



WORKING PAPER

Building Blocks and Strategies for Helping Americans Move Out of Poverty

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ABOUT THE US PARTNERSHIP ON MOBILITY FROM POVERTY

With funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the Urban Institute is supporting the [US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty](#). Chaired by David Ellwood and consisting of 25 leading voices representing academia, practice, the faith community, philanthropy, and the private sector.

Ideas will come not only from the Partners themselves: the Partnership will solicit new thinking from innovative leaders, programs, and individuals around the country. Partners will consult widely, seeking out diverse voices and expertise as they examine the causes of persistent poverty and stagnant mobility. The Partnership will learn from communities and families experiencing poverty, from the nation's leading service providers and advocates, from a wide network of experts, and from the latest research findings. The Partnership's approach is geographically agnostic and politically nonpartisan; its findings will be transparent and available to all.

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Building Blocks and Strategies for Helping Americans Move Out of Poverty

Central to the American dream is the notion that the United States is the land of opportunity where, through hard work, individuals and families can achieve prosperity, success, and upward mobility regardless of the circumstances into which they are born. In reality, however, the odds are quite low that a low-income child will rise into the middle class as an adult (Chetty et al. 2014). For many individuals and across generations of families, economic mobility is hampered by such barriers as unstable families; poor education; a lack of access to educational opportunities and jobs; and inadequate food, health care, and housing. Some low-income families and individuals overcome these barriers, and their experience of poverty is transitory. For others, assistance from public or private sources can make the difference. Many programs and initiatives work to help individuals and families move out of poverty.

This paper, prepared for the US Partnership on Mobility from Poverty, provides one way to organize thinking about programs and initiatives that can assist individuals and families to move out of poverty. The first part of the paper, “Contextual Challenges to Mobility,” discusses obstacles—such as shifting market forces and globalization, a broken criminal justice system, and structural racial and gender discrimination—that often confront individuals who seek to move out of poverty. The programs and initiatives featured in this paper operate in this broader context, which they may or may not directly address, but which nonetheless shapes individuals’ chances of moving out of poverty.

The second part of the paper, “Fundamental Building Blocks for Promoting Mobility,” identifies and discusses 13 building blocks for developing effective strategies to promote mobility from poverty. These include high-quality child care and early learning, employment and training, and health and mental health. This section briefly describes some of the main strategies within each building block, providing illustrative examples of actual programs and initiatives. These examples are not intended to be a comprehensive list or necessarily the best programs; rather, they give the reader a sense of the strategies being used to address mobility. The majority of examples included in this section exist in urban or suburban areas; we hope in future publications to highlight and examine examples from rural areas and tribal communities.

The third part of the paper, “Strategies for Combining Building Blocks,” takes a closer look at how programs often combine several “building blocks” to create mobility strategies for families, neighborhoods, and systems of programs and communities (i.e., initiatives to generate comprehensive personal or family mobility; place-conscious strategies to create neighborhoods of choice and opportunity; and regional, cross-

sectoral, jointly accountable partnerships). Although the programs we feature in the building-blocks section predominantly focus on achieving specific outcomes (e.g., high-quality child care and early-learning providers focus primarily on increasing children’s cognitive, language, social-emotional, and learning skills), many of these same programs or their umbrella agencies are often involved in more-comprehensive strategies. In other words, the programs may focus on one or more building blocks but recognize and act on the need to address other building blocks to achieve outcomes that may extend beyond the immediate scope of a particular program or agency. To illustrate how several building blocks could combine to build pathways out of poverty, we look in depth at a few particularly illustrative program examples, such as Mobility Mentoring, which coaches families to set goals and address challenges across multiple domains, and Purpose-Built Communities, which focuses on developing neighborhoods so they provide the high-quality housing, schools, services, and civic culture that children need to succeed on their journey from cradle to career.

Contextual Challenges to Mobility

Efforts to promote mobility from poverty need to weigh contextual considerations carefully. Emphasis on purely programmatic initiatives that help individuals overcome barriers to mobility runs the risk of underestimating the impact of structural barriers and the broader economic and policy context that frames individual efforts to escape poverty.

The Relationship of Economic Mobility to Structural Inequities

Initiatives focused on stability and income support are often considered a prerequisite to mobility for families and individuals living in persistent poverty. However, any effort to promote economic mobility must recognize the substantial and structural barriers that particular populations—including people of color and women—must overcome in order to move out of poverty.

Women and people of color are disproportionately represented within the ranks of the people living in long-term poverty due to limited labor market opportunities, racial and gender discrimination, neighborhood segregation, and inadequate schools and educational opportunities (Corcoran 2001). Even after accounting for differences in experience, occupations, and other factors, women still make about 8 percent less than men (Blau and Kahn 2000). And women’s decisions about interrupting their careers and the occupations they choose may be in response to gender norms and their treatment in the workplace. The legacy of segregation and discrimination in federal, state, and local policies and practices have left many low-income black people living in neighborhoods that lack quality housing, schools, and other basic services,

including police (Rothstein 2015; Turner, Popkin, and Rawlings 2009). Considering housing alone, problems such as rising rental prices and cuts in housing subsidies disproportionately affect black people (Desmond 2016). Even relatively affluent predominantly black communities, such as Prince George's County, Maryland, struggle with poor schools, crime, and the inability to attract the kind of retail and amenities found in comparable white communities (Turner and Rawlings 2009; Cashin 2004). And although black people and other people of color are less starkly segregated today than in the past, virtually all neighborhoods with concentrated poverty in the United States are composed of a majority of people of color. The families who live in these neighborhoods are often stuck in these same distressed communities for generations, unable to move up the economic ladder (Sharkey 2013).

Structural racism in our criminal justice system has blighted the lives of many men and women of color, leaving them with criminal records that impede their ability to find employment (Emsellem and Ziedenberg 2015). The War on Drugs has imposed harsh penalties for even minor drug offenses and has today rendered young men of color disproportionately likely to be arrested and to spend time behind bars (Lieberman and Fontaine 2015). Young black women face a higher risk than other young women of being incarcerated for nonviolent offenses and for drugs (Popkin et al. 2015). Consequently, social movements such as Black Lives Matter may play an important role in promoting mobility because they use social and political action to shine a social and cultural spotlight on issues such as racial bias in the justice system.

To the extent that laws and law enforcement contribute to public safety, they support upward economic mobility. However, overcriminalization, overzealous or discriminatory law enforcement activity, mass incarceration, and large civil fines disproportionately hinder the economic prospects of low-income people and people of color. In the United States, 70 million adults have a criminal record that can show up in a routine background check (Emsellem and Ziedenberg 2015). Having a felony conviction can reduce overall employment up to 2.8 percentage points, but for black men felony convictions reduce employment rates up to 5.3 percentage points (Schmitt and Warner 2010). Further, incarceration is associated with reduced total earnings of 2 percent for white men, 6 percent for Latino men, and 9 percent for black men (Schmitt and Warner 2010). Even civil fines for minor infractions, such as traffic violations, can disproportionately hurt low-income families. For example, a failure to pay a speeding ticket can lead to suspension of a driver's license, which can then make it impossible to commute to a job or lead to a jail sentence if that person is caught driving.

The Relationship of Economic Mobility to the Economy and Policy Environment

The broader economic and policy context in which programs and initiatives operate can greatly influence their effectiveness. For example, great education and training programs cannot help individuals lift

themselves out of poverty unless the economy generates a sufficient number of suitable jobs. Similarly, direct assistance to families through income, nutrition assistance, housing support, earnings supplements, and the like can play an important role in stabilizing an individual's income, allowing other programs to help improve longer-term prospects for mobility. We do not discuss efforts to change the economic and policy context here; rather, we note how the economy and extant policies shape how mobility-enhancing programs and initiatives operate.

A thriving economy facilitates mobility from poverty. Between 1994 and 2000, real average annual gross domestic product growth averaged over 4 percent a year;¹ over that period, the poverty rate dropped from 14.5 to 11.3 percent (Executive Office of the President of the United States 2016). The poverty rate then surged above 15 percent during the Great Recession, and in 2014, years into an economic recovery, it remains well above 14 percent. With gross domestic product growth forecasts hovering just above 2 percent a year (CBO 2016), increasing mobility from poverty will be challenging.

Considerable debate continues about how to promote fair, shared economic growth. One approach to spurring growth is to reduce taxes and regulations, because high taxes and onerous and capricious regulations can stifle economic activity. However, government regulations can protect workers' health and the environment and even spur innovation and job growth in firms that help others comply with regulations. Similarly, taxes fund government investments and activities that can spur growth. Debate also continues both on the how tax revenue can be spent domestically to encourage job creation and on the role of global trade agreements on US employment. For example, efforts to create more entry-level jobs through enterprise zones, targeted tax credits, wage subsidies, and public-sector jobs have a mixed record (Behar and Mok 2013; Bishop 1981; Dutta-Gupta et al. 2016; Pavetti, Schott, and Lower-Basch 2011; Perloff and Wachter 1979). The biggest concerns with such efforts are that taxpayers end up subsidizing employers for creating jobs they would have created anyway and that public-sector employees are used for work that could have been done by private-sector employees.

In addition to concerns about the number of available jobs, the quality of those jobs matter for promoting mobility from poverty. The share of "middle-skill" jobs (those requiring more than a high school education but less than a four-year college degree) that pay near the average hourly wage (about \$25 an hour today)² is declining, and that is largely because of technological change and globalization (Autor, Katz, and Kearney 2008): tasks that can be routinized can be automated or effectively done by workers in countries with developing economies. A shortage of middle-skill jobs could pose serious challenges for workers trying to climb up from the bottom rungs of the economic ladder. Note, however, that although the share of middle-skill jobs is declining, they still make up about almost half the jobs in the economy (Holzer 2015). Further, the changing nature of work presents new opportunities for higher-skill, higher-paying,

higher value-added jobs. As some analysts have noted, someone will have to build, maintain, and repair the “robots” (Levy and Murnane 2013).

For those at the very bottom of the economic ladder struggling to find any job, there is the reality that Edin and Shaefer (2015) document so compellingly in *\$2 Dollars A Day: Living on Almost Nothing in America*: the job market has changed in ways that leave low-wage workers struggling, and the safety net has shrunk so profoundly that they are left unprotected. A combination of low wages and employers that offer only irregular and unpredictable hours often makes it impossible for low-wage workers to count on earning enough to support their families.

Several federal, state, and local policies aim to improve the pay and quality of entry of lower-level jobs. For example, advocates of raising the minimum wage argue that a higher wage floor could substantially increase the resources and material well-being of low-wage workers and their families. Critics note that higher wage costs will ultimately reduce the number of available jobs. Scholars actively debate the pros and cons of the minimum wage. A recent Congressional Budget Office study highlights the trade-offs: raising the federal minimum wage from \$7.25 per hour to \$10.10 per hour would reduce employment by 500,000 but lift 900,000 people out of poverty (CBO 2014). California and New York have passed legislation to increase the state minimum wage (for at least some workers) to \$15, and other areas have momentum toward similar legislation. On job quality, federal policy mandating unpaid family and medical leave aims to help individuals keep their jobs and avoid falling into a downward spiral that may lead to entrenched poverty. Several states and cities have enhanced this by mandating paid time off for some workers, and some studies show the positive effects on individuals’ employment, job retention, and health (Bartel et al. 2014; Drago and Lovell 2011; Rossin-Slater, Ruhm, and Waldfogel 2011).

Certain segments of the population may face barriers to some job opportunities, but policy efforts can reduce those barriers and improve access, improving the mobility of these groups. For example, civil rights laws reduce hiring discrimination based on race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and disability status. More-targeted policies, such as the Ban the Box campaign, seek to expand employment opportunities for those who have been involved with the criminal justice system and have sometimes been automatically disqualified for jobs through check-off boxes on job applications.

Along with policies and programs targeted at the labor market, public-assistance policies and programs can both help and hinder mobility from poverty. Programs providing basic income support or other types of assistance can see families through rough times, allowing parents to prepare for and find new work and providing material support for children so they can develop physically, emotionally, and cognitively. However, program rules and administrative requirements can reduce the incentive to work and save and to have and raise children in two-parent families. Most public-assistance programs, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), housing

assistance, and others, provide more material aid to those with the least income and reduce benefits as earnings rise. That general structure is vital to supporting the neediest families, but it creates high effective marginal tax rates that could discourage work effort and, in some cases, parental coresidence. However, research on the extent to which public-assistance programs reduce work effort and marriage and encourage nonmarital childbearing generally report weak deleterious effects (Baicker et al. 2014; Hoynes and Schanzenbach 2012; Jacob and Ludwig 2012; Moffitt 2002). Further, the direct income and in-kind transfers provided by these programs raises millions of families' income above the poverty line (Chaudry et al. 2016), and public-assistance programs can help children improve their adult outcomes (Hoynes, Schanzenbach, and Almond 2012). In addition, policies such as the earned income tax credit (EITC) counter some disincentives to work found in other policies by increasing in value as eligible individuals begin to work and only slowly decline in value as family incomes rise above the federal poverty level. The EITC demonstrably encouraged employment among single mothers during the 1990s (Grogger 2003).

Efforts to promote mobility from poverty need to be mindful of the broader economic context and the policies and programs that currently serve or disproportionately target low-income families. Although this paper focuses on programs and initiatives to help families move out of poverty, readers should also consider how changes to policies and practices at the federal, state, and local levels could enhance mobility.

Fundamental Building Blocks for Promoting Mobility

We define 13 building blocks that play demonstrable roles in advancing the economic mobility of low-income Americans. Programs and initiatives that seek to increase mobility from poverty often act within and across these building blocks. Table 1 presents these fundamental building blocks and the outcomes that initiatives typically seek to achieve within each. Depending on its mission and theory of change, any single initiative might target one or more building block, acting on different levels including individual and families, neighborhoods, systems, the labor market, and even society and culture to achieve their goals.

Below, we discuss each building block and its relevance to mobility, grouping blocks for purposes of explication when appropriate. For each building block or block group, we provide a few examples of programs that seek to influence mobility. Programs are displayed in ***bold italic*** when they are first mentioned in the text; we provide more detail on each program in the supporting table following each section.

