



# Two Generations, One Future

Leveraging the Two-Generation Approach for Families

 **ASCEND**  
THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

# Our Vision

**WE ENVISION** **AN AMERICA**  
**IN WHICH A LEGACY OF ECONOMIC**  
**SECURITY AND EDUCATIONAL**  
**SUCCESS** **PASSES**  
**FROM**  
**ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT.**



# Ascend at the Aspen Institute

WE ENVISION **AN AMERICA**  
IN WHICH A LEGACY OF **ECONOMIC**  
**SECURITY** AND **EDUCATIONAL**  
**SUCCESS** PASSES FROM  
ONE GENERATION TO THE NEXT.

Nonpartisan national  
hub

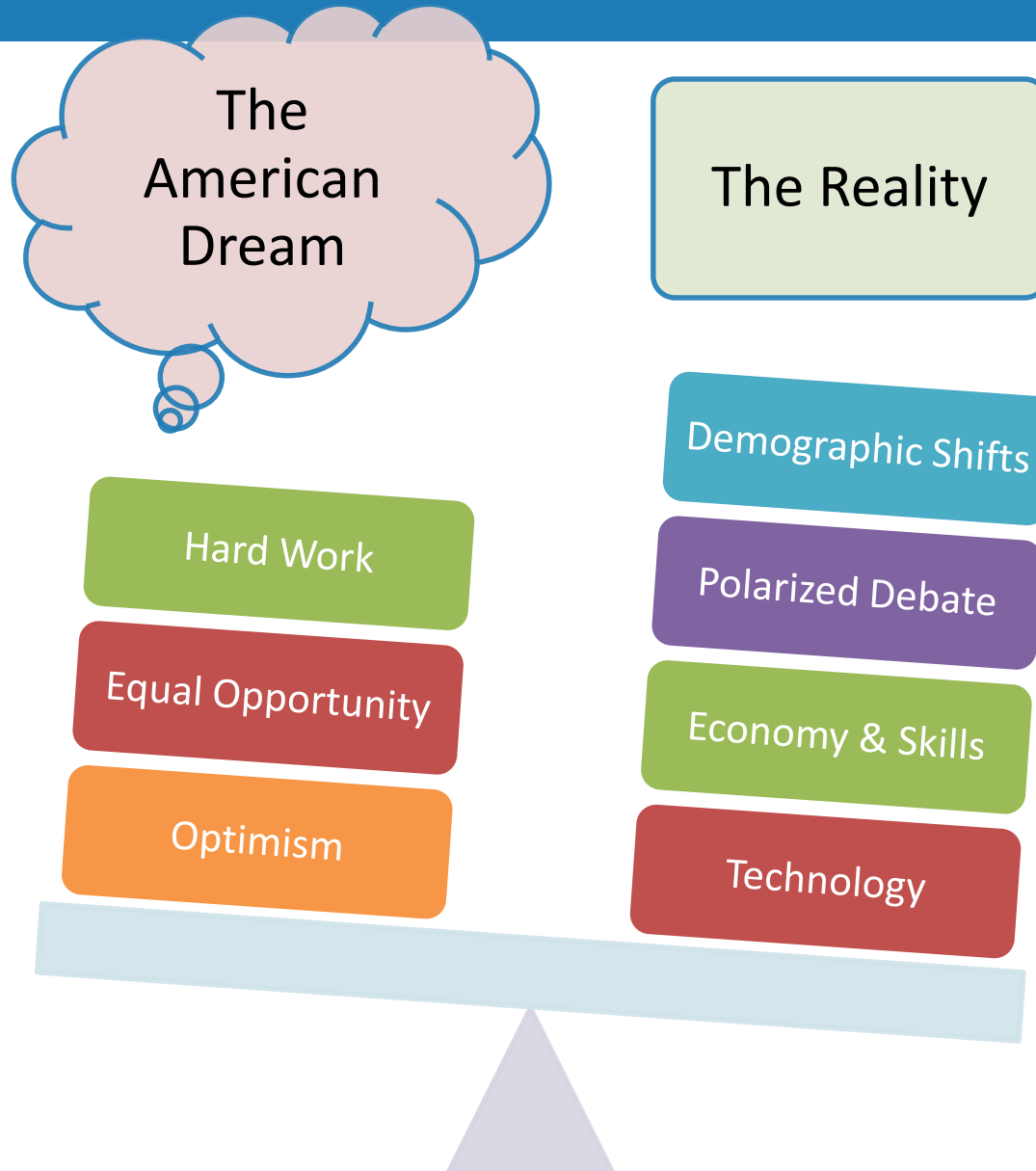
Solutions, leaders, and  
resources

