

LITTLE DIXIE COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC.

Rural Impact Initiative

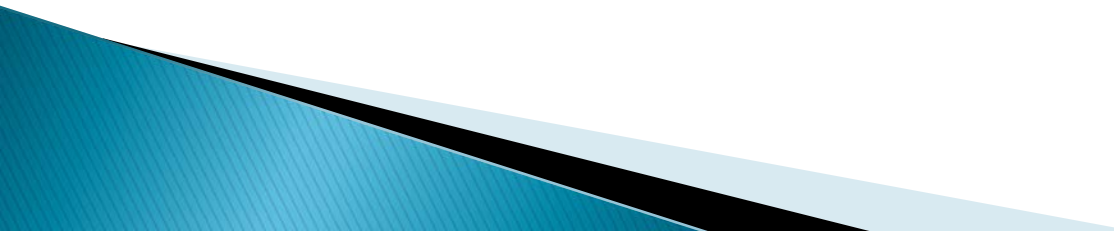
Choctaw, McCurtain and Pushmataha Counties –
Southeast Oklahoma

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NEED FOR RURAL IMPACT

- ▶ Little Dixie was chosen as one of 10 rural impact grantees as the backbone organization
 - ▶ Long standing, quality early childhood programs: Head Start, Early Head Start and Early Head Start – Child Care
 - ▶ Choctaw, McCurtain and Pushmataha have the highest poverty rates for children and families in the state.
 - ▶ 34% of the children in this area live in poverty and 27% of families live in poverty.
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Little Dixie's Goal

Increase parent support and educational opportunities through:


- *increased concentrated services,*
 - *increased communication,*
- *enhanced community partnerships, and*
- *more closely aligned systems*

to increase the economic self-sufficiency of families living in poverty

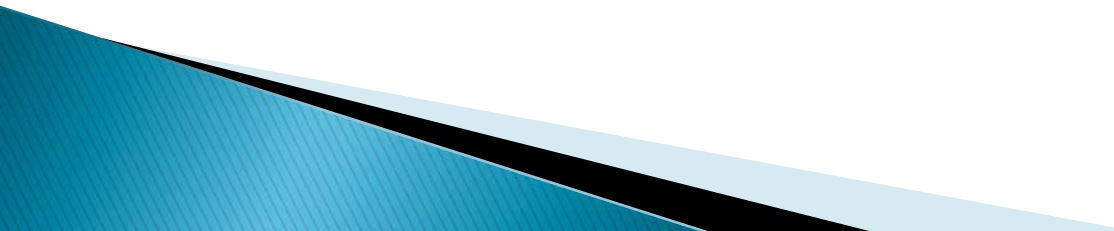
KEY POINTS OF ACTION PLAN

- ▶ Addressing concurrently the needs of both vulnerable children and their parents
 - ▶ Increasing parents' employment and education and the well-being of their children and families
 - ▶ Evaluating opportunities to eliminate barriers or obstacles to accessing services including duplication of data collection
 - ▶ Collectively, intentionally and simultaneously increasing capacity of children and parents
 - ▶ Thinking of this as a new philosophy, approach or way of doing business
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KEY POINTS OF ACTION PLAN

- ▶ Working with partners to evaluate barriers or obstacles to accessing services and family participation
 - ▶ Focusing by partners on comprehensive services for the whole family
 - ▶ Sharing data and outcomes with partners
 - ▶ Developing strong communication across partners
 - ▶ Enhancing partnerships across adult/child programs by developing cross system planning team of critical partners
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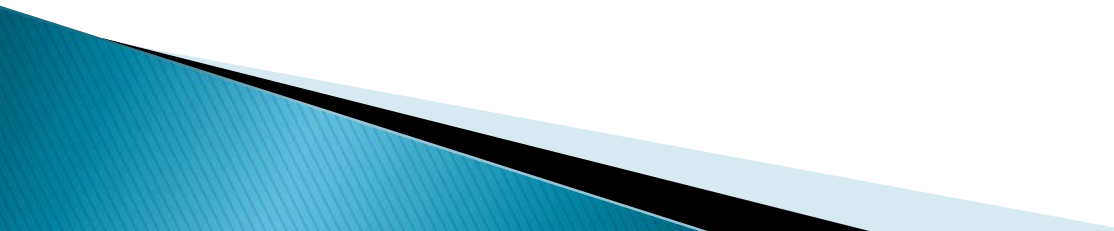
DEVELOPMENT OF CROSS SYSTEM PLANNING TEAM (CRITICAL PARTNERS)