TABLE 1

Fundamental Building Blocks for Mobility

Family Formation and Stability

Increases in stable, healthy marriage and relationships for parents; reductions in teen, nonmarital, and unplanned pregnancies

Parenting Skills

Increases in child-level academic, social, and emotional skills through increases in the time and skills parents can apply to their children's development and learning experiences

High-Quality Child Care and Early Learning

Short-term increases in children's cognitive, language, social-emotional, and learning skills; long-term improvements in economic productivity and reductions in criminal behavior; increases in parenting skills and other parent-level outcomes, such as stress reduction

Elementary and Secondary Education

Increases in college and job readiness and accessibility; decreases in criminal behavior and other mobility-limiting circumstances

Postsecondary Education

Increases in knowledge and skills in preparation for jobs and careers that lead to higher earnings

Employment and Training

Increases in job- or industry-specific skills; access to jobs and increases in job placement; career advancement leading to higher earnings

Wages, Wage Supplements, and Work Supports

Increases in income through wage supplements or increases in mandated wages

Cash or Near-Cash Safety Net (food, transportation, etc.)

Increases in stability and capacity to achieve outcomes in other domains; decreases in stress that may become toxic in other domains such as health and mental health

Asset Formation and Access to Capital

Increases in savings, wealth, and other assets; decreases in debt

Health and Mental Health

Reductions in health disparities; improvements in access to quality health care as well as in health and mental health indicators (decreased rates of depression, increased confidence and self-esteem); reductions in substance abuse; increases in access to clean water and air; reductions in food insecurity

Criminal Justice and Safety

Reductions in neighborhood crime and victimization; decreases in justice-system involvement (arrest, detention, incarceration, etc.); reductions in individual criminal behavior and delinquency; improvements to sense of safety; reductions in trauma; improvements in such indicators as employment, stable housing, and health for justice-involved individuals

Housing

Increases in housing stability and capacity to achieve outcomes in other domains for individuals and families; improvements to neighborhoods; increases in planned residential mobility; reductions in unwanted moves and evictions; deconcentrated poverty

Community Building and Social Capital

Increases in positive social support and social networks; increases in personal efficacy for individuals and collective efficacy and civic participation for communities; improved relationships with and influence on those with formal authority and other kinds of power; increases in peer-to-peer knowledge and resource sharing; positive changes in beliefs and expectations about life prospects for self and family

For brevity's sake, we include only a few examples for each building block; far more programs and initiatives could have been included. We feature a mix of programs including those with a significant base of evidence or a performance track record of effectiveness as well as innovative and high-profile programs. In tables 2 through 9, "Relevance to mobility" indicates how each initiative connects to mobility from poverty and why it may be important or interesting to consider. The language in this column is our synthesis based on available descriptive materials. In some cases, the program has explicitly articulated this "theory of change"; in others, we have made inferences consistent with the framework described in this paper. The tables also include information on the target population and geographic scope of the program, the impact of the program (as measured by either formal external evaluation, such as a randomized controlled trial, or performance data drawn from administrative sources tracking the status of program participants), and funding sources and budget. We cite sources only when information is derived from a source other than a program's own materials or website.

Family Formation and Stability and Parenting Skills

Family formation and parenting can have important consequences for economic mobility. Unintended pregnancies, unstable relationships, and underdeveloped parenting skills can inhibit young adults' mobility and cause disadvantages to persist across generations (Smeeding, Erikson, and Jantti 2011).

Unintended or mistimed pregnancies are pregnancies that a woman or man does not want at the time. Unintended pregnancies can lead to abortions or to teen or nonmarital births. Although teen birth rates in the United States have been dropping since the early 1990s, they remain high compared with other economically advanced nations (Sedgh et al. 2015). Nonmarital births as a share of all births have decreased slightly from a 2009 peak but remain above 40 percent, with over 50 percent of Hispanic babies and 70 percent of black babies now born outside marriage (Curtin et al. 2013; Hamilton et al. 2015; McLanahan et al. 2010).

Teenage pregnancies are often associated with lower educational achievement and a higher poverty rate for teen parents, as well as similarly poor outcomes for their children (Hoffman and Maynard 2008). Children of unmarried mothers are far more likely to live in poverty than children of married parents and they experience more family instability, and a growing number of studies suggest that these children can have more behavioral problems and more trouble finishing school (McLanahan and Jencks 2015). Growing up in poor or low-income households negatively affects social, emotional, and learning outcomes for children (Brooks-Gunn and Duncan 1997).

Initiatives to reduce unintended pregnancies have had significant success by focusing on contraception. Research shows that access to certain contraceptives significantly reduces unintended pregnancy, thus

reducing unintended births and abortions (Secura et al. 2014). Initiatives such as the **Colorado Family Planning Initiative** seek to reduce unintended pregnancies for women under age 25 by increasing access to contraceptives, particularly long-acting reversible contraceptives.

Unstable relationships are another family pattern associated with economic disadvantage. Many less-educated, unmarried parents have unstable relationships, and those who marry have high divorce rates.³ Instability in living arrangements has negative consequences for child development (Fomby and Cherlin 2007).

Evaluations of initiatives to promote marriage and offer healthy relationship education have found mixed success depending on the populations targeted and the methods employed. These programs have also generated controversy, particularly programs targeted at low-income parents and fathers that have been promoted by some federal and state policymakers. Evaluations of couple relationship education programs reveal consistent positive findings about their effects on family stability and child well-being, but the effect sizes tend to be small and fade over time (Cowan and Cowan 2014). Having a child can be a stressful time for new parents, and some couple-focused interventions emphasize skills that can help new parents manage that stress and communicate better with their partners. For example, **Project Relate Oklahoma** (formerly known as the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative) offers skill building for healthy relationships to a range of consumers, including couples, new and expectant parents, single mothers and noncustodial fathers, youth, and divorcing couples. The program is being evaluated as part of the US Department of Health and Human Services's Building Strong Families and Supporting Healthy Marriage Projects.

Positive parenting directly benefits children's development and strengthens their chances for upward mobility. As with unintended pregnancies and relationship instability, problems with parenting occur more frequently among the economically disadvantaged. Poverty and its correlates, such as high rates of maternal depression, can weaken the supports and protections parents might ideally provide to their children (Brooks-Gunn and Duncan 1997). Without supportive parenting, adverse early life experiences can cause toxic stress and damage the development of a child's brain architecture, which provides the foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health.⁴

Programs designed to strengthen parenting skills and parent-child relationships in at-risk populations have demonstrated positive results. Model home-visiting programs use home visits from nurses, social workers, early childhood specialists, and trained paraprofessionals to provide education and support to parents during pregnancy and the first five years of childhood.⁵ For example, the **Nurse-Family Partnership** works to disrupt the cycle of poverty through its nurse home-visitation program that strives to improve pregnancy outcomes, child health and development, and economic self-sufficiency for low-income, first-time moms and their children. A systematic review of home-visiting research has identified more than a dozen models implemented in the United States and abroad that have significantly improved parenting practices.⁶ Additionally, the National Center for Parent, Family and Community Engagement in the Office of

Head Start, US Department of Health and Human Services conducted a comprehensive review of parenting interventions nationwide and developed the Compendium of Parenting Interventions (National Center for Parent, Family, and Community Engagement 2015) to help decisionmakers choose an evidence-based program that will be most effective with the families they serve. Several promising parenting programs offer group-based and individualized training and show positive effects on children’s behavior.

Within the past decade or so, policies to improve the involvement of noncustodial fathers shifted from almost entirely emphasizing child support collections to increasing support for building the capacity of fathers, including, as noted, improving the relationship and communication skills of unwed fathers and mothers. Evaluation results for father involvement initiatives have been mixed (McLanahan et al. 2010). Some programs, such as *Avance’s Fathers in Action*, blend promising practices from previous models to improve the parenting, relationship skills, and employment of low-income fathers. Evaluations of these blended approaches are still in their early phases.⁷

TABLE 2A

Examples of Programs and Initiatives Focused on Family Formation and Stability and Parenting Skills

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Colorado Family Planning Initiative			
Colorado Family Planning Initiative seeks to reduce unintended pregnancy by ensuring all Coloradans have access to affordable, quality contraceptive and reproductive health services. In particular, the initiative increases access to effective contraceptive methods, such as intrauterine devices (IUDs) and implants. Strategies include increasing training for providers, financing long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) method provision at Title X-funded clinics, and increasing patient caseload.			
Increasing access to LARCs reduces the likelihood that women will experience unintended pregnancies, thereby minimizing the associated social, economic, and health risks that can hinder mobility from poverty for low-income families.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income girls and women ages 15–24 ■ Colorado 	Outcomes study shows sizable declines in unintended pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates; increases in IUD and implant use; and \$79 million savings in birth-related Medicaid costs (Ricketts, Klingler, and Schwalberg 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Private contributions ■ \$26 million in total funding 2009–16
Project Relate Oklahoma			
Project Relate (formerly the Oklahoma Marriage Initiative) is a strategy that equips Oklahoma youth, individuals, coparents, and couples with encouragement and practical skills to have successful relationships and in turn create a stable foundation, which is vital for children. The initiative involves policy and research on family stability, training and resource development for professionals and paraprofessionals, statewide service delivery of skills-based workshops to a variety of populations, and community transformation through place-based strategies.			
Promoting more stable and resilient relationships between parents supports a healthy and supportive environment for children. Further, parents are able to improve communication skills that can be translated into other areas of life.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income parents ■ Oklahoma 	Outcomes study shows improved communication, commitments, happiness, support, affection, constructive conflict behaviors, and avoidance of destructive behaviors in parent relationships. ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ TANF dollars and grants ■ Budget not available

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Nurse-Family Partnership			
Nurse-Family Partnership helps transform the lives of low-income, first-time mothers and their babies. Through ongoing home visits from registered nurses, vulnerable moms receive the care and support they need to have a healthy pregnancy, provide responsible and competent care for their children, and become more economically self-sufficient. Nurses work with mothers from pregnancy until the child's second birthday.			
Intervening with at-risk moms during their first pregnancy by providing prenatal and health education and parenting skill-building while also empowering them to become self-sufficient leads to lifelong, multigenerational benefits that can break cycles of poverty and disadvantage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income, first-time mothers ■ Sites in 44 states 	RCTs in three locations found improved prenatal health, fewer injuries among children, increased school readiness among children, fewer subsequent pregnancies and longer intervals between pregnancies, and increased occurrence of maternal employment (Kitzman et al. 2000; Olds et al. 1986, 2002).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Local, state, and federal funding; institutional support and individual giving ■ \$14 million total revenue (FY 2014)
Avance's Fathers in Action/Padres Activos			
Fathers in Action/Padres Activos strengthens the role of fathers by fostering economic stability through workforce development and financial education; helping to (re)establish, maintain, and enhance healthy co-parenting and father-child relationships; and providing case management and support services to reduce barriers to effective and nurturing parenting. The program helps parents be active, supportive, and engaged in their children's lives; make healthy decisions; and become financially stable in order to share the financial support of their children. ^b			
Fathers develop as role models, form a social support network and enhance their own job skills, thus leading to increased economic stability and mobility. Strengthening the family unit provides a healthy and supportive environment for children, leading to increased school readiness and social and emotional outcomes. In turn, children are more likely to succeed in higher education and career placement. ^c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income residential and nonresidential fathers and their partners, with a focus on those with children ages 5 and under or those expecting ■ The curriculum is currently delivered at the Houston and the Rio Grande Valley, TX, sites with plans for expansion 	Four-year, independent, external RCT to begin in 2016; results pending.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Federal funding ■ \$1.1 million annual revenue for Fathers in Action/Padres Activos (FY 2015)

Notes:

^a Project Relate, "Using Evidence to Get Results," National Healthy Marriage Resource Center, published July 7, 2015, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.healthymarriageinfo.org/resource-detail/index.aspx?rid=4115>.

^b "AVANCE Granted Millions for Fathers," AVANCE, October 13, 2015, accessed April 11, 2016, <http://www.avance.org/3-3-million-awarded-to-boost-fathers-healthy-marriages/>.

^c "Infographic: The Importance of Fathers Involvement," Child & Family Research Partnership, posted June 19, 2015, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://childandfamilyresearch.org/2015/06/fathers2015/>.

High-Quality Child Care and Early Learning, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Postsecondary Education

Children raised in low-income families may have less access to high-quality child care and stimulating environments. As such, they are less likely to be school ready at kindergarten than their higher-income peers (Isaacs 2012). Those early disadvantages can compound because the schooling opportunities for

children in low-income neighborhoods are more constrained than those of higher-income children, and subsequent options for postsecondary education are similarly curtailed (Sawhill 2013).

A wide body of research documents the benefits of high-quality early learning programs for both cognitive and noncognitive outcomes (Camilli et al. 2010; Heckman 2010; Yoshikawa et al. 2013). Settings that are likely to enhance future economic mobility for children while offering an important support to working parents include those that support rich teacher-child interactions, use “intensive, developmentally focused” curricula and engage in regular classroom assessment and teacher professional development (Barnett and Ackerman 2006; Nores and Barnett 2014; Yoshikawa et al. 2013). A recent study concluded that universal high-quality preschool could reduce the achievement gap at kindergarten entry between students from low-income families and students from higher-income families 27 percent in math and 41 percent in reading. The gap in math could be reduced 78 percent for Hispanic students and 45 percent for black students; the gap in reading could be nearly eliminated for these groups (Friedman-Krauss, Barnett, and Nores 2016). Programs such as **Educare** provide high-quality comprehensive early care and education for low-income children from birth to age 5 as well as an array of social and other supports for their families. Entities such as the **Children’s Services Council of Palm Beach County** seek to achieve better results for very young children by developing more-effective and integrated local early childhood systems, which include components such as early intervention, parenting support, health care, and high-quality child care and early learning.

