



GREATER NEW ORLEANS
FOUNDATION

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Building a Network for Change

Stand Up For Our Children Year Two Evaluation

October 2014

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Section One: Executive Summary

Introduction

Stand Up for Our Children is an initiative of the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) to foster civic participation and empower parents and families to improve the quality of life for the region’s most vulnerable children. The initiative was made possible through a \$1.5 million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

A fundamental belief of both foundations is that solutions to community problems emanate from local citizens working individually and collectively toward the common good and that people have the inherent capacity to solve their own problems. In that spirit, the Stand Up for Our Children initiative focused on three key outcomes: increasing parent engagement in advocating for vulnerable children 0-5 years old, strengthening nonprofits through organizational capacity building and fostering collaboration among participating organizations.

Prior to any grant awards, a planning process identified capacity issues and service gaps which the initiative was further shaped to address:

- Use of best practices in parent engagement
- GNOF would need to undertake a proactive approach to blend capacity building with grantmaking as a Stand Up strategy in assembling the cohort of grant recipients
- A peer-to-peer learning cohort, the Community of Practice (CoP), would become the vehicle for ongoing organizational capacity building, parental engagement and development of a network for change among participants.

The following 12 organizations received grant awards for participation in the initiative:

Birthing Project USA, Delta Region Office	Orleans Public Education Network
City of NOLA Health Department – Healthy Start NOLA	Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
Kingsley House*	Puentes New Orleans
Louisiana Children’s Museum	Total Community Action
Neighborhood Partnership Network	United Way of Southeast Louisiana
New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium*	Urban League of Greater New Orleans

*Year 2 grantees

All Stand Up grantees were required to participate in the Community of Practice half-day learning sessions over the course of the initiative. In Year Two, the CoP met five times providing structured professional development experiences about early childhood and organizational capacity practices. These meetings were designed and facilitated by GNOF staff and volunteer CoP members, and over time, grantees took greater ownership of shaping and running the CoP meetings.

The overall Stand Up initiative has been managed by a Foundation Design Team led by Joann Ricci, Vice President of Organizational Effectiveness, GNOF. The team is comprised of Kellie Chavez Greene, Senior Program Officer for Organizational Effectiveness; Flint Mitchell, Program Officer; and Mandi Cambre, Program Coordinator for Organizational Effectiveness and Programs. The overall design of the Year Two evaluation was developed in partnership with the Foundation Design Team along with input from members of the CoP and the third-party Year Two evaluator, Jeffrey M. Glebocki, Strategy + Action/Philanthropy.

Methodology

The initiative’s Year One evaluation sought to learn about *changes in participants’ awareness, knowledge and acquisition of skills*. The Year Two evaluation looks at *how participants began to apply these knowledge and skills and take action as individuals, organizations and networks*. This evaluation considered the Stand Up initiative’s activities and impact from September 2013 to August 2014.

Data was collected and analyzed through a set of primary methods and engaged significant portions of the initiative’s participants:

Data Collection Method	Number of Participants
Parent Online Survey (and Interview)	47
CoP Online Survey	24 (83% of the CoP cohort of 29)
CoP Focus Groups (2)	19 (66% of the CoP cohort of 29)
Executive Director Focus Group (and Interviews)	9 (75% of the Executive Directors cohort of 12)
Foundation Design Team Focus Group	4 (100% of the Foundation Design Team of four)

Additionally, the evaluator conducted an observation of the CoP's April 2014 meeting, and observed the Foundation Design Team’s Year Two planning conference calls. Supplemental data points included a telephone interview with Jitu Brown,

National Director of the Journey for Justice Alliance, and CoP presenter on parent engagement; review of CoP meeting evaluations self-reported by participants; and a review of the March 2014 *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* article, “Community Funds Ask People from Diverse Walks of Life for Priorities” which featured the Stand Up initiative.

Year Two Evaluation Findings

The Stand Up initiative provided a continuum of comprehensive services and support to the participating grantees. These included project and technical assistance grants, professional development training, convening and network building, development of the peer-to-peer Community of Practice, assistance from local and national experts, and cultivation of promising practices in parent engagement.

The Year Two evaluation focused on the following three questions about the impact and activities of the initiative. These questions are followed by the key findings and stories that tell what has changed as a result of Stand Up for Our Children.

Evaluation Question #1: How or to what extent have Stand Up funded organizations increased their capacity to engage parents of children ages 0-5?

Problem Statement: Prior to the Stand Up initiative, the use of promising and/or best practices around parent engagement was generally not common among CoP members. Before participating in Stand Up, these organizations generally did not engage parents as leaders, or they maintained earlier belief systems that viewed the parent as the “client, not a partner.” These same organizations also generally did not prioritize building the capacity of parents to take on substantive leadership and advocacy roles in their children’s lives.

Key Findings:

- **All 12 funded nonprofit organizations reported increased capacity to engage parents.**

Parent engagement expert, Mr. Jitu Brown, National Director of the Journey for Justice Alliance and CoP professional development presenter, observed that organizations “often make the mistake of looking at parents as the audience when they should be leaders.” His advice has been taken up by the CoP.

One group put parents on their organizational chart, another included parent capacity building in their new strategic plan, and others have changed their staff and volunteer training to better meet parent needs. A CoP executive director noted that “we’ve seen a change in attitude of front line staff and executive staff (when working with parents).”

CoP member groups have changed how and where they hold parent meetings so they are more convenient and accessible to parents; some are providing daycare and transportation to attract parents; and still others have undertaken intentional outreach to also engage fathers in their work with parents.

- **Stand Up grantees now have increased awareness and knowledge about parent voice.**
- **Funded organizations are incorporating best practices – and parents themselves – into their work.**
- **Staff skills needed to implement best practice in parent engagement have been made stronger.**
- **The Stand Up initiative is having a profound impact on the funded organizations’ regarding parent engagement and in the organizations’ culture, policies and practices.**
- **Parent leaders are influencing positive change in their communities.**

Evaluation Question #2: How or to what extent have parents participating in Stand Up increased their capacity to advocate for their children ages 0-5?

Problem Statement: Participants in the CoP noted prior to their involvement in Stand Up they believed that New Orleans had not been a “child-centric” city, and that parents “are disengaged...in the political process, disenfranchised...and don’t have their tentacles into the decision makers and the power and authorities at the state level, or even at the city level.” Other observations from CoP members infer a lack of civic engagement in the community, and that people and organizations have typically not been receptive to having “parents at the table.”

Key Findings:

- **Parents are putting their confidence and skills as leaders into action in the community.**

Parents have a greater belief in their ability to affect change, they are more involved in their communities, and they are standing up as parent leaders. CoP members described Stand Up parent meetings as “transformative” and a “metamorphosis” for participants; that they see parents now “taking stands” on community and school issues; and that now “we have stronger parent advocates.”

An exemplar of this change is the parent who tackled the issue of bullying in her son’s elementary school. After almost giving up in frustration trying to work with the school, “she decided instead to put into practice what she had learned (through the parent meetings), and she started an anti-bullying program” at the school “even though her child was the bully.” The school has now adopted the program because of its success.

- **Stand Up funded learning activities resulted in increased parents’ self-agency.**
- **Parents have stronger skills sets as a result of Stand Up learning activities.**
- **Parents are increasing the use of data to influence decisions and advocate for change affecting their children, families and communities.**
- **Parents are connecting with other parents and organizations to bring about change.**

Evaluation Question #3: To what extent did participation in the Community of Practice foster collaboration and learning from one another?

Problem Statement: Organizations, prior to participating in the Stand Up initiative, did not know each other or have working relationships, and generally did not utilize collaborative practice or partnerships. The Greater New Orleans Foundation’s September 2011 “Needs Scan Report: Identifying the Organizational Effectiveness Needs of Nonprofit Organizations in the Greater New Orleans Region” found that the area’s nonprofit sector is “fragmented and siloed, and (that) this inhibits systemic change.” The report also noted area “nonprofits across all sectors are struggling with a variety of capacity challenges, including “developing partnerships and collaborations between nonprofits.” Observations from the CoP participating groups and the Foundation’s Design Team parallel the report’s findings.

Key Findings:

- **Participation in the CoP improved collaborative practice and resulted in joint projects and programs.**

“I think that this initiative has helped all of our organizations build that web of collaboration even stronger. I think that’s one of the number one byproducts (of Stand Up),” observed a CoP executive director.

A highly visible partnership emerged as a result of Stand Up, the first such collaborative effort between these two entities - Neighborhood Partnership Network (NPN) is a community-based, historically African-American organization, and the Louisiana Children’s Museum (LCM) is a more traditional, established cultural institution.

The two organizations partnered around LCM’s “Family Fest” which served as the release party for NPN’s “*Trumpet*,” a community newspaper. The event attracted over 200 parents and children, and all twelve CoP groups participated by contributing articles to the paper and hosting information tables at the release event. The festival also served to introduce LCM as a community venue to new parents and groups.

- **CoP participants are learning and applying new parent engagement practices.**
- **CoP members are solving program implementation problems by working with their CoP colleagues.**
- **Most CoP participants benefit from shared resources working with their fellow members; and all CoP members have experienced the benefit of expanded relationships and information sharing.**
- **The CoP is taking greater ownership of the Stand Up initiative and its future through the establishment of a post-initiative, action-based network of community organizations and parents.**

Other Findings from the Year Two Evaluation:

- **The Stand Up initiative is viewed as an “incomplete opportunity” needing more time and resource to take root.**

- **The design and implementation of the Stand Up initiative is transforming the Foundation’s practice.**
- **The capacity and knowledge of Foundation staff has increased through managing the Stand Up initiative.**

Recommendations

Through the analysis of the evaluation findings and observation of the initiative’s activities, these recommendations are made to leverage the impact of Stand Up for Our Children into further progress:

For post-initiative next steps

- The Greater New Orleans Foundation should “broker and advocate” on behalf of the new network to attract additional resource and participation.
- The Foundation should encourage this network to secure the support of key stakeholders early on, and assist the network in garnering resource to document learning and assess progress.

For future Foundation initiatives

- Document the internal organizational changes at the Greater New Orleans Foundation stimulated by the Stand Up initiative. Share this learning with staff and board, and with grantees as a model that encourages collaboration and strengthened organizational effectiveness.
- Build in more pre-development time and resource in the design and launch of new initiatives to ensure participants are fully equipped for the journey ahead.
- Design future Foundation initiatives with longer implementation timelines so they can take hold and grow.

For larger, longer-term community impact

- The Foundation should convene Stand Up executive directors and invite other leaders to consider the need for a civic function to help New Orleans prioritize, act on and dedicate resource to a short list of key issues.

Section Two: Introduction

Stand Up For Our Children is an initiative funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to foster civic participation and empower parents and families to improve the quality of life for New Orleans' most vulnerable children.

A fundamental belief of both the W.K. Kellogg Foundation (Kellogg) and the Greater New Orleans Foundation (GNOF) is that solutions to community problems emanate from local citizens working individually and collectively toward the common good and that people have the inherent capacity to solve their own problems. In turn, Stand Up For Our Children (Stand Up) created opportunities for parents and families to achieve greater self-agency in their efforts to improve the conditions facing our region's most vulnerable children. This initiative funded nonprofit organizations committed to inclusion, innovation, and impact in solving systemic early childhood problems through engagement by parents and families and others in the community through dialogue, issue identification, leadership development, collaboration, data driven planning, capacity building and community mobilization.

Grant Approach and Development

Planning Phase (June 1, 2010 – August 31, 2010)

This \$1.5 million W. K. Kellogg grant was received by GNOF in the fall of 2010. An advisory committee was established to assist in the design of the initiative, comprised of seven community members and balancing factors such as race, gender and sector (nonprofit, business, government, etc.).

Development and Assessment Phase (June, 2010 – December, 2010)

GNOF program staff determined that to achieve the rigorous and important outcomes of the grant, the capacity needs of prospective sub-grantees had to be addressed before and during the grant period.

Implementation Phase (Mid-summer, 2011 – present)

Leadership for the Stand Up grant was transferred in mid-summer 2011 from GNOF Programs to its Organizational Effectiveness (OE) department under the direction of Joann Ricci, Vice President of OE. During the Implementation Phase, GNOF focused on two outcomes:

- More engaged parents advocating for vulnerable children 0-5 years old
- Strengthened nonprofits through organizational capacity building.

Flint Mitchell, GNOF Program Officer, and Joann Ricci undertook additional planning and determined that a proactive grantmaking approach would be the most efficient and effective way of engaging nonprofits. This decision was based on the preliminary advisory committee work, additional data gleaned from the community (including the September 2011 GNOF “Needs Scan” report on the state of the area’s nonprofit sector), prior staff insights about the nonprofits, and conversations with key civic engagement leaders and early childhood practitioners.

In March 2012, staff identified and convened approximately thirty-five nonprofit organizations recognized as key providers in the early childhood and/or civic engagement arena and led them through a half-day meeting to map the services currently provided, assess the needs of the sector, introduce participants to the Stand Up for Our Children initiative and gauge their capacity to fulfill the intent of the grant.

Through this effort, staff and the nonprofits determined the capacity needs of the field and concluded that additional training and consulting expertise was needed to address gaps in early childhood service provision and parental engagement to ensure that applications and programs funded delivered the desired outcomes of the Kellogg grant initiative.

At the start of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative, the CoP agenda was developed and led by the VP of Organizational Effectiveness with assistance from a CoP design team comprised of the Foundation’s program officer and two local consultants who worked with the organizations. Towards the end of the Year One implementation, grantees volunteered to serve on the CoP design team, and CoP members continued to participate through Year Two, taking an increasingly more active role in the design and facilitation of the CoP meetings themselves.

Using the data collected from the March 2012 gathering and prior capacity building insights into the needs of the organizations, coupled with Flint Mitchell’s due diligence, site visits, and feedback from other GNOF staff, board, and local funders, GNOF narrowed the list of potential applicants from the original thirty-five to twelve and invited senior level staff of these prospective applicants to a day-

long training in early June. This session, led by nationally-recognized early childhood and parent engagement and leadership experts from the Connecticut Commission on Children and the award-winning Parent Leadership Training Institute, provided participating nonprofits insight into promising practices in parent engagement, especially parents with children between the ages of zero and five. Participation was a prerequisite for submitting a Letter of Intent (LOI) and moving forward in the Stand Up grant process. One organization declined the Foundation's invitation to participate.

GNOF staff determined and shared with the nonprofit organizations that, post-award, the Foundation would offer ongoing, structured learning experiences to further educate grantees about early childhood advocacy and organizational capacity promising practices. Successful grant applicants were required to participate in a learning cohort, or Community of Practice (CoP), half-day learning sessions over the course of the initiative.

Invitations to apply for a full grant went to eleven organizations, each of which were eligible for up to three days of program and grant consultation from two local consultants who continued to assist with the learning cohort and evaluation process. After careful and extensive review, GNOF provided funding to ten organizations in August 2012 (one organization withdrew from consideration during the review process).

- **Birthing Project USA, Delta Region Office (Birthing Project)***

Birthing Project pairs expecting mothers with a partner to provide support to expectant mothers during their pregnancy and encourage delivery of a healthy baby. This partnership, referred to as the "Little Sister/Sister Friend Model," has achieved success internationally. The Birthing Project chose to expand on this model to address Healthy Birth Weights.

- **City of NOLA Health Dept. - Healthy Start NOLA***

Healthy Start is a fetal and infant mortality reduction program serving the City's most vulnerable citizens - those who are economically disadvantaged and at increased risk for negative birth outcomes. Healthy Start's Stand Up area of focus was Healthy Birth Weights.

- **Louisiana Children’s Museum (LCM)**

LCM’s mission is to promote “...hands-on participatory learning for children of all ages. Encouraging discovery through observation, inquiry, creative construction, role-playing, problem-solving and free play, the Museum motivates children to develop their cognitive, physical and social skills while enjoying fruitful interaction with adults and peers.” LCM chose to focus on the Ready to Learn goal of Stand Up.

- **Neighborhood Partnership Network (NPN)**

NPN serves the New Orleans community in the areas of community/civic engagement and “...makes available the expertise of its network to a wide range of community efforts. NPN is committed to using proven community mobilization approaches that produce positive healthy results for New Orleans neighborhoods and strengthen civil society by building greater community participation, commitment, and capacity.” NPN’s Stand Up area of focus was Family and Economic Security and Ready to Learn.

- **Orleans Public Education Network (OPEN)**

OPEN is “...committed to ensuring that there is an informed and engaged community that exercises influence on policy and programs to realize excellence and equity for every child in public schools in New Orleans.” OPEN’s focus was broadly centered on parent leadership.

- **Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast (Planned Parenthood)***

Planned Parenthood serves as a “... provider of reproductive health care, sexuality education and advocacy for reproductive rights.” Planned Parenthood addressed the Healthy Birth Weight goal of Stand Up.

- **Puentes New Orleans (Puentes)**

Puentes serves “...to build assets and create access for and with Latinos of the Greater New Orleans area through civic engagement, leadership development, economic asset building, policy and advocacy.” Puentes focused on the Ready to Learn goal of Stand Up.

- **Total Community Action (TCA)**

TCA seeks to move families toward self-sufficiency and “...addresses the needs of the poor and near-poor by providing direct assistance and the opportunity for people to better help themselves.” TCA directed their Stand Up work towards the goals of Family and Economic Security and Ready to Learn.

- **United Way of Southeast Louisiana** (United Way)**

United Way of Southeast Louisiana’s mission is “to increase the organized capacity of people to be independent and self-sufficient.” United Way of Southeast Louisiana executes this mission through service to citizens residing within a seven parish area. United Way of Southeast Louisiana addressed the Ready to Learn goal of Stand Up.

- **Urban League of Greater New Orleans (Urban League)**

The Urban League of Greater New Orleans engages in activities focused on three major areas: Youth and Education, Community and Economic Development, and Policy and Social Justice. The Urban League of Greater New Orleans directed its Stand Up funded work to address the Ready to Learn goal.

This ten-member CoP was joined by two additional sub-grantees as part of Year Two of the Stand Up initiative:

- **Kingsley House (Kingsley House)**

Kingsley House is the oldest settlement house in the South, and now serves over 7,000 individuals across Southeast Louisiana. From infants to the elderly, Kingsley House provides an array of nationally accredited and state certified programs.

