

**State Children's Cabinets and Councils:**

# Getting Results for Children and Youth

*Karen Pittman, Elizabeth Gaines, Ian Faigley*



**the  
forum**  
FOR YOUTH INVESTMENT

Part of the State Children's Cabinets and Councils Series  
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## About the Forum for Youth Investment

The Forum for Youth Investment is a nonprofit, nonpartisan “action tank” dedicated to helping communities and the nation make sure all young people are Ready by 21™ – ready for college, work and life. Informed by rigorous research and practical experience, the Forum forges innovative ideas, strategies and partnerships to strengthen solutions for young people and those who care about them. A trusted resource for policy makers, advocates, researchers and practitioners, the Forum provides youth and adult leaders with the information, connections and tools they need to create greater opportunities and outcomes for young people.

The Forum was founded in 1998 by Karen Pittman and Merita Irby, two of the country's top leaders on youth issues and youth policy. The Forum's 25-person staff is headquartered in Washington D.C. in the historic Cady-Lee House with a satellite office in Michigan and staff in Missouri, New Mexico and Virginia.



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# Acknowledgements

Over the past few years, the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL), the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Forum for Youth Investment (the Forum) have each written about the work of state-level coordinating bodies.\* Three years ago, NCSL, the Forum and the NGA Center for Best Practices joined forces to create opportunities for legislators and executive branch members to come together to discuss child and youth policy coordination strategies. At the same time, NGA and the Forum joined forces to create a learning network for children's cabinet and council directors in which NCSL has been an active participant.

In March 2007, the Forum proposed that the directors of state children's cabinets and councils join forces with the national partner organizations to consolidate and update the knowledge base about children's cabinets and councils. The Forum took on the research and writing project based on broad agreement that this endeavor was worth undertaking. Ten months and dozens of interviews later, we are delighted to unveil the Effective Children's Cabinets and Councils Series.

This project is without a doubt both richer and more useful because of our partnerships with NGA, NCSL and their members. It reflects not only their previous published reports, from which we have drawn heavily, but their direct involvement and review.

The ultimate credit for the products, however, must go to the children's cabinet and council directors themselves. This work is a direct response to their enthusiasm for sharing and learning. It responds to the significant increase in: 1) calls from legislative and executive branch staff who are looking for information on how to get started and 2) calls from experienced directors looking for advice on how to expand, adjust or leverage their current assets to increase their effectiveness, sustainability or reach.

This series is intended to capture and organize the decisions and experiences of more than 20 children's cabinets and councils and present them, for the first time, against an emerging set of expectations about what the public and policy makers could and should expect from them. Thanks to each of the state contacts for their time spent reviewing the documents. They include: Eva Lester (AZ), Mary Ann Hanley (CT), Janice Gruendel (CT), Laura Keisler (DC), Jen Bennecke (GA), Elaine DeCostanzo (GA), Carol Behrer (IA), Shanelle Wagler (IA), Jim Redmon (KS), Mark Washington (KY), TJ Delahanty (KY), Adren Wilson (LA), Sylvia Andrews (LA), Lauren Sterling (ME), Karen Finn (MD), Cassie Motz (MD), Lisa Brewer-Walraven (MI), Julianne Smrcka (NM), Debbie Benson (NY), Bob Frawley (NY), Angela Sausser Short (OH), Janice Hendryx (OK), Mickey Lansing (OR), Terry Maloney (PA), Shelly Yanoff (PA) and Amanda Singer (UT). Thanks also to former Children's Cabinet chairs Suzy Sonnier (LA), Claire Dudley (NM), Arlene Lee (MD) and Patricia Kempthorne (ID) for their added wisdom and review of the materials. Thanks also to Philip Morris USA for their generous support of the Forum's policy work.

As always, while the series reflects the wisdom of many contributors and advisors, in the end it reflects the Forum's point of view. The Forum assumed full responsibility for the development of the series and assumes full responsibility for the conclusions and recommendations offered.

\* See State Youth Policy: Helping All Youth to Grow Up Fully Prepared and Engaged, The Forum for Youth Investment, 2002; A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets, NGA Center for Best Practices, 2004; and State Human Services Organization: Strategies for Improving Results, NCSL 2006.

## State Children's Cabinets and Councils as of May 2008

In states across the country, established through legislative or executive orders, cross-agency coordinating bodies called children's cabinets, commissions, or councils are systematically changing the fragmented and ineffective way states typically do business for children and youth.

Children's cabinets and councils (which vary in structure from state to state) typically are made up of heads of government agencies with child and youth-serving programs, who meet on a regular basis with the collective goal of coordinating services, developing a common set of outcomes, and collaboratively deciding upon and implementing plans to foster the well-being of young people.