Students who attend high-quality elementary and secondary schools or have significant extracurricular support are better positioned to achieve success in the workforce, college, and beyond (Altonji and Dunn 1996; Greenstone et al. 2013; Haveman and Smeeding 2006). Lower-income children and many children of color tend to attend lower-quality schools than those from higher-income families and white families.⁸

A vast literature covers the wide range of interventions and strategies that have been used to improve schools, and we do not try to survey that literature here. Instead, we highlight a couple of powerful examples and focus particular attention on programs designed to link education to mobility by encouraging children to stay in school and making an effective connection to work.

Among the school-related factors affecting student performance, teacher quality appears to matter most. A teacher is estimated to have two to three times the impact on student performance on reading and math tests of any other school factor, including services, facilities, and leadership (RAND 2012). The effects of teacher quality are particularly strong for students from low-income families and black students. Although precisely what mechanisms go into making a teacher effective remains unclear,⁹ evidence shows that well-designed teacher-evaluation programs, such as the **Cincinnati Public Schools Teacher Education System**, could have a direct and lasting effect on individual teacher performance (Taylor and Tyler 2012). Evidence also shows that the choice of a high-quality curriculum can significantly affect student learning.

Students from low-income families are less likely than those from higher-income families to complete high school and make successful transitions to the labor market or postsecondary educational institutions. People with high school diplomas have higher earnings prospects than those without high school diplomas (Cullen et al. 2013). Many schools and school systems pursue programs designed to help students who are at risk of dropping out to stay in school, graduate, and move on to postsecondary education. One such effort is the **Multiple Pathways to Graduation** initiative of Portland Public Schools, which offers alternative education options such as credit recovery programs, residential treatment and school facilities, and hands-on project-based learning. **Career Academies**, which integrate academic studies with occupational training, are designed to break down barriers low-income young adults often encounter in completing high school and preparing for college and careers.

Completing high school may not be enough to place low-income students on a path out of poverty and into the middle class. Median earnings for associate degree holders are about 25 percent higher than those for high school graduates, and the earnings premium for four-year college graduates is about 68 percent and growing, making education beyond high school an important strategy for reducing poverty and promoting economic mobility (Baum, Ma, and Payea 2013). Students from low-income backgrounds enroll disproportionately in community colleges and for-profit institutions compared with those from higher-income backgrounds. The certificate and associate's degree programs offered by community colleges can provide opportunities for young adults or adults interested in moving up or changing careers. However, too many of these students leave community college before earning credentials relevant to employers; only 38 percent of students who start at a community college complete a credential within six years (Shapiro et al. 2015). Evidence is growing that more-structured pathways and increased supports are important; and programs such as **CUNY ASAP** that provide financial, academic, and logistical supports targeting low-income individuals are proving effective.

The difficulties that many students from disadvantaged backgrounds face in completing postsecondary credentials make developing alternative paths to success in the labor market a vital complementary strategy. The **Reinvention** initiative of the City Colleges of Chicago combines a focus on *access* to quality, affordable postsecondary education (the traditional emphasis of community colleges as measured by enrollment) with *student success* measured by students graduating in a timely manner and moving on to further college and in-demand careers. To support these aims, Reinvention has worked to increase the relevance of the City Colleges of Chicago's academic programs to the marketplace, created more structure for students following semester-by-semester pathways to their educational and career goals, provided more intensive and tailored student supports, and made a commitment to more efficient operations to ease student administrative burden and facilitate organizational change.

TABLE 2B

Examples of Programs and Initiatives Focused on High-Quality Child Care and Early Learning, Elementary and Secondary Education, and Postsecondary Education

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Educare			
Educare is a network of early childhood schools that offers high-quality early childhood education and family support services. Based on research from early childhood development, education, social work, and other fields, Educare's approach includes four domains of practice: data utilization, embedded professional development, high-quality teaching practices, and intensive family engagement. Educare prepares children for success in school and life, and helps parents develop the skills they need to champion their children's education. Educare also shares its practices with early childhood providers and advocates for increased investments in early learning to benefit young children across the country.			
Providing high-quality early childhood education leads to better income, assets, and educational outcomes and less reliance on special education or public aid.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income children from birth to age 5 and their families ■ 21 schools across the United States 	Ongoing implementation study findings include language and school-readiness scores exceed typical achievement levels for children living in low-income households. The majority of Educare children, including high-needs children, enter kindergarten ready for school and score within their developmental range in cognitive and social-emotional skills. ^a RCT results forthcoming from Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public-private partnerships; federal Head Start and Early Head Start; state child care and local education funding; private philanthropic dollars ■ Budget varies by site
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County			
Children's Services Council of Palm Beach County (CSC) plans, develops, funds, and evaluates programs and promotes public policies that benefit children and families. Key strategies include facilitating access to prenatal and inter-conception care; promotion of child and maternal health and wellness; promotion of physical, cognitive, and emotional competence and development among young children; and expanding access to quality early care and education programs. CSC is a member of Early Childhood-LINC, a network focused on developing effective, integrated early childhood systems.			
Implementing comprehensive prevention and early intervention strategies to address the needs of children and their families enables them to attain their full potential.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Pregnant women and families with infants and children under age 6 ■ Palm Beach County, FL 	Quasi-experimental comparison-group study indicates better birth weights, preterm births, child abuse and neglect rates, and kindergarten readiness outcomes for children receiving CSC-funded services. 7.5% of babies were born low birth weight compared with 9.4% of a matched group, and 13.6% were born preterm compared with 15.5%. 94.2% of children were deemed kindergarten-ready compared to 89.7% of the matched group (Center for the Study of Social Policy 2016). Impact and fidelity study and return on investment study for certain programs within the system are forthcoming from Metis Associates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Property taxes, grants, and other funding sources ■ \$111 million program services budget; \$125 million agency budget (FY 2015–16)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Cincinnati Public Schools Teacher Evaluation			
Cincinnati Public Schools Teacher Evaluation is a leading model for enhancing teachers' professionalism and supporting higher student achievement. Teachers are evaluated multiple times by multiple people and given clear metrics and results. Evaluation results are tied to promotions and retention.			
Increasing teacher quality through effective evaluations systems leads to better education for students, thereby increasing the likelihood they will have a successful future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Midcareer elementary and middle school teachers and their students ■ Cincinnati, OH 	Performance data show that teachers raise student achievement during the school year while they are being evaluated and even more in the years after evaluation. A student instructed by a teacher after evaluation will score about 4.5 percentile points higher in math than a student taught by the teacher before evaluation (Taylor and Tyler 2012).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public school system funding ■ Budget not available
Portland Public Schools Multiple Pathways to Graduation			
The Multiple Pathways to Graduation initiative aims to provide educational options for all youth that empower, engage, and prepare them for college, work training, and citizenship while serving as a vanguard for systemic educational change. Multiple Pathways to Graduation programs include alternative education options that are either district-operated or community-based, developed to meet the needs of a specific student population.			
Providing the appropriate educational environment for each student instead of a "one-size fits all" approach enables more students to succeed in school and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public school students ■ Portland, OR 	Performance data show promising results for individual programs within the initiative: the Reconnection Center placed 2,339 students back in school in three years, and 849 received a diploma or GED. The graduation rate for parenting seniors for the 2013–14 school year was about 35% overall and 78% for seniors who received district child care. ^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public school system funding ■ \$8.9 million for Alternative Education Options and \$675,000 for Reconnection Services/Center (2015)
Career Academies			
Typically serving students from grades 9 or 10 through grade 12, Career Academies combine academic and technical curricula around a career theme and establish partnerships with local employers to provide work-based learning opportunities. Career Academies are typically organized as small learning communities that keep students engaged in school and prepare them for successful transitions to postsecondary education and employment.			
Providing the concrete, relevant skills and qualifications needed to succeed in the workforce makes young people better prepared for college and employment and thus better able to achieve self-sufficiency and financial success.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Young adults (age ranges vary across sites) ■ More than 2,500 sites nationally 	RCT shows positive impacts on earnings, with labor market impacts concentrated among young men, and other life outcomes such as living independently, marriage, and custodial parenthood. No significant impacts were found on postsecondary preparedness (Kemple 2008).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundation and federal funding ■ Budget varies by site

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
CUNY ASAP			
The City University of New York's Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP) provides students with financial support, career counseling, personal advisement, transportation vouchers, and special class scheduling options. The program enables students to receive an associate's degree in three years and assistance to transfer to a four-year university or transition to the workforce.			
Reducing the barriers many low-income students face toward completing a degree facilitates higher educational attainment, thereby leading to financial stability, career placement, and mobility from poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income individuals seeking a college education ■ Seven colleges within New York City 	Outcomes study, RCT, and cost-benefit analysis indicate positive outcomes within overall three-year graduation rates, graduation rates for those with developmental needs, enrollment rates, number of credits earned and completion of coursework (Levin and Garcia 2012; Linderman and Kolenovic 2012; Scrivner et al. 2015).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundation and state funding, university endowments ■ \$17 million total budget (FY 2015)
Reinvention of City Colleges of Chicago			
City Colleges of Chicago offers associate's degrees, basic/advanced certificates, remediation classes, and adult education with the goal that every student can attain a postsecondary education and every graduating student has the skill sets necessary to enter the workforce. The Reinvention of City Colleges is a major reform to develop a cost-effective postsecondary model that will lead to greater degree attainment, job placement, and career advancement.			
Aligning education with workforce needs and linking college with job readiness puts students in a better position to obtain a successful career and financial stability.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ All City Colleges students (100,000 annually) ■ 7 college campuses, 6 satellite sites and 70 offsite adult education instruction centers in Chicago, IL 	Performance data show since Reinvention began in 2010 there has been a 142% increase in the graduation rate from 7% to 17%, a 125% increase in associate degrees from 2,201 to 4,944, as well as a 22% increase in certificates, a 10% increase in credit enrollment, a 9% increase in transfers, and a 171% increase in adult education transitions. ^c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Local, state, federal funding; tuition payments; university endowment ■ Budget not available

Notes:

^a“Educare,” Strategies for Donors, Early Childhood Toolkit, the Center for High Impact Philanthropy, University of Pennsylvania, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.impact.upenn.edu/our-analysis/opportunities-to-achieve-impact/early-childhood-toolkit/strategies-for-donors/provide-great-places-to-learn/educare/>.

^b“Multiple Pathways to Graduation,” Portland Public Schools, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.pps.net/site/Default.aspx?PageID=951>.

^c“City Colleges of Chicago Fact Sheet,” City Colleges of Chicago, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.ccc.edu/menu/Pages/City-Colleges-of-Chicago-Fact-Sheet-.aspx>; and City Colleges of Chicago (2011).

Employment and Training; and Wages, Wage Supplements, and Work Supports

Some individuals are trapped in poverty because they lack the skills for even entry-level jobs; others, with limited skills, are mired in the low-wage labor market. Minimum and other low-wage jobs simply do not pay enough to keep an adult with children out of poverty.

Employment and training programs assist individuals in improving their skills and obtaining jobs. Effective programs can play a key role in mobility from poverty because earnings from work are the largest source of income for most people. The best employment and training programs prepare individuals for well-paying jobs in high-demand sectors, often working closely with employers in the industry to develop curricula and to ensure that training is appropriate for employer needs. Those sector-based approaches have met with success (Maguire et al. 2010).

The employment and training field now emphasizes “career pathways” in which training and employment is explicitly targeted to move individuals up into higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs. A career pathway is a combination of rigorous and high-quality education, training, and other services that aligns with the skill needs of industries in the state or regional economy and prepares an individual to be successful in any of a full range of secondary or postsecondary education options, including apprenticeships (Title I Sec. 3 (7) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014). Several large, government-funded, rigorous evaluations of the career pathway approach are in progress.¹⁰

Career pathway programs take many forms. Innovative programs may provide basic skills training by incorporating soft skills or work-readiness training and by providing a pathway of training to in-demand jobs. In addition, to increase training completion, programs may provide supportive services, such as child care, transportation subsidies, and job search and retention assistance.

Instituto del Progreso Latino is an example of a career pathway model; it serves Latino immigrants in the Chicago area. One innovation of the program is to incorporate contextualized education and training in basic reading, writing, and math skills. Contextualized learning assists participants in bridging the gap to occupational skills training while keeping them on track to earn higher wages. The program focuses on in-demand sectors and partners with many area employers. Instituto is working to replicate its program model in other labor markets. Another example is **Courses to Employment**, a national initiative with multiple sites that focuses on how partnerships of community colleges and workforce-focused nonprofits can help nontraditional students—those unlikely to take college courses because of low skills or lack of exposure to postsecondary education—succeed in postsecondary education and the workforce.

Apprenticeship programs are an alternative way for individuals to increase occupational skills while earning wages. Several models in the United States have engaged employers to provide apprenticeship opportunities that lead to higher paying jobs for individuals. The **Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship** program is one example, providing opportunities for young people to gain skills while involved in productive, paying work.

Some employment and training programs focus exclusively on youth. To break the cycle of poverty, youth programs provide education and training to out-of-school youth who lack the basic skills necessary to move into entry-level careers. Many also focus on providing exposure to careers and connections to

mentors. One innovative example is **Year Up**, a program focusing on high-demand sectors that provides intensive mentoring, training, and employment internships for youth lacking other opportunities to enter the labor force.

Other organizations and initiatives focus on improving the quality of jobs while working to improve the skills of workers who hold those jobs. **PHI** is a direct-care employment program (focused on occupations such as home health aides and nursing assistants) that provides job training and works with employers to change public policies that will improve working conditions for employees. Also working to make progress on a broader scale, some initiatives—known as workforce or sector partnerships or collaboratives—focus on improving education and training systems within a sector or geographic area by creating partnerships across major actors, including the community college system, public workforce system, community-based organizations, labor unions, and employers. These efforts may focus on specific labor market sectors to improve the pipeline for low-skill workers to move into in-demand middle-skill jobs. Many of these sector-based workforce partnerships are operating across the country.¹¹

Some initiatives focus on creating jobs rather than connecting or preparing workers for existing jobs. Such programs include transitional and subsidized jobs programs that seek to match individuals with temporary jobs in which the government pays some portion of the wage (Dutta-Gupta et al. 2016). Efforts to increase income and wages for low-wage workers are important for mobility from poverty because employment alone does not guarantee mobility from poverty. Unable to earn a living wage, many individuals continue to be “working poor” in the United States (Bureau of Labor Statistics 2015). Working poor individuals may have jobs that offer low wages, few hours, or no benefits (such as health care), and they might have little prospect for advancement.¹²

In addition to employment and training programs, other efforts seek to supplement income and wages directly. The main federal program boosting the income of workers is the EITC, which supplemented the earnings of 28 million eligible individuals and families who received more than \$66 billion in EITC in 2014.¹³ Twenty-six states and the District of Columbia have a state EITC for working families with children that supplements the federal EITC.¹⁴ The federal EITC provides a much lower benefit for workers without children. **Paycheck Plus** is a pilot program in New York City currently being evaluated to test the effects of an expanded EITC for low-income single workers without dependent children.

