

Ben Goodwin  
Our House, Inc.  
Little Rock, Arkansas

**The Two-Generation Approach**  
Empowering Low-Income Parents to Be Their Child's Best Advocate

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**Overview of Presentation**

- What is the "Two-Generation Approach?"
- What is Our House?
- Why take a Two-Generation Approach?
- How programs can move towards a Two-Generation Approach.
- "Be Your Child's Best Advocate" as a 2-Gen Framework



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**A Definition**

Two-generation strategies intentionally and systematically connect adult/child investments for larger, longer lasting impacts on family economic success.

-Dr. Christopher King  
University of Texas



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### My Definition

Programs that work with parents **and** children **and** whole families in a coordinated way to empower them to overcome poverty.



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### National Resources

Ascend Network, Aspen Institute

Urban Institute

Many Foundations

“2-Gen” or “2Gen”



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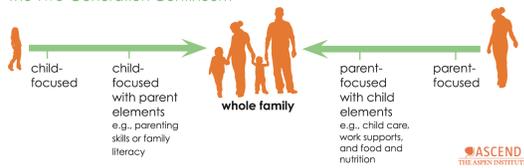
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### Where does your organization fall on this continuum?

The Two-Generation Continuum



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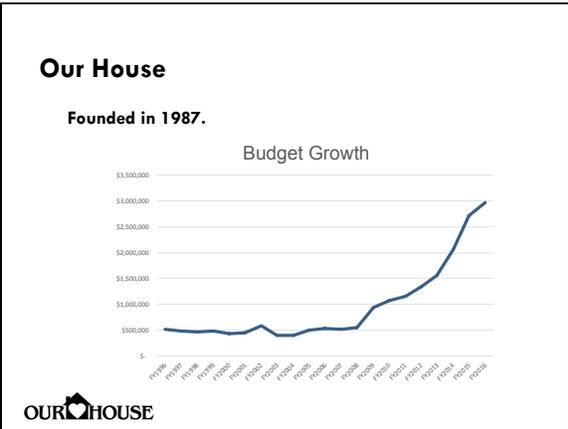
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**Our House**

**7-acre campus, "one-stop shop"**

**Serve 1,800 people/year**

**Serve 200 adults and 300 children each day**

**Housing for 110 people each night**

**Licensed, quality-rated children's programs**

**Workforce programs**

**OUR HOUSE**

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**OUR HOUSE**

**Housing**

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OUR  HOUSE Housing

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OUR  HOUSE Out-of-School Time Program

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OUR  HOUSE Out-of-School Time Program

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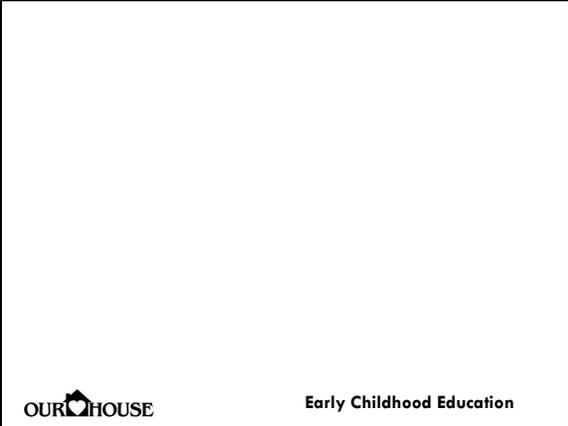
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OUR HOUSE

Homelessness Prevention

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### Why take a two-generation approach?

Because it works!

82% of school-age children showed improvement in math & English grades

98% of pre-school children met all developmental milestones

550 adults found full-time employment

93% of prevention clients avoided homelessness

OUR HOUSE

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Average Household Income Change - 136 CAFSI Families



OUR HOUSE

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**Why does it work?**

Activates highest motivation of parents.

And children! Parents and children provide the core "support network" for each other.

Creates sustainable, reinforcing positive dynamic that lasts beyond the "intervention".



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Video can be found at [goo.gl/AZalQL](http://goo.gl/AZalQL)

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**How can programs move toward a two-generation approach?**

Identify where you are on the continuum.



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**Tips for children-serving programs:**

Create more and better opportunities for program staff to interact with parents, and train and equip them to make good use of these opportunities.

Parent/teacher conferences

Family fun nights

Parent-led activities



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**Tips for all programs:**

In your own programs, model the importance of empowerment by:

Operate quality programs—and communicate this to your clients.

Listen to your clients—provide fora for constructive feedback (surveys, focus groups, program evaluations).



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**Tips for all programs:**

Efficiency is important. Low-income parents don't have much spare time.

Make sure your program schedules accommodate parents.

Provide child care. Provide a meal.



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**Tips for all programs:**

Efficiency is important. Low-income parents don't have much spare time.

Make the most of brief interactions.

[www.tipsforgreatkids.com](http://www.tipsforgreatkids.com)



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**Tips for all programs:**

Two-generation approaches require a big investment of time, money, and strategic focus.

Long-term, diverse programming.

Well-trained (and well-selected) staff who are bought into the concept.



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**“Be Your Child’s Best Advocate”:  
The Concept**

Equipping parents with the skills to interact with systems on behalf of their children and their family.

Acknowledging parents' leadership/expertise, which is more empowering, motivating, and sustainable.

Sustainability: equipping parents with the skills they need to tackle whatever life throws their way.



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