

All Children Thrive-California

Partner Toolkit



All Children Thrive
California

© 2021 California Department of Public Health. Funded under contract # 18-10620

Table of Contents

I. Foreword	1
II. Imagine	3
III. What is All Children Thrive?	5
IV. Why All Children Thrive Now?	9
V. Developing All Children Thrive	13
VI. The Transformation Journey	15
VII. Transformation Drivers	19
VIII. Becoming an All Children Thrive City	24
IX. Tools for Cities	27
X. References and Acknowledgments	39

I. Foreword



I. Foreword From Our Directors

We are living in an unprecedented time where the convergence of the COVID pandemic, racial injustices and inequities, economic instability, and family stress leave children and youth struggling more than ever. Many of the organizations and institutions children and families depend on—including schools, parks, faith and social organizations—have been sidelined by the pandemic or are operating ineffectively. These new challenges are piled on top of the existing adversities and traumas that are all too common for children in under-resourced communities.

All Children Thrive–California (ACT) is a community-led movement to transform how cities throughout California work to improve child and family well-being. ACT brings together community members with city staff and elected officials to create policies, programs, and resources to address the underlying adverse conditions that lead to childhood trauma and to promote the conditions that foster child well-being. By building networks of people and places to co-design innovative solutions and share their experiences and expertise, ACT will spread and scale solutions that work.

Public Health Advocates and the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families & Communities collaborated in developing this toolkit to help cities and their community partners make a difference in the lives of children by addressing adversities and responding effectively to mounting trauma. We hope that the All Children Thrive–California (ACT) Toolkit will become a valuable resource for responding to the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on communities and provides cities with effective strategies for transforming communities into places where children and youth can thrive.

While trauma may be caused by family and community conditions, it is reinforced when critically important support systems fail to function. There are many actions cities can take to address the harms brought by deep-rooted and systemic challenges as well as current adversities on kids and their families. Many of the most effective approaches depend on the active involvement of community members—both youth and adults—in designing, developing, and implementing solutions.

There is an urgent need to address the causes and effects of childhood trauma at the community level through enacting transformative policies and programs addressing economic development, housing, mental health and wellness, safe community spaces, and early childhood and youth development. Such efforts can protect and promote the well-being of our children and youth.

ACT can play a unique role in the function of cities and in the lives of community members by enacting long-term, structural solutions based on a community health improvement framework. Throughout this toolkit we detail this approach and describe specific policy strategies cities can customize to meet their unique needs.

Our hope is that cities and communities throughout California will use this toolkit to prevent adverse childhood experiences and promote the health, development, and well-being of all children. We believe you will find it a valuable resource for reimagining and transforming your community into a place where all children and youth can thrive.



Harold Goldstein

*Executive Director at
Public Health Advocates*



Neal Halfon

*Professor and Director, Center for Healthier Children, Families
and Communities University of California, Los Angeles*

II. Imagine



II. Imagine – Executive Summary

Imagine a city designed with child well-being at its center, so that all children, of all backgrounds, can thrive.

This city fosters healing and resilience among children and communities that have faced adversities. It transforms and redesigns the places, law, and systems that support children's health, development, and well-being. Long standing issues such as a lack of affordable housing, investments in early childhood development, and safe spaces for children and youth are addressed and new environments created to fully support families.

All Children Thrive–California (ACT) is an exciting new initiative that transforms cities across our state. By engaging in ACT, power and decision-making is shifted to the individuals most affected by our broken systems—children and families, parents, youth, community members and organizations. They work side by side with city and county leaders to develop practical solutions focused on addressing adversity,

early childhood development, housing, public safety, and youth development. They create cities prepared to meet the most pressing challenges facing our children and families today.

Through funding from the California Department of Public Health and technical support from Public Health Advocates and the UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities, ACT aims to reimagine and restructure cities in California to improve the experiences of all children from all walks of life. Through the ACT process, cities and communities across the state will transform from a state where few children thrive due to current and historical inequities arising from capitalism, classism, racism, trauma, and isolation—to a state where all children thrive.

This toolkit serves as a key resource sharing the ACT program model. In this toolkit you will find information on the goals and background for ACT, processes for engagement, and steps to begin transforming your city to recognize that all children matter.



III. What is All Children Thrive?



III. What is All Children Thrive?

ACT was created from the idea that children's health and well-being is dependent on many factors and systems and requires collaborative solutions that bring communities together to positively impact how children grow, develop, live, learn, and play.

The Goals of ACT include the following:

All Children Thrive Goals

Shape Perspective:

Onboard cities and help them realize their essential role in public health efforts to address child well-being and trauma prevention. Cities work with community members and partners to identify their role and sense of purpose in promoting child well-being, preventing trauma, and advancing equity.

Innovate through Collaboration:

Cities network to learn about other challenges and potential solutions and to create opportunities to strategize and learn together through learning communities.

Shift Power:

Embed community voices into policy, planning, development, and city-wide, cross-sector systems improvements.

Sustainable Change:

Pass policies, create strong programs, bring in funding, and transform systems so children and families can thrive.



Shared Principles and Values



The principles of ACT are prioritizing children and youth, prioritizing youth leadership and voice, creating relationships that center each other's humanity, and eliminating inequitable systemic barriers.



The shared values of ACT are justice and equity, cultural humility, integrity, innovation, courage, and shared accountability.



The values of ACT governmental partners are servant leadership, transparency, prioritizing prevention, community-driven practice, and building trust through disruption and power shifting.



Approach

ACT is designed to address trauma in communities and create programs where all children can thrive. The initiative does this by helping community members and youth work side-by-side with city officials and staff to collaboratively design city solutions to prevailing problems. This ensures that those most impacted by adversity are at the forefront of decision making. Our process is supported by research, data, and tools that have proven to be effective (Kaplan et al., 2010; Mansour, 2003). ACT staff act as coaches, assisting communities to utilize data and research to transform their cities. This effectively expands relationships throughout the state, creating a stronger movement for change.

ACT specifically works to recognize the existing strengths and assets in communities and works with stakeholders to identify current and new challenges they face. A growing number of cities are recognizing that racism, childhood trauma, climate change, and health threats like the COVID-19 pandemic are global challenges that may be best solved using locally developed solutions (Katz, 2018). Cities recognize that their future rests on the well-being of a new generation of children and youth. Investing in their future requires significant changes to improve child health outcomes, ensure child-friendly and safe environments, and ensure viable economies and job markets for a new generation.

Stages of Growth

We anticipate that cities will start at different points based on the existing programs and services in their communities. Their ability to engage in ACT will depend on the political will of city leaders. To help meet cities where they are at and facilitate their growth toward becoming an ACT city, ACT has adopted a model focusing on three stages of transformation: Engage, Grow, and Accelerate. Each stage has accompanying milestones and processes supported by ACT. As cities progress and acquire new skills and understanding, they will be able to advance their efforts more effectively. A city's level of growth will also be determined by the practices, programs, and policies they put in place.