Fueling cross-sector  
collaboration

Investing in a bold,  
networked way of  
working



# The U.S. in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

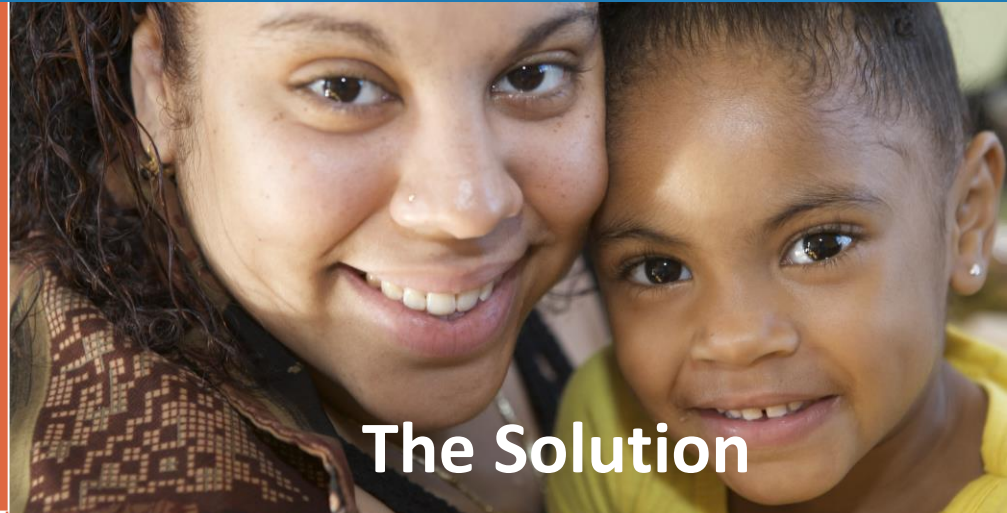


# Breaking through the silos



## The Need

Fragmented policies and programs that address the needs of children and parents separately leave either the child or parent behind and dim each family's chance at success.



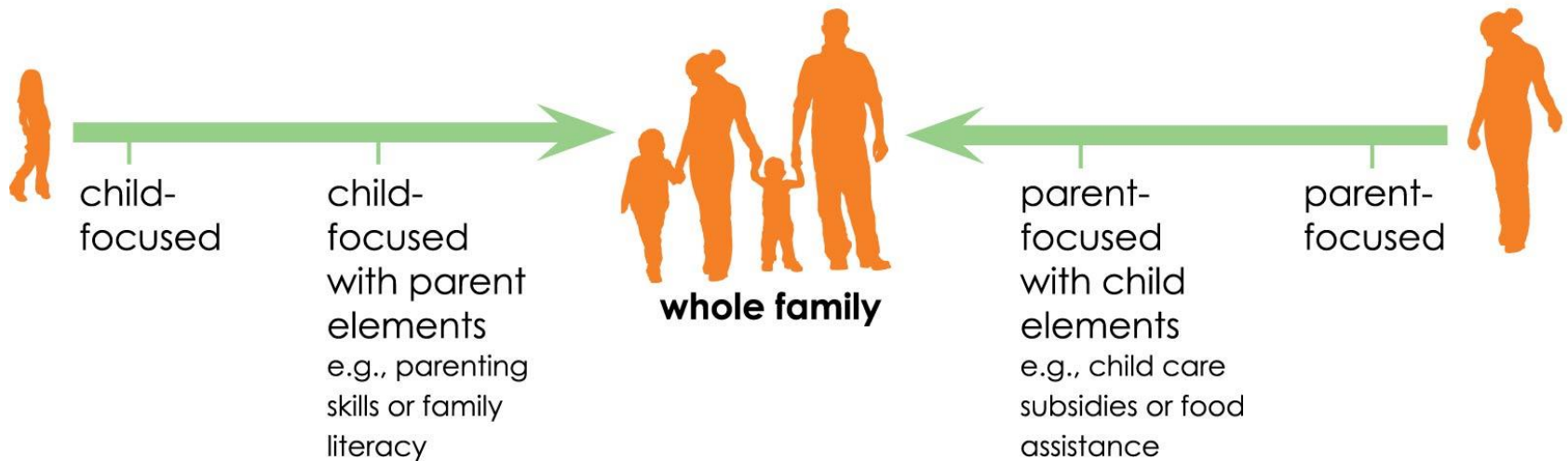
## The Solution

Policies and programs that address the needs of *children and their parents together* can harness the family's full potential and put the *entire family* on a path to permanent economic security.