- **New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium (Fatherhood Consortium)**

The New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium is “a collaborative group of organizations and individuals who are fathers or work with fathers in various capacities.” The Consortium’s mission is “to develop comprehensive social supports, programs, public awareness, and policies that will assist fathers in reaching their fullest potential.”

The overall Stand Up initiative has been managed by a Foundation Design Team led by Joann Ricci, GNOF, Vice President of Organizational Effectiveness. The team is comprised of Kellie Chavez Greene, Senior Program Officer for Organizational

Effectiveness; Flint Mitchell, Program Officer; and Mandi Cambre, Organizational Effectiveness Program Associate.

**It is important to note following the pre-grant application convening session that Healthy Start, Birthing Project and Planned Parenthood decided to enter into a partnership to address their shared focus of Healthy Birth Weights and indicated this partnership in their grant application.*

*** United Way's grant funded work did not involve direct involvement with engaging parents.*

Community of Practice (CoP)

Through this grantmaking process, GNOF staff determined the capacity needs of the field and concluded that additional training and consulting expertise was needed to address gaps in early childhood service provision and parental engagement to ensure the applications and programs funded deliver the desired outcomes of the Kellogg grant. It was additionally recognized that post-award the Foundation would offer ongoing, structured learning experiences to further educate grantees about early childhood and organizational capacity best practices.

To that end, successful grant applicants were required to participate in a Community of Practice (CoP) managed by a CoP design team consisting of the Foundation's Design Team Members and several volunteer CoP participants. Over time, there was an intentional move by Foundation staff to reduce its participation and to increase the role of the CoP members in planning and facilitating CoP meetings.

A key component of the CoP is these regular meetings for all participants and the Foundation Design Team. The purpose of these meetings was to:

- Share promising practices for parent engagement
- Gain greater insight on areas related to the implementation of the Stand Up funded projects
- Provide professional development opportunities to CoP members
- Encourage peer-to-peer relationship building to foster collaboration and shared learning
- Allow for members to compare notes on progress and challenges in their respective endeavors and encourage problem solving among participants, and
- Co-create overall forward movement for the initiative.

GNOF provided each of the grantee organizations these professional, programmatic and organizational development opportunities:

- Supplied pre-grant application consultation, via experienced non-profit consultants, that assisted organizations with developing a strong grant application
- Post-grant application consultation, with experienced non-profit consultants, centered on needs in the areas of program development, evaluation planning and logic model design
- Capacity building via the CoP meetings that focused on organizational and program development issues, and content matters related to the goals of the Stand Up initiative
- Capacity building, network and relationship building, and problem solving opportunities made possible through the facilitated and non-facilitated meeting formats of peer-to-peer learning
- Capacity building via grantee participation on the CoP design team which met frequently to debrief after CoP meetings and plan the objectives of the next gathering.
- The availability of optional, modest technical assistance grants in Year Two to assist with the sustainability of the initiative's grant-funded work.

To garner optimal participation in the CoP meetings, GNOF required that both a member of the grant recipient's program staff and a high level administrator - also referred to as a "Decision Maker" - attend all meetings. In Year One of the initiative, CoP members met seven times from October 2012 to July 2013; in Year Two, the CoP convened five times from October 2013 to June 2014. The meetings of the CoP were built around a range of learning opportunities:

- Understanding commonalities and identifying priorities
- Identifying challenges
- Using evaluation to document successes
- Data collection and assessment
- Developing logic models
- Authentic parent engagement and recruitment strategies

- Developing a policy agenda, and
- Social media to engage parents.

This Year Two evaluation report utilizes the terms “Stand Up” and “CoP” interchangeably.

Evaluation Audience

The original objective of the Year One evaluation of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative was to assess:

- to what extent participation in the Stand Up initiative yielded an increase in the capacity of parents to be leaders, and
- whether there was an increase in the funded organization’s capacity to engage parents.

During the development phase of the initiative, GNOF staff determined there were capacity needs in the field, particularly for grant recipients of the initiative. Successful applicants were required to participate in a Community of Practice designed to address these needs over time. Therefore, a third objective of the Year One evaluation was added:

- To assess the influence of the Community of Practice approach to promoting collaboration and learning among participants.

Findings from the Year Two evaluation will be shared with the Kellogg Foundation to help them assess the impact of their national and place-based grantmaking strategies. These findings will also be shared with the Greater New Orleans Foundation, the CoP members as well as local funders to assist in determining the how the Stand Up initiative met its objectives, and how the community might pursue a continued endeavor post-Stand Up.

Evaluation Questions

The Year Two evaluation of this initiative, covering the grant period of September 2013 to August 2014, was guided by the following questions:

- **How or to what extent have Stand Up funded organizations increased their capacity to engage parents of children ages 0-5?**
- **How or to what extent have parents participating in Stand Up increased their capacity to advocate for their children ages 0-5?**
- **To what extent did participation in the Community of Practice foster collaboration and learning from one another?**

Section Three: Methodology

The Year Two evaluation of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative was designed to consider three inquiries:

1. How or to what extent have Stand Up funded organizations increased their capacity to engage parents of children ages 0-5?
2. How or to what extent have parents participating in Stand Up increased their capacity to advocate for their children ages 0-5?
3. To what extent did participation in the Community of Practice foster collaboration and learning from one another?

While these core inquiries form the basis for both the Year One and Year Two evaluations, the indicators and measures have evolved for the second year. Year One sought to learn about *changes in participants' awareness, knowledge and acquisition of skills*. The Year Two evaluation looks at *how participants began to apply these knowledge and skills and take action as individuals, organizations and networks*.

The overall design of the Year Two evaluation was developed in partnership with the Foundation Design Team along with input from grantees from the CoP, and the third-party Year Two evaluator, Jeffrey M. Glebocki, Strategy + Action/Philanthropy. During the latter half of the Year Two evaluation, the Foundation Design Team asked to include an additional inquiry:

- How or to what extent has the Stand Up initiative affected learning and practice at the Foundation?

The evaluation utilized a similar set of data collection methods as the Year One Evaluation, supplemented with several secondary data points:

Online Survey

Two online surveys – one for Stand Up parents and one for CoP members - were designed to collect information from participants. The surveys were administered during Spring 2014 using the Survey Monkey online tool, although some parents completed the survey using hard-copies of the same survey instrument.

A total of 46 parents responded to the parent survey (see **Attachment #1**), representing participants from nine of the 12 CoP groups. Of the total Year Two

cohort of 29 individual staff members in the 12-organization CoP (four of which were executive directors), 24, or 83%, participated in this online survey (see **Attachment #2**).

Focus Groups

To garner deeper insight into the impact of the Stand Up initiative and to delve further into the data collected through the online surveys, three focus groups were held, two with CoP members (see **Attachment #3**) and one with executive directors of CoP groups (see **Attachment #4**). The focus groups were conducted in New Orleans the week of March 31, 2014 involving a total of 19 individuals in the two CoP focus groups (or 66% of the cohort of 29), and seven participants in the directors focus group (or 58% from a cohort of 12).

Individual telephone interviews, using the executive directors' focus group questions, were conducted the week of April 7 with two directors unable to attend the focus group.

Each of the focus groups was digitally tape recorded, and all focus group discussions and telephone interviews were conducted on a confidential basis. Participants were assured there would be no attribution of personal remarks.

An additional focus group was conducted the week of March 31, 2014 with the Foundation Design Team of four staff members (see **Attachment #5**), and this discussion was also digitally recorded.

Observation

Jeffrey Glebocki conducted a third-party observation of the CoP's April 3, 2014 meeting (see **Attachment #6**). He also sat in on the Foundation Design Team's Year Two planning conference calls.

Supplemental Data Points

A follow-up telephone interview was conducted by Jeffrey Glebocki with Jitu Brown, National Director of the Journey for Justice Alliance on May 30, 2014. Mr. Brown was a presenter on parent engagement and empowerment at a CoP meeting during Year Two.

Jeffrey Glebocki also reviewed and analyzed the meeting evaluations from each of the Year Two CoP meetings as completed by participants. The self-reported evaluations provided insights into the effectiveness of the CoP meetings, as well as about the directions and issues for the following meetings. These evaluations served as a formative “trending” tool on how key indicators were being met through the initiative.

Additionally, this report included a review of the March 27, 2014 article, “Community Funds Ask People from Diverse Walks of Life for Priorities,” in *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* (see **Attachment #7**).

Data Analysis

Responses to the parent and CoP online surveys were calculated and charted utilizing Survey Monkey’s analytical tools. All focus group discussions were digitally recorded and transcribed by a third-party transcription service. Interview and meeting observation notes were recorded in writing by Jeffrey Glebocki.

The findings articulated in the Year Two evaluation report emerged from the synthesis, analysis and interpretation of the variety of data collection methods this effort employed. This analysis sought to highlight the common themes that emerged in the data as they relate to the key evaluation questions, as well as unexpected learnings that surfaced.

Evaluation Limitations

The Year Two evaluation generally follows the format of the Stand Up Year One evaluation to maintain consistency in presentation. However, due to the evolutionary changes of the Stand Up initiative, the Year Two report is not a compare/contrast evaluation between the phases of the initiative. These changes include:

- An approximately 50% turnover in the individual participants in the CoP through the life-span of the Stand Up CoP.
- The addition of two new CoP organizations between Year One and Year Two of the initiative.
- Differing parent participant cohorts in Stand Up-related programs and activities from Year One to Year Two.

- A planned-for parents focus group (see **Attachment #8**) was cancelled due to logistics challenges, and only one follow-up parent telephone interview was conducted (April 23, 2014), again due to challenges in scheduling the phone interviews.

Additionally, the reader will note some numbers from the online survey results total more than 100% as some participants selected more than one response; and, in other places some survey participants did not respond to all questions which also affects the numerical results.

Section Four: Context

The Stand Up for Our Children initiative focused on three key outcomes:

- increasing parent engagement in advocating for vulnerable children 0-5 years old
- strengthened nonprofits through organizational capacity building
- fostering collaboration among participating organizations.

This evaluation did not include documentation about organizational and community conditions that existed prior to the initiative’s launch. It is important, though, to understand the community context in which the Stand Up initiative was designed, launched and ultimately began to address.

In September 2011, the Greater New Orleans Foundation released its “Needs Scan Report: Identifying the Organizational Effectiveness Needs of Nonprofit Organizations in the Greater New Orleans Region.” The report looked at a wider geographic catchment area and broader set of nonprofit organizations than the parameters of the Stand Up initiative. Its findings, however, appear to be reflective of the setting and conditions faced by the organizational participants in the initiative.

The Needs Scan Report concluded that area “nonprofits across all sectors are struggling with” a variety of capacity challenges. These include adequate fundraising and the expertise to plan effective development efforts; governance, leadership and financial management issues; civic engagement and advocacy that are priority issues but difficult to fund; and developing partnerships and collaborations between nonprofits.

The report goes on to state the area’s nonprofit sector is “fragmented and siloed, and (that) this inhibits systemic change.” Observations from the CoP participating groups and the Foundation’s initiative Design Team parallel the report’s findings:

➤ ***Organizations generally did not engage parents as leaders***

Participants in the CoP noted prior to their involvement in Stand Up they believed that New Orleans had not been a “child-centric” city, and that parents “are disengaged ... in the political process, disenfranchised ... and don’t have their tentacles into the decision makers and the power and authorities at the

state level, or even at the city level.” Other observations from CoP members infer a lack of civic engagement in the community, and that people and organizations have typically not been receptive to having “parents at the table.”

Indeed, some CoP participants self-report that their organizations “weren’t working with parents before” at all, and others noted that parent engagement was a “new” element to their programming. A majority of CoP members that were involving parents in some way often acknowledged their earlier belief systems about parents were inadequate or viewed the parent as the “client, not your partner.”

➤ ***Organizations generally did not undertake efforts to build the capacity of parents as leaders and advocates***

Over and again, CoP participants and executive directors observed how their programs and organizations were making fundamental shifts in their relationships with parents as leaders and advocates. These shifts range from groups “redefining the word parental” to how organizations frame their expectations of parents to how, and whether, their staff and programs build the capacity of parents as leaders and advocates. Implied in this commentary is a set of pre-initiative conditions in which organizations generally did not prioritize building the capacity of parents to take on substantive leadership and advocacy roles.

➤ ***Promising practices around parent engagement were generally not used***

Survey responses from CoP members (detailed in the following section, “Findings, Evaluation Question #1”) would suggest that before the initiative participating organizations were generally not incorporating parent engagement promising practices into their efforts. Response rates indicating increased capacity in these essential skills areas as a result of CoP participation range from a low of 60.9% for evaluation planning to a high of 87.5% for leadership.

The Foundation Design Team’s sentiments regarding the low utilization of promising or best practice in engaging parents reflect the initial findings from the Greater New Orleans Foundation’s half-day March 12 meeting to help set the learning agenda for the Stand Up initiative.

- ***Organizations participating in the Stand Up initiative often did not know each other or have working relationships, and generally did not utilize collaborative practice or partnerships.***

CoP members talked about the New Orleans community being “siloeed,” consisting of “cultural enclaves” and that “people did not travel across certain boundaries.” Respondents also described about how local nonprofits were siloeed – internal to how they were organized as well as how they related or didn’t relate - to other organizations.

CoP participants commented on the inadequate condition of organizational collaboration and coordination. One executive director of a CoP group described how nonprofits used to consider working together – “we all sit in a room and we all agree to sign a sheet of paper, and we all are going to do what we do, and (we’re) not going to stretch at all. We collaborated that (we’re) going to submit this application and say we are partners.” Another CoP member noted that prior to the initiative, organizations were “worried about competing for grants...”

“What worked best (about the Stand Up CoP) is there are people in the room that hardly knew each other before,” remarked a Foundation Design Team member. A CoP participant confirmed this observation sharing that the CoP provided “the ability to discuss ideas and future partnerships with agencies who we usually would not have the opportunity to sit at the table with,” and another member concurred that the greatest benefit of the CoP was “networking and meeting people in groups I have never met.”

Section Five: Findings

The Year Two evaluation of the Stand Up initiative documents the personal, professional and organizational change this effort has engendered – and considers the leading indicators showing how this change is taking root in organizations, programs and people beyond the initial life-span of the initiative.

The findings presented in this report are the result of the analysis and synthesis of the collected evaluation data described in the earlier section on methodology.

Evaluation Question #1: How or to what extent have Stand Up funded organizations increased their capacity to engage parents of children ages 0-5?

One of the core design components of the Stand Up initiative is strengthening nonprofit participants through organizational capacity building, specifically for more effective abilities to engage parents. The initiative defined this capacity building as:

1. Further development of early childhood and parent and family engagement practices, community organizing and advocacy alliances and coalitions
2. Increased use and implementation of promising/best practices engaging parents and families
3. Increased understanding and use of key data by the participating nonprofit organizations
4. Increased organizational capacity of nonprofits engaged in funded Stand Up work

The Community of Practice (CoP) participants in the Stand Up for Our Children initiative were asked to describe their role in their respective agencies (see **Chart #1** in Appendix). Of those responding, the majority, or 60%, defined themselves as Decision Makers and 50% as Program Staff.

Given this initiative's key focus on parent engagement, it is worth noting that the majority, or 66.22%, of organizational respondents stated they had some experience with engaging parents as leaders prior to Stand Up for Our Children; and, over a quarter of the organizational cohort (26.09%) reported they were very experienced with engaging parents as leaders. Only 13.04% of respondents said they had little or no experience (see **Chart #2** in Appendix).

Key Finding: CoP participants have increased awareness and knowledge about parent voice

Even with this high degree of prior experience engaging parents as leaders, it is important to highlight the major, positive influence Stand Up for Our Children is having on the organizational participants. Over 80% of respondents report an increase in their awareness of the importance of parent voice, and a full three-quarters (75%) report an increase in their knowledge of the concerns of parents regarding their children (see **Chart #3**).

Chart #3

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My awareness of the importance of parent voice	83.33%	-	16.67%
My knowledge of the concerns of parents regarding their children	75.00%	-	25.00%

N=24

CoP members’ reflections about parents include:

- “...my whole perspective on parent engagement has deepened ... I feel I have a greater understanding of how important it is to let parents take responsibility and lead the charge for change in their communities.”
- “One of the things we’re finding ourselves doing is meeting parents where they are, as opposed to bringing them out. I don’t like to put it like this, but as opposed to us doing the agenda, I think we’re listening. We are listening.”
- “We weren’t working with parents before. And now we do see that the needs of parents and their hopes for the city in regards to what it can be for their children are something that our organization didn’t even think that way (about).”

Almost poetically, this CoP participant summarized their organization’s view of parental involvement – “parents are the sun, everything else is the planets.”

Key Finding: CoP participants have increased capacity to engage parents

The initiative’s positive influence also extends to building the capacity of organizational participants. Almost all respondents (95.83%) state that involvement with the Stand Up for Our Children Community of Practice (CoP) increased their capacity to engage parents meaningfully. Over 70% of survey respondents report their COP involvement also increased their capacity in parent recruitment strategies (see **Chart #4**).

Chart #4

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected your capacity in the following areas:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Engaging parents meaningfully	95.83%	-	4.17%
Parent recruitment strategies	70.83%	-	29.17%

N=24

“We began to start looking at our work differently in engaging parents as leaders of communities,” notes a CoP participant. Another respondent remarked that “I think that something has definitely shifted and I think within our organization, we’re just now getting to that point where we’re thinking about maybe what would that look like if we include parents as true leaders.” And an executive director of a CoP organization observed, “We’ve seen a change in attitude of front line staff and executive staff (when working with parents).”

Key Finding: CoP participants are incorporating best practices – and parents themselves – into their work

Parent engagement expert, Mr. Jitu Brown, National Director of Journey for Justice Alliance and CoP professional development presenter has observed that organizations “often make the mistake of looking at parents as the audience when they should be

(looking at parents as) leaders.” His advice has been taken up through the CoP’s work in the Stand Up initiative.

When asked how their participation in the CoP has affected their general use and implementation of promising and evidence-based practices and tools for engaging parents, over 86% of respondents report an increase. And over 86% say they have increased the inclusion of parents shaping organizational activities (see **Chart #5**).

