WPFP 2 Gen Policy Ideas Organized by Adult-Focused State Systems*

1. Postsecondary Education (Community College System Focus)
   • Support two-year community and technical colleges to provide on-site child care for low-income students who are parents.
   • Adjust state need-based aid eligibility criteria to include cost of child care, living expenses based on family size, and child support in calculating aid.
   • Modify state 529 college savings plan rules to ensure that they allow and are supportive of effectively benefiting parents and children, especially those of low-income families.
   • Create flexible matched or tax code incentivized college savings accounts that pay for postsecondary education (PSE) tuition for children and parents (529 college savings plans).
   • Adjust state financial loan program payback provisions to dedicate some portion into a PSE account for students’ children.
   • Incent performance-based scholarships to provide rewards for parent education success and that allows the funding of scholarship saving accounts for their children.
   • Target state PSE performance funding criteria to reward institutions for low-income parent degree completion and designate some reward funds so institutions can establish scholarships for successful parents’ children.
   • Provide financial aid for summer study for low-income parents coupled with summer youth employment opportunities or on-campus children’s summer enrichment programs.
   • Provide support funding to PSE institutions for student services for low-income parents such as career coaching, family counseling, Executive Functioning counseling, financial literacy, and planning for their children’s future educational needs.

2. Adult Education
   • Prioritize adult education resources to providers that co-locate adult basic education and children’s services (encourage partnerships).
   • Expand and contextualize state-approved adult education curriculum to cover parenting, family financial literacy, and asset building topics.
   • Provide resources to adult education providers that offer (or partner/co-locate with organizations that offer) family counseling to parents and their children and that provide assistance to students in accessing support services.
   • Reward adult education participants and their children for collective educational progress/success by helping start and finance 529 college savings plans for parents and children.
   • Incent local providers of English learning services to include opportunities for child-parent learning.
3. Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)
   - Change TANF case management approach (training, materials, and staffing) to incorporate career coaching, financial literacy, and Executive Functioning counseling for parents and children.
   - Direct a portion of child support collected by the state for families receiving TANF to children’s education savings accounts.
   - Create incentives for TANF participants who demonstrate both parent and child educational progress.
   - Measure state TANF program success around indicators that reflect positive 2 Gen outcomes such as parent employment and earnings as well as parent and children educational progress.

4. Workforce Investment Act (WIA), Sector, and Unemployment Insurance (UI) Skills Training, and Other Workforce (WF) Training Programs
   - Change WIA case management approach (training and materials) to incorporate career coaching, financial literacy, and Executive Functioning counseling for parents and children.
   - Require all local WIA providers to provide support services, including subsidized child care, to low-income parents receiving training vouchers.
   - Create one entry point where workforce development and state income support services are co-located in WIA One-Stops. Streamline application processes, and cross-train staff so families don’t need to spend hours applying or recertifying in multiple places.
   - Set aside WIA training funds to provide noncustodial parents, including non-violent, formerly incarcerated parents, with skills training in higher wage industries, career coaching, counseling, and asset building. Integrate parent/child activities or provide parenting classes to increase parent/child engagement.
   - Modify state UI-financed skills training funds (and other state-financed training funds such as sector or industry partnership training) to include resources to cover support needs of training participants such as child care and transportation.

5. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education & Training (SNAP E&T) Funds
   - Use SNAP E&T 50/50 funds to include family supports such as child care and financial literacy training for parents in education and training.
   - Prioritize SNAP E&T 50/50 funds to adults with children three and under and provide a comprehensive set of services including skills training in higher wage industries, career coaching, counseling, and asset building while offering integrated parent/child activities or parenting classes designed to increase parent/child engagement.
   - Set aside SNAP E&T 50/50 funds to provide noncustodial parents, including non-violent, formerly-incarcerated parents, with skills training in higher wage industries, career coaching, counseling, and asset building while offering integrated parent/child activities or co-parenting classes designed to increase parent/child engagement.
   - Provide cash rewards to low-income parents who obtain a postsecondary credential.
• Use forthcoming SNAP E&T state demonstration funds to test 2 Gen strategies that combine employment training, income supports, and child care within families. (AECF)**

6. Economic Development
• When awarding business subsidies, prioritize businesses that provide paid leave, flexible savings accounts for child care, paid time off to complete a GED, tuition reimbursement for PSE, or health care insurance to all employees.
• Ensure that all transitional jobs programs provide participants access to key eligible supports such as child and health care and incorporate career coaching, financial literacy, and Executive Functioning counseling for parents and children.

