents and children through a holistic, family-centered approach.

Budget Guidance:

The following table provides examples of budgeted items and associated guidance for the 2Gen approach that may be helpful for developing the proposed annual budgets in MHM's budget template. The information is not exhaustive, and not all items are required. **Required items are bold, where applicable.**

Example Line Items	Description/Guidance
Data Management & Configuration	2Gen requires the ability to track and report on a specific set of program and participant outcomes for both adults and children. The recommendation is to include support for data management and configuration.
Training & Technical Assistance	Grantees must include \$5,000 in the planning year for technical guidance through the required Ascend Training Sessions. Additional technical assistance/guidance line items may be included if you anticipate needing additional support in designing or implementing the 2Gen approach.
Conferences and Travel	Grantees will be invited to send up to two staff members to the Ascend Conference in the planning year. Please include \$3,000 per team member you propose to attend.

Staffing	The staffing model will be entirely dependent on your proposed approach. The recommendation is to include staff for both program implementation and data and outcomes coordination.
Parent Advisory Committees	Please include sufficient funding to compensate parents for their time in planning and advising throughout the program and planning years. General guidance is \$5,000 per year.

It is recommended to carefully consider how to divide activities across a planning year (year 1), implementation years (years 2-4), and a transition year within the proposed budget. Please refer to the RFP and budget template within the application for additional guidance.

A sample budget per year is not included because the 2Gen approach allows for more flexibility in program elements.