Chart #5

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My use and implementation of promising/evidence- based practices/tools for engaging parents	86.96%	-	13.04%
The inclusion of parents shaping organizational activities	86.36%	-	13.64%

N=23

A number of respondents talked about how participation in the initiative changed and redefined their perspectives on parents:

- “...Many of us ... walked in with a certain expectation of what parents look like, attitudes of parents, how to work with parents. It made those who were around the table to start re-questioning what is a parent, how do we define parents, what’s the role of parents, where do parents sit at the table of community?”
- “What I see changing is how we’re engaging parents. We’re finding new ways to get them to come together, to speak out what their concerns are for their children.”
- “(We have) a greater awareness of the role parents play in our work.”
- “I see more external entities recognizing the need to have a parent voice at the table....I can see more institutions creating tables....for parents to sit at.”

An executive director in the CoP captured their organization’s perspective on the shift brought about through the Stand Up initiative – “it’s not just seeking information from parents, but to invest in parents.”

Key Finding: Skills needed to implement best practice in parent engagement have been made stronger

Looking more closely at the skills necessary to design and implement best-practice parent engagement efforts, the majority of respondents state that participation in the CoP increased their capacity **in every skill set identified in the survey**. **Chart #6** demonstrates the positive impact of Stand Up organizational participants’ capacity around partnerships, program planning and implementation, logic models and evaluation, curriculum development and leadership. Response rates indicating increased capacity in these essential skill areas range from a low of 60.87% for evaluation planning to a high of 87.50% for leadership.

Chart #6

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected your capacity in the following areas:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Negotiating and Managing Partnerships	69.57%	-	30.43%
Program Planning	66.67%	-	33.33%
Program Implementation	62.50%	-	37.50%
Logic Model Development	65.22%	-	34.78%
Evaluation Planning	60.87%	-	39.13%
Determining Evaluation Indicators	69.57%	-	30.43%
Curriculum Development	62.50%	-	37.50%
Leadership	87.50%	-	12.50%

N=24

CoP participants shared specific examples about what this development of skills meant to them:

- “We haven’t had an intentional evaluation process in terms of really understanding the right kinds of questions to ask...so for me, this has been very much an intentional process to really name and claim what it is we do.”
- “(We) are using that design (team) thinking model ... for the parents who really want to help design more of the education sessions for other parents, or to step into a facilitator role ... and have a deeper understanding of the challenges that parents face.”
- “I learned a lot, like just skill-wise, being able to communicate with different organizations and knowing how to organize. Just those logistics, I’ve been able to get a hold of.”
- “We are learning about all of these other templates...for leadership, like what leadership would look like, what does leadership look like in our community. I think (it) has diversified our view of leadership...”

Similarly, participation in the Stand Up CoP increased participants’ awareness of data such as EDI and census information as reported by 86.96% of respondents. And more importantly, participation in the CoP increased the usage of this kind of empirical information by almost 70% of the respondents (see **Chart #7**).

Chart #7

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My awareness of data like EDI, census and others	86.96%	-	13.04%
My usage of data like EDI, census and others	69.57%	-	30.43%

N=23

One CoP organization noted that “the fact is that giving data to parents, even though its useful data, and giving parents training around how to integrate certain kinds of ideas and practices and behaviors into their daily lives so that they can improve and

help their children become school ready, was not as sexy or as inviting to people who are already voluntarily engaged in something that they wanted to do. But there was a way that we, organizationally, learned that we could adjust ourselves, adjust our information purveying, the way we articulated it, because it fit into everything.”

An executive director of a CoP group describes the evolution of thinking and practice in their organization around the use of data: “And the data collection that’s been part of this – that was one of the complaints where my staff are just like, ‘All this data collection and surveys and ...’ but the way I see it is because it’s a moving mark – and so it’s hard to quantify that. And you may never be able to quantify it, right? So that’s why the data is so important to the process, right? Because it’s hard to be able to say we’ve accomplished something when there’s no real mark, right? It will constantly always be there to me.”

Key Finding: The Stand Up initiative is having profound impact on most aspects of parent engagement & organizations’ culture, policies and practices

The individual CoP participants pursue their projects and programs – and their engagement of parents –within an organizational context. These organizations range from small, grassroots neighborhood-based ventures to much larger and more established agencies.

As a cohort, the CoP participants again report a generally positive influence on the use of best-practice in their respective organizations brought about through the Stand Up for Our Children initiative. For example, over 81% of respondents state there has been an increase in the influence parents have on organizational policies and procedures; over 86% say there has been an increase in their organization’s utilization of a civics-based approach to parent engagement; and just over 60% note an increase in their organization’s usage of data like EDI, census or others to frame agendas and activities (see **Chart #8**).

Chart #8

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following for your agency/organization:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
The influence parents have on organizational policies and procedures (N=22)	81.82%	-	18.18%
Your organization's utilization of a civics based approach to parent engagement (N=22)	86.36%	-	13.64%
My organization's usage of data like EDI, census or others to frame its agenda/activities (N=23)	60.87%	-	39.13%

The shift to a more civics-based approach to parent engagement and how that played out in their organizations was highlighted by several CoP participants. One respondent shared “(that) we spent considerable amount of time ... really putting on the hat of civics thinking. It was really how do we integrate that into the practice of the organization?” Another participant commented, “I think one tangible (example) in terms of internal organization is the change in which we train volunteers (to work with pregnant women). And what we were realizing (is that) we were putting a lot of energy and focus into kind of the paradigm shift ... to civics thinking, and really rolling that information out and that work out directly with parents.”

More specifically, involvement in the Stand Up for Our Children Community of Practice was reported to have positive impact on participating organizations’:

- Culture
- Policies
- Procedures and practices

A majority of Stand Up participants credit their involvement in the CoP with increased changes in their organizational culture (66.67%) and in their organizational procedures/practices (60.87%). The effect on organizational policies seems less widespread with only 34.78% of respondents noting an increased change (See **Chart #9**).

Chart #9

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Changes in my organization's culture influenced by participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice	66.67%	-	33.33%
Changes in my organization's policies influenced by participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice	34.78%	-	65.22%
Changes in my organization's procedures/practices influenced by participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice	60.87%	-	39.13%

N=24

Across these change dynamics, the influence of CoP participation and that of parent leaders have had the most impact on organizational culture and procedures and practices, and somewhat less so on organizational policies. The extent of this change is an important leading indicator as to how CoP participating organizations are adopting both beliefs and actions in how they will operate after the formal conclusion of the Stand Up initiative.

Several factors may be at work affecting the scope and pace of organizational change, though. The Stand Up initiative has a relatively short two-year life span, and more formal policy changes in organizations simply take longer. Some organizations and staff have only participated in the CoP for a portion of these two years. And, the number of CoP participants per organization, particularly for larger agencies, may be insufficient to drive policy change in a compressed period.

Culture

Over and again, CoP respondents – executive directors and staff alike – shared examples of how the culture of their organizations were evolving as a result of participating in the Stand Up initiative. This evolution ranged from fundamental shifts in how “parents” are defined and viewed by organizations to how their

engagement as parent leaders has become a priority in the design and implementation of programs and services:

- *Staff* “I think that this process has helped us to try to really focus on what parent-led really means in the value of having this parent led experience. Because initially, our staff were a little resistant because we’re very busy and it’s a lot easier just to give people stuff. But I think as time has gone on, we’ve found that it really is lightening the workload now and that we are allowing parents – and allowing parents to really have more control over decisions that are being made on behalf of themselves and their children - because we weren’t.”
- *Executive Director* “So again, always remembering in every aspect of the work that the parent is your partner. They’re not your client; they’re not your customer. They’re your partner, and it makes your work stronger.”
- *Executive Director* “We just thought that (parents) would come naturally, because why wouldn’t they want to participate? But it didn’t happen that way. So it really makes us shift in how we engage parents. We can be very respectful and be very open to what their needs might be.”
- *Executive Director* “The dialogue has definitely changed. The ‘what’s important from the parents’ perspective’ has definitely gotten fused into conversation.”

The Foundation’s staff responsible for management of the Stand Up initiative also observed the positive impact on the culture of CoP groups. One staff member shared how CoP participants “were sharing these stories of both how their parents had increased their self-agency...how the organizations had kind of increased in their self-agency and how they were confident to take on some of these, not take on, but work with their parents more to work with other organizations to realize their needs and make those connections.”

Policies

It takes time, commitment, understanding and internal champions to incorporate policy change in organizations large or small. The scope of policy change as reported by CoP participants is evolving at this early stage, but leading indicators hold promise as to the continued influence on organizational behavior instigated by the initiative. OPEN, for example, incorporated early childhood as one of its three policy priorities in working towards “student success and equity.”

Several CoP groups have taken significant actions from including parents on their organizational chart to prioritizing parent engagement as part of their strategic plan to more fully integrating parents into internal decision making:

- *Executive Director* “The role of parent has risen up as a priority, and in fact, parents are on our org chart as we look at our organizational structure.”
- *Executive Director* “(As part of our organization’s strategic plan) we are making a focus on building the capacity of parents. Not all our programs made the cut in the strategic plan, but we are committed to this for the next several years.”
- *Staff* “We have always had a service advisory group who are parents. Now that same group of women are part of our consortium who are our community partners, who also meet every two months. So they always (make suggestions), and that’s really good.”
- *Executive Director* “We formed a public policy committee for the first time. It’s a direct result of the kind of upward flow of information coming from our parents and families, and seeing the benefit that this could really bring to our greater community. We’ve got to do the right thing by our participants, first and foremost.”
- *Executive Director* “We do have the parent rep (on our board) who’s reporting back up on what’s going on at the parent group level, and the board’s like, oh yeah, we didn’t really think about it from that kind of perspective. And then the board’s asking how do we get more input from key stakeholders? The people we serve, what we’re here for and the other key stakeholders in the community to influence the decisions that we’re making at the board today.”

Procedures and Practices

How organizations operate “on the ground” manifests in the procedures and practices of daily operations – how does the organization behave and interact internally with staff and externally with individuals and other organizations. Again, leading indicators suggest that participation in the CoP is having a positive influence on how these organizations operate. This has entailed parents becoming peer service providers and organizations inculcating parent voice in practice:

- *Staff* “We lost some grant money, and so some of our staff is gone and parents had to step in – parents chose to step into some of those roles because what we

were doing is so important. It was in the design for them to help to do the trainings anyway, but now there's ownership in how the training happens.”

- *Staff* “I’ve worked in nonprofits for a while and parent engagement is always the challenge. And this has been the most that I’ve seen parents being engaged.”
- *Staff* “We’ve realized the reality of how important it is for parents to have parents as mentors, as opposed to having the staff constantly be that go-to person...I think we’re more committed now to really focusing on trying to remain parent-led and trying to help to set up those systems that are going to make that successful.”
- *Staff* “One of the things that I see entirely within us is breaking down the organizational silos what we have within our system. (Stand Up for Our Children) provided us with a way to open up the box. (For instance) we’ve hired some parents who are Latinos, Spanish speaking. So now we’re beginning to break open some boxes, to make some avenues and places (that we hadn’t done before.)”
- *Executive Director* “The focus on parents, the focus on engagement – getting (us) back to who we originally were.”

This positive impact on procedure and practice was also noted by the Foundation’s team overseeing the initiative. One member remarked that “I think it aligns with the values and tenets of the Stand Up initiative – the don’t do it to ‘em, do it with ‘em. It’s like the language that we’ve used ... is now the language that staff use internally and that the grantees use.”

Key Finding: CoP groups are taking action to support their staff’s use of best practice to engage parents

With large majorities, respondents report increased changes in their organization’s culture (81.82%) and procedures and practices (86.36%) that encourage and support staff’s use of best practice to engage parents and families. Nearly 60% feel there have been increased changes in their organization’s policies that encourage and support staff’s use of best practice to engage parents and families (see **Chart #10**).

Chart #10

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Changes in my organization’s culture that encourage and support staff’s use of best practice to engage parents and families	81.82%	-	18.18%
Changes in my organization’s policies that encourage and support staff’s use of best practice to engage parents and families	59.09%	-	40.91%
Changes in my organization’s procedures/practices that encourage and support staff’s use of best practice to engage parents and families	86.36%	-	13.64%

N=23

A CoP respondent commented that “(now) we don’t have meetings where children can’t come, so (our organization) always provides childcare support. We also make sure that the meal is a healthy meal, so when they do come, that they will eat well and we provide transportation. Those are the basic things that parents will need.”

Another participant notes that “my board chair is very supportive of family. He has created a (family-friendly) culture and it makes me more conscious as a leader of staff. If my boss can be that considerate to me, then I should create that kind of environment for my staff.”

Key Finding: CoP participants have incorporated the power of intentionality in their efforts

The Year Two evaluation surfaced an unexpected theme in the form of what some CoP participants referred to as intentionality. That is, the conscious and explicit decision to take action on priorities in their Stand Up-related work:

- *Staff* “We got deliberate about our attitudes towards parents. It had to be a real dynamic, as opposed to giving a person a fish, so to speak. It was the fact that we had to change our ideas.”
- *Staff* “Our organization is both local and national, and global, actually. So what we’re doing in New Orleans with this great opportunity, with the Stand Up funding and learning from the Community of Practice, we’re taking those lessons and we’re helping other (projects like ours) across the country really integrate the intentionality about civic engagement and integrating the civics thinking into the work. And helping them also redesign their volunteer training.”
- *Executive Director* “We’re solid when it comes to the intentionality with kids, and this has really ratcheted up the level of intentionality of the work with parents. It’s interesting how things go full circle, right? Because that’s how things were done back when (the national program) started in the 60s. The movement all came from parents, it came from families, it came from communities. And now it’s kind of helped us to full circle back to the way that we intended for parents involved right. But we kind of, over the years, lost a lot of that focus.”
-

Key Finding: Parent leaders are influencing positive change in how CoP organizations operate

Parent leaders engaged in Stand Up for Our Children have also had a marked influence on stimulating organizational change. Over 80% of CoP survey respondents report increased changes in their organization’s culture influenced by parent leaders, and slightly more than 65% say there have been increased changes in their organization’s procedures and practices influenced by parent leaders. Only 43.48% of respondents report increased changes in their organization’s policies influenced by parent leaders (see **Chart #11**).

Chart #11

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Changes in my organization’s culture influenced by parent leaders	82.61%	-	17.39%
Changes in my organization’s policies influenced by parent leaders	43.48%	-	56.52%
Changes in my organization’s procedures/practices influenced by parent leaders	65.22%	-	34.78%

N=24

“So we do have parent leaders now sitting at the table with us (on our civic design team),” shared a CoP participant, “(and) that’s how it really has helped and changed our working environment.” One respondent commented “how our families are no longer looking to us for a solution when they come to us with an issue. They come to us with a possible, viable solution.” And another participant highlighted the influence of parent voice – “We have really shifted the way we do things. Because we want to make certain that parental voice is at the table. So we’re very inclusive now of wanting to know what our parent leaders think.”

An additional theme identified by a number of CoP participants was how their organizations’ reframed their view of fathers as parents and valued members of the community:

- “We have changed the way that we see our main parents, so gender specifically – like this is a matriarchal environment when we talk about parents. Like a lot of our work has now become more expansive around what is parental engagement looking like to include different genders, or certain types of parents...”
- “(Our organization) had to change (its) subconscious idea about parents that included men. We were so deliberate to make sure that we had a cross-section

of individuals multigenerational, multi-ethnicities, and men and women. So to ignore men as a part of the work we do would be less.”

- “We’re starting to find the environment is not as adversarial as it’s been. So usually when we say fathers matter, people usually hear, women don’t matter, as opposed to hearing fathers matter alongside mothers. So now, we’re starting to find more partnerships with organizations. Even if they focus on women and children, they’re still starting, in their theology and their practice, they’re starting to understand the value of fathers as assets...”

This sentiment was reflected by a respondent to the parent online survey who noted they would encourage other parents to participate in parent group meetings, “especially fathers” as the group they engage in “allows us to be men but views us for the value we bring to our kids.”

Evaluation Question #2: How or to what extent have parents participating in Stand Up increased their capacity to advocate for their children 0-5?

The success of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative is dependent on the scope and effectiveness of how CoP participants engage parents. And the success of the CoP groups is contingent on how parents increase their capacity to advocate for their children and put that capacity into play in their families and communities.

The Year Two evaluation of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative considered three parent outcomes consistent with those of the Year One evaluation. Year Two delved into the application and use of awareness and knowledge, looked at skills acquisition, and how parents were connecting with other organizations:

1. Increased personal sense of agency among parent advocates
2. Increased understanding and use of key data
3. Further development of early childhood and parent/families, community organizing and advocacy alliances and coalitions

A total of 46 parents completed an online survey:

- 91% were female and 9% were male (see **Chart #12** in Appendix)
- 82% reported that had a child or children at home ages 0 – 5, and 18% said they had no children of that age at home.

When asked to identify their race/ethnicity, the majority, or 80% of survey participants, responded they were African-American/Black. There were 13% of respondents identifying as Latino/Hispanic; 5% that identified as Asian; and, 2% as Caucasian. One respondent self-identified as Black American/White American/Native American. (See **Chart #13** in Appendix.)

Parents in the survey were also asked to identify what program they participated in as part of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative. Most, but not all, CoP groups had some parent participation in this survey as detailed in **Chart #14**.

Chart #14

What program have you participated in? (Please select one)

Answer Options	Percent
Birthing Project/Healthy Parents, Healthy Communities	4.9%
Healthy Start NOLA/HSNO Stand Up for Our Children	7.3%
Kingsley House/Educare New Orleans	-
Louisiana Children’s Museum/Stand Up - Parent Engagement and Advocacy through Word Play	26.8%
New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium/The Father Fellows Program	7.3%
Neighborhood Partnership Network/Parents First Program	-
Orleans Public Education Network/Ready, Set, Go - Parent Leadership Training	24.4%
Planned Parenthood/The Healthy Pregnancy Initiative	4.9%
Puentes/Abriendo Puentes	12.2%
Total Community Action/I AM ACTIVE	26.8 %
United Way SELA/Engaging Parents in Improving the Quality of Early Care: Licensing Family Child Care	-

Urban League/PRIDE Leadership Academy	14.6%
I don't know	2.4%

N = 41

Other: Nazyia Doula Collective; None; TCA Head Start; Parent Empowerment Leadership Program; PLTI (2)

Key Finding: Stand Up-related parent meetings and learning activities result in parents' increased confidence to serve as leaders and in stronger skills sets

As the Year One evaluation of the Stand Up initiative observed, having the confidence, knowledge and drive to utilize individual agency is a first step for engaging in community and influencing change. The Year Two parent survey results provide strong evidence that the initiative is having substantial and positive influence on parents as advocates and leaders.