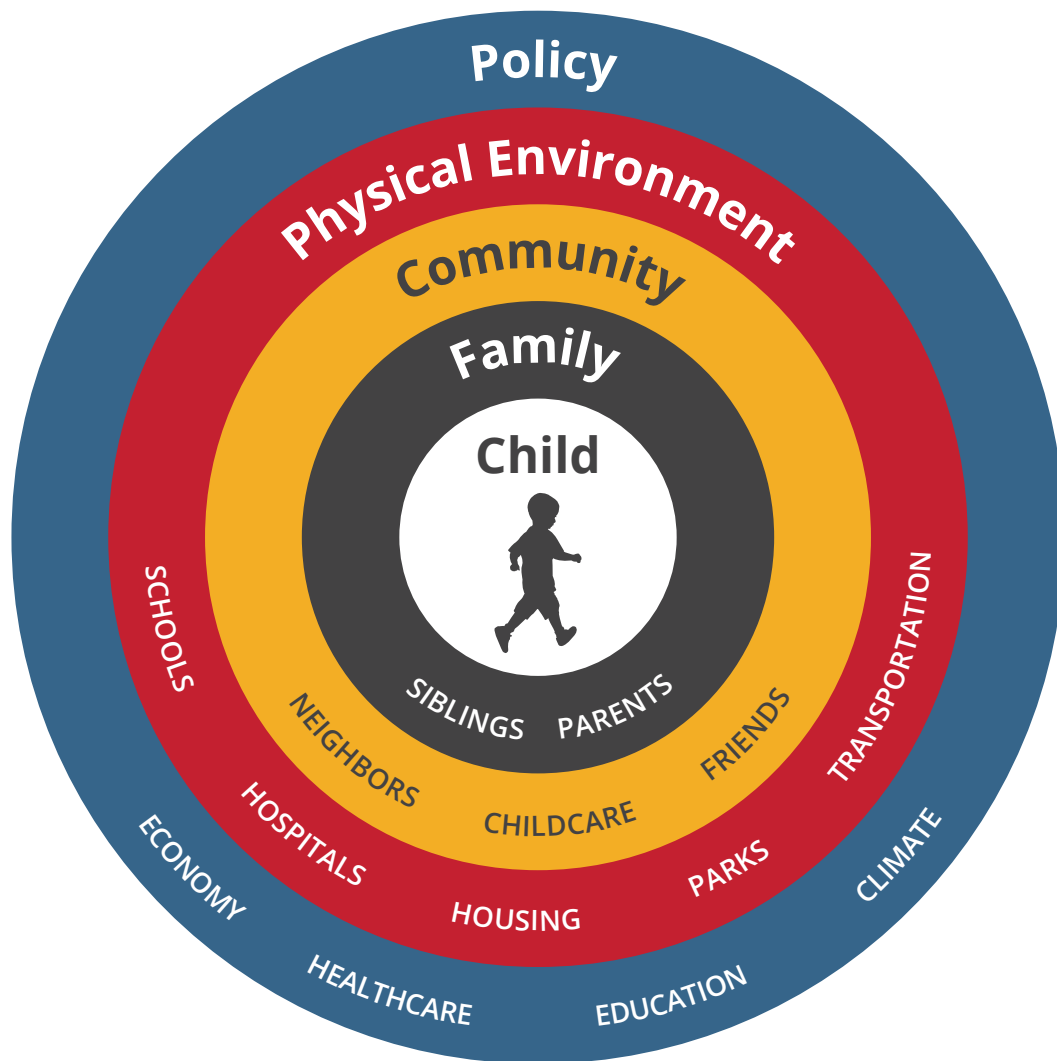
IV. Why All Children Thrive Now?



IV. Why All Children Thrive Now?

Most communities are experiencing growing levels of adversity and anxiety because the complex systems that affect healthy human development are rapidly and radically changing.

These include children's experiences and exposures at home, in their families, at child care centers, at schools and recreational programs, in the streets and parks where they walk, run, play, and grow, and in neighborhoods that are designed either to compound adversity and trauma or to create opportunities for care and thriving (Halfon, et al., 2014). These complex systems not only include the structures and organization that guide and influence healthy human development, but also the policies, procedures, and values that set priorities for children and families (Mistry, K., et al., 2012).



As our society transitions from an industrial to an IT/gig economy, massive changes are underway in the pathways to economic opportunity, the production of value and wealth, and in the basic social order, defined by the power and control average working people have over their livelihoods and destinies. Kids are growing up in neighborhoods with less social trust and in families that feel more anxious and less secure. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many of these deep and latent vulnerabilities to the surface.

These deep changes are disrupting families, communities, and the developmental supports kids need to flourish. As a result, many of the efforts to improve our systems of care are not only costly but also often ineffective, frequently disheartening, and ultimately self-defeating. What is needed is an all-systems approach designed to work at scale for the whole population. ACT recognizes that continuing to focus on incremental improvements in health, public health, mental health, educational, and social service systems loses sight of the forest

Kids are growing up in neighborhoods with less social trust and in families that feel more anxious and less secure. The COVID-19 pandemic has brought many of these deep and latent vulnerabilities to the surface.

for the trees. A systems approach considers the role and impact of all these factors and forces the adoption of a cross-sector, whole-population approach where all children and youth can truly thrive.



The Importance of Data

There is growing distress in communities that data have been used in ways that do not help, and sometimes even harm, the communities they are intended to represent. Institutions and systems have extracted and used data in ways that are unjust and harmful to the communities that shared their lived experiences and expertise (Dhaliwal, 2018). Data designed to assess community systems also have been misused to draw false conclusions about people. If not interpreted and used in socially responsible ways, these data can themselves be sources of trauma.

In addition to the misuse of existing data, there are huge data gaps for some of our most impacted and under-resourced communities and populations. This can contribute to disparities in health outcomes by limiting access to essential healthcare, housing, food, and necessary investments. A commitment from cities to ensuring all children thrive requires an active and explicit inclusion of these communities and those at their intersections: foster,

incarcerated, LGBTQ, rural, and differently-abled youth, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders, Native Americans, Asian Americans, Black/African Americans, and Hispanics/Latinos. “Inclusion” in this context means more than outreach and engagement work—it requires intentional and active efforts to provide dedicated resources, decision-making power, and cultural authority. Community members and individuals in the most impacted groups should have control of the data that represents them and be at the forefront of the movement to drive change in how that data is used.

Compounding these inequities is the reality that data on children are lacking. Children are generally invisible from birth through their 3rd grade achievement scores. In the absence of these critical data, structural and relational patterns of oppression, adversity, and disadvantage are invisible, and the leverage points necessary to change those patterns remain hidden.