### *State Children's Cabinets*

Arizona Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Connecticut Early Childhood Education Cabinet  
 Florida Children and Youth Cabinet  
 Georgia First Lady's Children's Cabinet  
 Kansas Children's Cabinet and Trust Fund  
 Louisiana Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Maine Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Maryland Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Michigan Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 New Mexico Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 New York Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Ohio Family and Children First Cabinet Council  
 Rhode Island Children's Cabinet\*  
 Tennessee Governor's Children's Cabinet  
 Utah Governor's Child and Family Cabinet Council

### *High Level State Councils, Commissions, Collaboratives, Committees*

Connecticut Youth Futures Committee  
 Iowa Collaboration for Youth Development  
 Iowa Empowerment Board  
 Kentucky Youth Development Coordinating Council  
 New York State Council on Children and Families  
 Oklahoma Commission on Children and Youth  
 Oregon Commission on Children and Families  
 Pennsylvania Commission for Children and Families  
 Washington, D.C. Interagency Collaboration & Services Integration Commission

\*Did not respond to request for interview

## Rationale for Big Picture Change Structures

A strong and effective Children's Cabinet can improve coordination and efficiency across state departments and local levels of government; mobilize resources around the governor's priorities for children; facilitate a holistic approach to serving children; and strengthen partnerships with the non profit and private sectors.

A Governor's Guide to Children's Cabinets, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, 2004.

Children's cabinets and councils are typically made up of heads of government agencies with child and youth-serving programs, who meet on a regular basis with the collective goal of coordinating services, developing a common set of outcomes, and corroboratively deciding upon and implementing plans to foster the well-being of young people.

The active study and support of these high-potential children's cabinets and councils is timely. It is becoming increasingly clear that what are sometimes seen as pro forma, political or even practical/budgetary decisions about the structure, composition and authority of children's cabinets and councils can and do make a difference in their capacity to achieve their missions.

Calls for greater coordination, collaboration and efficiency in the provision of youth services came on the scene more than two decades ago and since have been on the "top 10" strategies list for state and local governments\*. The logic behind these calls is difficult to dispute. Services are fragmented. Policies are often redundant and sometimes contradictory. Policy makers are overwhelmed. The public is confused or, even more dangerous, complacent, having decided that everything

has been tried and nothing works. There is growing consensus that there is a need to change the way business is currently done for our nation's youth.

A handful of states, like New York and Maryland, have had permanent children's coordination bodies in place for decades. However, widespread calls for the creation of formal, permanent children's cabinets and councils have come more recently. The sentiment articulated in the NGA quote above reflects growing recognition among governors, legislators, administrators and policy advocates that creating or strengthening state-level coordinating structures may be the cheaper, faster and better alternative for affecting cross-system, cross-outcome change.

In the past, reorganization efforts have focused on restructuring – redrawing the state organizational chart to shift program and administrative responsibilities. However, restructuring alone is seldom effective. Rather than moving the deck chairs on the Titanic, many policymakers are interested in fundamental reform of state human services... Although structural configuration may be one part of organizational reform, other factors... are also critical.

Susan Robison, State Human Services Organization: Strategies for Improving Results, National Conference of State Legislatures, 2006.

Susan Robison, a former staff member and consultant with the National Conference of State Legislatures and the founder of Connexus, researched and wrote a

\*See, for example, Putting the Pieces Together, National Conference of State Legislatures, 1988

report on a wide range of collaborative bodies for the NCSL in 2003 and 2004. In the report, Robison names four promising organizational reform strategies that, in some combination, are being used by states to improve the quality, effectiveness and reach of publicly funded human services: 1) improving frontline service delivery, 2) improving state-local partnerships, 3) reorganizing state agency structures and 4) creating structures to promote collaboration (interagency, state-local and/or public-private).

The confluence of information, authority and influence held by the individuals, departments and governmental branches represented on state-level cabinets and councils gives these entities enormous potential to effect change. State-level children's cabinets and councils, if structured and staffed correctly, have a unique capacity to increase a state's horsepower for changing the odds for its children and youth when they have the attributes listed on the following page.

- (1) ***The opportunity to not only promote but institutionalize a common vision*** (common language, measurable results) of desired child and youth outcomes and needed family and community supports.
- (2) ***The capacity to engage all stakeholders*** as members, partners or key informants.
- (3) ***The capacity to assume shared accountability for child and youth outcomes***, by virtue of their membership.
- (4) ***The authority and resources to:***
  - assess, ***align policies and resource allocations;***
  - increase public and political will and ***build demand*** for improvements within and outside of government;
  - ***engage young people and their families*** in program and policy development planning processes; and

- ***improve*** the quality, quantity and coordination of ***service delivery*** processes, programs and systems.

Like most complex structures, relatively few of these cabinets and councils have fully realized their potential. While there are no hard numbers to date, anecdotes suggest that the success rate of city-, county- and state-level cabinets and councils is relatively low. Some bodies lose steam from lack of focus, authority, resources or momentum. Only a few have demonstrated significant, measurable and sustainable results. Many bodies have had to evolve their structures and strategies over time.