Over 88% of respondents report an increased understanding that it is their right as a parent to be actively involved in issues that affect their children. And 75% of parents report an increased understanding of the democratic process (see **Chart #15**).

Chart #15

Please share how your participation in parent group meetings has affected the way you see yourself and your role in your family. For each of the following statements, please indicate if it has Increased, Decreased or it there has been No Change. How has your participation in the parent group meetings affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My understanding that is my right as a parent to be actively involved in issues that affect my child(ren)	88.89%	-	11.11%
My ability to see myself as a leader	88.89%	-	11.11%
Knowing I can make a difference in the community	93.33%	-	6.67%
My ability to influence community members to take action on important issues	86.67%	-	13.33%
Feeling driven to be a leader	80.00%	-	20.00%
Feeling personal responsibility to participate in community projects	77.78%	2.22%	20.00%
My confidence in myself	86.36%	-	13.64%
My understanding of the democratic process	75.00%	2.27%	22.73%
My knowledge and skills in bringing about change	86.36%	-	13.64%
My ability to influence decisions that affect my child	91.11%	-	8.89%
My ability to influence decisions that affect my family	93.33%	-	6.67%
My confidence in serving as a parent leader	91.11%	-	8.89%
My learning new skills to serve as a parent leader	91.11%	-	8.89%

N = 45

In describing how they see themselves and their role in the family setting, several key themes emerge about the impact of participation in Stand Up-related parent group meetings:

- **Parents experienced a positive change in their belief systems.** Without exception, every survey measure about participants' belief systems demonstrates significant positive change in how parents view themselves and their abilities. For example, over 86% report increased confidence in themselves, over 91% say they have increased confidence to serve as parent leaders, and over 86% see an increase in their ability to influence community members to take action on important issues.

In that same spirit, over 91% of parents say they have an increased ability to influence decisions that affect their child, and over 93% say they have an increased ability to influence decisions that affect their families.

The powerful impact of parent meetings is described by several CoP members as “transformative” and as a “metamorphosis” for parents. “The growth they see in themselves is what’s most powerful for me,” remarked a COP participant. “For those who come that don’t have a voice, who hesitate to speak and to see some of them actually transform into the folk we see during the graduation ceremony....the way they grow as people and bring that to the way they parent.”

One parent talked of “coming out of my comfort zone to express my view and solutions to community healing by using my voice via questions and presentations.” Another parent observed the realization that “some of my actions as a parent (were) wrong in some cases. It was a real mind opener on life and decisions.”

A story symbolic of these fundamental changes was shared by a CoP member about a critical shift they encouraged in their work with parents – “One thing I noticed...is (about) 90% of our parents had never taken their child to a public library. One of our sessions...we actually take them to the public library, give them a tour...and they don’t leave without a library card...and the parents have told me that (now) they take their kids to the library about once a week, that their kids love it, that their kids are asking them to read books to them.”

Another CoP participant told of their program efforts which “lifted the level” of parents’ self-esteem – “...the sign that we put up every week...said, I am not just a parent, I am my child’s first educator. Every time the women walked

into the room, it was like a mantra. And often...that phrase came up as a part of their responsibilities...”

- **Parents acquired leadership skills.** Over 86% of parents surveyed report an increase in their knowledge and skills to bring about change, and over 91% noted an increased in learning new skills to serve as a parent leader.

Parents reported on their new skills in “creating partnerships and getting involved in ... neighborhood meetings,” “advocating for all children, not just my child,” and having “learned how City and State government work in regards to advocating for change for our children.” Other parents talked about the personal change they have experienced – “I can now effectively communicate on touchy subjects and control my emotions at the same time;” “My new skill is that I have learned patience;” “I pay more attention to children’s environmental stress;” and “The ability to verbally express my concerns as a parent to others.” And one parent noted an increased “awareness of what abilities I have in advocating.”

- **Parents have a stronger drive to make change.** A full 80% of respondents state there has been an increase in feeling driven to be a leader, over 88% note an increase in their ability to see themselves as leaders and almost 78% declare an increase in feeling a personal responsibility to participate in community projects.

A specific example of that participation in community projects comes from a CoP participant who shared how the parents they work with are “becoming more responsible for how the community functions. It was previously a staff functionto do a follow up telephone call....for the parents who miss an education session. We have parents who are doing that now. They’re taking responsibility for the other parents, and they’re in the community and saying – you missed last week, here’s what you missed, we can get together, we can figure this out.”

“There’s a change in the wind,” observed one CoP group member, “and it’s the parents – they’ve always wanted to be involved, they’ve always wanted the tools. And there seems to be, I think, like a tipping point that we’re reaching where parents really

seem to want this. They seem to be able to say, if somebody will listen to me – that’s what I think is happening.”

Key Finding: Parents are putting their confidence and skills as leaders into action in the community

These important changes at the personal and family level appear to also be manifesting through participants’ engagement at the neighborhood and community level (see **Chart #16**). A full 85% of parent respondents report an increased understanding that it is their right as a parent to be actively involved in issues that affect the children in their community; and just over 79% say there’s been an increase in their motivation to be involved in their community. “When we go to parent meetings at school, there’s supposed to be a translator,” noted a parent. “And school information and documents are supposed to be translated in your native language. This is an example of how participating in parent groups has increased my understanding of my rights as a parent.”

Chart #16

Please share how your participation in parent group meetings has affected the way you see your role in your neighborhood and community. For each of the following statements, please indicate if it has Increased, Decreased or it there has been No Change. How has your participation in the parent group meetings affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My ability to influence decisions that affect my neighborhood	71.43%	2.38%	26.19%
My ability to influence decisions that affect my community	74.42%	2.33%	23.26%
My ability to influence decisions that affect children in my community	90.70%	-	9.30%
My motivation to be involved in my community	79.07%	2.33%	18.60%
My understanding that it is my right as a parent to be actively involved in issues that affect the children in my community	85.00%	5.00%	10.00%
My involvement in changing things I don't like about my community	73.17%	-	26.83%
My involvement in influencing decisions that affect my neighborhood	74.42%	-	25.58%
My involvement in influencing decisions that affect children in my community	79.07%	2.33%	18.60%
My involvement in influencing decisions that affect my community	69.77%	2.33%	27.91%
The number of times I have served as a parent leader in the community	67.44%	2.33%	30.23%

N = 43

Similarly, several key themes emerge about how this initiative is positively influencing how parents perceive and act on their role in the community:

- **Parents have a greater belief in their ability to affect change.** Over 90% of parent respondents said there has been an increase in their ability to influence decisions that affect children in their community. Over 71% feel

there's been an increase in their ability to influence decisions that affect their neighborhood, and over 74% see an increase in their ability to influence such decisions in their community.

- **Parents are more involved in the community.** This rise in beliefs about the ability to affect change seems to translate to a self-reported shift in neighborhood and community involvement. Parents report an increase in their involvement in changing things they don't like about their communities (73.17%), an increase in involvement in influencing decisions that affect their neighborhood (74.42%), an increase in involvement in influencing decisions that affect children in their communities (79.07%), and an increase in influencing decisions that affect their community in general (69.77%).

A CoP group involved in state policy issues observed that helping parents “understand where we're coming from and where we need to go and seeing them feel excited and engaged in a process that could change legislation was really huge for this group.” Another CoP participant talked of a wider change in that “we're starting to see parents actually taking stands. We're seeing parents questioning schools around their policies and practices.”

- **Parents are standing up as parent leaders.** Acknowledging and accepting their role in the community, more than two-thirds of parent respondents (67.44%) report an increase in the number of times that have served as a parent leader in the community. A CoP group noted that “for us, we have stronger parent advocates. They're able to come, so they go up to Baton Rouge...knock on doors and speak comfortably in that environment.”

An example of change at the local level was shared by another CoP participant – “One of our families had a son in elementary school, and right now bullying is a big topic ...that we have in schools. She had been going to school every day and trying to work with them, and she was almost at the point where she was giving up. But she decided instead to put into practice what she had learned through this work, and she started an anti-bullying program at the child's school even though her child was the bully. And because it was so successful, the school has actually adopted this program.”

Parents themselves shared numerous examples of how they serve as parent leaders: “I informed my neighbor about the process of enrolling her daughter in school;” “I learned from the other men (at the fatherhood session) just as much as I taught the other men;” “I attended school board meetings with other parents, and welcomed new families in my neighborhood;” “I’m sharing parent information with my peers, and volunteering to work with abused and neglected children.”

Key Finding: Parents are increasing the use of data to influence decisions and advocate for change affecting their children, families and communities

Understanding data and its implications – education statistics, census demographics, and other facts and figures – can strengthen advocacy skills for parents. Using this data is key to parents becoming effective advocates for their families.

By a wide majority, parents report an increased use of data around issues that affect their children and their families (see **Chart #17**). Over 87% of parents state their use of data has increased as someone actively involved in issues affecting their children, and over 90% note their use of data to influence decisions affecting their children and family has increased.

Chart #17

Please share how your participation in parent group meetings has affected the way you see yourself and your role in your family. For each of the following statements, please indicate if it has Increased, Decreased or if there has been No Change. How has your participation in the parent group meetings affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My knowledge of data related to children	87.80%	-	12.20%
My use of data as a parent actively involved in issues that affect my child(ren)	87.80%	-	12.20%
My use of data to influence decisions that affect my child(ren) and family	90.24%	-	9.76%
My use of data to inform me about issues that affect my family	95.12%	-	4.88%
My use of data to advocate for change to benefit my family	85.37	-	14.63%

N = 41

Similarly, over 95% of respondents say their use of data to inform them about issues affecting their families has increased, and over 85% comment that their use of data to advocate for change to benefit their families has increased. Almost 88% feel their knowledge of data related to children has increased as well.

Parents also report, by wide margins, an increased ability to find information that helps them better navigate their community (75%); and an increased ability to make sense of data and information about children in their community (80.49%) (See **Chart #18**).

Positive change has also occurred in applying this increased ability. Over 78% of respondents state an increased use of data to influence decisions that affect their neighborhood and community.

Chart #18

Please share how your participation in parent group meetings has affected the way you see your role in your neighborhood and community. For each of the following statements, please indicate if it has Increased, Decreased or it there has been No Change. How has your participation in the parent group meetings affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My ability to find information to help me better navigate my community	75.00%	2.50%	22.50%
My ability to make sense of data and information about children in my community	80.49%	-	19.51%
My use of data to influence decisions that affect my neighborhood and community	78.05%	-	21.95%

N = 41

A CoP participant observed how their group changed their approach with conveying the importance of data to parents – “We recognized that how we were engaging parents came through a little differently. So that meant...we had to shift. The information was still there ... but when we integrated it into some other things that they were already dealing with, they were able to digest it better.”

An example of parent leadership in this arena was shared by a CoP group that told of “one parent that is really close to the topic (of mental health for children) emotionally. She has taken that on as her project and she will create a resource for the community that informs them of what resources are available as it relates to mental health.”

Key Finding: Parents are connecting with other parents and organizations to bring about change

The impact of individual parents’ engagement in the community can be strengthened, supported and leveraged as parents connect with others – parents, families and organizations. The Stand Up for Our Children initiative has been successful in fostering increased connections between participating parents and others in the community (see **Chart #19**).

Chart #19

Please share how your participation in parent group meetings has affected the way you see yourself and your role in your family. For each of the following statements, please indicate if it has Increased, Decreased or it there has been No Change. How has your participation in the parent group meetings affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
My confidence in my ability to connect with other parents	92.68%	-	7.32%
My sharing of information about programs and resources with other parents	92.86%	-	7.14%
My connections with other parents	95.24%	-	4.76%
My connections with other organizations in Stand Up for Our Children	71.43%	-	28.57%
My connections with other organizations in the community	76.19%	-	23.81%
My connections with other efforts to change things in the community I don't like	78.57%	2.38%	19.05%

N = 42

Parents report a significant increase in their confidence of their ability to connect with other parents (92.68%), and an even greater increase in their actual connections with other parents (95.24%). Putting these connections into play, almost 93% of parents state there has been an increase in their sharing of information about programs and resources with other parents. One parent told of a friend who has a special needs child - "I received information (from the organization I am involved with) and shared that with her, especially on what schools should do to her child at school."

A CoP group told about several parents trying to "find their way" and "figure out how to apply" for special school programs. "There was no way they could have navigated this without coming to the meetings and talking to each other and supporting each other, driving each other to the meetings." Another CoP member shared that "we've seen more of the partnerships amongst the men in (our) cohort." One participant looking for a job was hired by another cohort member; and, another gentleman who started a separate organization has recruited the cohort to come for cooking classes.

These relationships have also increased between Stand Up parents and other organizations. Over 71% of parents say their connections have increased with other organizations in the Stand Up initiative, over 76% report an increase in connections with other organizations in the community, and almost 79% state there has been an increase in connections with other efforts to change things in the community they don't like.

Evaluation Question #3: To what extent did participation in the Community of Practice foster collaboration and learning from one another?

As one CoP executive director remarked, “our individual scope is amplified through Stand Up.” CoP participants report this amplification manifested through more collaboration and partnerships among members, significant skills building and application of new practices to engage parents, joint problem solving, sharing of resources and information, and stronger relationships. The strengthening of skills and application involving the tools of evaluation and social media was less common.

An unexpected learning was Stand Up's positive and at times powerful influence in stimulating personal and professional change among participants.

Key Finding: Participation in the CoP improved collaborative practice & resulted in joint projects and programs

Participation in the Community of Practice had a substantive positive impact on CoP members collaborating/partnering with other agencies to address parent engagement. A total of 87% of CoP survey respondents report they have partnered with other agencies to address parent engagement (see **Chart #20** in Appendix).

As one CoP executive director remarked, “I think that this initiative has helped all of our organizations build that web of collaboration even stronger. I think that's one of the number one byproducts.”

Several CoP directors shared their thinking about why the CoP has had this important impact on its participants. One CoP director observed that “the amount of time invested by staff members has been significant, that's not something that you can take

lightly. The depth of relationships that have been built because of that time, and because of the schedule of convening together really has strengthened partnerships around the table...” Another executive concurred: “it’s the familiarity that comes with sitting around the table, with the frequency and the length of time, and the shared conversations, so that you build this relationship, you build this trust. Your ideas are generating about what else we might do to strengthen these relationships.”

Yet another executive director noted his staff wanted “to learn more about what other organizations intend, to dig even deeper into the work, wanting to visit the other organizations, and actually see firsthand what the world looks like, and looking for opportunities to do more of that.” A fourth director commented “that the way we have done this work has really been in the spirit of parents as leaders. But what is new to it is a very defined and intentional space where we can collaborate.” All these remarks resonated with a Foundation Design Team member – “It’s those authentic conversations that lead you to the relationship building. That then leads to those strategic partnerships we’re looking for.”

This substantive impact influences collaborative practice *and* results in actual collaborative projects and programs. CoP survey respondents and executive directors provided descriptions and insights into both effects:

Collaborative practice

“(The) coordination of our parenting groups and leveraging resources” is one example of collaboration shared by a CoP member. Other participants talked of doing joint presentations to parents, including information around EDI data; conducting joint “listening sessions” with parents; collecting and sharing information; partnering with another agency to “provide training to their parents,” and combining curriculum.

CoP executive directors generally voiced interest, energy and support for working with other organizations. One director shared their efforts in bringing about internal change to encourage more collaboration – “The collaborative spirit (in our agency) has been suppressed. I want to un-suppress it. I want our staff to do real collaboration.”

While in support of such collaboration, several CoP directors did comment about the investment of time and staff involved in partnering, and that while the “payoff is critical,” they called for resources which are needed to continue such efforts.

Collaborative projects and programs

Two collaborative ventures mentioned repeatedly that seemed to have engaged most or all CoP participants are the *Trumpet* newspaper published by Neighborhood Partnerships Network, and the Louisiana Children’s Museum “Family Fest.” “We actually engaged every entity in the CoP because of the *Trumpet* magazine,” shared one respondent, “because it’s an open dialogue in printed space where everyone has had an opportunity to put their celebrations, acknowledgements and things of that sort in the *Trumpet*.”

CoP groups and their participating parents contributed articles for the *Trumpet* as well as being part of the release party for the paper’s special parents’ issue (see **Attachment #9**). The “Family Fest” has attracted over 200 participants and serves as an introduction to the Museum’s resources and a venue for community organizations – many represented in the Stand Up CoP – to reach out to parents.

A Museum’s CoP staff described the Family Fest event - “We open the museum for one night...this particular one...was the *Trumpet* rollout for the newspaper, and the Birthing Project and the Urban League and Healthy Start and Puentes and OPEN and all these people came. We had tables set up around and they could sign people up for their programs. So there were so many ways that we could reach people, and I don’t think that...all the other groups that I’ve been in, there’s never been that depth of community than there’s been with this one.”

Numerous other examples of collaborative projects and programs were mentioned by CoP respondents involving shared space and staff resources, coordinated planning and training, joint distribution of resource materials for parents and organizations, partnering around parent events, and other efforts in working together. These examples include:

- Partnership with Planned Parenthood in the design and dissemination of the prenatal care resource guide and coordinating parent engagement workshops.
- Urban League partnership with Loyola that now uses the Urban League curriculum and facilitators on parent leadership development.
- Partnership with Puentes to engage Hispanic parents.
- Partnership with the Louisiana Children’s Museum and OPEN’s Parent Leadership Training Institute on workshop sessions.

- Partnership with United Way of Southeast Louisiana resulting in a school readiness learning trail presented in three languages - Spanish, Vietnamese and English.

CoP members also shared how participation affected their work with parents. One group remarked that “we work with our group of parents, but the opportunity to participate in the (CoP) has allowed us to get a different perspective, and increase the opportunity to work with other parents around...other advocacy issues. It may not necessarily be (our organization’s issue). It may be a parent issue that our parents could participate in something that is important for children and families.”

And yet another CoP member shared that the “Community of Practice I think made the biggest difference to me, because we had those contacts, and we were able to go to places that were rich with parents that were ready for an experience like this. As a result, it was a wonderful experience for (our organization). For our staff, too. We got as much out of it or more.”