Other efforts to help the working poor focus on supporting workers in maintaining work or training through assistance with necessary work supports, such as child care or transportation. High-quality early learning and child care programs (discussed previously) serve the goals of child education and supporting parental work. Transportation assistance programs range from assistance with public transportation costs to programs that help low-income workers buy a car, which can be especially important for those living in

rural areas without access to public transportation. An example of a program providing this type of assistance is the **Ways to Work** program.

TABLE 2C

Examples of Initiatives Focused on Employment and Training, and, Wages, Wage Supplements, and Work Supports

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Instituto del Progreso Latino			
Instituto del Progreso Latino (Instituto) provides Latino immigrants and their families with job training, education, and employment placement with a goal of career advancement and greater long-term financial stability. Instituto operates charter schools as well as other job training and basic education programs and provides supportive services such as childcare, financial coaching, and citizenship services. Instituto addresses the needs of the whole family and advances individuals along a career pathway, starting from any skill level.			
Engaging the entire family and addressing the needs of individuals at all skill levels, while preserving cultural identity and dignity, allows immigrants to develop their human capital and obtain financial stability through careers in high-demand fields.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Latino immigrants and their families, including adults at all skill levels, high school students, out-of-school youth, and children ages 3 and older Chicago, IL 	Performance data show Instituto serves 10,000 families every year. In 2015, 1,800 people received citizenship services, 189 new industry-recognized credentials were earned, and 604 people found new employment, resulting in over \$16 million in new income earned. ^a Instituto's Carreras en Salud program is undergoing an RCT, results pending from PACE.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private contributions, foundation and government funding, internally generated revenue \$21 million revenue (FY 2015, IPL and its schools)
Courses to Employment			
Courses to Employment (C2E) partnerships are partnerships between community colleges and nonprofit organizations formed to address the educational and employment challenges of unemployed and underemployed workers. C2E partnerships pull together resources and expertise so that nonprofits and community colleges are able to expand the range of services and training opportunities.			
Leveraging the strengths of community colleges and local nonprofits to provide training and support services helps nontraditional students (especially low-income adults) complete education programs and find and retain better jobs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-income adults, including the under- and unemployed C2E partnerships exist nationwide (about 50 locations in 2013) 	Outcomes study of C2E participants shows favorable results in terms of program completion, employment, and wages, with variation in the degree of earnings gains among different partnerships and the occupations targeted (Conway, Blair and Helmer 2012).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foundation funding supported the demonstration Budget and funding sources vary by partnership
Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship			
Wisconsin's Youth Apprenticeship program is designed for high school students who want hands-on learning in an occupational area at a work site along with classroom instruction. The program combines academic and technical instruction with mentored, paid, on-the-job learning. The program requires students to complete at least 450 hours of work-based learning and two semesters of related-classroom instruction each year for up to two years. The Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship model has clear and rigorous standards and covers a wide range of occupations and career clusters.			
Providing youth with work experience and increasing skills and productivity through apprenticeships diversifies routes to rewarding careers including students who may not be successful in traditional academic settings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High school juniors and seniors Wisconsin 	Self-reported performance data indicate that, in 2015, 74.5% of youth apprenticeship graduates were offered continued employment after completing the program. ^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State funding \$2.2 million in local apprenticeship grants (PY 2015–16)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Year Up			
Year Up is a one-year intensive training program that aims to empower motivated young adults to reach their full potential through professional careers and higher education. The program uses a high-support, high-expectation model and provides young adults with a unique combination of hands-on technical and professional skills, college credits, and corporate internships.			
Equipping young adults with skills, knowledge, and experience through training and internships helps remedy the opportunity gap and provides employers with needed talent. Young adults are put on a pathway towards a successful career and economic self-sufficiency.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Young adults (ages 18–24) who lack opportunity and access to the mainstream economy ■ Presence in 18 cities across the United States 	RCT of three cities found participants' earnings were 32% greater than the control group (Rader and Elliot 2014). Performance data indicate that 85% of graduates are employed or attending college full-time within four months of completing the program. ^c	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundations, government, corporate, and individual giving ■ \$115 million in total revenue (2015)
PHI			
PHI (formerly the Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute) is a national nonprofit development organization that provides recruitment, training, retention strategies, organizational development, and other technical assistance in the direct-care industry. PHI develops and disseminates employer-based practices to improve direct-care jobs and the quality of care for elders and people living with disabilities and conducts research to raise the visibility of this traditionally undervalued and undercompensated workforce and to support public policy improvements.			
Improving entry-level jobs and career advancement in direct care helps low-income individuals with multiple barriers to employment, primarily women, support their families with dignity and respect for the value of their work to the healthcare system. Direct-care occupations present few barriers to entry and are some of the fastest-growing in the country.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ More than 4 million direct-care workers nationally, primarily women (disproportionately women of color and immigrants) ■ National 	Self-reported performance data indicate PHI's employer-based practices promote job satisfaction/retention for workers, cost efficiencies for employers, and improved care for clients (Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute 2012). PHI's affiliated home care business in New York models these practices. PHI research and advocacy has secured increased compensation and basic labor protections for this workforce. ^d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Public and private contributions, fee-for-service contract revenue ■ \$7.7 million total revenue (FY 2015)
Paycheck Plus			
Paycheck Plus is a demonstration project launched by MDRC and the New York City Center for Economic Opportunity to rigorously test a new earnings supplement for low-income adults. The strategy simulates an enhanced Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) for single tax filers with no qualifying children. Under the federal EITC, the maximum benefit for single workers is \$503. Paycheck Plus tests an increased amount of up to \$2,000. The program also doubles the income cut-off (\$29,863 versus \$14,800). In partnership with the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, Paycheck Plus in NYC is partially funded through a Section 1115 waiver.			
Enhancing earnings supplements for single adults by expanding the EITC incentivizes work, which in turn increases employment and reduces poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Single (unmarried), unemployed or low-wage workers without dependent children, with a focus on men and noncustodial parents ■ New York, NY, and Atlanta, GA 	RCT forthcoming to assess impact on economic and social outcomes. Findings will be released in 2017 and 2018. ^d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundation, local, and federal funding ■ \$2.5 million budget (FY 2015, for New York)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Ways to Work			
Ways to Work was a Community Development Financial Institution that provided low-interest loans, financial, education, and support to families with challenging credit histories. Ways to Work loans offered an alternative to predatory lenders to help families pay for unexpected expenses that could interfere with their ability to keep a job or stay in school. Most often these loans were used to purchase a reliable preowned vehicle.			
Providing borrowers with small, short-term, low-interest loans for a car helps individuals obtain reliable transportation, promoting stability needed to maintain successful careers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income workers without a car ■ Operated in partnership with community-based nonprofits throughout the United States 	Outcomes study revealed Ways to Work cars helped 94% of borrowers improve their employment circumstances. Credit impact study indicates Ways to Work borrowers outperform a comparison group in improving credit scores. ROI study found a 248% return on investment for all stakeholder groups, with projected taxpayer savings of approximately \$18.2 million from reduced enrollment in public assistance in 2007–11 (ICF International 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Government, foundations and private contributions ■ \$393 thousand total revenue (CY 2015)

Notes:

^a “Our Impact,” Instituto, accessed April 2016, <http://www.institutochicago.org>.

^b Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Program, “Youth Apprenticeship Year-End Report, Fiscal Year 14/15” (unpublished report, Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development, Madison, generated August 17, 2016).

^c “Our Results,” Year Up, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.yearup.org/our-approach/results/>.

^d “Home Care Workers Deserve Minimum Wage & Overtime,” Paraprofessional Healthcare Institute, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://phinational.org/campaigns/home-care-workers-deserve-minimum-wage-protection>.

^e “Paycheck Plus: Expanded Earned Income Tax Credit for Single Adults: Project Overview,” MDRC, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.mdrc.org/project/paycheck-plus-expanded-earned-income-tax-credit-single-adults#overview>.

Cash or Near-Cash Safety Net, and Asset Formation and Access to Capital

At the most elementary level, poverty is the lack of sufficient income and assets to meet a family’s basic needs and allow its members to fully participate in society. Poverty perpetuates itself in myriad ways. Poor people tend to live in resource-deprived neighborhoods and must confront stress-inducing environments and instability and cope with material deprivations such as food and housing insecurity. Government agencies and programs play a larger role in providing basic material assistance to poor families than smaller, nongovernment service providers.

Federal cash (or near-cash) means-tested assistance programs, including TANF, SNAP, and Supplemental Security Income, can help keep poor families from poverty’s deepest deprivations and allow them to prepare for and find new work; such programs also provide material support for children so they can develop physically, emotionally, and cognitively. Although near-cash assistance provides important

material assistance, it can only be used for its specified purpose (e.g., SNAP benefits can be used only for food, not utility bills or diapers), and the flexibility of cash support can be vital to low-income families (Edin and Schaefer 2015). Savings and access to capital help ensure that individuals have a buffer to protect against hardships and a pathway to opportunities to improve upward mobility.

However, program rules and administrative requirements can reduce the incentive to work and save. Most cash and near-cash public-assistance programs provide more material aid to those with the least income and reduce benefits as earnings rise. This general structure is vital to support the neediest families but creates high effective marginal tax rates that could discourage work and, in some cases, parental coresidence. Similarly, rules restricting the asset holdings of public-assistance recipients discourage savings (Ratcliffe et al. 2016), although there have been efforts to offset this through relaxed asset limit rules that allow savings for specific goals such as education and retirement to be exempted. Cash and near-cash assistance programs have also been used as mechanisms to provide services and supports to help move people out of poverty. Utah launched an innovative project called **Next Generation Kids**, a two-generation strategy to help individuals and families break the cycle of poverty. Enrolling TANF families headed by parents who received cash assistance as a child, Next Generation Kids uses TANF dollars to provide education, employment training, and other supports for parents along with services to support the child's educational and healthy development (Office of Family Assistance 2016).

Another type of cash assistance program is conditional cash transfers. These programs provide cash assistance to poor families who engage in certain activities or behaviors, linking income support with actions that will improve well-being and potentially mobility from poverty. One example is the Opportunity NYC-Family Rewards program, launched in 2007 in New York City, which offered cash benefits to poor families conditional upon efforts to improve their health, further their children's education, and increase parents' work and earnings. The **Family Rewards 2.0** program, launched in July 2011 in the Bronx, New York, and Memphis, Tennessee, is a revised program that continues to offer cash rewards for parent and family health but limits education rewards to high school students (Dechausay, Miller, and Quiroz-Becerra 2014).

Savings or asset formation and access to capital or credit at reasonable prices can play an important role in helping individuals move out of poverty. Assets can provide insurance against tough times (enabling asset holders to avoid using payday loans and entering a spiral of debt), tuition toward a postsecondary education, capital to build a small business, savings for a down payment on a home, and other opportunities to improve upward mobility. People who experience poverty often lack assets and savings. A common misconception is that people in poverty cannot save, but evidence from savings programs and research shows they can (Mckernan, Ratcliffe and Williams-Shanks 2012).

Having even a small amount of savings to use in case of emergency or a temporary hardship can promote stability and buffer against downward mobility. Programs that encourage low- and moderate-

income individuals to save the money received through their tax refunds (such as the **SaveUSA** pilot program) can be a first step toward saving by helping people create an emergency fund. Once that is established, individuals may be more successful in saving for larger, longer-term investments.

Incentivizing savings for specific purposes such as college education, homeownership, self-employment, and retirement security allows low-income Americans to plan ahead, set aside savings, and invest in a more secure future. (Sherraden and Gilbert 1991) Individual development accounts are a vehicle for encouraging savings. Often funded as a partnership between government and nonprofits, they typically have restrictions on what savings can be spent; permissible expenditures might include business start-ups or expansions, homeownership, or postsecondary education. One individual development account program—Arizona’s **Earn to Learn**—provides low-income students with an eight-to-one match on their savings of up to \$4,000 a year toward tuition and expenses for attending one of Arizona’s three public in-state universities. Several other programs encourage saving by having other public or private sources match individuals’ savings. Children’s savings accounts programs, such as San Francisco’s Kindergarten to College account, fall into this category; that program encourages parents to save for children’s education by providing public matched funds. **SEED for Oklahoma Kids** is a matched children’s savings program that has had some success improving the savings of low-income participants.

Other programs focus on financial coaching to improve how people handle their money, build credit, and avoid or get out of debt. A rigorous evaluation of one financial coaching program (**Branches in Miami**) found significant and robust effects on outcomes related to money management, debt, savings, and other measures and perceptions of financial well-being (Theodos et al. 2015).