7. Health Care
• Expand state Medicaid eligibility to the fullest extent possible under the law and develop linkages to children’s health insurance program to ensure that all eligible family members are covered.
• Provide incentives and implement performance measures to ensure that all eligible parents and children within a family are fully enrolled in publicly available health care services.
• Focus state home visitation efforts and services to identify and address family mental health needs from the perspective the “whole family”. (CLASP)
• Utilize Medicaid mental health provision/resources to assist parents in addressing maternal depression and toxic stress issues that impede on their ability to interact with their children and navigate educational and work responsibilities. (CLASP)

8. Child Care
• Prioritize subsidized child care for low-income, student parents who qualify for need-based financial aid in state-supported community colleges.
• Make state-supported community college class and study time eligible activities for public child care assistance especially for student parents qualified for need-based financial aid.
• Expand access to child care in hard-to-serve areas when parents are enrolled in postsecondary education or workforce training and mitigate the “cliff effect”.
• Allow subsidized child care to continue for 3 months during spells of parental unemployment. (Urban Institute)
• Provide after-school care for children of low-income working parents living in distressed communities with under-performing schools. (Urban Institute)
• Create an Early Childhood Bridge Fund that funds providers to provide high quality comprehensive services to children 0 to 5 who live with low-income parents who work or attend school. (Urban Institute)
• Provide a monthly child care allowance to all low-income parents who are working or in school and have children age 3 years old or less (or school age).

9. Child Support/Noncustodial Father
• Establish law that eliminates debt owed to the state by noncustodial parents if they consistently pay their full child support payments for a specified period.
• Reduce interest or principle accrued on child support arrearages for parents of children with TANF benefits when parents are actively engaged in employment, as well as an adult education or postsecondary program.
• For individuals sentenced to at least 18 consecutive months of imprisonment without capacity to pay child support, automatically suspend their child support order and reinstate upon release.
• Revise state child support laws so that the agency working directly with noncustodial parents can make recommendations for access and visitation to the courts and integrate agreements into child support orders.

10. Tax and Income State Systems/Policy
• Adjust state tax policies such as income tax rates and/or deductions for families with children 3 and younger to enhance the resources available to low-income families. (AECF)
• Provide a state refundable child care credit for low-income working families or those who have a parent(s) attending education and/or skills training.
• Offer a robust, refundable state EITC that is tiered to provide higher benefits for low-income parents with children under 3 (or school age) to help parents pay the high cost of child care for young children.
• Expand state EITC resources to parents who invest a portion of those additional resources in a child’s PSE savings account.

11. Employment Law and Work Supports
• Require employers to provide paid leave for parents to attend to children at birth as well as their children’s education and health care needs.
• Provide two months of paid parental/maternity leave over a 12-month period for parents working 20 hours or more, reimbursing parents a minimum of 55 percent of their wages (paid for from a state fund composed of employee contributions). (Urban Institute)
• Require employers to provide low-wage employees with care giving obligations advance notice of work schedules to help parents more effectively manage consistent access to child care. (CLASP)
• Require employers to provide consistent/predictable work hours and reporting pay to low-wage employees with care giving obligations. (CLASP)
• Require employers to provide work schedule flexibility to employees with care giving obligations to address children’s needs. (CLASP)
• Expand the family care giving provision for UI eligibility to include leaving a job for child care issues. (CLASP)
• Provide tax incentives to employers who provide flexible scheduling for parents, allow for job sharing, and provide tuition support for further education. (AECF)
• Structure UI program to provide resources to parents engaged in work search or skills development to help cover child care expenses.

12. Corrections
• Give priority to providing adult education services to all parent inmates without a high school degree or equivalency and tie efforts to the educational activities of their children thru on-line services.
• Expand reentry services/programs to incorporate career coaching, financial literacy, and Executive Functioning counseling for parents and children.
• Allocate resources to finance the cost of postsecondary education and other skill training opportunities, particularly for parents

13. Community-Based Development
• Give priority in the Community Services Block Grant program state discretionary funds to local community action agency projects that support local 2 Gen initiatives.
• Give priority in awarding state Community Development Block Grant projects to organizations that support local 2 Gen initiatives.

14. Leadership and State Alignment
• Initiate process from Governor’s Office or through state level commissions to integrate 2 Gen goals into key state agencies, including: Workforce Development, Economic Development, Corrections, Health, Early Childhood Education, etc. Coordinate goals across departments and create incentives for state agencies to work collaboratively. (AECF)
• Simplify and align benefits access across parent- and child-serving state agencies, including streamlining application and recertification process and establishing “Express Lane” processes for families. (AECF)
• Establish state level performance measures and benchmarks that track and report on the economic, educational, and social progress of low-income families and link to the provision of state 2 Gen strategies and services.
• Integrate state level data systems to more effectively analyze child and adult conditions to generate a more robust understanding of families. (AECF)
• Reform state program funding processes to support the pooling of resources from multiple child- and adult-serving programs to support 2 Gen strategies and thus reduce administrative barriers to collaborative efforts.
• Create a flexible 2 Gen innovation fund to build partnerships and test and strengthen policy alignment. (AECF)
• Build evidence for 2 Gen approaches and bring child and adult services together in one place through expanding services to incorporate or link to programs serving the whole family in early childhood, K-12, housing, career pathways, and higher education. (AECF)

* All policy ideas should be crafted to 1) articulate the relevant adult-focused system/program for the suggested policy change idea, and 2) make sure the policy idea has a parent and child component and that the components are somehow/somewhat related.
** Any policy idea followed by a parenthesis containing an organization was derived from consultation with representative(s) of the group or from their materials. All specific wording is the responsibility of WPFP and does not reflect on the organization.