Key Finding: CoP participants are learning and applying new parent engagement practices

Interactions within the Stand Up for Our Children CoP have also had a significant and positive impact on participants’ learning new practices around engaging parents. A majority, or 83%, of CoP survey respondents report that have learned new practices around engaging parents (see **Chart #21** in Appendix).

Several CoP members acknowledged that prior to the Stand Up initiative, they “really had a deficit” in parent engagement. “What I see changing is how we’re engaging parents,” said one CoP group member. “We’re finding new ways to get them to come together, to speak out what their concerns are for their children.” Another CoP participant remarked that “my whole perspective on parent engagement has deepened as I feel I have a greater understanding of how important it is to let parents take responsibility and lead the charge for change in their communities. (The) CoP has really helped me to understand how critical it is for those of us working with parents to really step back and support them as they take the lead in these efforts.”

An executive director from the CoP group believes that through the CoP “we’re able to get more diverse allies because of the result of being in a room, talking about the issues, listening to the issues, that more people are paying attention that just us – a couple of childcare providers.” One staff participant from a CoP organization succinctly stated that “the CoP has really given us a lot of opportunities, all of us, to work together in depth and in ways that we didn’t recognize before.”

Another CoP member described the value of this experience to their group – “But when we’re able to sit in (the CoP) and do the kind of things that we were doing today, and talk about it, and network and exchange ideas and energy, you start to see this cross-pollination of activities. So, it shows up very differently for very different kind of parents.”

There is at least one CoP group that is “trying to figure out when you hire parents as professionals within your organization...how do you set up parents for success within our corporate culture?” Other CoP participants mentioned learning “new strategies around civic engagement,” acquiring “effective communication skills,” “meeting parents where they are,” and becoming “more aware of how to address certain barriers that many parents face that could help with the retention of parents...in programs.”

Key Findings: Interactions with CoP members is increasing knowledge of evaluation processes, but for only half the participants

The influence of interaction with fellow members in the Stand Up initiative’s CoP is less striking as it affects members’ increased knowledge around program evaluation. A slim majority, or 52%, of CoP survey respondents feel that they have increased knowledge of design and implementation of evaluation processes as a result of interactions with fellow CoP members. A total of 48% responded they do not have increased knowledge about program evaluation (see **Chart #22** in Appendix).

Several respondents noted they “learned some new tools” and that they have an increased “understanding of the importance” of evaluation. And several other CoP members talked in greater detail about the depth of their learning – about the value of ensuring program activities are connected to “what’s being measured as a desired

outcome,” to “define indicators” before evaluating, and how to design a “logic model.”

(Do note that **Chart #6** suggests 60.87% of CoP respondents reported increased capacity in evaluation planning and 69.57% report increased capacity in determining evaluation indicators – both as a result of participation in the Stand Up CoP. **Chart #21** displays the impact of interactions with fellow CoP members not overall CoP participation.)

Key Finding: Interactions with CoP members is generally not improving skills around social media usage

Similarly, there was a less distinct impact on CoP participants in gaining improved social media skills as a result of interactions with other CoP members. **Chart #23** (see Appendix) shows that 52% of respondents declared they did not improve their skills around social media usage as a result of their interactions with their fellow Stand Up CoP members, and 48% said they did gain improved skills around social media usage.

CoP participants noted a variety of improved skills they garnered through the interaction with fellow members:

- “Not afraid to speak in front of a crowd.”
- “....served as a springboard to my researching more complex strategies, which are currently being employed.”
- Learned “ways to engage the community with social media (and) ways to communicate with different forms of media.”

One respondent reported that both a Facebook page and Twitter account for the Stand Up initiative was created and that several CoP members had volunteered to be administrators for the Facebook page.

Key Finding: Members solve program implementation problems by working with their CoP colleagues

A clearer positive effect on CoP members emerges on the issue of problem solving around program implementation. 78% of respondents state they have solved problems around implementation as a result of their interactions with fellow Stand Up CoP members, and 22% of respondents said that had not (see **Chart #24** in Appendix).

One CoP participant remarked that “(we worked) with partners to recruit parents from our networks.” Another commented, “we were able to stretch our resources to provide a high quality experience” for parents.

Other respondents shared how their joint efforts with CoP members helped in identifying solutions:

- “...conversations about how other organizations dealt with recruitment and retention (were) very beneficial.”
- “(We worked) together through challenges experienced by other CoP (members) to help mitigate some challenges in our program.”
- “We’ve learned from other CoP members about problem solving logistical barriers to parent engagement such as transportation and childcare.”

Key Finding: Most CoP participants benefit from shared resources working with their fellow members

A majority of CoP survey respondents, 87%, report they have benefited from shared resources as a result of their interactions with fellow Stand Up CoP members, and 13% stated that had not experienced such benefits (see **Chart #25** in Appendix).

Meeting and program space, parent participants and program curricula were mentioned by several CoP members as common shared resource.

“We have shared space for listening sessions, workshops, events and food costs,” remarked one CoP member. Another member observed how the “Louisiana Children’s Museum’s WordPlay in Broadmoor, United Way SELA Proactive

Interactive Civics, and Birthing Project share constituents and space.” “The Urban League has shared curriculum with the New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium for the Stand Up work” commented another participant, “and...we recommended instructors for both of our programs to be sure that identical conversations take place” in the Urban League and Fatherhood Consortium groups

Other members identified their CoP experiences and relationships as the key shared resource. One participant highlighted the value of “exposure to different parental-type forums, political and social events,” and another member stated they benefited from “networking with other parent serving organizations and have been able to leverage resources and collaborate with other CoP organizations like (the) Louisiana Children’s Museum, Birthing Project, United Way, Urban League and Neighborhood Partnership Network.”

One respondent captured the power of connection and relationship building in observing “the CoP allowed the time and space to build relationships with staff members and directors from organizations that share similar values and have similar visions for our community that have gone beyond just the (Stand Up) work. It was beneficial to know that some of the same successes, challenges, and barriers are faced by other organizations doing the work and although we may do things differently, there is no need to reinvent the wheel, or to work in isolation.”

Key Finding: All CoP members have experienced other benefits to their work resulting from interactions with their CoP colleagues

A full 100% of CoP survey respondents stated they had experienced other benefits as a result of their interactions with their fellow Stand Up CoP members (see **Chart #26** in Appendix).

Comments from respondents describing specific benefits generally clustered into two areas – relationships and information.

Relationships

CoP participants referred to the “increased relationships” they experienced, as well as gaining “an expanded referral network” and in at least one case a “network (that) has expanded for other efforts not directly related to Stand Up work.” One respondent noted that “some of these organizations are new to me and great to work with,” and another highlighted the value of “professional mentoring from partners and an opportunity to problem solve together.”

“The ability to build relationships with other staff members that work in organizations with similar values was extremely beneficial,” remarked a CoP member, “(and) the ability to realize our collective power acted as a motivator to see that behavior mimicked with our parent groups.”

Information

“I have been able to enhance our program with ideas I gained from discussion with other CoP members,” noted one respondent. Another participant highlighted the “concentrated exposure to new methodologies for parent engagement and parental inclusion.” And another CoP respondent talked about the “awareness of services available through CoP participating programs.”

The spirit of cooperation and willing transfer of information was captured by the CoP member who observed that “the members of the CoP have varied expertise and shared their knowledge and experience with us, not worried about competing for grants or for glory, but for the shared success of our community and of the initiative.”

Key Finding: Engagement in the CoP has fostered personal change among some participants

The impact of the CoP and Stand Up initiative on professional and organizational development has been complemented by the personal change experienced by some CoP participants.

Perhaps the most dramatic story is that of LeAndra Shipps which was recounted by *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* in its March 27, 2014 story, “Community Funds Ask

People From Diverse Walks of Life for Priorities.” The article featured examples of various community foundation efforts around the country to engage community members, including the Stand Up initiative (see **Attachment #7**). Ms. Shipps was hired by Planned Parenthood through a Stand Up grant.

“At Planned Parenthood, Ms. Shipps works as a doula, an assistant to expectant and new mothers. But she also now attends monthly meetings at the foundation’s offices, reminding nonprofit leaders of the challenges faced by parents who are poor or facing racism. Ms. Shipps knows about such struggles firsthand: She was briefly homeless years ago and is African-American.”

“Too often, says Ms. Shipps, charity leaders and grant makers would miss that bigger picture as they discussed the roles they would play in Stand Up for Our Children.”

“The conversation would never really be about parents, ever,’ she says, ‘It was about models and theories and plans and evaluation.”

A Foundation Design Team member observed the personal and professional change experienced by Ms. Shipps – “she was...quiet in the background, wasn’t sure of what her work could be and (she) just emerged as this (CoP) design team leader, this leader in the group, facilitating meetings. And now she’s on the cover of *The Chronicle of Philanthropy*.”

Other CoP respondents commented on their own personal and professional stories through the Stand Up initiative. Several members remarked that the experience “really humbled me and (has) really given me a renewed energy to continue this work.” One CoP member shared they felt “very gratified to meet (the) parents and children,” and another observed that “I hadn’t been as hopeful about getting parents involved, but that’s totally changed. I’m much more hopeful.”

Still others talked of the personal change in their perspectives and how they work. As one participant remarked, “we started thinking like parents, we changed our attitude.” A CoP member described how they now look at their task – “to open up your understanding, to open up your vision, to open up the way you want to work about this, to open up who you work with to get a particular thing done.” Another respondent stated that “for me, it’s always been a personal thing. I tell my (co-workers) all the time – ‘if you don’t see yourself as a change agent, then you don’t belong here, you just don’t belong here.’ I don’t see it as a job. I see it as a calling.”

The CoP's positive influence on personal change was also noted by at least one executive director who observed they had "seen increased staff ability to work with parents in a more intimate and more personal way."

Stand Up for Our Children: Going Forward with Concerns, Hope and Action

Every initiative, whether that of a funder or nonprofit organization, carries with it a set of challenging questions of what happens when the initial financial resource is depleted. Will other funding be secured to continue the momentum? Will participating leaders and organizations come forward to make the body of work their own and thereby extend the life of the endeavor? Or, will the initiative be considered a one-off learning experience for funder and participant alike, and closed out?

Feedback from the Stand Up CoP organizations and executive directors, and from the Foundation's Design Team, identifies concerns and anxieties about the initiative's future path, funding and lifespan. At the same time, there exists great hope about the future for Stand Up, and there is action being taken to bring those hopes to fruition.

Key Finding: Stand Up is viewed as an "incomplete opportunity"

From all the aforementioned quarters, concern was expressed there wasn't enough time and resource provided for the Stand Up initiative to take root and increase the likelihood of its future success. "We are still in the trenches trying to just get our program going," expressed one CoP participant, "I would have liked the opportunity to...build the network and become stronger..." Another CoP member stated that "we've never done this kind of work, so we had to catch up with a lot of people (in the CoP). Now I feel like we've got this train moving, and I'm afraid it's going to halt."

One CoP participant felt that "the 'where we're going' is (that) we've not gotten there, and we don't have that dot on the horizon about where that is." This sentiment was echoed by a CoP colleague that simply said Stand Up is an "incomplete opportunity."

A contributing factor to this dynamic is the 50% staff turnover in the individual participants of the CoP cohort as noted in the methodology section. Several CoP members voiced the timing and learning curve challenges they faced as new staff who “inherited” the Stand Up initiative when joining their respective organizations.

The Foundation’s Design Team shares its own concerns about the future. One team member observed that “this initiative (doesn’t have) all its legs in the infrastructure yet” and that Stand Up “needs more commitment.” Another team member thought that “I might think about doing (Stand Up) in a different way. It would probably require more money, more time, time in the future as well as spending time on the initiative itself day to day.”

Key Finding: Future funding and changing relationships cloud the initiative’s future

The CoP executive directors, noting their responsibility to maintaining the health of their respective organizations, honed in on the practicality of having a sustainable future for Stand Up. One executive director called the question – “How do we plan to institutionalize this initiative. I always begin everything thinking about sustainability.”

Another executive director described the typical funding cycle of “it’s either one and done, or a couple, two, three years...and then, how are you going to sustain it.” This director also noted that “in communities like ours where there’s not a lot of natural resources (for) funding support, it just seems like we’re ripe for a different type of longer-term approach to the kind of change that needs to happen.”

Members of the Foundation’s Design Team share their own concerns about the question of future resource for Stand Up. One member felt that “there are so many possibilities (but) are these possibilities going to be able to be realized without continued support from a foundation?” While another team member felt that fundraising for future Stand Up activities would have ideally begun several years ago, the Foundation does have very modest resource set aside to assist the CoP in convening continued meetings into the short term future. But one CoP director

offered a somewhat different angle in that Stand Up has “forged different kind of partnerships” and feels “these can help with sustainability, so how do we structure other grants to build (Stand Up) in.”

In addition to concerns about future financial support for Stand Up, at least one executive director reported their staff has talked about another possible transition challenge - “There are relationships that are formed that will continue, but what if there’s staff turnover?” A member of the Design Team echoed that observation in that “people are coming and leaving, ideas come and leave with them.”

Key Finding: The good news is that the Community of Practice members are taking greater ownership of the Stand Up initiative – and its future

Amidst these concerns about future funding and the depth of the initiative’s roots, there exists a widespread and positive hope about Stand Up’s next steps. This hope is being buttressed by a range of specific actions being undertaken by the CoP and its members that demonstrate growing ownership of the initiative. As one CoP executive director shared – “we have to lead by example.”

- **Organizations are supporting their staff for post-Stand Up work.** When asked about how their organizations are making changes to support their staff’s and organization’s continued efforts after Stand Up, the majority of COP survey respondents report an increase in changing culture, policies, procedures and practices (see **Chart #27**). Leading indicators about how CoP groups are changing internally and in their external behavior can be found in this report’s review of Evaluation Questions #1 and #3.

Chart #27

How has your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice affected the following:			
Answer Options	Increased	Decreased	No Change
Changes in my organization’s culture to support our staff’s and organization’s continued efforts after the Stand Up initiative	82.61%	-	17.39%
Changes in my organization’s policies to support our staff’s and organization’s continued efforts after the Stand Up initiative	60.87%	-	39.13%
Changes in my organization’s procedures/practices to support our staff’s and organization’s continued efforts after the Stand Up initiative	73.91%	-	26.09%

N=23

The Community of Practice, as a tool and methodology for change, has served as a powerful vehicle to increase participant ownership of Stand Up, increased levels of participation in guiding the initiative going forward, and increased participant action on shaping what endeavors grow out of Stand Up.

- CoP members are increasingly in the driver’s seat.** Seeking to cultivate the wisdom and engagement of CoP members, the Foundation Design Team opened up the Year Two meeting planning and facilitation process to include CoP participants. Over time, the Foundation Design Team intentionally reduced its role in organizing and running CoP meetings and increased the role of CoP members to do so.

A third-party observation of the CoP’s April 3, 2014 meeting concluded the CoP was well on its way to making the Stand Up proceedings its own. The meeting was thoughtfully and well-facilitated by CoP members, the meeting agenda was followed and most CoP members had completed a homework assignment due for the meeting. Participants were supportive of each other’s work, and were comfortable in sharing their problem areas as well as their successes. The CoP facilitators asked clarifying questions during group

discussions to move the conversation along, and gave clear instructions for small group exercises which produced helpful thinking, plans and presentations on specific action steps. Foundation staff participated in the meeting at key points but without dominating or distracting from CoP facilitation.

- **The CoP is moving forward to continue an ongoing network for change.** The final Stand Up CoP meeting on June 5, 2014 resulted in an agreement of 12 organizations committing to move forward as a continuing group of practitioners. The group developed an initial self-description as “a loose network of organizations that share information/best practices regarding parent civic engagement.” Space for a follow-up meeting was offered by one member and by the Foundation.

The follow-up meeting was held June 26, 2014 and resulted in a new “network identity statement:

“An action-based network composed of organizations, parents and families standing up for our children through advocacy efforts, information and resource sharing, and parent leadership development.”

The participants identified what the network needs are to move forward (space, facilitation, timeline, communications, commitments from members, etc.), organized its own design team for next steps, and scheduled a follow-up meeting July 17, 2014.

- **The CoP is working to create a post-Stand Up parent network.** The CoP with Foundation Design Team encouragement and guidance is exploring the development of a parent network as an outgrowth of Stand Up. As one CoP member said about the power of parents, “...for them to make an impact, they need to have coalitions, relationships, partnerships, with other like-minded community members who want to make the similar changes, who are able to affect change through their role, because they can.”

As a cohort, CoP members utilized small and large group exercises to identify individual and shared interests, beliefs and objectives for what a parent network might look like and achieve. Interview questions and protocol were developed

for CoP members to surface parental interest in the concept, and 24 parents were interviewed by CoP groups. The Urban League has surveyed CoP members about a pre-parent network event they are hosting as part of a Stand Up technical assistance grant.

In considering the future of such a parent network, one CoP executive director felt that “we’re just laying the foundation for (the network). It’s going to be their network (not ours).” Another executive director noted that, “if the parent network is strong, they will be telling us” about what’s important to them.

Key Finding: CoP leadership has identified a need for community priority and policy setting at a higher level

CoP executive directors’ experience with the Stand Up initiative - collaboration, relationship and network building, focus and priority-setting - may have served as the impetus for suggesting the need of higher level community priority and policy setting in New Orleans.

Several of these executive directors talked about building relationships with “big business, medium sized, and even small businesses” to engage State government around shaping policy and increasing resources. One executive director provided such a scenario – “When we show up with parents, it’s no big surprise (at the State capitol), it doesn’t have the shock and awe value...but if we showed up...with an equal number of business leaders...and we’re all going in together with the same passion and same like mind in terms of what needs to change or what policies we’re all advocating for together, I promise you it will happen.”

Another executive director remarked that New Orleans “needs an organization to play that convener and facilitator role” to promote and engender collaboration, policy and advocacy. This director envisions an opportunity for the community to gather around a small set of issues and agree, “that’s important, let’s work on it together.”

Other directors noted the significant potential of convening major individual philanthropists and corporate leaders, along with foundation and nonprofit leaders, to generate a commitment to focus on an issue and commit, for example, some

percentage of their philanthropy a year on such an issue. As one director envisioned, “imagine what if we were all saying, ‘there are the three things that we want to work on in this community, and (we) really are’....”