TABLE 2D

Examples of Initiatives Focused on Cash or Near-Cash Safety Net, and Asset Formation and Access to Capital

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Next Generation Kids			
Next Generation Kids (NGK) is a financial assistance program focused on combatting the cycle of intergenerational poverty by implementing a two-generation approach. TANF families volunteer to participate in NGK. These families are headed by parents who received cash assistance as a child and also receive it as an adult. The project offers education, employment training, and other supports to parents as well as resources or connections to resources to support their children’s educational and healthy development.			
Using TANF as a platform to provide education and job training along with supportive services helps adults who have experienced poverty throughout their lives and their families become financially self-sufficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families experiencing intergenerational poverty Utah (demonstration sites in Salt Lake and Weber Counties) 	Performance data indicate the program served 31 families in 2015, helping adults obtain employment, obtain their high school diploma or GED, or enroll in job training. The program improved stability by connecting families to housing resources, afterschool programs,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal funding through TANF Budget not available (no additional funds are used; the same services are provided through TANF with a two-generational lens)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
		high-quality preschool, food and nutrition programs, and financial education classes (Utah Intergenerational Welfare Reform Commission 2015).	
Family Rewards 2.0			
Family Rewards 2.0 is a conditional cash transfer program seeking to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty by offering cash assistance to poor families to reduce immediate hardship, conditioned on families' efforts to improve their health, further their children's education, and increase parents' work and earnings. The program builds off New York City's first conditional cash transfer program from 2007 (the Opportunity NYC-Family Rewards program), with modifications to the amount and timing of rewards and, notably, with the addition of family guidance (staff members actively helping families develop strategies to earn rewards).			
Rewarding families for activities in children's education, family preventative healthcare, and parental employment and education helps individuals and families obtain resources necessary to become self-sufficient.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income families receiving TANF and/or SNAP ■ Bronx, NY, and Memphis, TN 	RCT under way. Early findings show that nearly all families earned at least some rewards (average of \$2,160) in year 2; family guidance component helped families find the steps to rewards; families understood rewards better; cash transferred in 2.0 was less than in the first model (Dechausay, Miller, and Quiroz-Becerra 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Federal SIF funding and private matching funds ■ \$4 million annual operating budget
SAVEUSA			
SaveUSA was a voluntary tax-time savings program that encouraged low- and moderate-income individuals to set aside money from their tax refund for savings by offering a 50 percent match (up to \$500) on any savings set aside for at least one year. The program operated 2011–15 in New York City and San Antonio and 2011–13 in Tulsa and Newark. Tax filers could directly deposit all or a portion of their tax refund into a special SaveUSA savings account and pledge to save between \$200 and \$1,000 of their deposit for one year. Money could be withdrawn from SaveUSA accounts at any time and for any purpose, but only those who maintain their initially pledged savings amount for a full year receive a 50 percent match on that amount.			
Using influxes of cash from tax-time refunds to support the buildup of savings helps low- and moderate-income families manage temporary losses of income or increased expenditures from unexpected events. In this way, increased savings provide stability and financial security to support upward mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low- to moderate-income families accessing Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) services ■ New York, NY, Tulsa, OK, Newark, NJ, and San Antonio, TX 	RCT in New York and Tulsa indicates SaveUSA increased total amounts of savings and led to improvements in some measures of financial security, such as having more cash available for unexpected expenses (Azurdia and Freedman 2016).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Federal SIF funding and private match funds ■ \$1 million annual operating budget
SEED For Oklahoma Kids			
The SEED for Oklahoma Kids (SEED OK) experiment, a large-scale study with approximately 2,700 newborn children and random assignment to treatment and control groups, tests the impacts of universal, automatic Child Development Accounts (CDAs) beginning at birth. CDAs are savings or investment accounts to help people accumulate assets for postsecondary education and other long-term developmental purposes. The CDA in SEED OK consists of an Oklahoma College Savings Plan account automatically opened with an initial deposit of \$1,000 and a progressive savings match. Impacts exam. Impacts examined include asset accumulation, education-related attitudes and behaviors, child development, and eventually educational achievement.			
Providing automatic accounts and postsecondary education assets for all children fosters college-bound identity and encourages planning and saving for college (Beverly, Elliott, and Sherraden 2013), which support educational achievement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Children and their parents ■ Study sample is drawn from Oklahoma birth records; the experiment is intended to model policy for all US children 	RCT shows large impacts on account holding and asset accumulation (Clancy et al. 2016). Early research also reveals positive impacts on educational expectations, mothers' outlook, and child development, especially for disadvantaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundation funding ■ Multiyear, multimillion-dollar initiative

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
and eventually mobility from poverty.		children and parents (Beverly, Clancy, and Sherraden 2016).	
Earn to Learn			
Earn to Learn helps low-income Arizonans save for college. The program provides students and families with financial education, financial coaching, and assistance in setting up and maintaining matched-savings accounts (Individual Development Accounts) that can be used to help pay for college. The accounts provide an eight-to-one match on savings up to \$4,000 per year toward tuition and expenses to attend one of three in-state universities.			
Incentivizing saving for college and providing financial assistance to children in need helps eliminate financial barriers for low-income students to obtain quality university education that can lead to mobility from poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Future college students living in families with incomes less than 200% of the federal poverty level ■ Arizona 	Self-reported performance data indicate that, in three years, 1,029 students saved \$707,700 and received \$5,661,600 in match. 12,274 hours of financial education have been provided to 3,010 Arizona students. Over 57% identified STEM fields as majors. ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Federal government grants and university matching funds ■ \$561 thousand total revenue (FY 2013)
Branches			
Branches is a faith-based social service organization that provides financial stability programs in addition to childcare and tutoring. Branches focuses on five pillars of financial stability: housing, income/income potential, health care, financial tools, and financial capability. Services include referral services, free tax preparation, credit counseling, and financial coaching.			
Providing financial education and assistance can help consumers save more, thereby promoting financial stability, preventing downward mobility, and enabling individuals to invest in their own futures (through education, homeownership, etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low- to moderate-income individuals and families ■ Miami-Dade County, FL 	RCT found positive impacts on a number of indicators including number of savings deposits (2.6 more deposits than control group), perceived progress toward nonretirement savings, and reduced overall debt but no detectable effects on other measured outcomes, such as filing bankruptcy and financial knowledge (Theodos et al. 2015).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Foundation and local government funding ■ \$1.5 million budget for financial coaching (FY 2015)

Notes:

^a "Impact & Student Demographics," Earn to Learn, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://earntolearn.org/our-work/impact/>.

Health and Mental Health

Poor health and mental health can create a significant mobility trap for low-income individuals and families, impeding their ability to develop skills and succeed in the labor market. Poor physical or mental health can limit a person's ability to form strong attachments to the labor force and undermine his or her ability to take advantage of available education, training, and employment opportunities. Negative health events can affect mobility through job loss or high medical costs. Poor physical and mental health in childhood can affect both cognition and educational attainment, which can in turn affect mobility. Individuals with physical and emotional disabilities receiving support through public disability programs risk losing that support if they go to work, greatly constraining their prospects for upward mobility. Evidence shows that government

health care programs, such as Medicaid, can protect families from some of the effects of negative health events on income; evidence also shows that Medicaid expansions for children have led to improvements in reading test scores later in childhood and higher rates of high school and college completion (Gangopadhyaya 2015). Although it is too soon to measure the full effects of the expansion of Medicaid eligibility for adults under the Affordable Care Act, the expansions occurring in 31 states could affect mobility if coverage reduces unintended pregnancies, increases access to preventive care, and allows individuals to receive health services that would address physical and mental health concerns that might otherwise interfere with work.

Social factors can have profound effects on the physical and mental health of adults and children, and these social determinants of health may have particularly deep implications for the economic and social mobility of children as they advance into adulthood. Although research is only beginning to assess the causal pathways that link social experiences with health and disease, several such pathways have emerged as potentially relevant to the economic mobility of children as they grow into adults. Children who grow up in poor social or economic conditions endure immediate health risks, such as poor nutrition and exposure to lead, allergens, and other pollutants, and they are also more likely to face health-depleting conditions as adults. The Center for Disease Control's long-running Adverse Childhood Experiences Study has demonstrated an association of adverse childhood experiences with health and mental health problems as an adult (Felitti et al. 1998; Arias 2004), and children whose families experience the effects of poverty are at heightened risk of maltreatment.¹⁵ Emerging neuroscientific evidence suggests that nonnormative stress, such as the death of a parent, or strong, frequent, or prolonged stress without the buffer of a supportive adult can disrupt the developing brain architecture in children, leading to a weak foundation for learning, behavior, and health (Shonkoff et al. 2012). Another line of research suggests that living in poverty affects children's brain development in ways that affect achievement (Hair et al. 2015).

Growing recognition of the mental health consequences of poverty or other harsh social conditions has sparked widespread interest in and adoption of “trauma-informed care” as a new paradigm for organizing physical and mental health and human services. Trauma-informed care changes the opening question for those seeking services from “What is wrong with you?” to “What has happened to you?” With trauma-informed care, participants design their own path to healing, and it is facilitated by support and mentoring from the service provider (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 2014, 267–69). ***The New Haven MOMS Partnership*** is a mother-led coalition of community-based providers, local and state governments, national partners, and academic institutions that advocates community-based services and systems reforms to promote maternal mental health, family basic needs, and family economic security.

Many initiatives address the social determinants of health and recognize there are ways to influence health outside of the doctor's office. These include many of the policies and practices described in the other

building blocks in this paper. Indeed, strong evidence suggests that increased investment in certain services (such as housing support and nutritional assistance), as well as various models of partnership between health care and social services (such as integrated health care and housing services), can lead to substantial health improvements and reduced health care costs for targeted populations (Taylor et al. 2015). **Hennepin Health**, a county-based accountable care organization serving Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a Medicaid demonstration project that seeks to improve the coordination of the physical, behavioral, social, and economic dimensions of care for an expanded community of Medicaid beneficiaries by bringing together such partners as local human services and public health agency officials, health care providers, and insurers. The California Endowment's **Building Healthy Communities** is a community-change initiative that seeks to preserve and promote the health of Californians and to address the social determinants of health as a means of significantly improving population health outcomes and, by extension, economic mobility.

TABLE 2E

Examples of Initiatives Focused on Health and Mental Health

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
New Haven MOMS Partnership			
The New Haven MOMS Partnership is a collaboration of agencies that work to support the wellbeing of mothers and families, with an emphasis on maternal mental health. The mission of the Partnership is to transform the delivery of services through community and neighborhood-based resources dedicated to wellness and strengthening generations of families. The Partnership uses input from families and providers to develop its public health approaches. Their MoMba social media application connects new mothers to promote healthy mother-infant interaction, social connectedness, and community engagement.			
Intervening upon maternal psychopathology, stress reactivity, and executive function improves parenting capacity and ultimately, health, development, and achievement on a citywide level. Secure, reliable relationships and the stress buffering process provided by parents help prevent adverse childhood outcomes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-income, black and Latina pregnant and parenting women New Haven, CT 	RCT results forthcoming from a federally-funded study supported through HHS. 58% of mothers reported a clinically significant decrease in depressive symptoms; over 78% of mothers completed the mental health interventions; 73% of others reported clinically significant reductions in parenting stress and increases in parent-child attachment metrics. ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partner organizations, foundation funding, and federal funding from the NIH and Office on Women's Health \$11 million annual revenue including \$6 million from ACF through the State of Connecticut SSBG funds (FY 2015)
Hennepin Health			
Hennepin Health is a managed care program that takes an integrative approach to health care by considering a member's medical, behavioral health and social service needs. Members receive care from a multidisciplinary care coordination team that consists of doctors, nurses, pharmacists, social workers and community health workers. Other innovative features of the program include a common electronic health record, along with a tiered care system that is based upon a member's identified needs.			
Improving health care for low-income individuals by addressing a wide range of health-related and social service needs helps people maintain the stability needed for mobility from poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicaid-eligible individuals ages 0-64 Hennepin County, MN 	Preliminary outcomes suggest Hennepin Health has a positive impact on shifting care to outpatient settings. In the first year of the program, emergency department visits decreased 9.1% and outpatient visits increased 3.3% (Sandberg et al.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Medicaid funding \$144 million total revenue (2015)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
		2014).	
Building Healthy Communities			
Building Healthy Communities (BHC) is a 10-year old place-based initiative to help low-income communities improve health in the places they live. BHC aims to advance statewide policy, change the national narrative about health, and transform communities most devastated by health inequities in order to provide access to resources and opportunities essential for health: affordable housing and fresh food; safe, fair wage jobs; clean air; and other ingredients essential for a healthy life.			
Improving neighborhood economic, social, and political conditions related to education, food access, safety, pollution, democratic participation, and social cohesion improves health outcomes for residents, which in turn provides the stability needed for mobility from poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Low-income communities ■ 14 sites in California 	BHC led to the achievement of discrete health-protective policy changes in 12 specified literature-supported domains. The initiative also led to increased knowledge and skills for individuals and groups in grantee communities to be able to effectively voice concerns to policymakers and public officials; increased coordination and collaboration between organizations; and changes in the narrative and norms around health (Preskill et al. 2013).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Investments from the California Endowment ■ \$1 billion estimated budget for 10 years

Notes:

^a "New Haven MOMS Partnership," ClinicalTrials.gov, accessed August 23, 2016 <https://clinicaltrials.gov/show/NCT01665872>.

Safety and Justice

Crime and criminal justice policy interact in complex ways to impede mobility from poverty. Living in a community riven by violence robs individuals of their sense of safety and security. That stress affects healthy childhood development and adult decisionmaking. Further, businesses may eschew high-crime areas, limiting job opportunities for community residents. Thus, effective crime reduction strategies support upward economic mobility. However, as discussed in the first section of this paper, overly broad application of enforcement and sanctions by the justice system can disproportionately hinder the economic prospects of low-income people and people of color.

Negative safety and justice outcomes undermine outcomes achieved through the other building blocks. For example, the trauma experienced by children and adults who live in fear of violence or are exposed to it can undermine the economic mobility of low-income people who live in distressed communities. A study on the effects of homicides on children's cognitive performance found that children assessed within a week of a homicide occurring in their neighborhood had significantly lower achievement scores than similarly situated children who did not have a recent homicide occur within their neighborhood (Sharkey 2010). In addition, improving community safety is typically considered a prerequisite to success for housing-focused initiatives

such as the Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, which is described later in this report. Focused deterrence strategies such as those promulgated by the **National Network for Safe Communities** have shown effectiveness in reducing violence in distressed communities without resorting to broad application of criminal penalties to residents, limiting the negative consequences of the penalties, which are discussed later in this section.