All efforts at creating a children's cabinet or council offer lessons for those embarking on the process for the first time. The decisions, lessons and experiences are ripe for documentation and sharing — both the successes and the challenges.

There are numerous types of state-level cabinets and councils whose members have been charged with various coordinating tasks. In her analysis, Robison recommends that collaborative organizations:

- Focus on results for all children and families.
- Develop broader purpose.
- Develop stronger community connections.
- Develop broader participation.
- Develop broader scope/focus.
- Develop greater authority.
- Focus on accountability.

Governors, legislators, department secretaries and advocates are looking for information on ways to strengthen the structure and function of their existing cabinets and councils or quickly build on lessons learned from other states if they are creating a new one. There is a continued need to push from description to analysis as expectations of what bodies can and should do become higher.



These leaders and policy makers need documentation of what exists and examples of what works. We believe that the time is right to also articulate what should be expected. The essential question for leaders and policy makers to determine is what the changes to the status quo will be. What are the kinds of innovations and efficiencies that the public and policy makers should expect to see if there is a strong cabinet or council in their state? What are the kinds of issues they should expect it to tackle? What is the added value? And what structural supports are needed to ensure that these bodies can live up to expectations? Should Robison's list of trends become an explicit list of goals for cabinets and councils?

These are not idle questions. Some argue that the creation of permanent children's cabinets and councils with the authority and resources to monitor and facilitate change is, in essence, an added layer of bureaucracy. This added layer can only be justified if there is added value. It is difficult to demonstrate added value if there are not well-defined expectations and clear measures of success. The long-term goal is better outcomes for children and youth. The short-term goals, however, require more precise articulation. Increased stakeholder engagement, shared accountability, common vision and results metrics, policy and budget alignment have to be seen not just as organizational alternatives but as industry standards for good government and effective state-level cabinets or councils.

We know that children's cabinets and councils successfully take on many roles related to improving youth outcomes, such as developing a common vision, creating shared accountability and increasing stakeholder engagement. We believe that they can have significantly greater impact if they see these capacities not as a list of optional roles they might play but as a list of expected roles that they should play, directly or indirectly. While the scope, strategies and pacing will vary, there are a common set of tasks that should be considered the core mission of these cabinets and councils. The questions, then, shift from whether to how.

***How can children's cabinets and councils promote a common vision and commitment to measurable results?*** Engage all stakeholders? Assume and promote shared accountability? Take or facilitate complex strategic actions?

***How do decisions made about membership, structure, staffing, and scope of authority*** enhance or limit these bodies' ability to achieve their goals?

***How and how easily can these decisions be changed or developed over time?***

These children's cabinets and councils can be an extremely powerful strategy for change when their mandate is clear and aligned with their structures and functions. We offer this series as a resource to those who want to know more about the structures and functions associated with effective coordinating bodies and the measures that can be taken to achieve them.



# Elements of Success

Children's cabinets and councils are established for a variety of reasons (from system crises to campaign promises to the efforts of individual champions), through a variety of mechanisms (from legislation to executive order to federal funding requirements). They also take on a variety of forms and duties (from service coordination on a single issue to cross-system planning and accountability for a broad slate of results). Whatever their origins and histories, however, all reflect a common set of decisions that have been made (intentionally or unintentionally) about their structure and functions.

Robison identifies six common "elements for success" to consider in designing a coordinating body/collaborative:

- Purpose
- Composition/Participation
- Accountability
- Authority
- Scope and Scale
- Organizational Home

She suggests that these elements:

"reflect characteristics that people in key positions within state and community collaborative organizations identify as critical to success, that are associated with...improvement in statistical measures of child and family well-being, and that state legislators who are champions of human service reform report are critical from their perspective."

NGA, in their 2004 study, affirmed these elements and emphasized a seventh – staffing and operating budget – something most would agree is a critical element. The Forum slightly adapted that list and added additional elements relating to strategies that cabinets

and councils employ. (See Applying the Ready by 21™ Change Model to Children's Cabinets and Councils.) Our discussions with children's cabinet and council directors in the network confirm that these elements reflect the key decisions that have to be made in the design or redesign of these bodies.

These discussions also reinforced the value of organizing these elements to reflect a clear theory of change so that whatever knowledge is available about the interrelationship between these elements can be brought to bear early in the decision-making process.

## Planning for Impact: Linking Goals to Structure to Strategies

If indeed "form follows function," as 20th century architects would have us believe, then state officials looking to create or strengthen their children's cabinet or council should find it useful to have a basic theory of change that links structure to strategies to purpose. These are the three core parts of the Forum's Ready by 21™ Change Model.