Impact on Learning and Practice at the Greater New Orleans Foundation

The Stand Up for Our Children initiative was a significant undertaking for the Greater New Orleans Foundation in its scale, complexity and objectives. A focus group discussion was organized with the Foundation’s internal Stand Up Design Team to surface the initiative’s impact on learning and practice at the Foundation.

Several respondents described this multi-year initiative as “multi-faceted” and “comprehensive in nature.” It is seen as a complex, layered enterprise involving “the development of the practitioner, the organization and the community” and the Foundation itself. These layers include both content and project management components: “parent engagement, civics, evaluation, communication, social media....relationship building, community building....operational funding, technical assistance funding, data, collaboration, planning, and using consultants.”

Key Finding: The design and implementation of the Stand Up initiative is transforming Foundation practice

The Stand Up initiative appears to have stimulated an evolution in Foundation practice:

- **An intentional shift towards cross-departmental work.** One focus group respondent observed this shift in how “we (the Foundation) practice grantmaking and capacity building” manifesting in “collaboration...between Organizational Effectiveness and Programs.” The Stand Up initiative was described by another respondent as the Foundation’s “first demonstrable, cultural experience of two departments really working together.” Another participant noted that “it has been intentional to integrate Organizational

Effectiveness into the work” and that this integration has resulted in “less fragmentation.”

The focus group participants also talked about increased cross-departmental work across the Foundation, such as more programmatic engagement in the grant writing process, joint meetings between Foundation departments, and the emergence of cross-departmental teams, one around economic opportunity and one environmental initiative.

Several of Stand Up’s key operational components seem to have taken root within these cross-departmental efforts at the Foundation as well. One respondent noted this “practice shift (is) influencing other work as a foundation when other initiatives are starting design teams and Communities of Practice.”

- **New language is beginning to permeate the Foundation.** “The language we’ve used in (Stand Up),” remarked one respondent, “is now the language that (Foundation) staff use internally....” Another focus group participant shared that “all of a sudden, I’m hearing the (Foundation staff) say Community of Practice and design teams...”

Key Finding: The capacity and knowledge of Foundation staff has increased through managing the Stand Up initiative

In acknowledging the complex and comprehensive nature of the Stand Up initiative, Design Team members highlighted their own professional growth in both content knowledge and improved practice.

- **Foundation staff has enriched content knowledge.** The wide-ranging nature of the Stand Up initiative exposed Foundation staff to new subject areas and to deeper understanding of content they were already familiar with. “I understood the civic process,” shared one respondent, “but now I know a whole lot more about (civic engagement)” and “what the whole continuum looks like for advocacy, involvement or engagement on organizing.”

Another participant talked about their learning around “advocacy and the capacity of these (Stand Up) organizations,” the extent of “youth development,” and “governance and fundraising.” And one person noted “I didn’t know any of these terms – World Café, Communities of Practice – (and) I learned about all of those...”

- **Foundation staff has expanded their grantmaking and project management capabilities.** For one respondent, the Stand Up experience was a learning “about the Foundation’s process and approach to the work.” For another, “it affirmed for me that Community of Practice is a methodology and a grantmaking approach that can get the desired outcomes.”

Several participants experienced learning about the challenges and opportunities present working with grassroots organizations and parents. “I’m not a parent, although I’ve worked in many situations with grassroots leaders and parents,” one respondent shared, “I think there was some learning around that.” Another respondent articulated the challenges faced by small, grassroots organizations. “They’re already doing so much work that the idea of trying to create yet another partnership outside of their grant funded work seems like it could be just a difficult thing to do.” Without exception, all participants talked of their commitment to helping Stand Up organizations succeed.

The Design Team is also self-aware about the “inherent” imbalance between the Foundation as grantmaker and the Stand Up participants as grant recipients. “We have to be really cognizant,” noted one respondent, “there’s a time to be ‘a guide on the side’ rather than the ‘sage on the stage’. And there are moments where you do have to step in and be the sage.”

The Design Team as individuals and as a group was thoughtful in their analysis about how past project management and design can strengthen future grantmaking and initiatives. The team shared a general sense that, in retrospect, the early stages of Stand Up could have been fortified and run more smoothly. The team recognizes none of them were engaged in the initial Stand Up grant writing or initial project work. That noted, the team’s learnings identified key factors to be considered for future endeavors:

- Garner the explicit expectations of the initiative's funder at the beginning
- Launch fundraising planning and activities early on to ensure continued support of initiative work
- Allow for more upfront planning time with organizational partners and consider planning grants to facilitate that initial work
- Include CoP members early on in design and launch
- Build in additional time for capacity building of organizations around key content and management issues
- Schedule more frequent meetings of the CoP and provide resources to support those, and include CoP members early on in the design of those meetings.

Section Six: Recommendations

This evaluation has demonstrated the significant impact which the Stand Up for Our Children initiative has had on participating individuals, organizations and networks.

Given what the engaged parties have contributed to making the Stand Up initiative a success, the following recommendations are made in the spirit of leveraging this success into further progress for the participants, parents, community and funders.

For post-initiative next steps

- Regular and frequent Community of Practice meetings are key to maintaining momentum, continued buy-in from participants and to stoke further personal, professional and organizational change. The Kellogg Foundation should consider providing 12 – 24 month “stage two” support to the Greater New Orleans Foundation which would assist the newly emerging network of organizations and parents to flesh out their plans and establish footing in the community.
- Concurrently, the Greater New Orleans Foundation should dedicate staff and financial resource to bolster the new network as it needs on-the-ground assistance over the next 12 to 24 months, as well. The Foundation should also consider a “broker and advocate” role to assist this new network with attracting other local, regional and national resources, and encouraging other groups and institutions to come to the table in support of the network’s efforts.
- Encourage this new network to engage key decision makers early on and secure their support for the short and long-term objectives the network will take on. Assist the network in garnering sufficient resource to document its learning and assess its progress, successes and challenges.

For future Foundation initiatives

- Document the internal organizational changes at the Greater New Orleans Foundation stimulated by the Stand Up initiative. Record what changes are taking place in the grantmaking practice and process, in new and deeper cross-departmental effort and in how next-generation Foundation initiatives are being designed and implemented differently. Share this learning organization-

wide with staff and board, and with the grantee community as a model which encourages collaboration, continuous improvement and strengthened organizational effectiveness.

- Build in more pre-development time and resource in the design and launch of new initiatives. Consider additional planning activities, the use of planning grants to participants when appropriate and more in-depth professional development around content and practice to ensure participants are fully equipped for the journey ahead.
- Design future Foundation initiatives with longer implementation timelines which provide activities and relationships the room to take hold and grow.
- For initiatives which include substantive organizational change components, utilize multiple-participant cohorts to drive change inside organizations. Engaging cohorts larger than one or two individuals per group, and supporting those larger cohorts, can increase their abilities to implant change in their respective work settings, particularly with more significantly sized agencies.

For larger, longer-term community impact

- CoP executive directors put forward a challenging but intriguing idea about New Orleans being in need of a civic function to help the community prioritize, act on and dedicate resource to a short list of key issues. The Greater New Orleans Foundation should delve deeper into this idea. Re-convene Stand Up executive directors and invite other leaders into a dialogue about what this means, what could be achieved, what barriers exist and what interest there may be in pursuing such a venture.
- The Greater New Orleans Foundation should instigate a community initiative to create a “brokerage agency” between the area’s nonprofit and business sectors. The purpose of such an agency is not fund development, but rather brokering human resource. It would identify program and leadership needs on the nonprofit side and identify talent and expertise on the business side, and match the appropriate parties. The Foundation’s earlier “Needs Scan” called

out many of these nonprofit organizational deficiencies and the scan could serve as a starting point for this venture.

Nonprofits would strengthen their service delivery and programs as well as their leadership and management, and businesses would benefit from “giving back” to their community through volunteer and loaned-executive/expertise experiences. Model such an endeavor on like-programs that exist in other communities around the country.

Section Seven: Appendix

Credits

The Year Two Evaluation of the Stand Up for Our Children initiative would not have been possible without the ongoing support and participation of these individuals:

Stand Up for Our Children Community of Practice

D'Yuanna Allen Robb, Executive Director, Birthing Project
Rhodesia Perine, Program Manager, Birthing Project
Denise Graves, Parent Leadership Coordinator, Birthing Project
Kimberly Williams, Program Director, Healthy Start NOLA
Alice Johnson, Outreach/Health Education Coordinator, Healthy Start NOLA
Adrian Todd, Chief Program Officer, Kingsley House
Rafel Hart, Educare NOLA Director, Kingsley House
Michal Erder, Visitor Experiences Manager, Louisiana Children's Museum
Eileen Engel, Community Engagement Manager, Louisiana Children's Museum
Pody Gay, Education Director, Louisiana Children's Museum
Petrice Sams-Abiodun, Executive Director, Lindy Boggs National Center for
Community Literacy (New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium)
Gregory Rattler, Director, New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium
Timolynn Sams, Executive Director, Neighborhood Partnership Network
Chemwapuwa "Chemmy" Blackman, Neighborhood Liaison, Neighborhood
Partnership Network
Rachel Graham, Communications Manager, Neighborhood Partnership Network
Zakenya Perry, Director of Programs, Orleans Public Education Network
Saundra Reed, Community Coordinator, Orleans Public Education Network
Carol Alexander-Lewis, PLTI Coordinator, Orleans Public Education Network
Lila Arnaud, Community Education Network, Planned Parenthood Gulf Coast
LeAndra Shipps, Parent Educator/Services Navigator, Planned Parenthood Gulf
Coast
Carolina Hernandez, Executive Director, Puentes
Jenny Yanez, Community Organizer, Puentes
James Kelley Terry, Director of Planning, Research and Development, Total
Community Action
India Conde, Family Community Service Manager, Total Community Action
Todd Battiste, Vice President of Children and Families, United Way Southeast
Louisiana
Lanette Dumas, Contractor, United Way Southeast Louisiana

Arielle McConduit, Director of the Urban League Parent Information Center, Urban League of Greater New Orleans
Cathy Washington, Vice President, Operations and Communications, Urban League of Greater New Orleans
Gilma Pavon, Program Coordinator, Urban League of Greater New Orleans

Stand Up for Our Children member organizations' executive directors

D'Yuanna Allen Robb, Birthing Project
Kimberly Williams, Healthy Start NOLA
Keith Liederman, Kingsley House
Julia Bland, Louisiana Children's Museum
Petrice Sams-Abiodun, New Orleans Fatherhood Consortium
Timolynn Sams, Neighborhood Partnership Network
Deirde Johnson Burel, Orleans Public Education Network
Melissa Hall-James, Planned Parenthood
Carolina Hernandez, Puentes
Thelma French, Total Community Action
Michael Williamson, United Way SELA
Urban League, Erika McConduit

Greater New Orleans Foundation Design Team

Joann Ricci, Vice President, Organizational Effectiveness
Kellie Chavez Greene, Senior Program Officer for Organizational Effectiveness
Flint Mitchell, Program Officer
Mandi Cambre, Organizational Effectiveness Program Associate

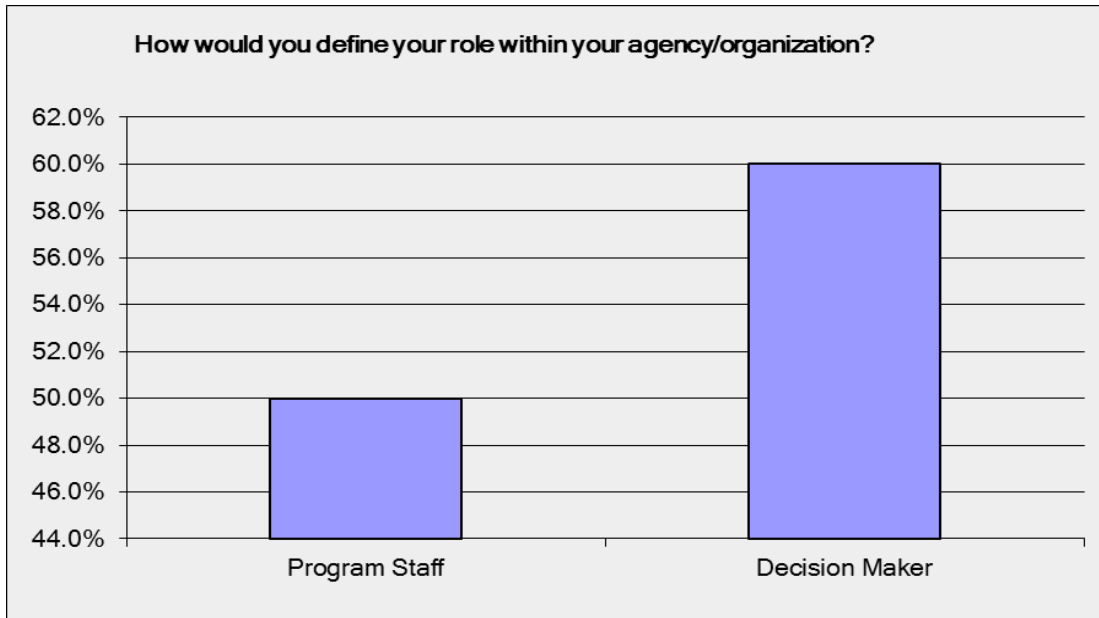
Particular appreciation goes to the Stand Up parents for being part of the initiative and participating in the Year Two evaluation.

Thank you to all these folks for their hard work and their generous cooperation in this undertaking, and hats off to Ms. Mandi Cambre for keeping the trains running on time. Finally, our apologies to anyone's name we may have accidentally left off this "thank-you" list!

Jeffrey M. Glebocki
CEO
Strategy + Action/Philanthropy

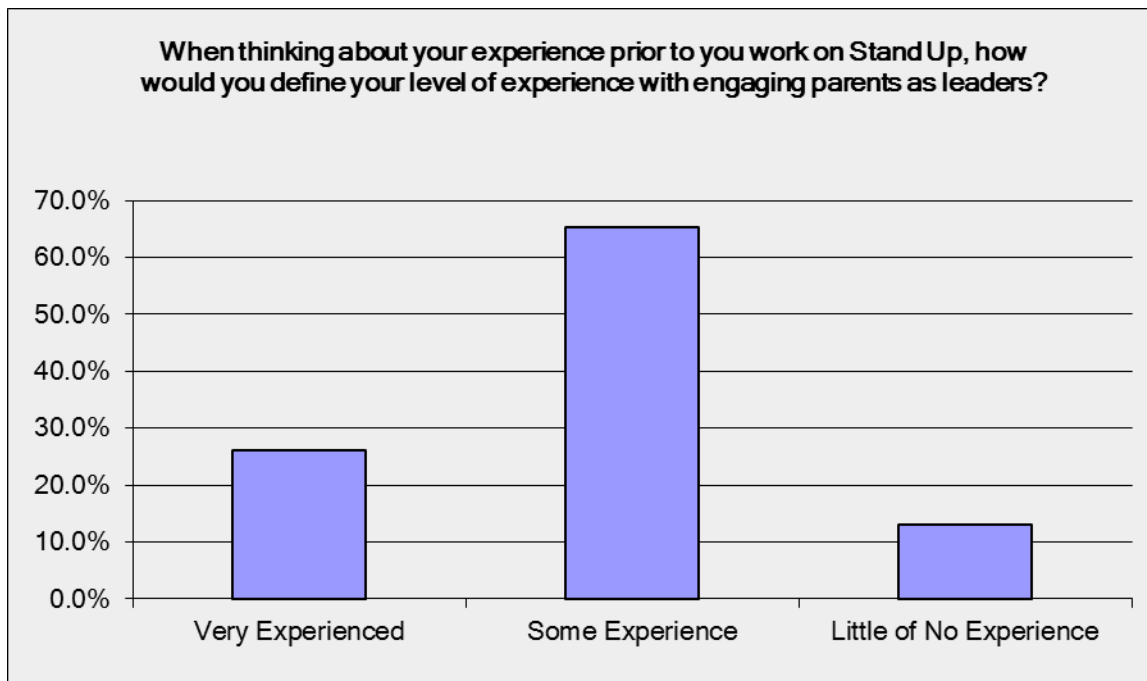
Charts & Graphs

Chart #1



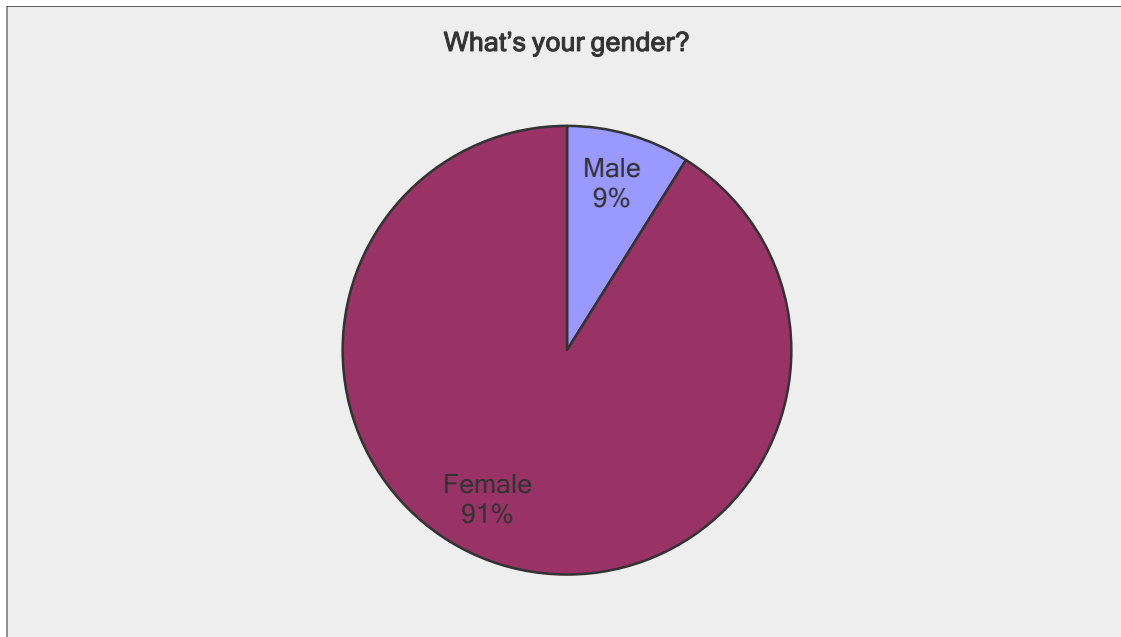
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Chart #2