Beyond the negative effects of living in high-crime neighborhoods, residents of those neighborhoods often face barriers to upward mobility as a result of their neighborhoods being heavily policed because such policing leads to high levels of criminal justice involvement. As discussed previously in the “Contextual Challenges to Mobility” section, young men of color are disproportionately likely to be arrested and to spend time incarcerated when compared with white men (Lieberman and Fontaine 2015), and young black women experience similar disparities (Popkin et al. 2015). Incarceration interrupts employment trajectories, reduces family incomes, and can even lead to eviction and homelessness. Initiatives focused on justice policy generally seek alternatives to incarceration for justice system-involved individuals or seek to divert high-risk individuals from any justice system involvement. **Roca** is a program in the Boston area that aims to interrupt the cycle of early incarceration and recidivism for high-risk young people by reaching out to youth who are neither working or in school and youth who have already become involved in the justice system.

Many people experience the negative effects of incarceration even if they have not yet been (and may not ultimately be) convicted of anything. Pretrial detention in jail is a common occurrence and is often experienced by indigent or low-income defendants who are unable to post monetary bail. Pretrial detention can disrupt employment, housing, and other forms of social stability, and even short periods of detention may increase the likelihood of future offending (Lowenkamp, VanNostrand, and Holsinger 2013). Initiatives such as **New Jersey’s comprehensive bail reform**, seek to prevent people from experiencing pretrial detention simply because they are too poor to post a monetary bond for release. In January 2016, Camden, Morris/Sussex, and Passaic counties began piloting a computerized assessment tool to gauge a defendant’s risk to the public if released before trial. Legislation will go into statewide effect in 2017, transitioning the state from a system that relies primarily on receiving monetary bail as a condition of release to a risk-based system with nonmonetary conditions. The goal is to reduce the unnecessary pretrial detention of low-income people by reducing the role of monetary bail in determining pretrial release.¹⁶

Many initiatives focus on ameliorating the consequences of criminal justice involvement once it has already occurred. As discussed in the first section of this paper, having a criminal record—as 70 million American adults do (Emsellem and Ziedenberg 2015)—or having been incarcerated have negative effects on employment and earnings, particularly for black men. Efforts such as the Ban the Box campaign aim to persuade employers to remove questions about criminal record history from hiring applications so that ex-offenders can market their job qualifications to potential employers before undergoing a formal background

check. Equivalent efforts focus on mitigating other collateral consequences of felony convictions, such as being unable to live in public housing or losing the right to vote.

Justice-related financial obligations may take a considerable toll on upward mobility by harming people and families who are already financially fragile and could be a major contributor to the large racial wealth gap in the United States, particularly that which exists for black people (Zaw, Hamilton, and Darity Jr. 2016). Examples of justice-related financial obligations include fines for criminal and traffic offenses; restitution to victims; and fees to recover costs of the justice and sanctioning process itself, including monetary bail, assessed court fees, probation supervision fees, fees for electronic monitoring, and charges for the provision of a public defender to the indigent. These fees are often associated with low-level offenses, such as traffic violations or misdemeanors, which have received less public and scholarly attention than more serious felony offenses. Unpaid fees can end up marked as a debt in collections on a person's credit bureau file, which in turn can restrict access to credit and increase the price of credit (because of a lower credit score), harm employment prospects, and hinder the ability to rent an apartment (The Structure and Practices of the Debt Buying Industry 2013; Traub 2013). Even for people who have the resources to cover the assessed fees, payment of the fees could lead to nonpayment of other bills, which could then become delinquent and be sent to a debt collector. Justice-related payments can also leave people vulnerable when a financial emergency arises, possibly leading to the use of high-cost credit, such as pay day loans.

As the Justice Department's investigation of Ferguson, Missouri, illustrated, many residents in neighborhoods with high justice system involvement may have outstanding warrants. This includes warrants issued for failure to pay the justice fees and fines discussed above. Outstanding warrants place an individual at constant risk of loss of liberty and can provide a disincentive for engaging in government systems of any kind. ***Fugitive Safe Surrender*** is an example of a systems-level effort to allow nonviolent offenders with arrest warrants to have their cases resolved quickly, often avoiding jail time and simultaneously vacating barriers to employment (such as a driver's license suspension).

TABLE 2F

Examples of Programs and Initiatives Focused on Justice and Safety

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
National Network for Safe Communities			
<p>The National Network for Safe Communities (the National Network) supports cities implementing proven strategic interventions to reduce violence and improve public safety, minimize arrest and incarceration, strengthen communities, and improve relationships between law enforcement and the communities it serves. The National Network's intervention process, based on the school of thought known as "focused deterrence," identifies the small number of high-risk people driving particular serious crime problems and engages with them directly to communicate a moral message from the community against offending, prior notice from law enforcement about the consequences for further offending, and an offer of help from social service providers. This process has been used to address group violence, individual violent offenders, drug markets, intimate partner violence, and other safety issues.^a</p>			
Improving community safety through reduced violence and other strategies supports the stability needed for residents' mobility from poverty. In addition, focused deterrence strategies can help mitigate arrests and incarcerations, which are enormous barriers to economic mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearly 100 cities from over 30 states have employed the National Network's approach 	A meta-analysis of 10 comparison-group evaluations of focused deterrence interventions found that nine of the interventions substantially reduced crime and violence, with homicide reductions ranging from 34% to 63% (Braga and Weisburd 2012). A 2016 synthesis of findings from 43 reviews to identify effective strategies for reducing community violence found that focused deterrence had the largest direct effect on crime and violence of any intervention in the report (Abt and Winship 2016).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget and funding sources vary by site
Roca			
<p>Roca's mission is to disrupt the cycle of incarceration and poverty by helping young people transform their lives. The project includes intensive outreach to reengage young people and build relationships that support change and offers programming that meets young people where they are. Roca operates basic and advanced transitional employment, and works with the city of Boston, several criminal justice partners, and other organizations.</p>			
Engaging young people through positive and intensive relationships helps them gain competencies in life skills, education, and employment that keep them out of prison and move them toward economic independence.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people unwilling or unable to attend traditional programming, work, or school Multiple sites across MA, including Boston, Springfield, Chelsea, Revere, and Lynn 	Performance results indicate high rates of program retention and employment and low rates of arrest and violation. In 2015, 84% of participants were engaged in or had completed the intervention model, 87% retained employment over six months, and 93% had no new arrests. ^b	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay for success funding; private, foundation and federal funding \$11 million annual revenue (FY 2015)

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
New Jersey comprehensive bail reform			
The New Jersey bail reform bill will transition the state from a system that relies principally on setting monetary bail as a condition of release to a risk-based system that prevents thousands of people from languishing behind bars because they cannot afford the cost of bail. The statute also sets deadlines for the timely filing of an indictment and the disposition of criminal charges for incarcerated defendants. The law is scheduled to come into full effect in 2017.			
Reforming bail laws so that low-income individuals are not disproportionately disadvantaged means they will experience less jail time and debt burden of outstanding bails. Less jail time minimizes individual-level interruptions of employment and education, which directly impacts family and community well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide New Jersey court system 	Bail reform has not yet been implemented, but lawmakers anticipate it will decrease the number of low-risk individuals in the jail population. A 2013 analysis of New Jersey jails found that 75% of the individuals were being held before trial, and the average length of incarceration was more than 10 months. Almost 40% of those held before trial were in jail solely because of their inability to pay bail. More than 10% were held because of an inability to pay \$2500 or less to secure their release while awaiting trial (VanNostrand 2013).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State appropriations; additional state and local funding likely \$22 million appropriated to the state judiciary for the development, maintenance, and administration of a Statewide Pretrial Services Program
Fugitive Safe Surrender			
Fugitive Safe Surrender is an initiative that encourages persons wanted for nonviolent felony or misdemeanor crimes to voluntarily surrender to the law in a faith-based or other neutral setting. Managed by the United States Marshals Service as a community reentry program for wanted nonviolent offenders, the initiative allows individuals to turn themselves in to law enforcement and have their cases adjudicated in a safe and nonviolent environment. The goal is to reduce the risk to law enforcement officers, neighborhoods, and the fugitives themselves.			
Giving individuals the opportunity to settle their record and complete required punishment without additional penalty reduces the likelihood that individuals will live off the grid, unable to access employment and other services, and allows them reenter mainstream society and pursue means to mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fugitives who have committed misdemeanors or nonviolent felonies Programs exist in 14 states and DC. 	Performance data show various sites have seen significant uptake of Fugitive Safe Surrender during operations. For example, at the Camden site, 2,245 individuals turned themselves in over 4 days. ^c In Detroit, more than 6,500 turned themselves in over 4 days. ^d	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal funding Budget not available

Notes:

^a "Home," National Network for Safe Communities, accessed August 23, 2016, <https://nnscommunities.org/>.

^b "Proven Outcomes," Roca, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://rocainc.org/what-we-do/proven-outcomes/>.

^c "Fugitive Safe Surrender: Camden, New Jersey – November 19-22, 2008," US Marshals Service, <http://www.usmarshals.gov/safesurrender/camden.htm>.

^d "Fugitive Safe Surrender: Detroit, Michigan – June 4-7, 2008," US Marshals Service, <http://www.usmarshals.gov/safesurrender/detroit.htm>.

Housing

Housing and the communities in which people live influence nearly everything in their lives, from employment prospects to quality of education to health and safety (Blumenthal and McGinty 2015). Lack of stable housing can create a downward spiral for families, in turn affecting their ability to attain economic security, health, mental health, and material well-being. For example, Desmond's (2016) compelling exploration of eviction highlights the ways that changes in the housing market trap low-income black women in poverty.

Housing is often the biggest expense for most households, but unlike some other forms of federal assistance, housing subsidies are not an entitlement. The major federal programs are the public housing and Housing Choice (Section 8) voucher programs; together these programs serve only one in four eligible households, leaving many on lengthy local waiting lists (Turner and Kingsley 2008). Participants in both programs pay no more than 30 percent of their income for rent; the rest is covered through the subsidy, generally administered by the local housing authority. In public housing and the project-based Section 8 program, the subsidy is tied to the unit. The public housing program currently serves approximately 1 million households. Most units are in family developments or senior buildings, but since the early 1990s, the federal HOPE VI program has supported the demolition and replacement of traditional public housing with mixed-income communities that include public housing units alongside market-rate units (Popkin et al. 2004). The Housing Choice Voucher program serves more than 2 million households and provides vouchers that participants can use to rent units in the private market. The local housing authority determines a fair market rent; tenants pay 30 percent of their income and the voucher covers the rest. In theory, voucher holders have the freedom to choose where to live, but the reality is that limits on fair market rents and discrimination against voucher holders means that in practice, most live in low-income communities of color. Even with these limitations, evidence suggests the voucher is a powerful tool for alleviating the worst consequences of poverty: a rigorous national evaluation showed that vouchers reduced homelessness dramatically (Patterson et al. 2004). Further, a new analysis that builds on Chetty's work on mobility (Chetty, Hendren and Katz 2015) finds that children whose families were displaced because of public housing demolition in Chicago and relocated with vouchers were more likely to be employed and have higher earnings as adults than their counterparts who remained in public housing (Chyn 2015).

Four general approaches exist to using housing as a means to help address poverty and promote social and economic mobility. The first approach recognizes that quality housing itself is an important stabilizing influence on the lives of vulnerable families (Lindberg et al. 2010). Evidence shows that families with lower housing expenses spend more on their children for education, clothing, and other needs, and researchers are examining whether housing may also have detectable effects on health and overall well-being (Newman and Holupka 2014). For example, strong evidence has been found about the link between inadequate housing

and family involvement in the child welfare system (Cunningham et al. 2015). Programs such as the **Family Unification Program** offer a deep housing subsidy to families and youth involved in the child welfare system who have recently aged out of foster care, and that subsidy allows them to rent apartments in the private market.

The second approach focuses on efforts to use subsidized housing as a platform for delivering intensive, wrap-around services to vulnerable families. The Urban Institute's **Housing Opportunities and Services Together** (HOST) demonstration (Scott et al. 2013) tests the feasibility and effect of targeting vulnerable public-housing families with intensive case management (giving case managers low caseloads) using a two-generation, whole-family model. The HOST model also includes on-site clinical mental-health services, workforce services for adults, and programs for children and youth. Although the project is still ongoing, early results show high engagement and reductions in reported lease violations

The third approach focuses on using housing as a vehicle for positive residential mobility. Ample evidence shows that where a person lives matters: living in communities of concentrated poverty and disadvantage means living with chronic violence and disorder, poor-quality schools and services; and for women and girls, a coercive sexual environment where harassment and exploitation are so pervasive that they become normalized (Popkin et al. 2015). All of these factors undermine the well-being of children and leave them at risk for developmental delays, academic failure, poor physical and mental health, and involvement in risky and delinquent behavior (Popkin, Acs, and Smith 2009). Residential mobility programs such as the Moving to Opportunity housing voucher experiment and its current-day incarnations, including the **Baltimore Housing Mobility Program**, help families move out of neighborhoods of concentrated poverty into neighborhoods with more opportunity. Early evidence found little if any economic impact of the Moving to Opportunity housing voucher experiment on adults and older youth (Kling, Liebman, and Katz 2007). More recent analyses of Moving to Opportunity find that for children who were younger than age 13 when they moved, total lifetime earnings and college attendance increased and the likelihood of single parenthood decreased (Chetty, Hendren, and Katz 2015).

The fourth approach focuses on redeveloping distressed housing to create mixed-income communities that offer a range of supports to low-income children, adults, and families. This approach is explored more deeply in the section "Place Conscious Strategies to Create Neighborhoods of Choice and Opportunity."

