

# Harnessing Opportunity for Positive, Equitable Early Childhood Development Project (HOPE)

Resource Compendium | April 2022



# Table of Contents

Introduction	<b>3</b>
Project HOPE One-Page Overview	<b>4</b>
Building a Systems Change Initiative Theory of Change	<b>5</b>
Lived Experience Brief: The Practice of Engagement in Policy	<b>6</b>
Selecting Indicators For Early Childhood Systems Change Projects: Reference Guide and Webinar	<b>7</b>
State Action Plan Template	<b>8</b>
Value Proposition Presentation	<b>9</b>
Policy Memo: Options for Increasing Access to Family Supportive Services	<b>10</b>
Five Early Lessons from Project HOPE	<b>11</b>
Ripple Effects in States and Communities from Project HOPE	<b>12</b>
Project HOPE State Profiles	<b>13</b>

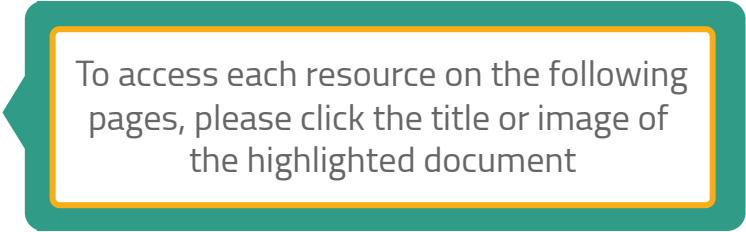
# The Harnessing Opportunity for Positive Equitable, Early Childhood Development Project (Project HOPE) Compendium

## Introduction

Funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Project HOPE worked to ensure equitable access to health services and healthy development opportunities for children under five and their families, by partnering with states and local organizations on policies and programs that would result in systems change.

Project HOPE was implemented by Nemours Children's Health (Nemours) from 2017-2021 in collaboration with national partners with expertise in key systems change components such as communications, data, financing, governance and leadership. Nemours supported four partner states –Florida, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Washington—to develop action plans for policy and practice change to address inequities at the systems level and increase families' access to services. During the course of the project, Nemours and its partners developed several tools and resources to advance state progress towards systems change.

In this compendium, you will find these tools compiled as a resource to state and community leaders in child health and early care and education (ECE) working to advance systems change. The tools can provide support and guidance in several areas such as community engagement, equity, data and evaluation, action planning, value sequencing, and developing an agenda for policy change. In addition to templates and planning tools, examples of work from Project HOPE are shared in addition to resources that summarize lessons learned and the impact of project HOPE. Descriptions are provided for each tool, which include the purpose along with how the tool can be used.



To access each resource on the following pages, please click the title or image of the highlighted document

For more information on Project HOPE:

Visit: <https://www.movinghealthcareupstream.org/nemours-project-hope/>

Email: [projecthope@nemours.org](mailto:projecthope@nemours.org)

# Overview of Project HOPE



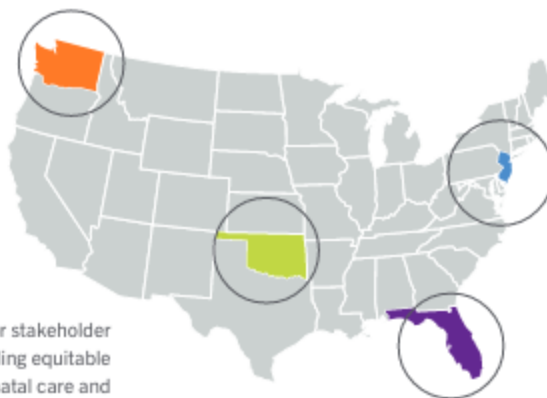
HARNESSING  
OPPORTUNITY FOR  
POSITIVE, EQUITABLE  
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

Project HOPE works to ensure equitable access to health services and healthy development opportunities for children under five and their families, by partnering with states and local organizations on policies and programs that result in systems change.