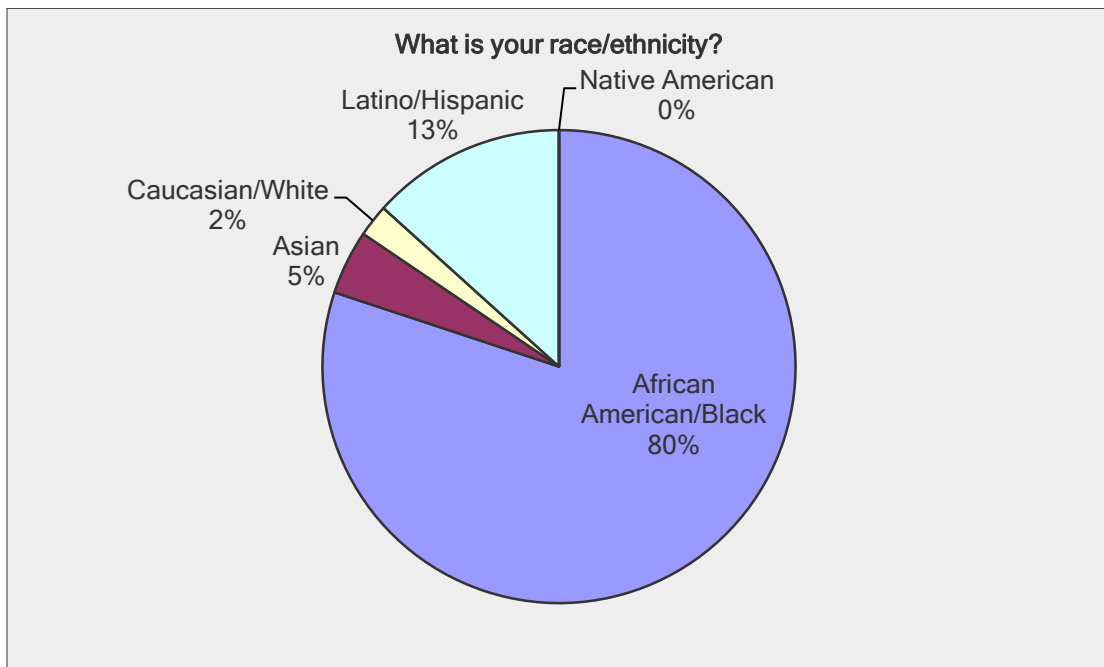
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Chart #12



N=45

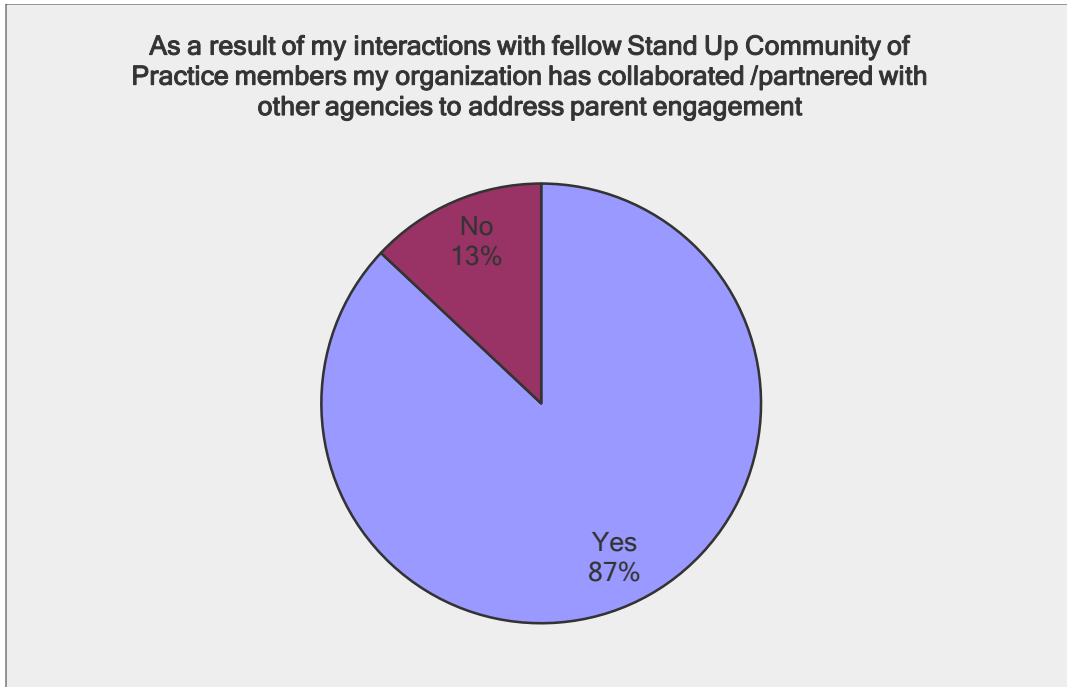
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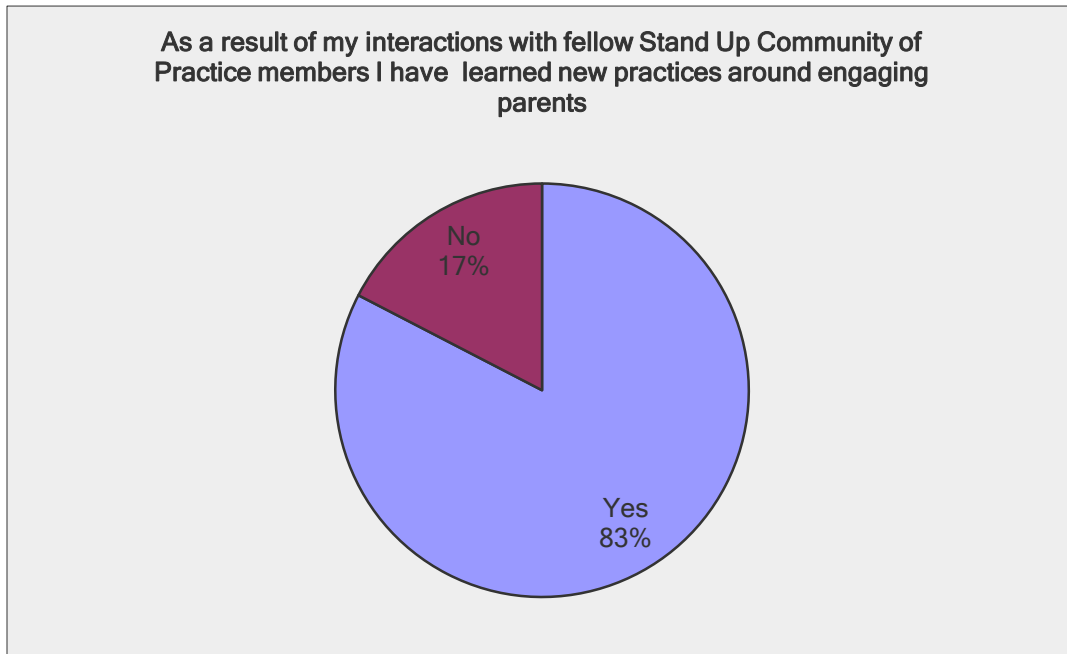
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Chart #20



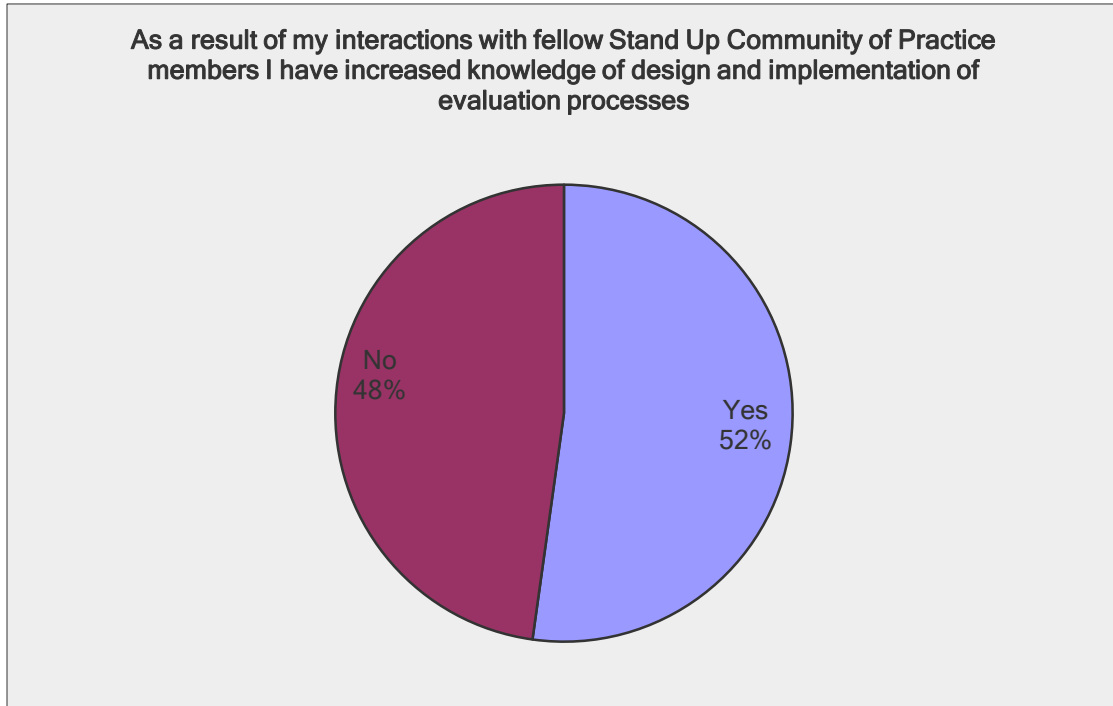
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Chart #21



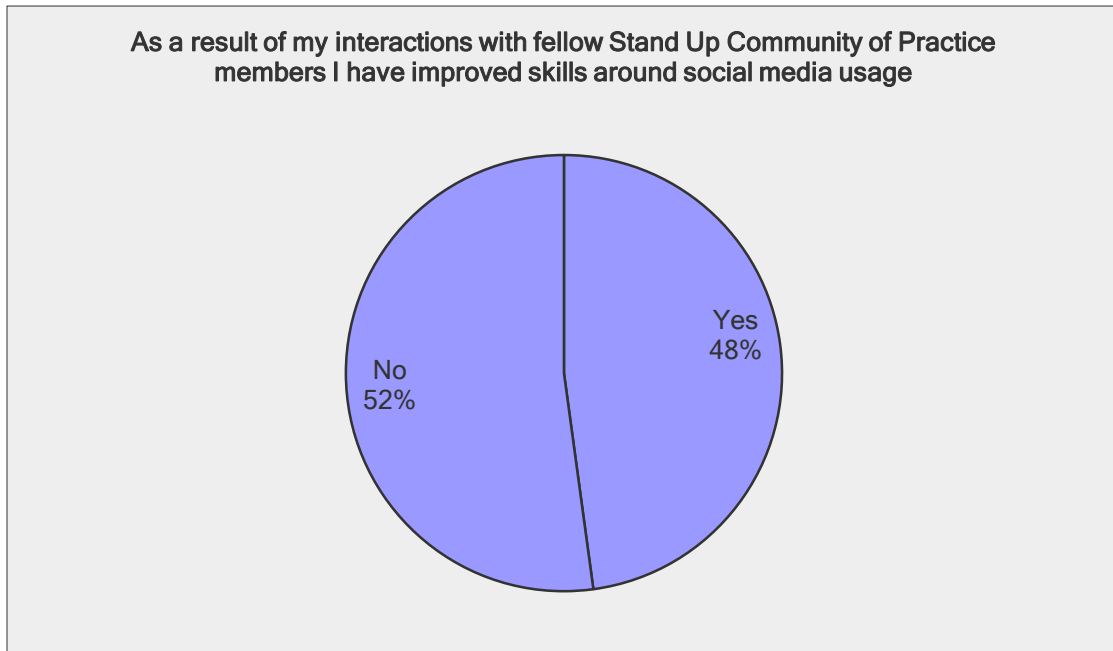
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Chart #22



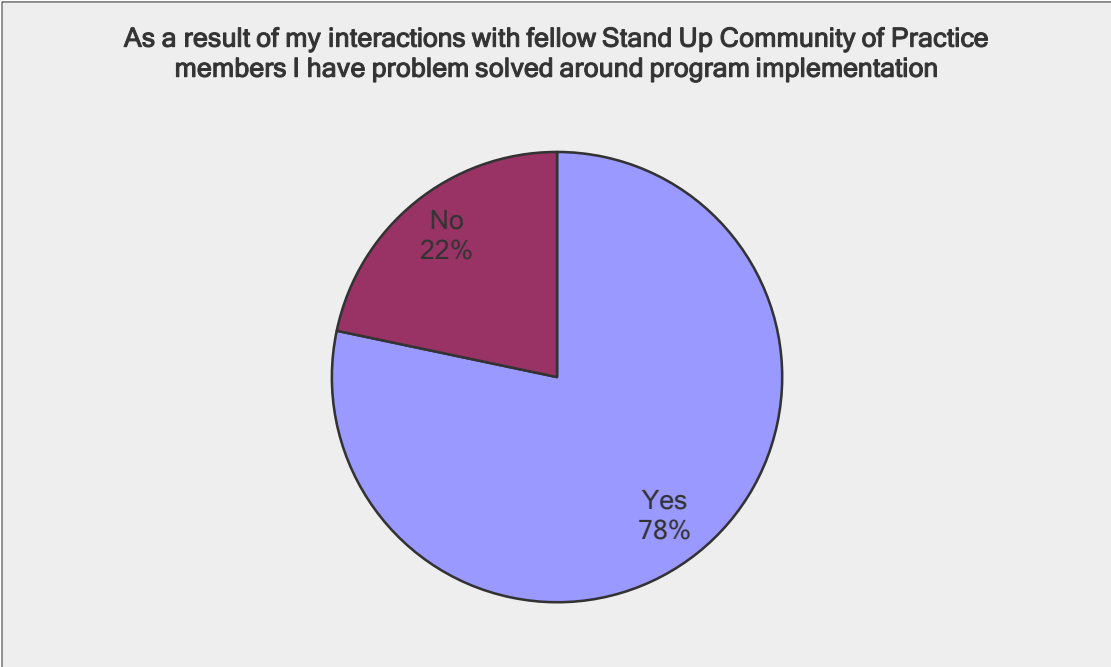
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Chart #23



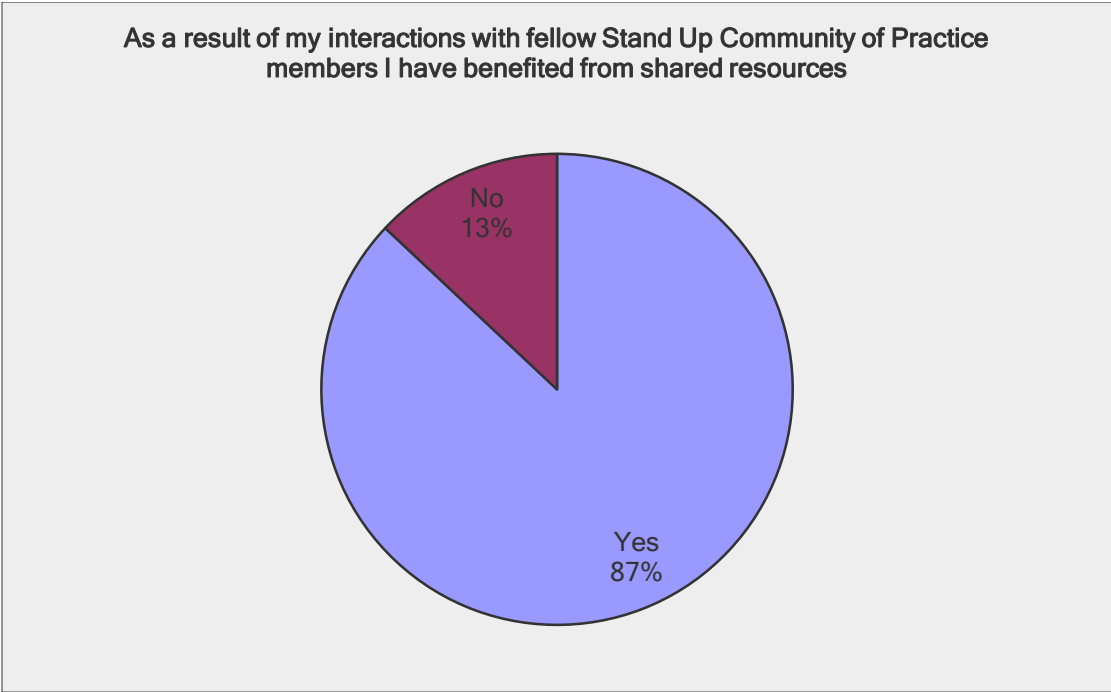
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Chart #24



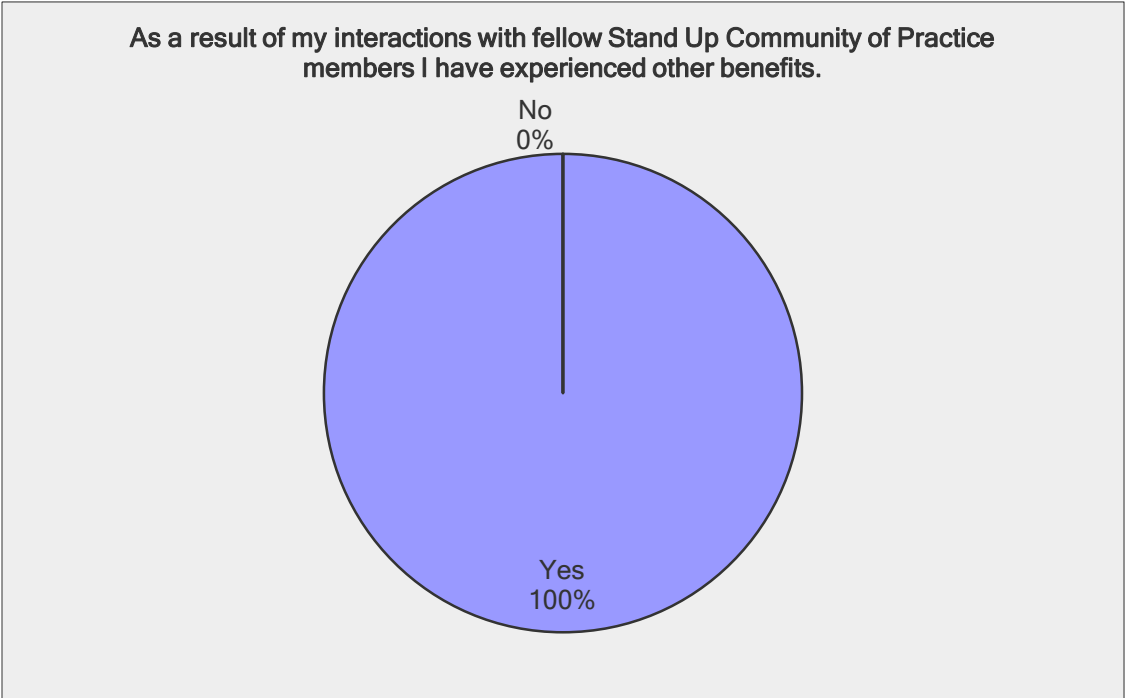
N=23

Chart #25



N=23

Chart #26



N=21

Section Eight: Attachments

- #1: Parents Online Survey Questions
- #2: CoP Online Survey Questions
- #3: CoP Focus Group Questions
- #4: CoP Executive Director Focus Group Questions
- #5: Foundation Design Team Focus Group Questions
- #6: Observation Guide for CoP Meeting
- #7: *The Chronicle of Philanthropy* article, March 27, 2014. “Community Funds Ask People from Diverse Walks of Life for Priorities”
- #8: Parents Focus Group Questions
- #9: *The NPN Trumpet* newspaper, Summer 2013.