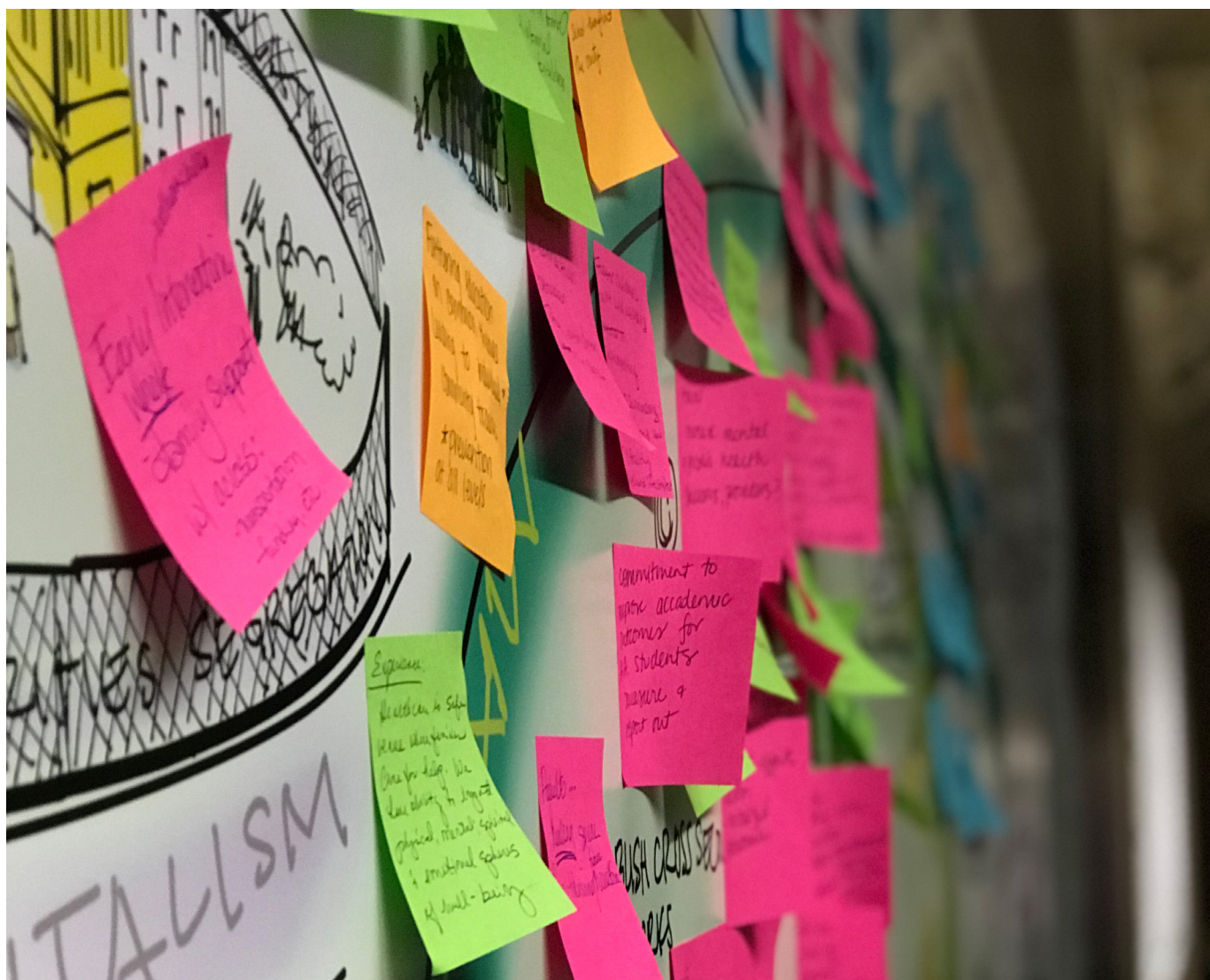
V. Developing All Children Thrive



V. Developing All Children Thrive

The All Children Thrive–California approach is informed by the ACT team’s experiences and work with cities with whom they have existing relationships from past initiatives, including Transforming Early Childhood Community Systems (TECCS), the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation’s Population Change Learning Community, Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Cities, All Children Thrive–Cincinnati, and All Children Thrive at the national level. It also borrows from and builds upon existing research and frameworks around the Three

Horizons pathway toward transformation (Sharpe, Hodgson, Leicester, Lyon, & Fazey, 2016), the work of Margaret Hargreaves and colleagues around measuring collective community capacity (Hargreaves et al., 2016), and work of the Rippel Foundation and their Pathways of Transformation for Health and Well-being through Regional Stewardship (Siegel, Erickson, Milstein, & Pritchard, 2018). These have broadly shaped the coaching model for cities to build their capabilities and capacities to support ACT.



VI. The All Children Thrive Transformation Journey

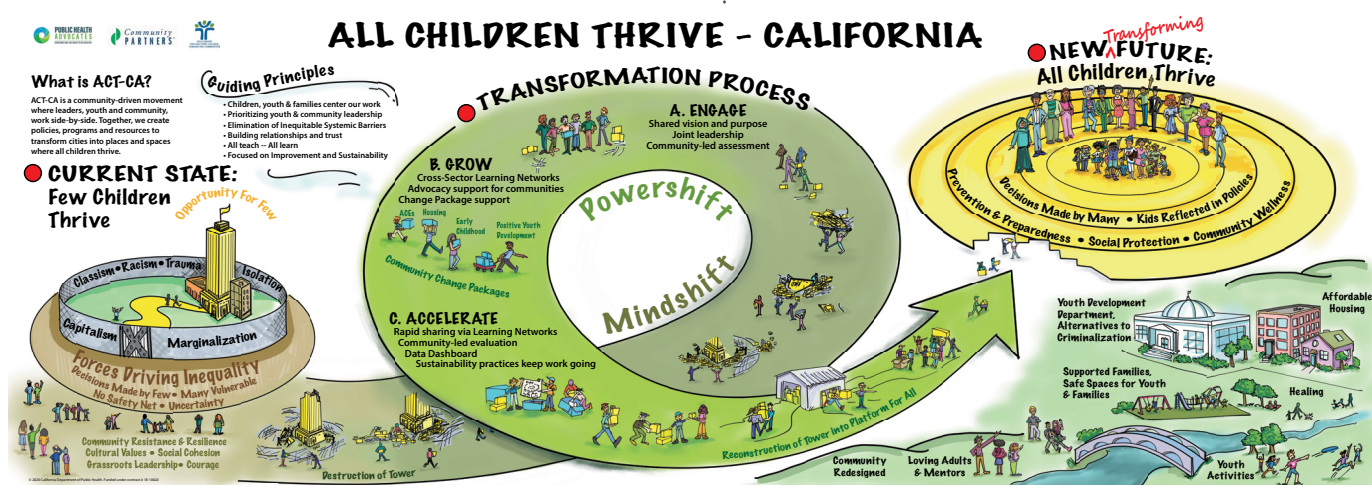


VI. The All Children Thrive Transformation Journey

ACT is a community-driven movement where youth, community members, community partners, and city officials and staff work side by side as in Core and Design Teams.

Through partnership with the Core and Design Teams, the group develops a plan through which they have an opportunity to identify and create policies, programs, and resources to transform cities into places where all children thrive. This process ensures community participation in program design, supports community leadership in program implementation, and creates

shared accountability. The ACT Big Picture Map illustrates the steps the ACT team and cities take together as collaborators throughout the stages of the initiative. The Big Picture Map is designed to illustrate the “transformation journey” with key milestones and activities. Each community and city might have a slightly different journey. The Big Picture Map shows an overall picture of what lies ahead to clarify what being part of ACT is about, what the city or community will do, and what the ACT team will do to support the city’s efforts. The Big Picture Map illustrates three stages of transformation: **(A) Engage**, **(B) Grow** and **(C) Accelerate**.



(A) Engage

The **Engage** stage is about familiarizing your prospective city with ACT, making a commitment to action, and formally joining the ACT Initiative. Your community or city meets with the ACT team and begins the process of becoming an official ACT city.

The goal of this stage is to affirm your city’s commitment to the vision and values of ACT by signing the ACT agreement and adopting the ACT Resolution, your commitment to prioritizing the well-being of children.

ACT staff, contractors, and partners help identify and assemble a **Core Team** comprising adult and youth community members, community-serving organizations, city staff and elected officials, and institutions such as a Mental Health Services Authority (MHSA) partner, school district staff, and staff from the county public health department or hospital. Essential to the Core Team is the inclusion of youth and adults affected by inequities in their communities and who have been traumatized by the health care, law enforcement, education, or criminal justice systems. ACT is mindful in choosing who is invited to the Core Team, aiming for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Once the Core Team has been assembled, we introduce its members to ACT's shared vision and principles, provide an overview of ACT, and ask you to join the initiative. Team members commit to participate by signing an agreement defining ACT and their responsibilities as a team member.

To help Core Team members understand how city or community policies and practices affect child well-being, the ACT team will support them in performing a **Community Assessment**. This may include looking at how budgets are allocated, the effectiveness of existing programs and initiatives, partnerships, organizations, and programs working in the community, and relevant data. Engaging youth and adult design team members in the issues that matter most to them is important to the assessment process. The community assessment identifies community priorities, partners, and workgroups for the city's ACT initiative and further defines the city's vision.

The community assessment identifies community priorities, partners, and workgroups for the city's ACT initiative and further defines the city's vision.



Example: East Palo Alto's Community Legacy Vision

Once priorities have been identified, the Core Team works to pass a city resolution that outlines the ACT framework and the city's commitment to the process. This completes the process of becoming a signatory ACT city.