- ▶ Initially identified and recruited critical partners
 - ▶ Internal and external partners have “bought in” to the project and are excited about it
 - ▶ List of partners continues to grow, people “want in” the process
 - ▶ Developing MOUs with partners
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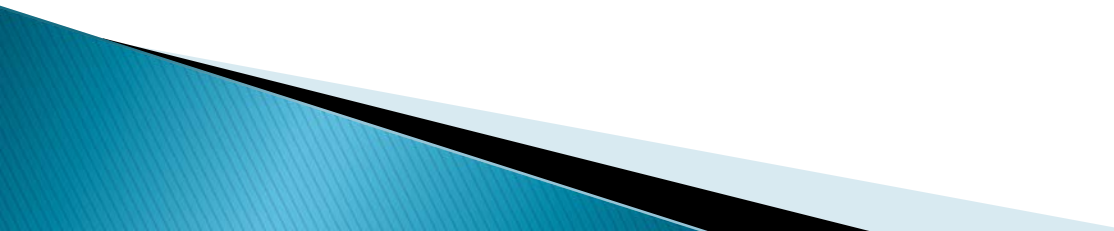
EXTERNAL PARTNERS

- ▶ Southern Workforce Board
 - ▶ Department of Human Services
 - ▶ OK Health Care Authority
 - ▶ OK Department of Health
 - ▶ Choctaw Nation
 - ▶ Youth Services
 - ▶ Adult Education – Hugo Public Schools
 - ▶ Kiamichi Technology Center
 - ▶ OK Employment Security Commission
 - ▶ Department of Rehabilitative Services
 - ▶ SOSU – Educational Opportunities Center
 - ▶ SOSU – TRIO Program
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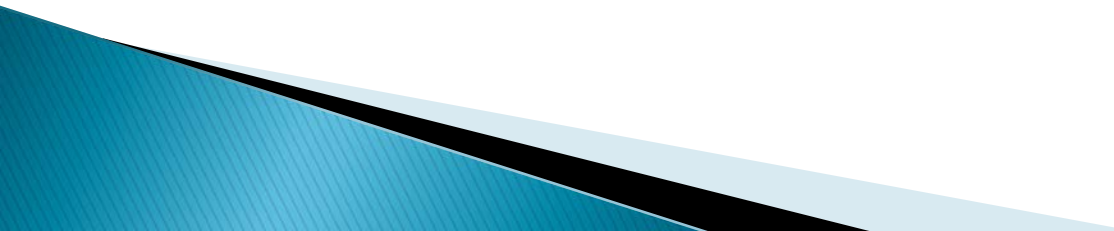
INTERNAL PARTNERS

- ▶ Head Start
 - ▶ Early Head Start
 - ▶ Early Head Start – Child Care
 - ▶ Housing Division
 - ▶ Drug Free Communities Program
 - ▶ CASA
 - ▶ Smart Start
 - ▶ At Risk Youth
 - ▶ Transit
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WHAT MAKES THIS APPROACH DIFFERENT?

- ▶ Strong leadership support from partners
 - ▶ Change in philosophy, not just another program
 - ▶ Enhanced, focused training for agency staff and partners on 2-Gen philosophy
 - ▶ Action Plan was developed by the partners
 - ▶ Involvement is a natural fit for CAAs
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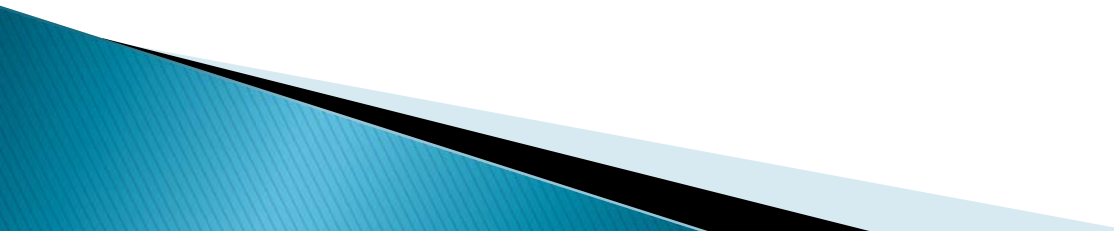
ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

