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**ARE YOU READY TO EXPLORE A DEDICATED FUNDING STREAM FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY – Questions for discussion**

Planning the Service Delivery System

* Have you assessed and documented the well-being of the community’s children?
* Is there agreement about the priorities for increased funding?
* Is there documentation that current resources are inadequate to meet need?
* Is there a city or county infrastructure focused on children that could manage new funding, e.g. office, department, senior staff, coordinating council?

Network and Leadership Capacity

* Is there a functioning network of children’s service providers representing all aspects of the children’s field? Is there a consensus about its goals, priorities, outcomes sought? How well does the network function? What is its diversity? Can it overcome the turf interests of its members? Does it have current or potential resources (e.g. staff) to do the early work?
* What is the nature of the leadership of the children’s network? Skills? Political connections? Community credibility?
* Are the children’s service providers aligned with a coalition of broader community groups? Do any of these organizations have a grassroots membership base?
* Where is the network on the continuum of political engagement? From risk-averse to independent? From politically active to politically invisible? From skilled to neophites?
* Is there a history of budget advocacy for children’s services? How robust? How successful?
* What is the ability of the leading organizations or individuals to raise private money?

Civic and political culture

* Does the local culture support children? E.g. Do business leaders support children’s services? Do the media cover children’s issues in a positive way? What about private giving, volunteerism?
* Is there support for children’s services among political leaders? How central are children’s issues to some or all elected officials?
* What is the potential for building a broad-based coalition of supporters – churches, civic organizations, labor, etc., with potential for “feet on the street?”
* What is the history of local revenue measures? Are there any positive indicators for support for a measure? Are there lessons learned from past experience with revenue measures generally, and specifically ones that are related to children, education, social services, etc.?

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| **SELF ASSESSMENT**  **Do you have….?** | **Rate**  **1 - 10** | **Next Steps** |
| **Status of Planning for the Service System** |  |  |
| Comprehensive assessment of needs, expenditures, and gaps in services. |  |  |
| Community-wide goals and outcomes for children, youth and families. |  |  |
| Agreement by core stakeholders about priorities for increased funding. |  |  |
| **Capacity of Network and Leadership** |  |  |
| Network/coalition that works together across multiple areas of children’s services and has overcome turf issues. |  |  |
| Convening entity (organization, network or coalition) with credibility to organize meetings in early phase of work. |  |  |
| Willingness and independence to speak out openly about unmet needs and funding options. |  |  |
| Network members or partners beyond children’s service providers, such as a large membership organization or organizing group, parent groups, youth, faith, labor. |  |  |
| History of collaboration to increase local budgets for children’s services. |  |  |
| Members who are politically engaged and have credibility with elected officials and community. |  |  |
| Funders to support early work, e.g. staff support. |  |  |
| **Political and Civic Culture** |  |  |
| Civic culture that supports children, e.g. business, media, service organizations. |  |  |
| Political leaders who have prioritized children and are current or potential allies. |  |  |
| Successful ballot measures that funded education, children or human services. |  |  |
| Base of private funding and volunteers who support children’s services. |  |  |
| History of success in “winning-over” opponents of public funding for kids. |  |  |
| **TENACITY, PASSION, HUMOR ☺** |  |  |