Engage Stage Key Outcomes/Milestones:

- Align with ACT vision and values
- City and Core Team commit to participate
- Conduct a community assessment
- Choose and prioritize North Star goals
- Adopt the ACT resolution

(B) Grow

Now that you are officially an ACT city, we introduce you to the shared learning community of member cities and individuals. Through this community, you can access knowledge, expertise, and best practices related to child well-being. You can also engage with other ACT cities and communities. As part of the learning community, you will have access to the ACT Data Dashboard, an online tool enabling cities to view and track key data and indicators related to child well-being.

At this stage, your Core Team will expand into a Design Team, working with ACT staff to develop implementation, evaluation, and accountability plans, engage in equity and advocacy training, and select one or more Community Action Areas—plans to improve child well-being and shape new systems for all children to thrive. The Community Action Areas focus on addressing adversity, early childhood development, housing, public safety, youth development, and other priorities related to child and youth well-being. In this stage, you will begin engaging in the online learning community with other ACT cities to learn about and share initiative successes and lessons learned using local data. Engaging the community at large is made at this stage.

Grow Stage Key Outcomes/Milestones:

- Engage in ACT Learning Community and Data Dashboard
- Design Team selects and co-creates Community Action Areas
- Design Team receives technical assistance and training associated with Community Action Areas
- Design Team develops implementation, evaluation, and sustainability plans.

(C) Accelerate

At this stage, you will enact and implement policies, measures, and programs as your Design Team further develops its capacities. You will be fully engaged in the ACT learning community and will continue to evolve as part of this network. You will continue to develop your policies and programs to scale, measure outcomes, and test and refine your implementation strategies. You will commit to funding child well-being efforts as ACT staff support your Design Team in developing a sustainability plan and identifying additional funding support.

Accelerate Stage Key Outcomes/Milestones:

- Continue to deepen connections in learning community
- Scale policies and programs for increased impact
- Measure outcomes of policies and programs
- Secure funding
- Design Team develops a sustainability plan.



VII. Transformation Drivers for All Children Thrive



VII. Transformation Drivers for All Children Thrive

The following are key components of the ACT program model and transformation journey that help cities be responsive to the new and diverse challenges in their communities.

Core and Design Teams

Core and Design teams are made up of community leaders, community members, city staff, municipal officials, and community partners. These teams are essential to moving the ACT initiative forward and to advancing and sustaining local policy and other changes promoting health. Core and Design Teams ensure community buy-in and a sense of ownership and pride in the policies as they become the voice of the ACT initiative in their city.

Your Core and Design Team performs three important functions:

1. Identify priorities and create demand - Core and Design Teams are well positioned to identify their community's unique gaps and needs. They create opportunities for adult and youth community members to engage with city officials to create programs, policies, and changes that are responsive to community needs, making them more likely to be successfully implemented.

2. Create partnerships and foster decision-maker champions - A partnership between community members, community-based organizations, and policymakers is key to creating accountability for local decision-makers and generating support from champions. For city staff, these partnerships can demonstrate public will and support for programs and policies.

3. Advance equity - Cities and communities are affected by adverse childhood experiences, trauma, economic hardship, community violence, poor housing quality, a history of racism, and organic inequities that put low-income individuals and people of color at increased risk. Community engagement allows cities to advance equity, giving marginalized communities an opportunity to voice their concerns and needs and to become part of the solution.

Community-Led Assessment and Evaluation

The community-led assessment is an important step in identifying policies and practices your city already has in place and in further outlining your city's transformation goals. The assessment uses an equity focused approach that includes resident engagement and capacity building. ACT coaches assist the city or Core and Design Teams to gather information identifying gaps and action areas, and to compile data helping the city to measure progress toward community well-being.

Design Teams participate in several system mapping activities that encourage innovation and shared learning and engage in a community-led evaluation process for the initiative. The evaluation process may include city surveys, Design Team surveys, or a plan do-study-act process (PDSA)—an interactive evaluation tool that helps with problem solving and understanding what is working and what is not. The PDSA helps ACT to articulate underlying assumptions and to be intentional in refining and improving the ACT process.

The community-led assessment is an equity focused approach that includes resident engagement and capacity building.

Community Action Areas

Following the community-led assessment, the Core Team will select one or more Community Action Areas to improve child well-being, identify resources within their community, and develop a plan to shape new systems so that all children may thrive. Community Action Areas are selected through a community-driven process and may include:

- Promoting healthy child development
- Creating protective environments
- Youth development and civic engagement
- Strengthening economic supports for children and families
- Access to safe and stable housing

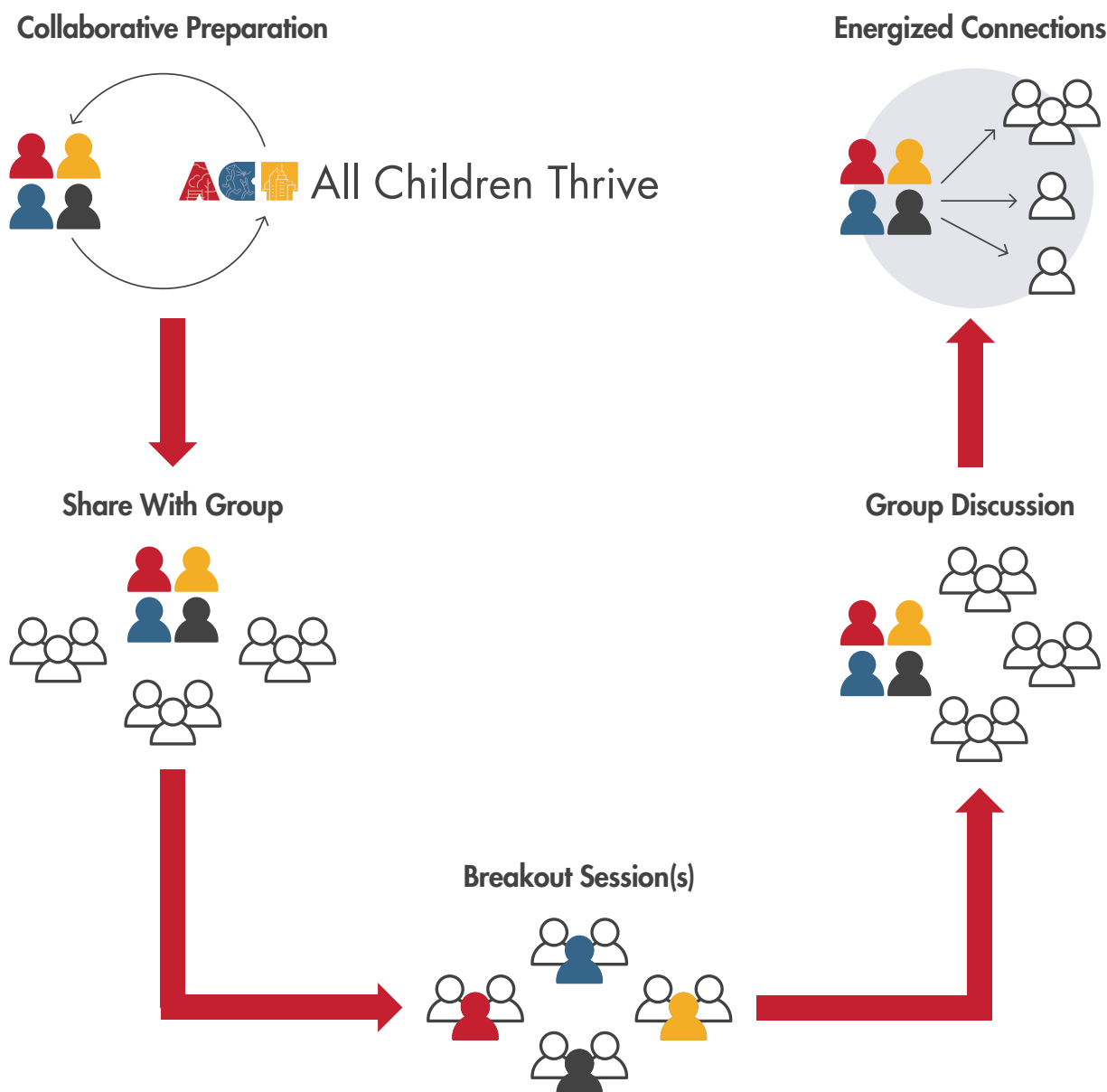
ACT coaches offer technical assistance in collecting, analyzing, and sharing community-level data in these areas. The ACT online learning community supports cities to create, strengthen, and facilitate relationships among ACT cities working in similar focus areas.