- ▶ Cohort of 20 EHS families who receive a comprehensive strategy of intensive case management, education and skills development for parents; quality early childhood services through EHS; links to education and job training skills, economic supports/financial capability training and support
 - ▶ Implementing a new self-sufficiency assessment
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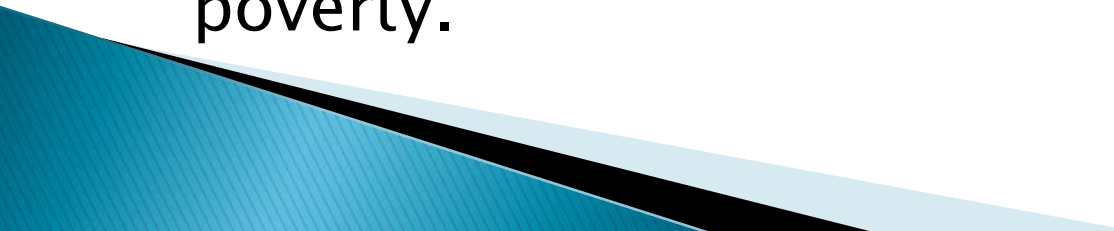
ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

- ▶ G-STARs: Collaborated with Southern Workforce Board to utilize G-STARs as a common data sharing system among partners for housing common intake information
- ▶ VROOM: Smart phone app with information and resources for parents providing with easy ways to boost early learning by turning simple, everyday shared moments into brain building moments
- ▶ In process of “branding” the project to spread recognition and knowledge of 2-Gen through communities

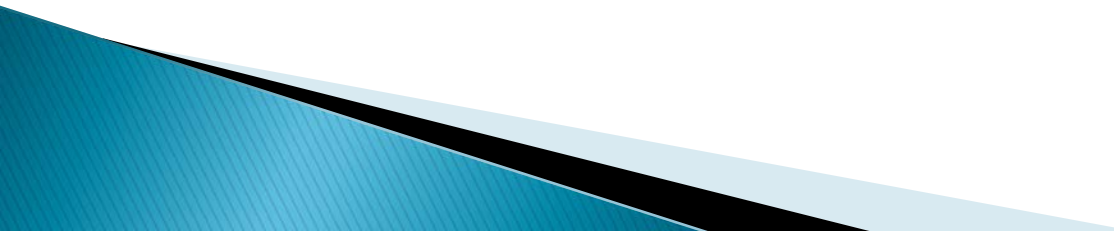
ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

- ▶ Developing tracking systems to collect and analyze data to monitor and share progress
 - ▶ Surveying parents on their successes, obstacles, barriers and what they think is best way to implement 2-gen work
 - ▶ Gained parent input through interviews, anecdotal information and community assessment meetings
 - ▶ Simultaneously supporting adult learning and EC
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ENHANCED TRAINING

- ▶ Provide training with a focus on 2-Gen for staff and partners
 - ▶ Planning resource fair to co-locate services
 - ▶ Will receive concentrated T&TA as Financial Capability grantee
 - ▶ Each partner meeting has a short training on 2-Gen
 - ▶ Bridges Out of Poverty training provided for staff, partners and community; training centers around understanding the dynamics that cause and maintain poverty and provides tools and strategies to prevent, reduce, and alleviate poverty.
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ENHANCED COMMUNICATION

- ▶ Shared training between partners
 - ▶ Developing Online Resource Directory for partners and community
 - ▶ Preparing newsletters to partners to spread the message about 2-Gen
 - ▶ Developing a “Resource Update” as a way to spread information about available resources
 - ▶ Developing a Facebook page to spread 2-Gen
 - ▶ Invited to join Ascend Network
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How We're Leveraging Funding

- ▶ Applied for numerous grants:
 - Kellogg Grant – \$30,000 – American Academy of Pediatrics: Funds to support Rural Impact Initiative
 - Strengthening Working Families Initiative – \$2,086,092 – Employment & Training Administration, DOL
 - Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Impact Program – \$2,133,000 – HRSA: Enhance EC systems building
 - Rides to Wellness Oklahoma – Consortium – Federal Transit Association: works to overcome barriers that keep citizens from accessing health care services
 - Investing in Innovation Fund – \$3,450,000 – US Dept. of Education: serves children in pre-school through 3rd grade by building a base of non-cognitive skills, strengthening family attachment and overall support

How We're Leveraging Funding

► Additional Grants:

- Financial Capability Technical Assistant Award – Office of Community Service: Provides T&TA to improve financial capability integration projects
- Strategic Investment Fund – \$99,956 – NeighborWorks: Hire Rural Impact Coordinator to coordinate services
- Two VISTA members assigned to assist with project – National Community Action Program
- Head Start Duration of Services Grant – up to \$500,000 – ACF: Extends Head Start hours of operation
- Connecting Kids to Coverage – 558,592 – DHHS: Facilitate the enrollment of impoverished children in SoonerCare