## Project HOPE supports initiatives in four states

In **Washington**, an integration workgroup is expanding equitable access to health, development, and social services through a centralized-access model called Help Me Grow.

In **Oklahoma**, a cross-sector stakeholder group in Oklahoma is expanding equitable access to high-quality prenatal care and resources to address infant mortality.



In **New Jersey**, stakeholder organizations are working to identify a path to more equitable access to quality health and child care services.

In **Florida**, a coalition is building on efforts to increase equitable access to developmental screenings and early intervention that promote social-emotional development.

The project's current funding period runs from April 2018 to April 2020. Our intention is to build or scale systems that advance child well-being permanently.

Healthy child development should be attainable for every family in the United States. However, poverty, trauma, and racism have lasting impacts on child well-being as families experience unequal access to needs and services. To make childhood health equity a reality, communities and states must transform systems to enable healthy development opportunities for all children and families.

## To advance our goal of early childhood health equity, Project HOPE consists of several partnerships.

- The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation provided the seed funding to carry out this initiative to three organizations, known as the Project HOPE Consortium.
- The Project HOPE Consortium includes Nemours Children's Health System, Boston Medical Center's Vital Village Network, and the BUILD Initiative. This consortium shares and disseminates learnings, building a foundation for scalable change.
- In each state, Project HOPE engages partners, aligns with existing initiatives, and incorporates multi-sector networks and resources, in order to further move the needle on systems improvements.
- We work with national experts in the field to support our states with technical assistance and to evaluate Project HOPE.



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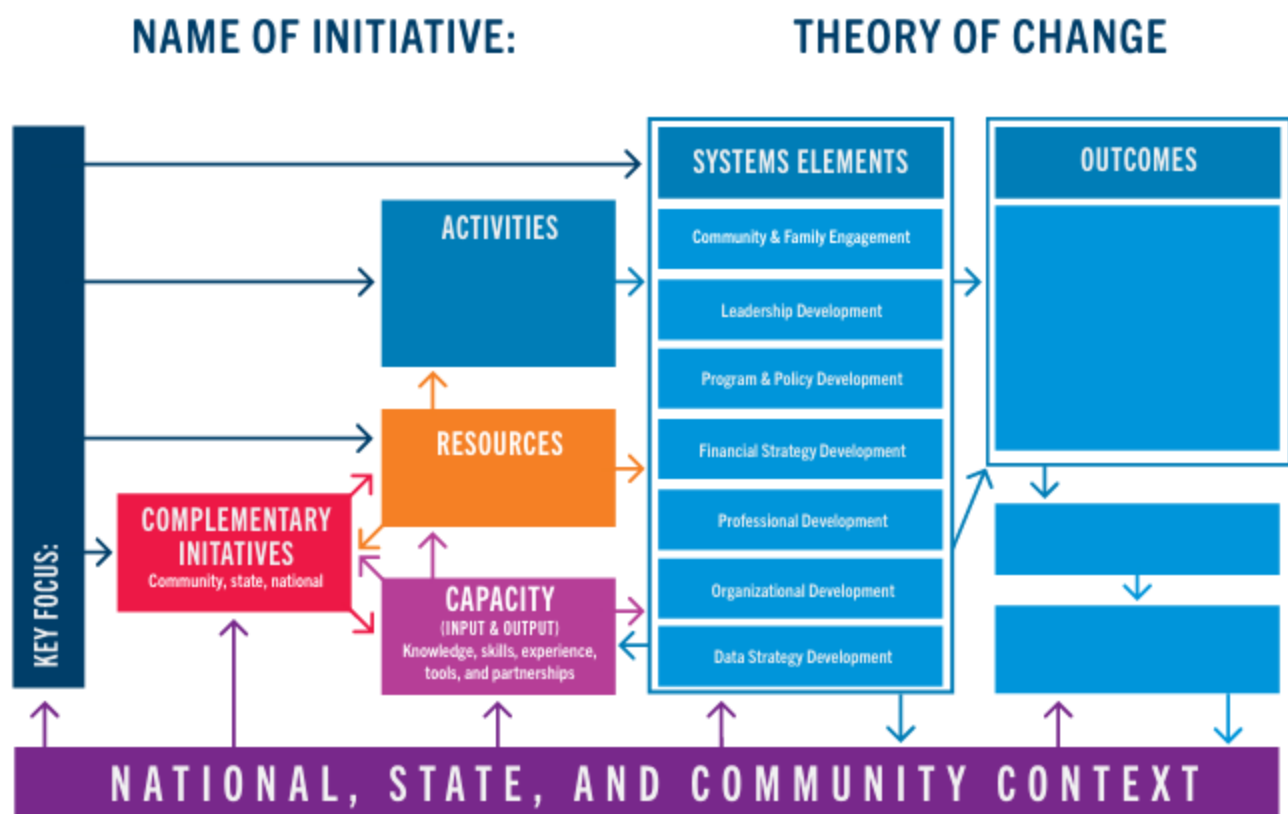
# Building a Systems Change Initiative Theory of Change