TABLE 2G

Examples of Initiatives Focused on Housing

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Family Unification Program			
Family Unification Program (FUP) is a program under which housing vouchers are provided to families and youth who lack adequate housing and are involved in the child welfare system. Families and youths may use the vouchers provided through FUP to lease decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private housing market. In addition to rental assistance, supportive services such as job preparation and educational counseling are provided to youth by the Public Child Welfare Agencies or community based nonprofits. The program's goal is to prevent or shorten children's involvement in out-of-home care due to inadequate housing and to prevent housing instability for youth aging out of foster care.			
Providing housing to families and youth aging out of foster care who have inadequate housing and family involvement in the child welfare system provides stability needed for mobility from poverty. The program also aims to reduce systems burdens, days in a homeless shelter, and involvement in the child welfare system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with child welfare cases and youth aged out of foster care (18 to 21 years old) More than 300 communities across the US 	Implementation evaluation revealed promising practices, such as screening in high-need families, providing housing search assistance and financial resources for leasing and moving expenses, and linking families to self-sufficiency programs. Sites struggled to systemically target high-need families, align goals and timelines, identify resources for support services, and measure reentry into the child welfare system (Cunningham et al. 2015). Outcome evaluation results forthcoming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal funding \$15 million in vouchers awarded by HUD (FY 2010)
HOST			
Housing Opportunity and Services Together (HOST) is an effort to test strategies that use housing as a platform for services to improve the life chances of vulnerable youth and adults living in public housing. HOST's two-generation, intensive, and targeted core case management component helps parents in low-income neighborhoods confront barriers to self-sufficiency: poor physical and mental health, addictions, low literacy and educational attainment, and historically weak connections to the labor force, while simultaneously integrating services for children and youth.			
Using housing as a platform for intensive two-generation case management and related interventions stabilizes families in public housing and improves employment, educational, and crime outcomes, changing the socio-economic trajectory for families and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High-need adults and youth living in distressed public and mixed-income housing Portland, OR; Chicago, IL; and Washington, DC 	Performance data indicate a decrease in lease violations in Chicago and Portland. ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federal and foundation funding \$1.6 million average annual revenue (FY 2011–15)

Baltimore Housing Mobility Program

The Baltimore Housing Mobility Program (BHMP) provides service-enriched housing vouchers to help low-income families from high-poverty neighborhoods move to strong neighborhoods in the Baltimore metropolitan area. The BHMP works to deconcentrate poverty and expand housing choices for families seeking safer, better-resourced communities. Through group readiness workshops on credit and budgeting, one-on-one counseling, housing search assistance, and security deposit assistance, the program helps families gain access to private market housing in low-poverty neighborhoods, adjust to life in their new communities, and access the employment and educational resources of suburban areas.

Moving low-income families from racially isolated high-poverty neighborhoods to low-poverty racially integrated suburban and city neighborhoods improves family outcomes for quality of life, health, education and employment.	■ Current and former residents of Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) family public housing; those on HABC's Housing Choice Voucher and family public housing waiting lists; and families in certain areas of Baltimore City, MD	Outcomes study and performance data indicate BHMP provides families with access to schools that have more than twice as many qualified teachers, poverty rates that are 50% lower, and better academic performance than their original neighborhood schools (Deluca and Rosenblatt 2011). As of mid-2016, 3,300 families had moved to low-poverty, racially integrated suburban and city neighborhoods. ^b Also see (Engdahl 2009).	■ Federal funding ■ \$51 million annual revenue (CY 2015)
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Note:

a "Home Page," Home Forward, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.homeforward.org/>; "Building Vibrant Communities," Chicago Housing Authority, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.thecha.org/>.

b "About Us," Baltimore Regional Housing Partnership, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.brhp.org/about>.

Community Building and Social Capital

Socially isolated individuals and communities lack access to networks that can provide support and connections to opportunities in the larger society and economy, impeding upward mobility from poverty. One potential way to reduce isolation is by building social capital.

Social capital is the collective value of all social networks (who people know), and the inclinations that arise from these networks to do things for each other (norms of reciprocity). The term refers to a wide variety of benefits that flow from the trust, reciprocity, information, and cooperation associated with social networks. Social capital creates value for the people who are connected and, at least sometimes, for bystanders.¹⁷ Some scholars warn that social capital can be used in negative ways, especially among homogenous groups: for example, privileged groups might use their access to people in positions of power to produce various forms of inequality (Bourdieu 1977) or gangs might use their strong social bonds to engage in criminal activity (Putnam 2000).

The relevance of social capital to economic mobility should be considered both for communities and individuals. In communities, social networks use social capital to enforce norms, deepen civic engagement, and promote community development (Putnam 2000; Gittell and Vidal 1998). Conversely, communities with low economic mobility can experience a downward spiral of social capital: for example, unemployment

can lead to social isolation not just for the unemployed but also for their still-employed neighbors (Putnam and Sander 2009).

According to this model, individuals could potentially leverage social capital to facilitate their own upward mobility, but such leverage has some limitations and potential costs. If the model is correct, individuals could use the social capital created by networks to get by or get ahead (Briggs 1997), often leveraging social capital to gain social status or economic benefits such as job attainment or advancement (Ferragina 2010). Although some studies find that capital generated by social networks is an effective substitute for financial or human capital in mediating economic mobility for individuals (Narayan and Pritchett 1999), others suggest that accumulation of social network capital proves ineffective for households at the bottom of the economic pyramid in highly polarized economies (Adato, Carter, and May 2006). Chantarat and Barrett (2012) find that social capital can be an important facilitator of upward mobility to escape persistent poverty, but they also find that social networking can be costly for low-income people, not all households find it worthwhile to pursue, and the usefulness of social networks depends fundamentally on the underlying structure of the economy in which the individual resides. Low-income women in poor communities often rely on networks to cope with hardship (Belle 1982; Edin and Lein 1997; Stack 1974). However, “draining” ties (responsibilities for or demands by other individuals in your network) and the process through which ties become draining limit the potential benefits of the social networks of those living in urban poverty (Curley 2009).

Initiatives that focus on helping low-income people create social networks can be categorized in four ways: (1) bonding, (2) bridging (Putnam 2000; Gittel and Vidal 1998), (3) linking (Aldrich 2012), and (4) virtual (Steinfeld, Ellison, and Lampe 2008). Below we provide examples of these categories.

Bonding initiatives focus on creating and leveraging social networks among homogeneous groups of people. **The Family Independence Initiative** facilitates the development of social networks among neighbors in low-income communities and explicitly forbids its staff to provide advice or other direct support to goal-oriented support groups of low-income neighbors so as to not interfere with the more enduring social alliances and personal self-efficacy members will develop if left to their own devices.

Bridging initiatives emphasize the development of social networks among heterogeneous groups of people—for example, groups from across class and educational strata—to provide access to information and resources from sources outside the immediate circles of low-income people (Lombardi et al. 2014). **Circles USA** links low-income participants to “allies,” middle- to high-income community volunteers who often reside in different communities and who support participants’ efforts through networking, listening and guidance. Allies often provide tangible resources to participants (e.g., funds for car repair) as well.

Linking initiatives focus on the relationship between citizens and people who have civic authority or power, such as public officials. *The Right Question Institute* teaches low-income participants to more effectively interact with people in authority, such as school administrators and public-agency representatives, to create what they call “microdemocracy,” through which they can participate effectively in shaping decisions that affect them.

Virtual initiatives connect participants to mutual support through social media. The previously-discussed New Haven MOMS Partnership has developed “MoMba,” a social media application that connects new mothers to other new mothers to break down postpartum isolation and promote healthy mother-infant interaction, social connectedness, and community engagement.¹⁸

TABLE 2H

Examples of Programs and Initiatives to Promote Community Building and Social and Civic Capital

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget
Family Independence Initiative			
The Family Independence Initiative leverages the power of information to illuminate and accelerate the initiative low-income families take to improve their lives. The initiative provides forums for low-income families to meet regularly with others facing similar challenges and share ideas and support. Families are paid to share data on income and savings, health, education and skills, housing, leadership, and connections and have access to online data systems. This data-driven approach leads to investments in needed resources such as lending programs and scholarship funds.			
Giving individuals the ability and resources to self-define and actualize their means of overcoming poverty, through coming together, sharing experiences, and building networks, addresses the lack of information and negative stereotypes that can hinder upward mobility. The initiative recognizes low-income families as the best experts at understanding what works within their lives to create self-change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families living in poverty Oakland, San Francisco and Fresno, CA; Boston, MA; New Orleans, LA; and Detroit, MI 	Outcomes study in Boston indicates after six months, average household income rose 13% and average savings increased 22%. Among children in these households, 25% improved grades and 20% improved attendance. Over 500 locally driven initiatives were formed. In Oakland, those participating in the program raised their incomes by 27% on average, and 40% bought homes within three years of program participation (Stuhldreher and O'Brien 2011; Moore 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Private contributions and foundation funding \$6.3 million total revenue for FY 2015
Circles USA			
Circles USA is a model for increasing the capacity of communities to thrive and resolve poverty. Local chapters take a collaborative approach during implementation by building on the strengths of existing community-based organizations. The model focuses on three stages: crisis management and stabilization, education and job placement and job retention, advancement and economic stability. Local chapters participate in a compilation of best practices from several disciplines including community organizing, case management, grassroots leadership, goal setting, financial literacy, mentoring, peer-to-peer counseling and learning, and child/youth development. ^a			
Engaging and connecting people and organizations enables communities to address poverty and help individuals obtain the resources they need to be able to achieve economic mobility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families living in poverty Over 70 local chapters across 23 states in the United States and 5 chapters in Canada 	Performance results from 2014 show that dedicated circle participants increase their income by an average of 181% (Colliers and Lawless 2014).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant funding, corporate sponsorship, and individual donations, among other funding streams \$830 thousand total

Relevance to mobility	Target population and geographic scope	Impact	Funding sources and budget revenue (FY 2015)
The Right Question Institute			
The Right Question Institute has developed an educational strategy to teach individuals, no matter what income or education level, how to ask better questions and participate effectively in decisions that affect them. The Institute's vision of 'microdemocracy' is that democratic action must begin with individual citizens confidently participating in their common and ordinary encounters with public agencies and services.			
Teaching individuals how to ask their own questions, participate in decisions, and hold decision makers accountable makes it possible for more people to participate effectively and confidently in local democratic action and obtain information needed for economic mobility. Thinking critically and asking questions helps in various situations, like parents taking initiative with their children's education or a patient communicating with a health care provider.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Anyone, but targeted at low-income people ■ Urban and rural low- and moderate-income communities around the country. 	Comparison study of one of the Right Question Institute's health interventions found patients who received training in question formulation and accountable decision-making before a mental health visit were twice as likely to retain treatment and three times as likely to have scheduled at least 1 visit during 6 month follow-up than patients who didn't receive the intervention (Alegria et al. 2008). Patients who received training before a doctor's visit valued the training and were more satisfied with care received (Lu et al. 2011).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Individual contributions, foundation grants, service-related revenue ■ \$871,000 total revenue (2015)

^a "Mitigating the Cliff Effects," Circles USA, accessed April 28, 2016, <http://www.circlesusa.org/the-circles-solution/systemic-barriers/>.

Strategies for Combining Building Blocks

Poverty and its causes are both complex. No single initiative or policy can provide the answer to poverty. For example, research shows that efforts to provide high-quality early care and education can have a powerful effect on the future economic mobility of very young children. However, children whose families are not stable or who live in unsafe neighborhoods with inadequate schools are likely to experience effects that high-quality early learning programs alone are unable to address. Lack of adequate health care, nutrition and untreated medical and mental health problems can have a devastating effect on both early learning and ongoing academic success. Thus, strategies that connect multiple building blocks are growing in number and popularity.

Most of the programs featured in the previous building blocks section are themselves part of more comprehensive strategies. In other words, the programs may focus on one or more building blocks but recognize and act upon the need to address other building blocks to achieve outcomes that may extend beyond the immediate scope of one particular program or agency. For example, the employment and training field increasingly emphasizes career pathways, which connect job training to job placement to

higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs, as well help participants access wraparound supports such as child care, transportation, and social capital building through cohort models.

This section features a few additional examples to uncover the methods some initiatives are using to link the multiple building blocks of mobility into more comprehensive strategies for economic mobility. Once again, the examples we feature are not meant to be comprehensive or the best; they are simply illustrative.

Initiatives Generating Comprehensive Personal or Family Mobility Pathways

Some approaches, such as coaching models and two-generation programs, map pathways out of poverty for individuals and families. Although these approaches may recognize such factors as structural racial and economic inequities as the tide against which low-income families often must swim, their primary programmatic focus is on helping low-income people to navigate and cut through the deep waters of poverty on their own personal journeys.

Coaching models generally use trained professionals who work collaboratively with household heads to identify and pursue the right combination of supports and resources for advancing their individual and familial goals. Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath)¹⁹ provides multiple services—both directly and by referral—to help low-income women and their families access and use multiple building blocks to mobility, such as housing, employment and training, and social capital. At the core of their strategy is an innovative coaching model called Mobility Mentoring that addresses the interplay between domains (such as mental health, early care, and work) while incorporating findings from brain science on how the stresses of poverty impact thinking and behavior.

The model is based on EMPath's underlying premise that

moving out of poverty is no longer a short process of following a simple roadmap to a good job. It has become a lengthy, complex navigational challenge requiring individuals to rely on strong executive function (EF) skills (impulse control, working memory, and mental flexibility) in order to effectively manage life's competing demands and optimize their decisions over many years. Experiences of social bias, persistent poverty, and trauma can directly undermine brain development and the EF skills most needed for success. The specific EF challenges in managing thoughts, behavior, and health caused by such adverse experiences are increasingly well understood, and this understanding may be used to improve policy and program design. The areas of the brain affected by adverse experiences of social bias, persistent poverty, and trauma remain plastic well into adulthood and, through proper coaching, may be strengthened and improved. Improvements in executive functioning are likely to positively impact outcomes in all areas of life, including parenting, personal relationships, money management, educational attainment, and career success. (Babcock 2012, 2)

Under the Mobility Mentoring model and the EMPath theory of change called the “bridge to self-sufficiency” (figure 1), coaches help low-income women strengthen five life pillars (family stability, well-being, education and training, financial management, and employment and career management) as a whole so deficits in one pillar do not cause weaknesses in others. Like most pathway strategies, EMPath’s approach does not rely on just one agency for service delivery. Program managers vet and refer to high-quality internal and external programs and partners across multiple domains to achieve intermediate outcomes on the path to self-sufficiency. In addition, EMPath uses its Voices Advocacy Council, a group of former and current EMPath program participants and staff, to guide advocacy efforts aimed at addressing policies that block the road to economic independence for low-income women and families.²⁰

EMPath’s bridge framework and Mobility Mentoring coaching approach are being used by more than 50 state agencies and nonprofit organizations serving hundreds of thousands of clients. These agencies share an open-source community of practice, the Economic Independence Exchange, in which the Mobility Mentoring tools and approaches are measured, evolved, and scaled.