Learning Community

The ACT learning community is an interactive space connecting ACT cities. The community consists of collaborative meetings and tools (discussion forum, calendar of events, data sharing and analysis) where community members, community organizations, policymakers, researchers, clinicians, and other passionate people come together to share information, align goals, create innovative solutions, and share progress and lessons learned.

The learning community allows for mature city engagement, moving cities from the broader ACT learning community to more elaborate learning networks requiring different levels of commitments from ACT partner cities, coaches, and community members. As the learning community grows and robust data are collected and shared, larger collaborative goals emerge. The image below shows the maturation process of the learning community:



Youth Innovation Idea Labs

Youth Innovation Idea Labs are a unique offering facilitated by ACT coaches. These labs provide an entry point for youth constituents to co-create solutions as part of ACT with tribal government, city, county, and school district leaders to improve child well-being. Innovation Idea Labs create opportunities to elevate and prioritize youth voices in determining strategies and plans of action for their communities and will be held in ACT communities across the state.



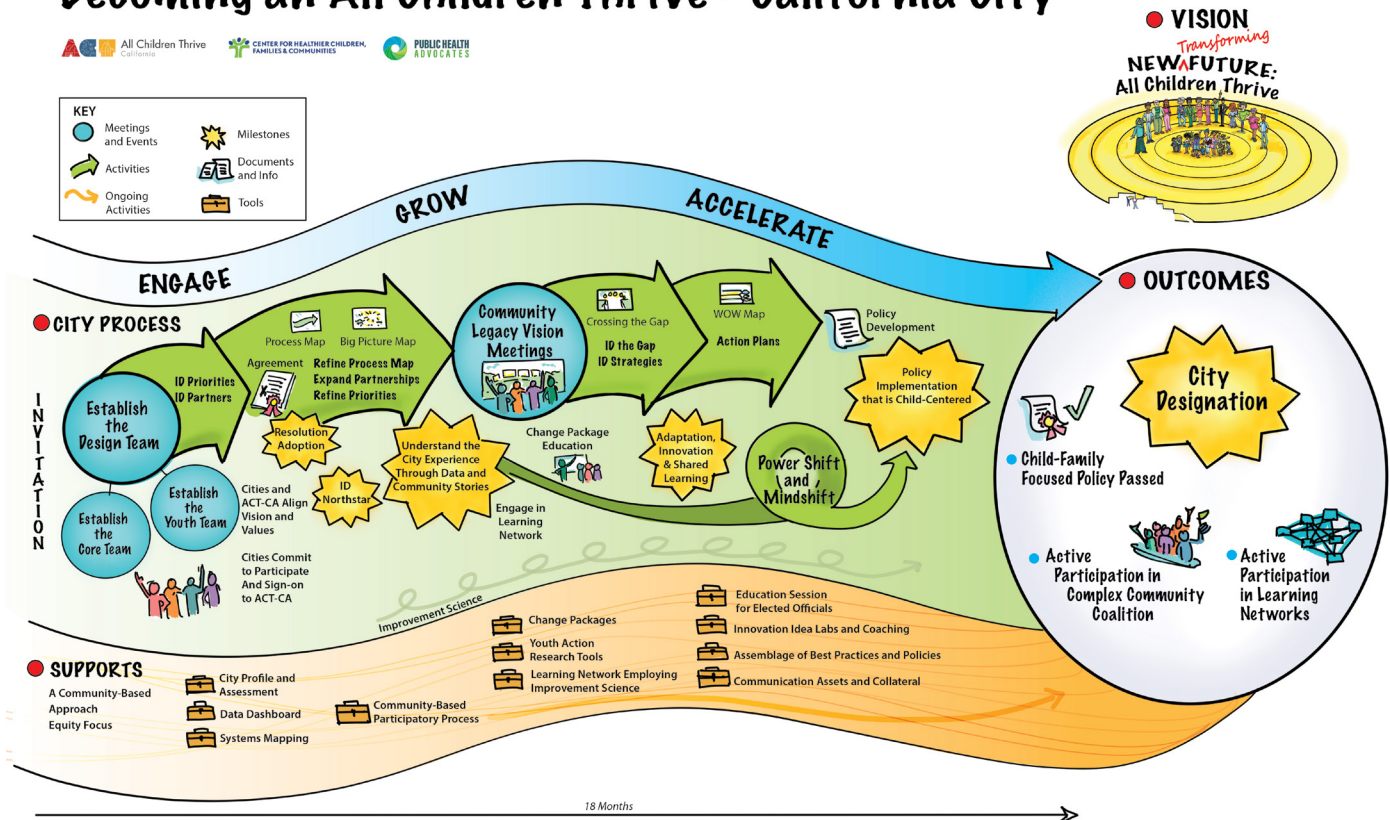
VIII. Becoming an All Children Thrive City



VIII. Becoming an All Children Thrive City

Becoming an ACT city requires agreement on the goals, shared principles, and values of the initiative. The following image presents the steps to become an ACT city. These steps are further outlined in the ACT Technical Assistance Plan for cities, available at ACT-CA.org.

Becoming an All Children Thrive - California City



To become an ACT city, a city must first assemble a Core Team of adults and youth, community partners, city staff, and municipal officials. The team will sign the agreement outlining the purpose of ACT and defining their responsibilities. The Core Team will work to pass a resolution in the city that outlines the ACT framework and a commitment to the process.

Through the Design Teams, the city will conduct a community-led assessment and develop a plan in one or more Community Action Areas where they have an opportunity to identify resources within their communities and create policies and programs to shape new systems addressing child well-being. The city then connects, networks, and grows in engagement through the ACT learning community.

The following outlines the key roles of individuals in transforming their city to an ACT city:

Adult and youth community members - participate, spread the word, and help implement; promote and advocate for strong healthy communities, children's health and well-being, and family focused solutions; ensure that policy changes are meeting the needs of community members and are sustained; hold decision-makers accountable; mobilize other community members; and be the voice of the campaign for social change.

Community-serving and youth organizations - increase community member awareness and participation in ACT; build trust and integrity with adult community members and youth; get feedback and input from adult and youth community members to improve processes or policies and advance efforts; and support active adult and youth community leadership (community activation) by creating conditions for large groups of community members to lead and be involved in transformational efforts.

City/County officials - are champions for ACT and have the power to push an agenda with City Council or Board of Supervisors; spark a call to action; adopt resolution and policy/policies; ensure they have an equity focus when providing resources and services within their community; and take intentional action to bring about social change.

Institutions/other - provide leadership and guidance; participate, help spread the word, and implement; ensure they have an equity focus when providing resources and services within their community; have a common goal and shared vision; and take action to bring about social change.



IX. Tools for Cities



IX. Tools for Cities

The following resources and tools are meant to help cities in their ACT transformation process. This list will be continuously updated to reflect current best practices and policies and to be responsive to new and emerging needs.

Strategies for Change

ACT offers the following evidence-based tools and strategies to help your city to improve a process or system by testing and measuring impact.