Attachment #1

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

PARENTS ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Attachment #2

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

CoP ONLINE SURVEY QUESTIONS

Attachment #3

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

COP FOCUS GROUPS

1. (Transition question) What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the Stand Up for Our Children effort?
2. Can you share a one-minute overview of how you've engaged parents through the Stand Up initiative? (Probe: One-on-one engagement, group or cohort setting, other?)
3. In thinking about your experience in working with parents since becoming involved in Stand Up, what has changed in your practice of working with parents? What has been the impact of you working with parents differently? (Probe: Changes in organization's culture, policies, procedures, usage of data, more inclusion of parents in shaping activities, etc.?)
4. Think about the parents with whom you have or are working with in your Stand Up group activities. How have you seen them put into practice the learning and work which you have engaged them around? (Probe: More engagement with setting organization's activities; more work in the community; more engagement with other, non-Stand Up organizations and activities, etc.)
5. Thinking about your participation in this Community of Practice, how has your organization changed the way it engages or responds to parents? (Probe: Changes in organizational policies, processes, culture, etc.)
 - a. How has your organization changed to support the work you are doing through Stand Up for Our Children? (Probe: Changes in organizational policies, processes, culture, etc.)
 - b. How have you changed as a practitioner as a result of your participation in the Stand Up COP? (Probe: Increased use of best practice, changes in how you engage parents, improved communications, etc.?)

6. How has your organization changed to encourage and support staff's use of best practice learned in the COP to engage parents/families? (Probe: Changes in organization's culture, policies, procedures, changes in priorities and focus, resource allocation, professional development, etc.?)
7. What partnerships, alliances and coalitions have occurred as a result of your participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice meetings and activities? What factors contributed to making these partnerships, alliances and coalitions happen? (Probe: COP convenings, trust being built among COP participants over time, learning about each others' work, etc?)
8. Considering your overall experience thus far in Stand Up, what is supporting your efforts? What is hindering your efforts? What could be strengthened to support your efforts?
9. (Closing) Do you have any additional comments or thoughts you would like to share about our conversation today?

Attachment #4

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

CoP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOCUS GROUP

1. (Transition question) What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of the Stand Up for Our Children grant and Community of Practice (COP)?
2. What about this initiative attracted your organization to participate and commit staff and time to it?
3. What changes have you seen in how your staff works with parents as a result of your organization being part of the Stand Up COP? What changes have you seen in how your organization works with parents? (Probe: Changes in communications, culture, policies, procedures, learning across positions or departments, etc.)
4. In a similar vein, how has your organization changed to support and sustain your efforts in working with parents now? And into the future after Stand Up funding ends?
5. As you think about your staff, what changes have you seen in them as a result of their participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice? (Probe: their leadership capacity, their work as practitioners, etc.?)
6. Overall, what kind of changes has your organization undertaken as a result of its participation in the Stand Up COP – culture, policies, procedures, prioritizing focus areas, etc.?
7. What partnerships, alliances and coalitions have occurred as a result of your organization's participation in the Stand Up Community of Practice meetings and activities? What factors contributed to making these partnerships, alliances and coalitions happen? (Probe: COP convenings, trust being built among COP participants over time, learning about each others' work, etc?)

8. Considering your overall experience thus far in Stand Up, what is supporting your efforts? What is hindering your efforts? What could be strengthened to support your efforts?

9. (Closing) Do you have any additional comments or thoughts you would like to share about our conversation today?

Attachment #5

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

FOUNDATION DESIGN TEAM FOCUS GROUP

1. (Transitional question) What three words come to mind about your experience with the Stand Up for Our Children initiative? Why those words?
2. Let's consider your experiences, feelings and thinking as you look back over the past two years working on the Stand Up for Our Children Initiative:
 - a. What did you learn overall?
 - b. What worked well?
 - c. What could you have done differently?
 - d. When did you begin to notice changes in the COP participating organizations – seeing practice change, seeing partnerships emerge, etc.?
 - e. What kind of changes have you noticed in the COP participants/practitioners themselves – change in practice, leadership development, improved communications, etc.?
 - f. What do you think contributed to these changes starting to take place, for both the COP organizations and the COP practitioners themselves?
3. The Stand Up for Our Children initiative is a major undertaking for the Foundation.
 - a. What did you learn about leading the COP Design Team given the grantor/grantee power dynamic?
 - b. What did you notice about yourselves and your grantees, and how you relate and work with each other?

4. As this initiative winds down, and you and the Foundation look at future initiatives and grantmaking:
 - a. What are your next steps post-Stand Up?
 - b. In considering how you apply your learning from the Stand Up initiative to shape future grantmaking, what elements of the initiative would you keep? What would you change? What would you drop?
5. Do you have any additional comments or thoughts you would like to share about our conversation today?

Attachment #6

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

OBSERVATION GUIDE FOR CoP MEETING

1. What is the objective for this meeting? How well did the gathering meet that objective? How was the meeting agenda utilized?
2. See attendance list. What is attendance compared to similar meetings (number of participants, program staff, decision makers)?
3. What leadership skills are exhibited by COP participants?
4. What is the quality of interactions among COP participants? Between COP participants and GNOF staff?
5. What issues are raised in conversation or discussion?
6. How are difficult or complex issues discussed and processed?
7. Do the proceedings of this meeting provide examples of:
 - a. organizational changes that have occurred as a result of participation in the COP?
 - b. changes that have occurred in individual participants as a result of their engagement in the COP?
 - c. increased or different kinds of usage of data by COP participants?
 - d. increased collaboration/partnership with other agencies to address parent engagement
 - e. increased inclusion of parents shaping organizational activities
8. To what extent does the group identify “next step” issues and strategies/tactics to meet those?

Attachment #7

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

THE CHRONICLE OF PHILANTHROPY, March 27, 2014

Community Funds Ask People From Diverse Walks of Life for Priorities



Jackson Hill, for The Chronicle

A grant from the Greater New Orleans Foundation allowed the local Planned Parenthood to hire LeAndra Shipp (left) to help new and expectant mothers. “I want to create things that people in the community tell me are necessary,” says foundation vice president Joann Ricci.

By Alex Daniels and Ben Gose

Brooklyn, N.Y.

Cecilia Clarke, president of the Brooklyn Community Foundation, is sitting on \$60-million in assets ready to be distributed throughout the borough.

But before she spends any money, she’s going to seek advice from her neighbors.

While the scores of nonprofits that previously got support wait nervously to see whether they will continue to get aid, the organization kicked off 2014 with a series of meetings with people throughout the city to determine new giving priorities.

Brooklyn Community Foundation is holding a series of public meetings to determine its new giving priorities. Cecilia Clarke, its leader, wants to hear from residents: “I don’t mean CEOs, and I don’t mean elected officials.”

Ms. Clarke makes clear that she’s not reaching out simply to people with fancy titles. She wants to get ideas from artists, business owners, educators, parents, the unemployed—anyone with a desire to get involved.

“I don’t mean CEOs, and I don’t mean elected officials,” she says. “I’m talking about who’s moving and shaking in the borough.”

Citizens’ Viewpoints

Ms. Clarke’s effort to let local people help set the grant-making agenda follows the example of an increasing number of community foundations.

Rather than using what she calls an “archaic” approach of putting a foundation’s staff in charge of picking worthy projects to support, Ms. Clarke says, community funds should serve as neutral parties that direct grants to the causes residents believe are most important.

Cities as disparate as Denver, Dubuque, and New Orleans are now running their grant making this way. Behind the approach is a desire to get people from different walks of life and ideologies together to shape priorities for their communities—and ideally spur more donations as a result.

“When your citizens are engaged in the work you do, they’re more likely to become donors,” says Nancy Van Milligen, president of Iowa’s Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.

No Longer Top-Down

Dubuque's efforts are a big change from the way many community foundations operate and a sign of a philosophical split among such organizations as they seek to serve their cities and regions, raise money, and satisfy 21st-century donors' growing appetite for impact.

Traditionally, community foundations have maintained in-house experts who identify grant priorities and measure success, giving affluent donors a sense that their gifts are making a difference.

But in recent years, a new movement has emerged, as some community funds have sought to make grant making more open and less top-down.

Some community-fund leaders remain skeptical of the effort to shift decision making. Foundations that try to figure out a city's needs simply by asking residents for ideas, as the Brooklyn Community Foundation is doing, will probably have a tough time figuring out who has the most credible ideas, says Paul Grogan, president of the Boston Foundation and leader of a movement to redefine community funds by getting more involved in government decision making.

The key to serving a community and staying accountable to donors, he says, is not to be solely a "convener" but to develop a cadre of research experts within the foundation and create change by taking stands on issues.

In recent years, for instance, the Boston fund used its data and political influence to help push successfully for a state law that expanded charter schools in the state.

"Our data has been very important to our credibility," Mr. Grogan says.

Gaining Credibility

But in Dubuque, the community foundation has found itself gaining credibility with donors by seeking guidance at the grass roots.

For instance, it got \$1.3-million from Dick Schmid, a local businessman, and his family after he read a newspaper story about [Envision 2010, a campaign the group led to gather ideas for improving life in the Iowa city](#), with residents helping to narrow the list to 10 projects.

Many of the ideas had been kicking around for years, says Ms. Van Milligen. But before Envision 2010, she says, there wasn't "the horsepower to bring them to fruition."

The Schmid family's 2005 donation created an endowment for one of the 10 finalists, a community health center.

Mr. Schmid says the process of getting residents to offer ideas made him confident the gift would truly benefit the city. In 2013, he also gave what he calls a "high six-figure" gift to renovate a building in the city's warehouse district, an area that city residents said should be redeveloped.

"They've all been vetted," he says of the Envision 2010 projects. "They've passed the sniff test as things that can help the community."

Voices of the Poor

For some community funds, the effort to involve local residents is an attempt to regain credibility among members of the community who often felt ignored in the past.

Since Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Greater New Orleans Foundation has worked to get more ideas from the city's low-income residents, a change from a more top-down approach it took before the disaster.

"I don't want to create things that we think people need," says Joann Ricci, the foundation's vice president for organizational effectiveness. "I want to create things that people in the community tell me are necessary."

The foundation is now undertaking two efforts to support solutions that bubble up from hard-hit neighborhoods. Stand Up for Our Children, a project supported by a \$1.5-million grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, seeks to get more parents to advocate for policies that will help youngsters.

The community foundation is also collaborating with the Kresge Foundation to groom longtime residents in poor neighborhoods for leadership positions at human-service groups.

Through Stand Up for Our Children, the community foundation made a grant to the local Planned Parenthood that let it hire LeAndra Shipps.

At Planned Parenthood, Ms. Shipps works as a doula, an assistant to expectant and new mothers. But she also now attends monthly meetings at the foundation's offices, reminding nonprofit leaders of the challenges faced by parents who are poor or facing racism. Ms. Shipps knows about such struggles firsthand: She was briefly homeless years ago and is African-American.

Too often, says Ms. Shipps, charity leaders and grant makers would miss that bigger picture as they discussed the roles they would play in Stand Up for Our Children.

"The conversation would never really be about parents, ever," she says. "It was about models and theories and plans and evaluations."

Income Gap

In Brooklyn, the continuing conversations about giving priorities have drawn people from different backgrounds.

Over the past decade, tens of thousands of people have flocked there, transforming pockets of the borough into a high-rent cultural center, dotted with luxury condos and hip restaurants. Yet nearly one in four Brooklyn residents is poor, according to data compiled in 2012 by New York University's Furman Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy.

Today, the borough is riven by a wide income gap: While households in the Brownsville neighborhood make a yearly median income of barely \$26,000, families in Park Slope make a median of nearly \$90,000 annually.

The borough's changing demographics poses a dilemma for philanthropic leaders like Ms. Clarke, who's been on the job since September. Guessing residents' needs in a city of 2.6 million would be "foolhardy," she says.

Some might say more low-cost housing. Some want better transportation options. Others favor supporting local food pantries or subsidizing art studios.

To figure out what people really want, the foundation says it will hold conversations with local residents through June.

Trying to Keep Up

Although the number of community funds getting residents involved in setting grant-making priorities has gained momentum in recent years, the roots of the approach extend back to the 1990s.

When Peter Pennekamp, now emeritus executive director of Northern California's Humboldt Area Foundation, started work there in 1993, community foundations were struggling with the rise of donor-advised funds and the entry of investment companies, such as Fidelity Investments, into philanthropy.

The result, he says, was an obsession to keep up among community funds with increasing assets.

“All people talked about was how to get in the pockets of donors,” he says.

He decided instead that his foundation could achieve more if it asked people about their concerns rather than simply trying to pry money out of their wallets.

His group also worked to help people find common ground on local issues that were divisive, working as a mediator in conflicts among local forestry companies, environmentalists, and American Indians.

Mr. Pennekamp credits the strategy with helping to spur development and rescuing the local economy. But, he acknowledges, it was difficult for the foundation to measure progress, at least in the short term.

Grant makers can often enumerate how many people have directly benefited from a charitable gift, he says, but it's harder to measure in data the effect of bringing together people with widely different views.

Also, he notes, the strategy may not lead to a community's tackling its most urgent or serious problems but instead focusing on "what people are willing to work on."

Some community foundations known for their leadership in reshaping the role of community funds in the 21st century are also seeking more feedback about their grant making from citizens.

Upon taking the helm a decade ago at the Cleveland Foundation, Ronald Richard pressed his staff members to become actively involved in policy matters. He directed Helen Williams, who leads the fund's education grant making, to push the teachers union and buttonhole state lawmakers to help overhaul education in the city.

"You need to fix the school system," he says he told Ms. Williams, "not wait around for grant requests."

Neighborhood Grants

But the foundation also gives residents a say in some of its philanthropic decisions. Through its Neighborhood Connections program, the foundation has been awarding \$5,000 grants to projects that residents choose. The grants have totaled \$5-million, a small share of the \$217-million that the foundation gave over all in that period.

With \$2-billion in assets, compared with the Brooklyn Community Foundation's \$60-million, the Cleveland Foundation can both serve as a muscular advocate and get community involvement, says Mr. Richard. "We're big enough that we can do lots of things."

Attachment #8

Stand Up For Our Children: Year Two Evaluation

PARENTS FOCUS GROUP

1. (Transition question) What is the first thing that comes to mind when you think of your involvement in the parent group meetings you attended?
2. Thinking back to your experience in your parent group meetings, what differences have you noticed within yourself? (Probe: new skills; new/different ways of thinking/doing; becoming more active in your neighborhood/community; etc.)
3. How has participating in these parent group meetings affected how you interact with people or organizations that provide services to your child (ren)? (Probe: kinds of interactions; frequency of interactions; outcomes of these interactions; etc.)
4. From your experience in these parent group meetings, how do you describe what a parent leader is? Has that definition changed as a result of your experiences? How so?
5. Do you think of yourselves as parent leaders? Why, why not and in what ways? (Probe: active role in community, communicating, making change, encouraging other parents to be involved, etc.)
6. What is supporting your efforts as parent leaders in the community? What gets in the way of your efforts?
7. How has participating in parent group meetings affected how you use data related to children in your community? (Probe: frequency of using data; kinds of problems or projects in which you use data, etc.)
8. What about your rights as citizens and parents – how has participating in parent group meetings increased your understanding of your rights as parents and citizens in this community?

9. How has participating in these parent group meetings helped you speak out about the needs of your children?

10. Looking at your experience with these parent group meetings, have you connected with other parents in Stand Up for Our Children groups (such as OPEN – Ready, Set, Go Parent Leadership Training; or Urban League PRIDE Leadership Academy; or the Neighborhood Partnership Program’s Parent First effort)? (Probe: Why? Why not?)
 - a. Looking at your experience with these parent group meetings, what kind of connections have you made with other parents and organizations? (Probe: What kind and how many connections with other Stand Up For Our Children parents and organizations? What kind and how many connections with other parents and organizations in the community?)

 - b. If there was an opportunity starting in the fall or next year to meet with other parents to talk, learn and possibly take action about issues affecting your children, how interested would you be in participating? (Probe: Why? Why not?)

11. And when you think about the connections you made with other parents and organizations, how have these new connections helped you in your efforts to change things in your community you don’t like?

12. (Closing) Do you have any additional comments or thoughts you would like to share about our conversation today?

Attachment #9

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