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of the Building a Systems Change Initiative Theory of Change is to help state and community leaders visually organize the focal areas and intended outcomes of systems change initiatives. It includes specific examples using Nemours' Harnessing Opportunity for Positive, Equitable Early Childhood Development Project (Project HOPE).

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use the template to develop their own Theory of Change for their systems change initiative. Users can enter their systems change initiative focal areas, activities, resources, intended outcomes, etc. into a shareable PDF file.



# Lived Experience: The Practice of Engagement in Policy

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this policy issue brief is to support states and communities in their endeavors for policy and systems change. This resource highlights the value of lived experience and the importance of integrating community voice into systems change work. The brief shares the promising community engagement practices and approaches of state and community leaders in California, Florida, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Washington and provides recommendations for stakeholders to accelerate this work.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use the engagement practices listed in the issue brief to intentionally integrate community voice into their systems change efforts.





# Selecting Indicators for Early Childhood Systems Change Projects

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this reference guide is to guide groups working toward achieving optimal and equitable health outcomes for young children and their families to identify, select, and track data indicators that can inform and advance their efforts.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use this guide to access and review data sources related to early childhood, health, education, etc. in order to identify, select and track and data indicators for their systems initiatives. Users can also view this [WEBINAR: Selecting Indicators for Early Childhood Systems Change](#), to learn more about the reference guide. The webinar shares an overview of the Reference Guide, tips on how to use the Reference Guide to support systems change work, and a walkthrough of the steps to take to select data indicators.

Selecting Indicators for Early Childhood  
Systems Change Projects  
A REFERENCE GUIDE | SEPTEMBER 2020



**PROJECT  
HOPE** | HARNESSING  
OPPORTUNITY FOR  
POSITIVE, EQUITABLE  
EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

# State Action Plan Template

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this action plan template is to support leaders in developing a sustainable three to five-year action plan to implement a statewide strategy that will facilitate the systems change necessary to improve health and well-being outcomes for young children and their families.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use this action plan template to identify their goals, partners, action steps and other essential planning components to determine their course of action to achieving systems change.

State Agency/  
Department Logo



### **Project HOPE State Action Plan**

The **Harnessing Opportunity for Positive Early Childhood Development Project (Project HOPE)**, works with states to redesign infrastructure components, including leadership, communications, governance, financing and data, to support impactful policy and program changes across sectors (systems change). The end goal is to ensure equitable access to high-quality services and resources for young children, prenatal to age five, and their families. This template is designed to support states in developing a sustainable three to five-year state action plan to implement a state strategy that will facilitate the systems change necessary to improve health and well-being outcomes for young children and their families.

#### **Contact**

**Name:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Email:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Sectors Engaged (at least two, one of which must be ECE or Health):** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Project HOPE SMART Goal and the inequity it is addressing over a 3-5 year timeframe:** Click or tap here to enter text.