- **Data and information** capture a deep sense of the challenges in a community and build the case for addressing them.
- **Policy Changes** integrate changes at a government, city, or systems levels and seek to achieve specific outcomes.
- **Governance and leadership changes** like establishing an Office of Child Well-Being or a citywide youth council help to provide accountability and oversight as policy changes are implemented.
- **Planning changes** include adopting a citywide outcome framework for kids to help structure the passage of specific policies and programs.
- **Engagement and organizational changes** emerge as cities intentionally create community coalitions to move child well-being to the forefront.
- **Messaging and advocacy changes** empower and give voice to groups that have been marginalized by traditional power structures.
- As the city begins to see itself as a place for social innovation for kids and moves beyond business as usual, **innovation strategies** for problem solving bring change and shape future innovations.



All Children Thrive Policy Menu

Our menu of ACT policies that can improve child and youth well-being in California is divided into five main Community Action Areas. Focus areas and specific initiatives are evolving, however, and this policy menu continually evolves to adapt to new and changing needs.

- Area 1: Promoting Healthy Child Development
- Area 2: Creating Protective Environments
- Area 3: Youth Development and Civic Engagement
- Area 4: Strengthening Economic Supports for Children and Families
- Area 5: Access to Safe and Stable Housing

The evidence-based policies below describe the “what” rather than the “how” by suggesting the measurable outcomes shown to bring about the most effective change. Describing them in these terms allows each ACT city flexibility in determining their legislative approach, tailoring and customizing each policy to best fit the city’s needs. ACT coaches assist cities throughout the process of selecting and refining their policy priorities.



Area 1: Promoting Healthy Child Development

Early childhood trauma is a risk factor for almost everything, from psychiatric disorders such as adult depression and PTSD, to cardiovascular problems, cancer, and obesity. Current systems and structures such as healthcare, education, housing, safety, parks, and criminal justice do not provide space for our children to thrive. Instead, they punish the most vulnerable children without addressing the direct source of their pain. In order to improve early childhood outcomes, we must reshape the structures in which they live. The following policies address early childhood trauma and promote resiliency and mutual respect between systems and communities.

- 1.1 Promote child well-being in the general plan:** Include built environment components in the city's General Plan that promote child well-being (e.g., safety, connectedness, ability to thrive) through an equity lens with a community-driven, long-term vision for walking and bicycling that guides adoption and implementation in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.2 Earmark resources to educate community members on gun violence prevention:** Legislate policy earmarking resources to support activities that educate community members on state policies that prevent gun violence (e.g., gun violence restraining orders, safe storage of guns) in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.3 Create an early learning city:** Legislate a policy or resolution that commits to adopting principles of an early learning city that engages parents, teachers, and others to equip children to resolve problems and assume leadership roles. Publish an annual report sharing outcome indicators. Establish and define the principles of an early learning city through a citizen review process using a community coalition, panel, or taskforce in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.4 Offer bonus dollars for healthy foods:** Legislate a policy that expands on existing state policies incentivizing low-income individuals with bonus dollars or matching funds to purchase healthy foods and hygiene items (diapers, toilet paper, toothpaste, feminine hygiene). Incentive funds should be redeemable at farmers' markets, grocery stores, mobile markets, and through Community-Supported Agriculture in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.5 Create healthy zoning:** Legislate a healthy youth zoning policy that controls the food environment, expanding the zoning of community gardens and farmers' markets while limiting commercial food retail such as convenience stores, or allowing "as-of-right" incentives to businesses that increase access to healthy food in areas frequented by young people in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.6 Passing a healthy procurement policy:** Legislate a healthy food procurement policy that creates or upholds municipal nutrition standards and sets the percentage of foods and beverages sold on city property that must meet those standards. Include a healthy retail recognition program with defined standards and criteria involving two or more community partners in the target jurisdiction.

- 1.7 Create a healthy vending policy:** Legislate a healthy vending policy that creates or upholds municipal nutrition standards and sets the percentage of foods and beverages sold on city property that meet those standards. Include a healthy retail recognition provision with defined standards and criteria involving two or more community partners in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.8 Partner for joint use:** Legislate a joint-use policy with school districts and organizations to allow playing fields, playgrounds, and recreation centers to be utilized by community members when schools or campuses are closed. Where necessary, adopt regulatory and legislative policies to address liability issues that might block implementation in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.9 Earmark funds to support and expand youth development activities:** Legislate a policy that earmarks resources to support youth development activities such as bike kitchens, bike exchanges, skate parks, or other wheeled means of travel (skateboards) that encourage physical activity. Include at-risk youth in buying, building, and repairing bikes, youth excursions, advocating for and improving local food systems, and consulting on municipal plans and budgets in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.10 Create Complete Streets:** Legislate a policy mandating adoption and implementation of a Complete Streets or Safe Routes to School and Community plan that supports planning, building, and maintaining a network of sidewalks and street crossings and creates a safe and comfortable walking environment connecting schools, parks, and other destinations in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.11 Increase and maintain open spaces:** Legislate a policy that earmarks resources for equitable park access to establish, maintain, and repair current open spaces while also expanding recreation areas in parks to poor and underserved neighborhoods to support the long-term physical and mental health of the target jurisdiction.
- 1.12 Make access to technology equitable:** Legislate a policy that bans unequal access to technologies such as broadband networks and incentivizes internet service providers to offer low-cost services to underserved neighborhoods in the target jurisdiction.
- 1.13 Stipulate child well-being as a right in the General Plan:** Legislate a policy promoting child well-being as a right in the city's General Plan, with provisions ensuring access for all children (including those with special health care needs and in the foster care system) to safe spaces to play, access for parents to affordable early education, daycare, and other spaces where children of all abilities learn and are cared for as part of a larger plan to build local infrastructure in the target jurisdiction. Include a provision that appoints a local children's ombudsman to review and respond to needs.

- 1.14 Earmark resources to support physical distancing needs:** Legislate a policy earmarking funds and resources to support physical distancing needs and addressing the need for materials (toys, school supplies) used by individual children in early care and education settings. Support efforts to expand free or sliding scale childcare, improve facilities where young children are cared for, and invest in staff who care for young children through professional development opportunities and providing a living wage in the target jurisdiction. Define living wage appropriate to the cost of living in the target jurisdiction.

Area 2: Creating Protective Environments

How do we create protective environments for children? We work to prevent trauma and adverse experiences, abuse, neglect, and violence before they occur. This begins by acknowledging the role our communities have in creating shared responsibility and accountability for the health and well-being for all children. We can't attempt to fix a problem that we don't identify, so data will need to be collected to pinpoint disparities. The following policies are meant to ensure that all families and children are supported with holistic, trauma-informed services designed to promote recovery, healing, and resilience.

- 2.1 Establish a Child Death Review Team:** Legislate a policy establishing a single county-level Child Death Review Team (CDRT) to examine and report all child deaths in the county. Stipulate that the CDRT include participation of community members and local police. Include that the CDRT use funds received on completion of Fatal Child Abuse and Neglect Surveillance (FCANS) reports for local, sustainable prevention activities to improve child well-being. CDRT will be published in an annual county report and made available to the community.
- 2.2 Mandate youth risk behavioral surveillance participation:** Include a policy within the Local Educational Agency's Local Control Accountability Plan mandating the participation in Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance (YRBS) survey modules that measure positive childhood experience and adverse childhood experience indicators in the target jurisdiction.
- 2.3 Mandate California Healthy Kids Survey Participation:** Include a policy within the Local Educational Agency's Local Control Accountability Plan mandating participation in the California Healthy Kids Survey (CHKS) utilizing the California Department of Education's standardized School Climate module in the target jurisdiction, with findings published and shared with the school community.
- 2.4 Support crisis response teams:** Legislate a policy that earmarks funds to support crisis response teams comprising social workers and other health professionals trained to respond in a culturally responsive manner to individuals and families experiencing mental health crisis or in need of wraparound services in the target jurisdiction. Culturally responsive will be defined with input from community coalitions, panels, or taskforces.