The Forum's work, over the past three years, has focused on articulating the principles, processes and practices that increase the capacity of change makers and coordinating structures to define and conduct what we call "Big Picture" work – work that brings a broad range of actors together to address a broad set of issues related to improving outcomes for youth.\*

The work is based on the four premises listed below.

- ***Changing child and youth outcomes requires broad commitments to a comprehensive set of goals that cut across systems and settings.***
- ***Most of those who need to be engaged already are, but they are working in parallel and sometimes at cross-purposes.***

\* Our work around improving outcomes complements the work that Mark Friedman, director of the Fiscal Policy Studies Institute and author of *Trying Hard Is Not Good Enough*, has done to bring results-based accountability to many states as the preferred method of defining outcomes and turning the curve on key indicators of child and youth well-being (see *Results Based Accountability and Ready by 21: Dual Frameworks for Improving Youth Outcomes*).

- *Focusing on helping leaders think differently, act differently and act together to change the odds for children and youth is an effective, efficient, expedient way to improve overall community capacity and increase public and political will.*
- *Leaders need program and policy examples, but they also need big ideas and practical tools and tips for reconfiguring structures, strategies and partnerships.*

For obvious reasons, a good deal of our work has focused on both articulating and deepening the capacity of state-level children's cabinets and councils. We see them as ideal structures for generating big impact results because of their capacity to create (or mandate) partnerships and define big picture goals for children and youth. They are also in a position to move a comprehensive agenda for children and youth: agendas that span development (pre-natal to early adulthood), outcomes (cognitive to physical to civic), settings and systems.

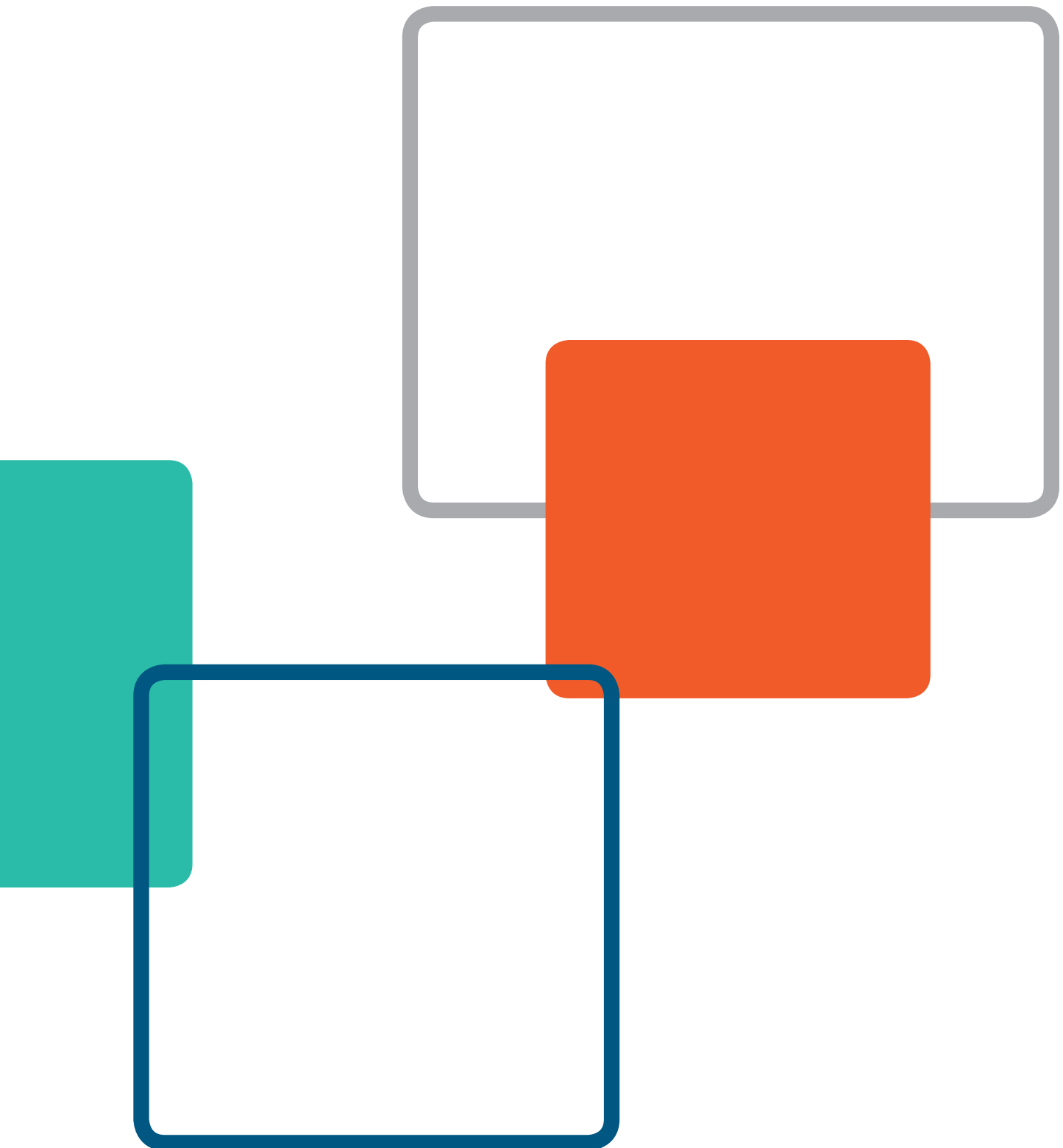
Our assertion is that, contrary to popular belief, the effectiveness of these bodies is not dependent on their ability to define a narrow focus, but on their ability to lay out a comprehensive set of goals for children and youth and coordinate complex agendas. Recent research by the Center for the Study of Social Policy supports this assertion, finding that:

the scope of issues [addressed by a community decision-making entity] did not impact success. The number of issues that were the focus of... [the] entity's work did not appear to impact their ability to be successful. In fact, success was found among... entities that focused on as few as two (2) or as many as fifty (50) indicators.

Working Together to Improve Results:  
Reviewing the Effectiveness of Community  
Decision-Making Entities, Center for the  
Study of Social Policy, 2006

Our hypothesis is that the effectiveness of a cabinet or council is linked to its members' ability to articulate a common vision, create a climate and metrics for shared accountability, engage all stakeholders and implement an integrated set of change strategies. The body's ability to perform these tasks, however, is in turn influenced by its structural characteristics – e.g., composition, authority and resources.

The Children's Cabinet and Councils Network has found the Forum's Ready by 21™ Change Model to be a valuable tool for explaining the potential of cabinets and councils, assessing their progress and identifying options for improvement. This is presented on the following pages.

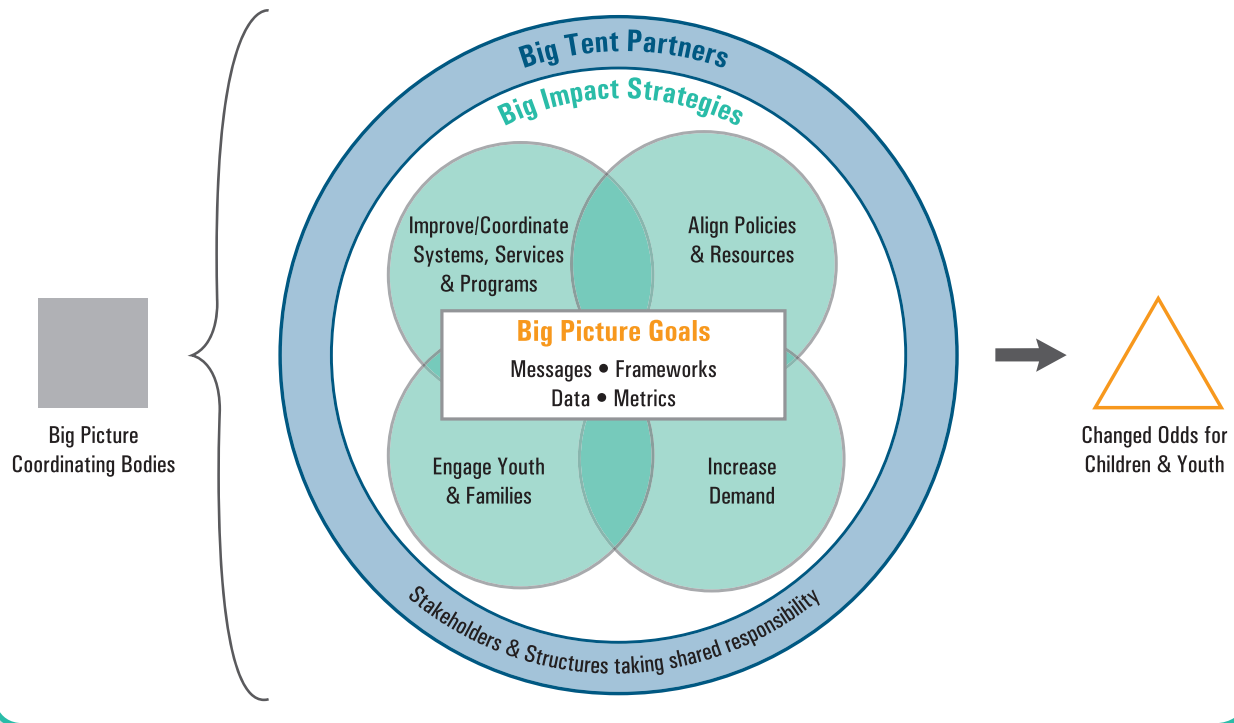




All youth ready for college, work & life.