**State and Community Partners Engaged:** Click or tap here to enter text.



# Value Proposition Presentation

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview to state and community leaders on value propositions and how they can help them communicate about their systems change initiatives to potential funders and partners. Project HOPE Florida used this presentation to engage their cross-sector state stakeholder group (CSSSG) in developing their value proposition to promote their parent leadership strategy to systems change statewide.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use this presentation to gain an understanding of a value sequence and how to develop a first draft of a value proposition. The presentation also shares key questions to help users review and revise the first draft of their value proposition.

Additional support for developing value propositions can be found in the [ReThink Health's Beyond the Grant Workbook](#).

## **Value Proposition**

A simple statement that summarizes why someone would choose your product or service



# Policy Memo: Options for Increasing Access to Family Supportive Services

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this memo is to share an analysis of policy recommendations from state leaders with community partners to review, discuss, and determine next steps for their systems change work. The memo was originally developed for Project HOPE New Jersey by ChangeLab Solutions, Nemours' public policy technical assistance partner, but can be helpful to other states to support them in engaging their community service providers in the decision-making process for systems change. The memo provided policy recommendations based on the following questions:

1. What are some examples of strategies state agencies can employ, both independently and collaboratively, to better serve families with children aged children birth to 5 and increase access to services?
2. What are some examples of policies, practices tools/methods/processes that can help these systems think about each other in their practice, be more aligned and integrated?
3. What are the policies and practices that would increase access to services while recognizing whole family needs such as affordable, accessible, quality childcare?

## ***How to use this Resource***

State leaders can utilize a similar approach to researching and developing an agenda of policy recommendations for systems change to increase families' access to services. Through shared leadership with community partners, state leaders can develop an action plan (such as the template shared on page 8) to advance the policy recommendations and impact systems change. The lead state agency can engage a state policy expert to draft the policy recommendations for the agencies involved based on the shared goals of the state and community partners. Once the recommendations are drafted, they can be shared for community feedback and input. State leaders can then work to prioritize and incorporate feedback and recommendations from the community as they set an action plan in motion to execute policy and systems change.

# Five Early Lessons Learned from Project HOPE

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this resource was to share an analysis of learnings from the early implementation phase of Project HOPE and channel them into innovations in the project that could intentionally move the needle and spark change to address inequities.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use this resource to glean learnings from the implementation of a systems change initiative that can inform their approach. Insights are provided into organizational capacity, funding, community engagement, and building state-community connections for system building.



### Five Early Lessons Learned from Project HOPE

Project HOPE has inspired many learnings thus far for Nemours, our states and partners. Our goal is to analyze and share these learnings and channel them into innovations in the project that can intentionally move the needle and spark change to address inequities. Below is a sample of some of the lessons learned we have documented thus far in the implementation of the project.

*Lesson Learned: Organizational capacity can be an important determinant of success, but it is challenging to try and measure before an initiative begins.*

Any measurement of organizational capacity that took place prior to choosing HOPE grantees would have had limited usefulness because the Cross-sector State Stakeholder Group (CSSSG) has significantly changed or evolved from what was proposed in the state application in three of the four states Nemours is working in. Allowing this level of flexibility in terms of finalizing a CSSSG was critical to enabling states to work towards achieving the HOPE goals. In addition to changes in CSSSG teams, unforeseen circumstances mean capacity may shift significantly due to increased demand on resources. The best illustration of this is Oklahoma's experience with receiving the Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG). PDG requires grantees to spend a relatively large amount of money, considerably larger than their HOPE grant, in a very short time period. The Oklahoma lead organization for HOPE is also the lead organization for PDG. Being awarded PDG presents great opportunities for Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) as an organization and in terms of amplifying the work being done under HOPE, but it also presents major capacity challenges. PDG provides \$3.1 million in funds that must be at least allocated by the end of the Federal Fiscal Year in September 2019. Any capacity assessment of OPSR prior to being awarded the HOPE grant could not have included this factor since PDG was not part of the picture at the time the grant was being awarded.