- 2.5 Adopt trauma-informed approaches:** Mandate the minimum number of public and private institutions adopting or implementing voluntary, comprehensive, ongoing trauma-informed organizational and service delivery policies and procedures in a target jurisdiction consistent with the US Department of Health & Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) document, SAMHSA's Concept of Trauma and Guidance for a Trauma-Informed Approach.
- 2.6 Define trauma-informed practices and approaches for your jurisdiction:** Designate the minimum number of jurisdictions that have adopted a definition of trauma-informed practices and approaches that includes the promotion of a culture based on beliefs about community and individual resilience, recovery, and healing from community and individual trauma.
- 2.7 Ban use of corporal punishment against children in schools:** Legislate a policy that expands the state's ban on the use of corporal punishment against children in schools in the target jurisdiction to include banning corporal punishment at home by family members. Define corporal punishment to include any form of physical punishment a caregiver uses to cause a child's pain or discomfort, such as spanking, slapping, pinching, pulling, hitting with an object such as a paddle, belt, hairbrush, whip, or stick, or making them eat soap, hot sauce, hot pepper, or other unpleasant substances. Appoint a local children's ombudsman to review instances of abuse through a culturally responsive lens and employ crisis response teams responding to reports of corporal punishment to support the family to engage in non-violent forms of conflict resolution and support family preservation and reunification. Earmark funds to support a community coalition or citizen panel or taskforce to provide guidance and recommendations on enforcement and implementation of corporal punishment response activities in a culturally responsive and sensitive manner.
- 2.8 Require domestic violence screening policies for first responders:** Legislate a policy requiring that first responders conduct an evidence-based screen when responding to domestic violence calls that asks about known risk factors for a violent relationship, with individuals scoring high for risk of domestic violence being immediately and proactively connected to a domestic violence advocate in the target jurisdiction.

Area 3: Youth Development and Civic Engagement

Youth remain a largely untapped resource for community innovation. In order for policies to be successful for young populations, those closest to the pain must be closest to the power. By engaging with youth as knowledgeable leaders in the community, you'll be one step closer to fostering positive relationships and creating space where youth can succeed. The following policies further civic engagement by youth in their communities.

- 3.1 Require a community coalition/advisory board be consulted on policy making:** Legislate a policy requiring that a community coalition or advisory body charged with defining the problems and the solutions that address childhood adversity and prevent violence is in place and consulted on local-level policymaking and decision-making. Earmark resources to support facilitation in the target jurisdiction.
- 3.2 Earmark funds to prevent childhood abuse/adversity:** Legislate a policy that earmarks funds to support youth crisis response teams of social workers and others who provide wraparound services in a culturally responsive manner to reach youth experiencing homelessness, in living situations with domestic and sexual violence, foster youth and youth aging out of the foster system, youth with mental illness or living with a family member experiencing mental illness, young people with an incarcerated family member, and families with children with disabilities in the target jurisdiction. Culturally responsive will be defined with the input of community coalitions or citizen review panels or taskforces.
- 3.3 Create, increase, and improve youth mentorship programs:** Include a policy within the Local Educational Agency's Local Control Accountability Plan mandating support and resources for expanded youth mentorship programs and leadership development opportunities in the target jurisdiction.
- 3.4 Mandate resources for expansion of early childhood literacy programs:** Include a policy within the Local Educational Agency's Local Control Accountability Plan mandating support and resources for expansion of early childhood literacy programs and family engagement in the target jurisdiction.

Area 4: Strengthening Economic Supports for Children and Families

We're living in an uncertain world because of COVID-19, and families with limited financial resources are affected most. Economic struggles are increased in marginalized communities, which experience greater financial insecurity due to predatory financial services, mass incarceration, and fewer employment protections. Children are not unaware of the hardships happening in their homes; when their parents worry, children worry too. The following policies can help financially stabilize community members, building intergenerational wealth for their children, too.

- 4.1 Ban predatory financial services:** Legislate a policy that limits or bans predatory financial services (e.g., check cashing, payday loans, sub-prime home loans) in a target jurisdiction and provides incentives to minority and community-owned businesses that offer stable, financial services with low-interest rates, public ownership opportunities, or local reinvestment opportunities. Earmark resources to support financial empowerment coaching and similar programs that help families escape debt and build wealth.

- 4.2 Increase job access and training to the formerly incarcerated and other in-need populations:** Legislate a policy that promotes access to job opportunities and training for people who have been formerly incarcerated to reduce recidivism, improve incomes, and benefit overall community health. Include a banning the box stipulation ensuring that past convictions are not included on job applications and earmarking funds for programs that offer targeted job training and placement to help people who were formerly incarcerated, low-income communities, communities of color, and youth in foster-care systems to find employment.
- 4.3 Expand industry zoning:** Legislate a policy that provides opportunities for expanded business zoning in locations deemed appropriate through a General Plan process and informed by community coalitions or citizen review panels and task forces. Include tax credits or other similar incentives to small businesses that build in or relocate to the established business zone and offer jobs that provide a living wage to workers. Define living wage relative to the cost of living in the target jurisdiction.
- 4.4 Living wage:** Legislate a policy that sets a living wage and benefit standard for businesses benefiting from public contracts, subsidies, or other public resources in the target jurisdiction. Offer tax breaks to small businesses that provide a living wage and that consider the cost of living in their living wage formula, and those that hire and contract locally from the target jurisdiction.
- 4.5 Incentivize businesses to strengthen employee financial security:** Legislate a policy that offers incentives to businesses in the form of tax credits in exchange for adopting meaningful and sustainable practices strengthening household financial security, including income supports (e.g., childcare, living wages, expanded paid leave options, measures to reduce the gender pay gap) to employees in the target jurisdiction. Define meaningful and sustainable practices informed by local community coalitions and citizen review panels and taskforces. Define living wage relative to the cost of living in the target jurisdiction.
- 4.6 Provide childcare subsidies:** Legislate a stronger than existing (state or federal) policy expanding childcare subsidies to families with low and middle incomes for use in accredited daycare and childcare settings in the target jurisdiction. Earmark resources to support facilities based on need and providing a living wage to their staff and teachers. Define living wage relative to the cost of living in the target jurisdiction.
- 4.7 Employee compensation for insufficient advance notice:** Legislate an employee compensation policy in the target jurisdiction for instances when the employer provides insufficient advance notice of schedule changes resulting in hours lost, loss of on-call hours or split shifts, or where a scheduled shift ends early. Establish a forum for local businesses, local chambers of commerce, and organizations serving families making minimum wage to ensure enhanced coordination and planning with businesses in implementing this policy. Define insufficient advance notice informed by community coalitions or citizen review panels and taskforces.

- 4.8 Employee advance notice:** Legislate a policy requiring that employers in the target jurisdiction provide advance notice before setting and changing work schedules. Include a provision specifying that when available, extra work hours be made available to employees who explicitly request such hours. Establish a forum for local businesses, local chambers of commerce, and organizations serving families making minimum wage to ensure enhanced coordination and planning with businesses in implementing this policy.
- 4.9 Employee protection for caregivers:** Legislate a policy that offers employees with caregiving responsibilities in the target jurisdiction protections from retaliation to their requests for change in work hours, schedule, or location. Establish a forum for local businesses, local chambers of commerce, and organizations serving families making minimum wage to ensure enhanced coordination and planning with businesses in implementing this policy.
- 4.10 Flexible work schedules:** A voluntary policy undertaken by local organizations with written policies that provide employees with the option for flexible and consistent scheduling in a target jurisdiction. Establish an employee forum to discuss worker protections, rights, and concerns.
- 4.11 Remove or reduce high pain, low gain fines and fees:** Legislate a policy that assesses, removes, or reduces high pain, low gain fines and fees that disproportionately impact women, children, and families. Such fees include criminal justice fines and fees (SB 144), jail/juvenile facilities fees (SB 555), county court fees (related to SB 144), local jurisdiction late fees, and others in the target jurisdiction. Allocate funds for legal and other local, community-based services navigation. Designate that policies being considered for removal will be reviewed and informed by local community coalitions or citizen review panels and taskforces.