# READY BY 21™ BLUEPRINT FOR ACTION APPLIED TO CHILDREN'S CABINETS AND COUNCILS

Ready by 21™ Blueprint for Action



The Children's Cabinet and Council Network has found the Forum's Ready by 21™ Blueprint for Action to be a valuable tool for explaining the potential of cabinets and councils, assessing their progress and identifying options for improvement. The elements of the model are straightforward. They are, in fact described in narrative form in the bullets at the opening of the Rationale section. The three distinct components of the change picture represent the three major components that have to be aligned to maximize impact:

**Big Picture Goals**  
Messages • Frameworks  
Data • Metrics

## **Big Picture Goals**

Articulating common set of desired youth outcomes and needed family and community supports and collecting the right data to show progress.



## **Big Tent Partners and Big Impact Strategies**

Ways to engage stakeholders to assume shared responsibility and undertake work to align policies/resources, increase demand, engage youth and families, and improve the quality and coordination of services.



Big Picture  
Coordinating Bodies

## **Big Picture Coordinating Bodies**

The composition, authority, home, scope and budget of the coordinating body.

There are two ways that coordinating bodies can increase their capacity to orchestrate changes in child and youth outcomes. They can strengthen the stability and capacity of their structures and/or increase their capacity to engage stakeholders in order to assess, improve and coordinate the change. The emerging recommendations for children's cabinets and councils and options for achieving them are outlined on the opposite page.

## Cabinet and Council Goals

### Big Picture Goals

Messages • Frameworks  
Data • Metrics

### Messages and Frameworks

**Recommendation:** Use framework that covers the full range of developmental stages (ages), developmental areas (e.g. Ready for College, Work and Life) and needed family and community supports (e.g. the 5 Promises).

**Variation:** Expand the framework to cover families and communities.

### Data and Metrics

**Recommendation:** All departments use common core set of child and youth indicators.

**Variation:** Core group of departments start the work with others phased in.

## Cabinet and Council Structural Considerations

### Organizational Home

**Recommendation:** Housed in Governor, Lt. Governor or First Spouse's office to provide leadership and maintain neutrality among state agencies.

**Variation:** Housed in free-standing independent state agency, or nonprofit/intermediary.

### Authority

**Recommendation:** Authority to make planning and implementation decisions; influence policy; direct/redirect resources.

**Variation:** Authority to raise new funds, allocate resources.

### Parallel Local Structures

**Recommendation:** Support a system of local versions of children's cabinets and councils with resources and technical assistance.

**Variation:** Seek input from existing local structures.

### Scope of the Vision and Mission

**Recommendation:** Broad focus on all children and youth

**Variation:** Phase in the full breadth of child and youth needs over time.

### Staffing and Resources

**Recommendation:** Enough staff to manage the work of the cabinet; dedicated funding pooled from several departments.

**Variation:** Departments pool staff on tasks as needed, but one permanent staff still critical.

### Composition and Scale

**Recommendation:** Formal membership should include full range of agency heads; should not be too large.

**Variation:** Formal membership also can include legislators as ex-officio members, and the chairs of non-governmental advisory group and of youth council.

## Cabinet and Council Partners

### Big Tent Partners

**Recommendation:** Develop advisory council of advocates, business leaders, community- and faith-based organizations. Develop sub-council of state agency career staff. Develop youth councils of young people.

**Variation:** Involve partners in children's cabinet and council work groups.

### Shared Responsibility

**Recommendation:** Performance measures and evaluation and reporting requirements (departments may have additional measures to supplement the core set).

**Variation:** All departments use their own measures but translate how they map into the common core set.

## Cabinet and Council Strategies

### Engage Youth and their Families

**Recommendation:** Create a system for all youth and their parents to engage in local decision-making.

**Variation:** Hold youth and parent forums, conduct youth and parent surveys and focus groups.

### Align Policies and Resources

**Recommendation:** Create a children's report card (child and youth outcomes) and children's resource map (spending on children and youth) and use them to drive collective policy and funding decisions.

**Variation:** Review existing agency indicators and budgets to drive collective policy and funding decisions.

### Increase Demand

**Recommendation:** Host legislative forums; engage public agency staff; conduct polling and focus groups to develop messages and use them to align communications of all departments.

**Variation:** Partner with non-governmental organizations to develop integrated communications plan.

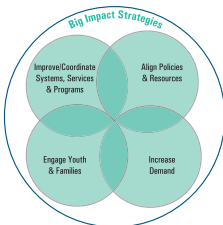
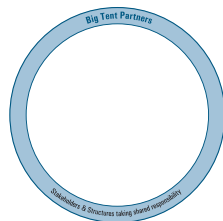
### Improve Services and Coordinate Systems & Programs

**Recommendation:** Develop common assessment criteria, Technical Assistance plan, workforce development strategy and research agenda across agencies.