FIGURE 1

EMPath’s Theory of Change



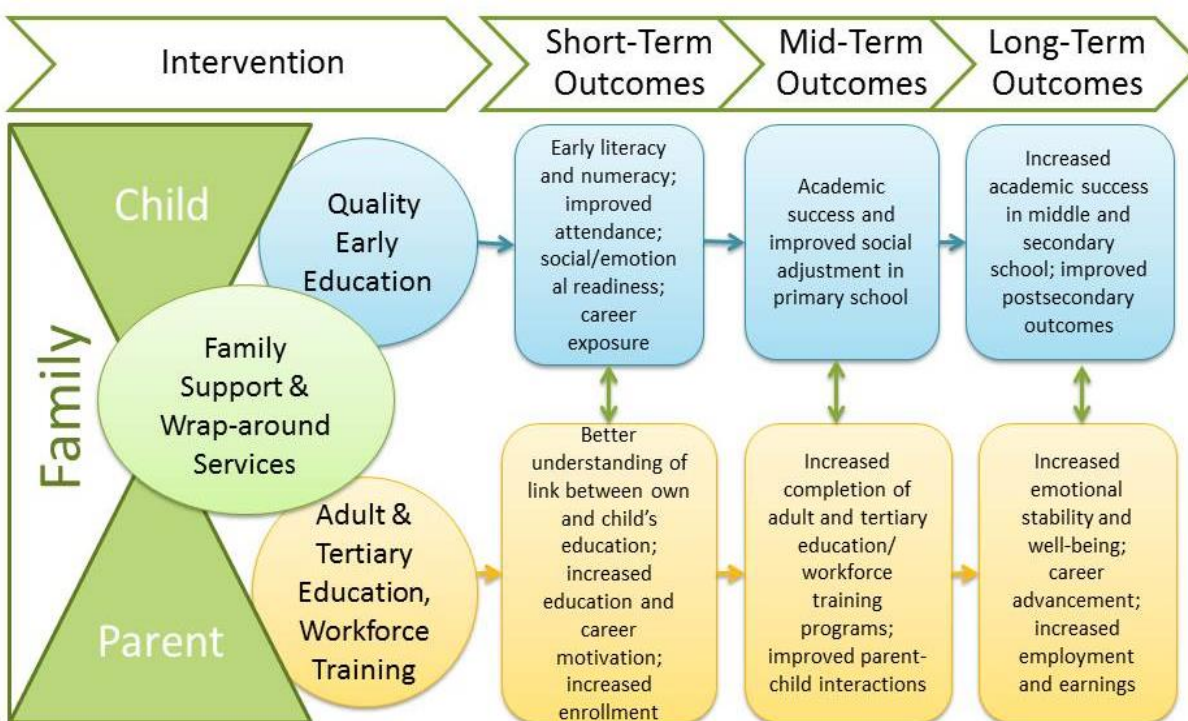
Source: Babcock (2014).

Two-generation approaches strategically link outcomes for children and their parents across education, economic supports, social capital, and health and well-being for both children and parents to promote inter-generational mobility—that is, a legacy of economic security that passes from one generation to the next (Mosle and Patel 2012). CareerAdvance at CAP Tulsa provides sector-based training to parents whose children are enrolled in Early Head Start and Head Start, providing materials, mental health counseling, transportation, and career coaching for families. The driving theory of change behind CareerAdvance is that family economic success will protect and enhance gains made through high-quality early childhood programs even after children transition into the public school system.²¹ Working through several partners, such as the local community college, CareerAdvance offers high-quality training for parents focused on health care occupations, which can offer family-supporting income, benefits, and opportunities for career advancement. Figure 2 presents a graphic of how CareerAdvance program designers and evaluators

conceptualize the link between services and outcomes for children and parents to design a two-generation pathway out of poverty.

FIGURE 2

CareerAdvance Theory of Change



Source: Chase-Lansdale (2011), King and Hernandez (2014), Smith and Coffey (2014).

Place-Conscious Strategies to Create Neighborhoods of Choice and Opportunity

Place-based initiatives map strategic pathways out of poverty at the neighborhood level. Drawing on decades of research about the deleterious effects of distressed neighborhoods on children and families, the premise of these initiatives is that place matters to the academic and economic success of the people who reside there. Place-based efforts often focus on neighborhoods of concentrated disadvantage: urban areas with high poverty, high crime, and chronic distress that blight the life chances of the families who live there (Sampson 2012). Though the mix of supports varies, place-based initiatives generally focus on creating a system of housing, education, social services, and community-building programs for a bounded geographic area that (1) counters the negative influences of crime and poverty and (2) offers mobility-advancing supports, such as good schools, to the individuals and families who live in the place.

Two well-known federal initiatives focus on developing pathways out of poverty at the neighborhood level. One is Promise Neighborhoods, which seeks to significantly improve the educational and developmental outcomes of children and youth in distressed communities by building a complete continuum of cradle-to-career solutions of both educational programs and family and community supports, using great schools as a foundation (Comey et al. 2013). The other is Choice Neighborhoods, which brings together stakeholders to transform distressed US Department of Housing and Urban Development housing and address the challenges in that housing's surrounding neighborhood,²² in part by creating mixed-income communities that do not displace low-income residents. Very few complete studies address the effects of living in mixed-income communities; the only major study has focused on Chicago and finds that low-income families have gained better housing and safer conditions but not access to new social networks that might promote opportunity or mobility (Chaskin and Joseph 2015). Although funding to redevelop distressed housing is at the core of Choice Neighborhoods, the program is designed to catalyze critical improvements in neighborhood assets, including vacant property, housing, services, and schools. There are currently 12 federal Promise Neighborhoods implementation sites and 12 federal Choice Neighborhoods sites.²³

The Purpose Built Communities model focuses on revitalizing both housing and educational pathways within the neighborhoods the initiative targets. To do so, program designers set up a new "community quarterback" nonprofit to take the lead on engaging community members and strategic partners (such as the business community); raising funds; and guiding implementation of carefully connected housing, education, and wellness components. At present, there are 13 Purpose Built Communities across the country, including one in the East Lake community, which in 1995 was one of Atlanta's most blighted and troubled neighborhoods. The community quarterback, the East Lake Foundation, has been recognized by the Urban Land Institute as a national model for community redevelopment.

FIGURE 3

Purpose Built Communities' Vision for Holistic Community Revitalization



Source: "Our Approach," Purpose Built Communities, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://purposebuiltcommunities.org/our-approach/>.

Some place-based pathway approaches reach beyond their immediate geographic footprint to achieve maximum impact. Turner and colleagues (2014) argue that "place-conscious" neighborhood-focused approaches can most effectively promote the economic mobility of residents. Place-conscious approaches have three defining characteristics: (1) they recognize that many opportunities that positively influence economic mobility are located outside the immediate neighborhood, and therefore initiatives that connect low-income individuals and families to city, state, and regional opportunities are important; (2) they may operate both within a neighborhood and by accessing city, state, and federal policies and programs depending on the policy domain; and (3) they understand that residential moves are common for low-income families and individuals and that moves should be supported when they are planned and beneficial and avoided when they are unplanned and unwanted.

Regional, Cross-Sectoral, Jointly Accountable Partnerships

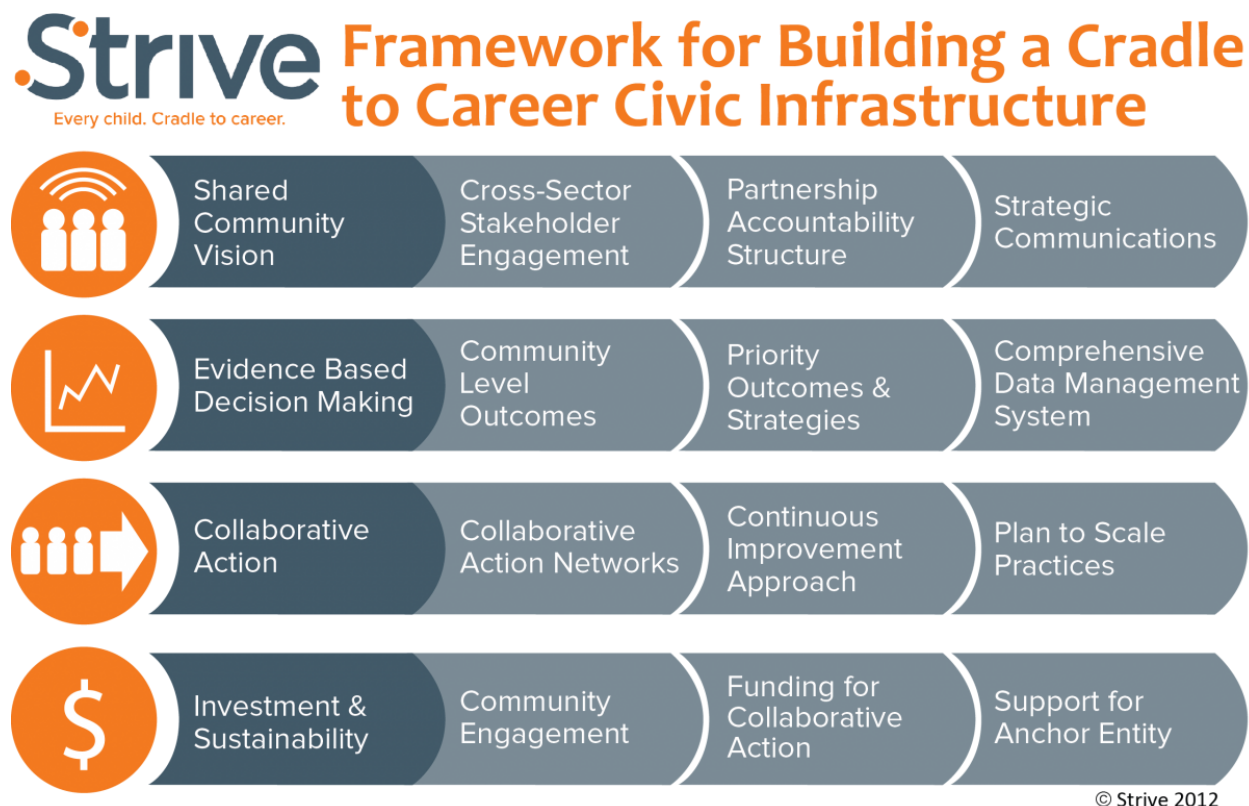
At the city, metropolitan, or regional level, pathway approaches run the gamut from collective impact efforts to urban revitalization. These efforts focus on building the civic and economic substrata, such as physical infrastructure, government accountability, citizen engagement, industry growth, and small business development, for effective pathways out of poverty.

For example, collective-impact initiatives explicitly involve actors from multiple sectors, including nonprofit service providers, community-based organizations, and government and labor-market representatives, who agree to solve specific social problems by adopting a common agenda, aligning their efforts, and setting common measures of success. Like the Purpose-Built Communities' community quarterback, these initiatives generally designate a core organization, often called a "backbone" or "anchor," to convene key partners and drive strategy forward. Though the principles of collective impact can be applied to any size geography, these initiatives typically operate best across cities, regions, and sometimes states, harnessing the efforts of many influential stakeholders. Widespread dissemination of a five-page article in the Stanford Social Innovation Review entitled "Collective Impact" (Kania and Kramer 2011), extensive marketing by consulting firm FSG, and a few follow-up articles (Hanleybrown, Kania, and Kramer 2012; Kania and Kramer 2013) have created a remarkable revolution in government and foundation approaches to community coalition building and collaboration. In fact, many funding organizations are now declaring that they are using a collective-impact approach.²⁴

The Strive Partnership in Greater Cincinnati, which is considered one of the most successful collective-impact initiatives in the country, focuses on improving academic success for students in Greater Cincinnati and northern Kentucky. The Strive Partnership provides a framework for building a cradle-to-career civic infrastructure (figure 4). The success of the partnership has given rise to The Strive Together Cradle to Career Network, which comprises 64 community partnerships in 32 states and Washington, DC.

FIGURE 4

Strive: A Model for Collective Impact Initiatives across the Country



Source: "StriveTogether Framework," StriveTogether, accessed August 23, 2016, <http://www.strivetgether.org/strivetgether-approach/strivetgether-framework>.

Conclusion

This paper provides a framework for organizing and discussing programs and initiatives to promote mobility from poverty. We have identified 13 fundamental building blocks for mobility along with some strategies that work through and combine those building blocks to increase mobility from poverty. To illustrate those building blocks and strategies, we have included many examples of programs and initiatives. The programs and initiatives selected are not meant to constitute a "best-of" list; rather each program was chosen to highlight and exemplify an approach to improving mobility. The list is woefully (but necessarily) incomplete, and there are many well-regarded programs and initiatives that we could not include.

The programs and initiatives featured in this paper operate in a broader policy, economic, and social context that can greatly influence their effectiveness. For example, great education and training programs cannot help individuals lift themselves out of poverty unless the economy generates a sufficient number of jobs. Federal policies of all types, ranging from trade to sentencing to immigration, also contribute

substantially to this context. And policies and programs like TANF, SNAP, and the EITC dwarf programmatic efforts to help low-income families in both scale and reach. Further, a substantial amount of funding for the programs and initiatives within our building blocks and pathways comes from government sources. Changing labor markets, rapidly evolving technology, and structural racism and gender discrimination are also important contexts for individual's experiences and the attendant challenges to mobility. All of these contextual factors are important to consider in concert with the programs and initiatives discussed here.

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