Area 5: Access to Safe and Stable Housing

Housing is a public health issue. No amount of health education, nutrition assistance, or medical insurance can replace the value of a protective home. In order to thrive, children and families need a place to live before attending to less critical issues in their lives. The following policies can make it easier for community members to access safe and stable housing.

- 5.1 Preserve existing affordable housing:** Legislate a policy that preserves existing housing at affordable levels or requires replacement of existing units (when preserving units is impossible) at the same affordability levels, in perpetuity in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.2 Expand affordable housing:** Legislate a policy that expands the quantity of affordable and/or supportive and transitional housing available to individuals and families—particularly pregnant people, those with young children, and formerly incarcerated individuals—proportional to the need in the target jurisdiction. Earmark funds to support case management or other similar supports to sustain housing.

- 5.3 Protect low-income renters:** Legislate a policy protecting low-income renters (up to 80% of the median family income in the area) in the target jurisdiction from rent burdening.
- 5.4 Incentivize the building of affordable housing:** Legislate that the City Planning Commission amend zoning as needed and approve sufficient housing stock to meet the city's current and anticipated workforce needs. Incentivize or commit public resources to support the production of affordable housing as defined by HSC 500.52.5: not more than 30% of gross household income, proportional to need in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.5 Require a minimum number of affordable housing units in community zoning:** Legislate a policy requiring that community zoning allocate a minimum percentage of units in any new housing project at no more than 80% of the median household income in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.6 Create community land trusts (CLTs):** Legislate a policy committing public land or buildings to CLTs, supporting CLT financing, and supporting CLT infrastructure managed by the community in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.7 Earmark resources for tenant rights education:** Legislate a policy that earmarks funds supporting implementation activities and enforcement of the tenant rights promised under AB 1482 to access to legal aid representation and/or consultation and education that ensures individuals and families are informed of their rental rights and provided with guidance in the instance of eviction proceedings in the target jurisdiction. Establish a coalition of community members and direct resources to facilitate the coalition to guide and review progress of implementation activities.
- 5.8 Prevent COVID-related evictions:** Enact a city-wide moratorium on housing evictions preventing any resident from being evicted due to a loss of income related to a business closure, loss of working hours or wages, layoffs, or out-of-pocket medical costs caused by a pandemic based on need in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.9 Enact density bonuses:** Legislate a policy addressing barriers in the city's land development code that make building affordable and multifamily housing difficult by waiving many requirements and granting incentives in exchange for building housing that meets the program's criteria. Loosen zoning restrictions and provide incentives allowing for higher density of affordable and mixed-income developments in the target jurisdiction.
- 5.10 Create a comprehensive housing plan:** Mandate use of a comprehensive housing plan as a roadmap for community planning, with specific strategies and actions that position the target jurisdiction to establish and reach goals for affordable housing based on need. Establish a coalition of community members and direct resources to support facilitation of the coalition to collect their guidance and support review and progress of activities.

***Bonus Community Action Area: Mental Health and Wellness**

Instead of addressing mental health only through treatment options, there are ways to invest in mental health proactively by investing in “mental wellness”. This is best done by addressing policy, systems, and environmental change instead of focusing on individuals. This does not mean individual services are not important or there are not policies that can be championed, but ACT’s role and primary focus is encouraging and guiding cities to innovate and to focus on prevention. Since mental health treatment approaches are often “downstream” focused, ACT considers Mental Health and Wellness a bonus Community Action Area and must be chosen in addition to one of the five Community Action Areas that focus on “upstream” approaches that will address mental wellness.

**Bonus Community Action Area reserved for Vanguard Cities and must be in addition to one of the five primary Community Action Areas detailed above.*

X. References and Acknowledgements



X. References and Acknowledgements

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2007). The bioecological model of human development. *Handbook of child psychology*, 1

Dhaliwal, K. (2018). Radical Inquiry. Retrieved on March 25, 2020 from <https://www.acesconnection.com/g/california-aces-action/blog/radical-inquiry-research-praxis-for-healing-and-liberation>.

Halfon, N., Larson, K., Lu, M., Tullis, E., & Russ, S. (2014). Lifecourse health development: past, present and future. *Maternal and Child Health Journal*, 18(2), 344–365.

Hargreaves, M. B., Verbitsky-Savitz, N., Coffee-Borden, B., Perreras, L., Pecora, P., Roller White, C., Morgan, G. B., Barila, T., Ervin, A., Case, L., Hunter, R., Adams, K. (2016). Advancing the Measurement of Collective Community Capacity to Address Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience. Community Science. Gaithersburg, MD.

Kaplan, H. C., Brady, P. W., Dritz, M. C., Hooper, D. K., Linam, W. M., Froehle, C. M., & Margolis, P. (2010). The influence of context on quality improvement success in health care: a systematic review of the literature. *The Milbank quarterly*, 88(4), 500-559.

Katz, B., & Nowak, J. (2018). The new localism: How cities can thrive in the age of populism. Brookings Institution Press.

Mansour, M. E., Kotagal, U., Rose, B., Ho, M., Brewer, D., Roy-Chaudhury, A., Hornung, R., Wade, T. & DeWitt, T. G. (2003). Health-related quality of life in urban elementary schoolchildren. *Pediatrics*, 111(6), 1372-1381

Mistry, K. B., Minkovitz, C. S., Riley, A. W., Johnson, S. B., Grason, H. A., Dubay, L. C., & Guyer, B. (2012). A new framework for childhood health promotion: the role of policies and programs in building capacity and foundations of early childhood health. *American Journal of Public Health*, 102(9), 1688-1696.

Siegel, B., Erickson, J., Milstein, B., Pritchard, K. E. (2018). Multisector Partnerships Need Further Development To Fulfill Aspirations For Transforming Regional Health And Well-Being. *Health Affairs*, 37(1), 30-37. doi: 10.1377/hlthaff.2017.11118.

Sharpe, B., Hodgson, A., Leicester, G., Lyon, A., and Fazey, I. (2016). Three horizons: a pathways practice for transformation. *Ecology and Society*, 21(2), 47. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ES-08388-210247>

Acknowledgement and All Children Thrive-California STAFF

Public Health Advocates

Elizabeth Armstrong
Reggie Caldwell
Brandie Campbell
Belinda Campos-Bresnahan
Flojaune Cofer
Kaniyaa Francis
Harold Goldstein
Everly Inong
DeAngelo Mack
Lourdes Perez
Kaytie Speziale

UCLA Center for Healthier Children, Families, and Communities

Efren Aguilar
Eryn Block
Charlene Choi
Mimi Choi
Linh Chuong
Emily Cornell
Myrita Craig
Leila Espinosa
Angelica Flores
Neal Halfon
Jennifer Lopez
Nicole Perreira
Nana Sarkodee-Adoo
Jared Schor
Hallie Young

All Children Thrive-California's Equity Advisory Group

Mayra Alvarez
Camille Bailey
Nayeli Bernal
Dahlton Brown
Trina Brown
Ruben Cantu
Kanwarpal Dhaliwal
Elizabeth Elliott
Lishaun Francis
Holly Fleming
Drew Furedi
Annie Henrich
Joyce Javier
Tracy Mendez
Lesli LeGras Morris
Amy Portello Nelson
Donielle Prince

Contractors

Wondros - Design Firm
CORE - Evaluation Firm
ACEs Connection - Outreach Partner
Civilian - Communications Firm
UC Davis - Analysis of BRFSS ACEs Data by City
Berkeley Media Studies Group - City Level
Media Analysis
LeapFrog - Big Picture Mapping