**Variation:** Review existing departmental criteria, plans, strategies and agendas to reveal gaps and overlaps.



Big Picture  
Coordinating Bodies



## About the State Children's Cabinets and Councils Series

In preparing this guide, we determined that the best method to organize this information was in a way that a) does justice to its providers and b) engages prospective readers, especially if it is assumed that they are equally busy. Rather than producing a lengthy report with chapters and appendices, the Forum decided to create a series of short, stand alone documents that can be released when ready and updated when needed.

"Getting Results", the Directory, and the "Elements of Success" Issue Briefs that comprise this new series capture and organize the decisions and experiences of more than 20 children's cabinets and councils and presents them, for the first time, against an emerging set of expectations about what the public and policy makers could and should expect from them.

*State Children's Cabinets and Councils: Getting Results for Children and Youth* delves into the "why" question. It provides the rationale behind the Forum's assertion that children's cabinets and councils should be taken seriously, spells out how state children's cabinets and councils are operating in ways that are consistent with the Forum's assumptions about change, identifies challenge areas, and introduces the Ready by 21™ Change Model that is used to frame the issue briefs and directory.

*The 2008 Directory of State Children's Cabinets and Councils* provides at-a-glance responses to basic but important questions: which states have these children's cabinets and councils? Who is involved in them? What do they do? The guide provides summaries of interviews done with children's cabinet and council directors in the latter half of 2007. In addition to one-page summary sheets on each state body, the Guide includes summary tables that allow readers to look for similarities and trends across the states. The Forum is committed to working with these directors to update this information each year.

*Children's Cabinets and Councils Elements of Success Issue Briefs* provides more in-depth information on each of the elements. The four-part series will be released quarterly in 2008.

- **Structure** outlines the range of current children's cabinet and council structures in place and offers tips, warning and options for getting the most effective structure in place. This issue brief builds heavily on the detailed documentation work done by Susan Robison for National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and Anne Segal for the National Governors Association (NGA) Center on Best Practices.
- **Creating a Common Framework** documents the experience of states attempting to develop comprehensive and yet organized goals (results), select indicators, and communicate a common vision for children and youth that cuts across systems and sectors. This issue also discusses the value of blending the popular Results Based Accountability approach with the Forum's Ready by 21™ Big Picture planning approach, a process that has proven useful to several cabinets and councils.
- **Integrated Change Strategies** reviews both common and innovative strategies and tactics being employed by children's cabinets and councils to increase demand, align policies, improve services and engage youth and families and provides examples of trend setting states.
- **Stakeholder Engagement and Shared Accountability** delves into two of the unique roles that a children's cabinet or council is positioned to fill. There are numerous lessons learned from children's cabinets and councils, some of which are no longer active, that suggest that coordinating bodies need to address how to a) develop a sense of shared accountability and b) engage a wide range of stakeholders in order to have the momentum and support base needed to be effective and sustainable.

In addition to these short reports, the Forum regularly posts documents or links that provide examples of enabling legislation, state report cards and action agendas, children's resource maps and other documents. We encourage those interested in learning more about coordinating bodies to visit the web site of the Forum for Youth Investment, [www.forumfyi.org](http://www.forumfyi.org) and click on the Youth Policy Resource Center for the latest announcements and documents from and about existing children's cabinets and councils.

# Related Publications from the Forum for Youth Investment

## Adding It Up: A Guide for Mapping Public Resources for Children, Youth and Families

This guide is a joint effort from the Forum for Youth Investment and The Finance Project designed to help decision makers and community leaders both learn the importance of a good children youth and families (CYF) resource map and map out the process of creating or improving a CYF map of their own. In order to help busy leaders organize their time and the process of getting started, we have packaged the guide in three parts:

- **A Brochure**

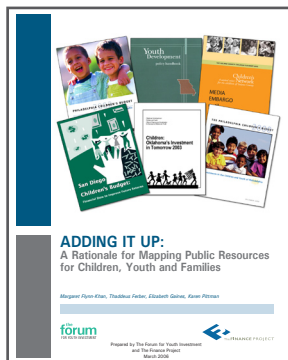
Offering the highlights of what a CYF map can do and why a state or community might benefit from one.

- **A Rationale for Mapping Public Resources for Children, Youth and Families**

This introduction explains the why, how and what behind creating a CYF resource map. Setting the stage for what's involved in the process, this overview provides a good framework for understanding both the benefits and the challenges of getting the job done right. Available online at [www.forumfyi.org/node/86](http://www.forumfyi.org/node/86).