*Lesson Learned: Flexible system building focused spending, such as that provided by HOPE, can accelerate progress on initiatives that have been identified as beneficial, but which lack a clear Federal or state funding stream and which do not have an obvious agency "home."*

System initiatives often struggle to find funding because of a lack of a specified funding stream and because their inter-sector focus often mean they do not have an obvious home-agency. Even though a lack of effective resource and referral mechanisms and developmental assessment processes are often seen as a challenge to providing effective early childhood services, it may be difficult to find a regular funding source or to implement plans to address them. A flexible funding source may help spur action that hopefully ultimately leads to sustainability of effective processes. An example is Washington State's effort to implement the Help Me Grow model for ensuring that young children and their families are



# Ripple Effects in States and Communities from Project HOPE

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of this resource is to share a summary of data analyzed on ripple effects that occurred in the early implementation phase of Project HOPE. Ripple effects were defined as events that could potentially shape early childhood partners, systems, policies, or practices but occurred outside of the central activities of Project HOPE.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders can use this resource to gain an understanding of how concerted systems change efforts can affect change that leads to positive impacts outside of their initiative. This resource also provides examples of ways to explain the interconnectedness of systems change work when communicating with stakeholders.



### Seeing Early Ripple Effects in States and Communities

Throughout the implementation of Project HOPE, a component of the evaluation plan includes "ripple effects." Data on ripple effects is collected by Nemours' evaluator, Altarum. Altarum defines ripple effects as events that may potentially shape early childhood partners, systems, policies, or practices, but occur outside of the central activities of the main project being evaluated. For example: two partner organizations develop a stronger relationship as a result of work on Project HOPE and then develop an initiative or apply for a grant together; or a participant in Project HOPE may decide to take the lead in enhancing equity, diversity, and inclusion training (EDI) in his or her agency or organization because of their experience with the project.

Below is a sample of some of the ripple effects we have documented thus far in the implementation of Project HOPE.

#### *Ripple Effect: Strengthening a Lead HOPE Agency's Approach to Tribal Communities*

Individuals, Agencies, Organizations Involved: Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR) and Tribal Organizations and Representatives

Approximate Event Date: Winter 2018-2019

Significance: OPSR has attempted to meaningfully engage Tribes in the work that it does. As a result of HOPE, OPSR is working in partnerships with Tribal representatives and organizations to develop a community-focused approach to achieving the goals of the HOPE project. OPSR has met with Tribal child care representatives and the Intertribal Council and engaged in other discussions that may serve as a model for future endeavors involving OPSR and the Tribal community.

#### *Ripple Effect: Rethinking Approaches to Cultural Competency/Cultural Humility Training*

Individuals, Agencies, Organizations Involved: State Department Participant in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) training in Oklahoma

Approximate Event Date: December 2018

Significance: Project HOPE is working to develop states' capacity in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) to help frame their project work, enhance their existing work and allow them to focus on equity more broadly. In order to establish and implement inclusive and equitable planning, engagement, and



# Project HOPE State Profiles

## ***Purpose of this Resource***

The purpose of the Project HOPE State Profiles is to document the efforts of each Project HOPE state's progress to increase access to health services and healthy development opportunities for children under five and their families. Each profile provides a brief background of Project HOPE in the respective state and highlights the stakeholders that collaborated on those efforts.

## ***How to use this Resource***

State and community leaders may find these helpful to identify strategies, action steps and potential partners for similar systems change efforts to advance equity.



Each Project HOPE State Profile documents the efforts behind the respective states' Cross-Sector State Stakeholder Group (CSSSG) and their drive to increase access to health services and healthy development opportunities for children under five and their families.

The documents also provide a brief background of Project HOPE in the respective state, and highlight the stakeholders that collaborated on these efforts. State and community leaders may find these helpful to identify strategies, action steps and potential partners for similar systems change efforts to advance equity.

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### Nemours National Office of Policy and Prevention.

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