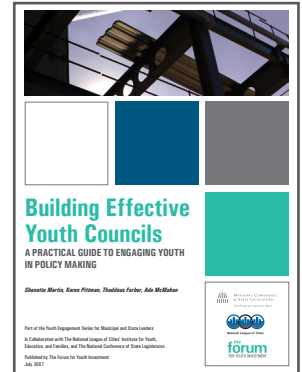
- **A Guide for Mapping Public Resources for Children, Youth and Families**

The "meat and potatoes" of the guide, the handbook has been designed to clarify the process of creating and implementing an effective CYF resource map. With special attention paid to helping users avoid pitfalls and work from examples of others' experience, the guide combines tips, tools, worksheets and everything a planning team might need to kick off a CYF resource map development process or reconfigure an existing one for greater success. Available online at [www.forumfyi.org/node/86](http://www.forumfyi.org/node/86).



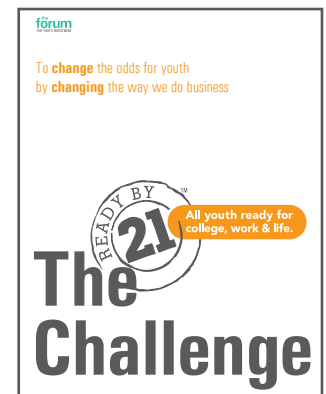
## Building Effective Youth Councils: A Practical Guide to Engaging Youth in Policy Making

This guide is designed to help state and localities to create or strengthen their own youth councils. It is a synthesis of theory and practice. This guide provides a general framework for thinking about youth councils, explaining the principles of youth action and the importance of youth engagement. It also incorporates advice and lessons from people "in the field" who have started or currently staff youth councils across the country.

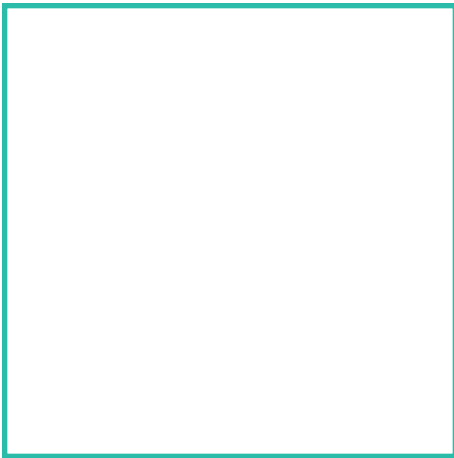
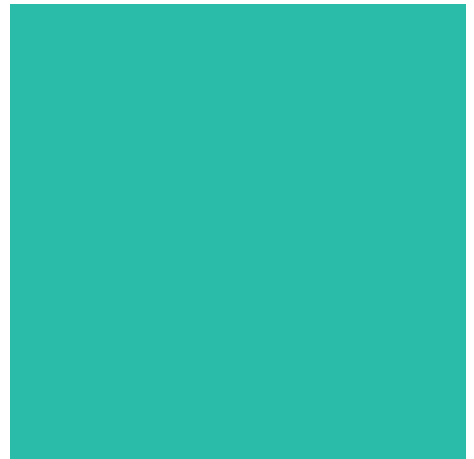
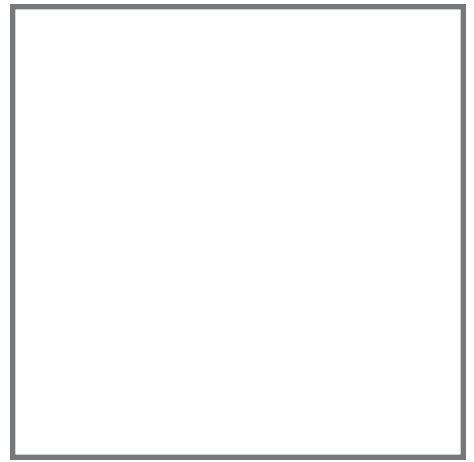
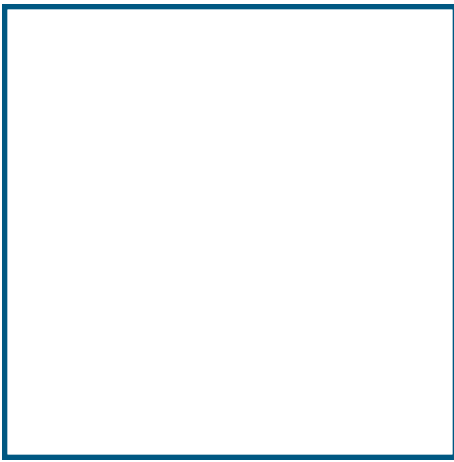


## Ready by 21: The Challenge

"The Challenge" is the definitive guide to the key ideas and resources behind the Ready by 21 Challenge. Too few young people are entering adulthood ready and our collective efforts to make a difference are far too fragmented to have a big impact. Changing the way we do business means that we need to throw out old assumptions about how change happens and engage youth and adult change makers with the ideas, resources and tools that help them. Leaders need to learn to focus and prioritize differently using a Big Picture Approach, so that together they can set bigger goals, use bolder strategies and be better partners, within an overall Blueprint for Action.







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