# Integrating a 2Gen Lens

## The Two-Generation Continuum

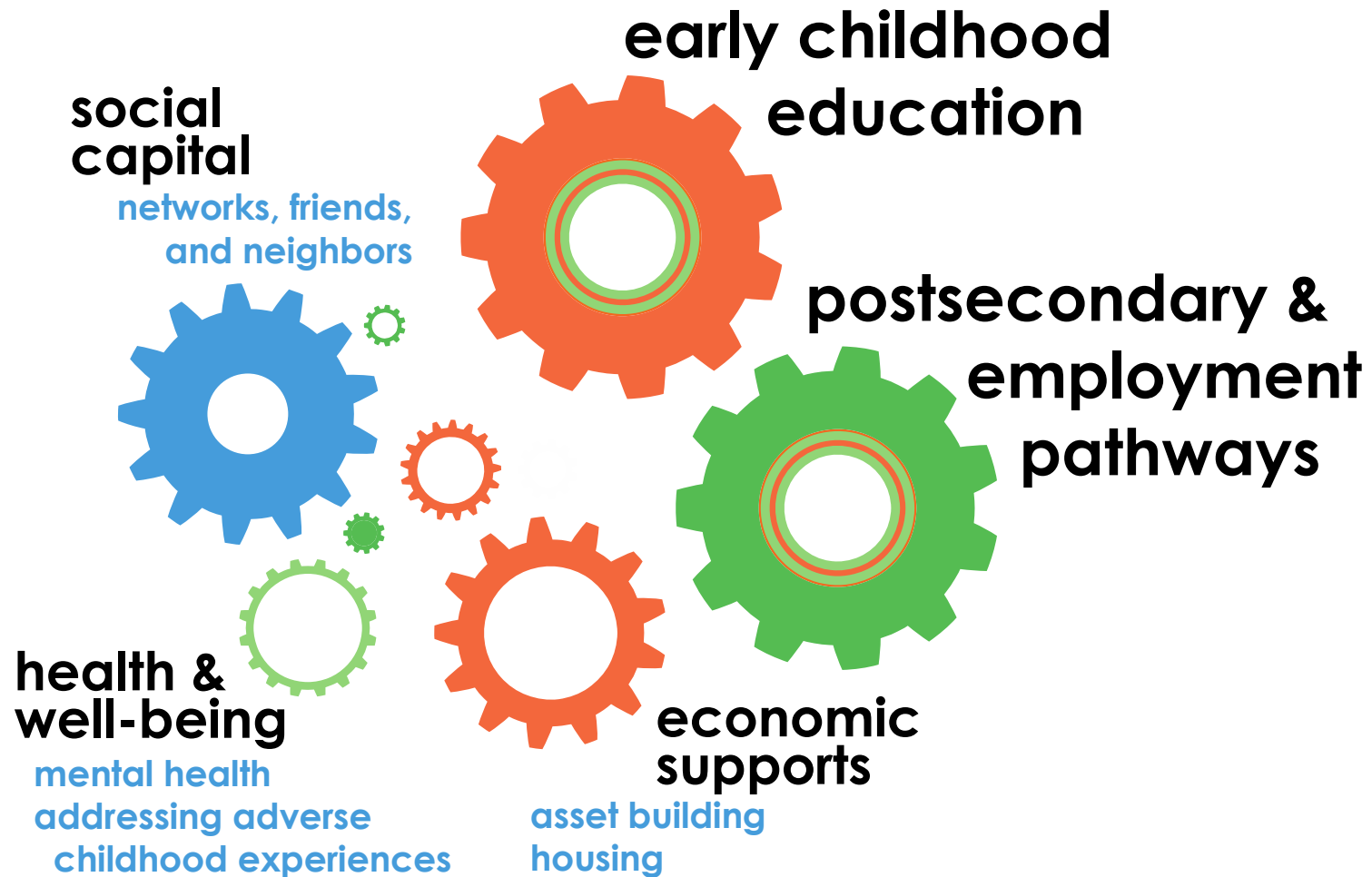


**Two-generation approaches** provide opportunities for and meet the needs of children and their parents **together**.



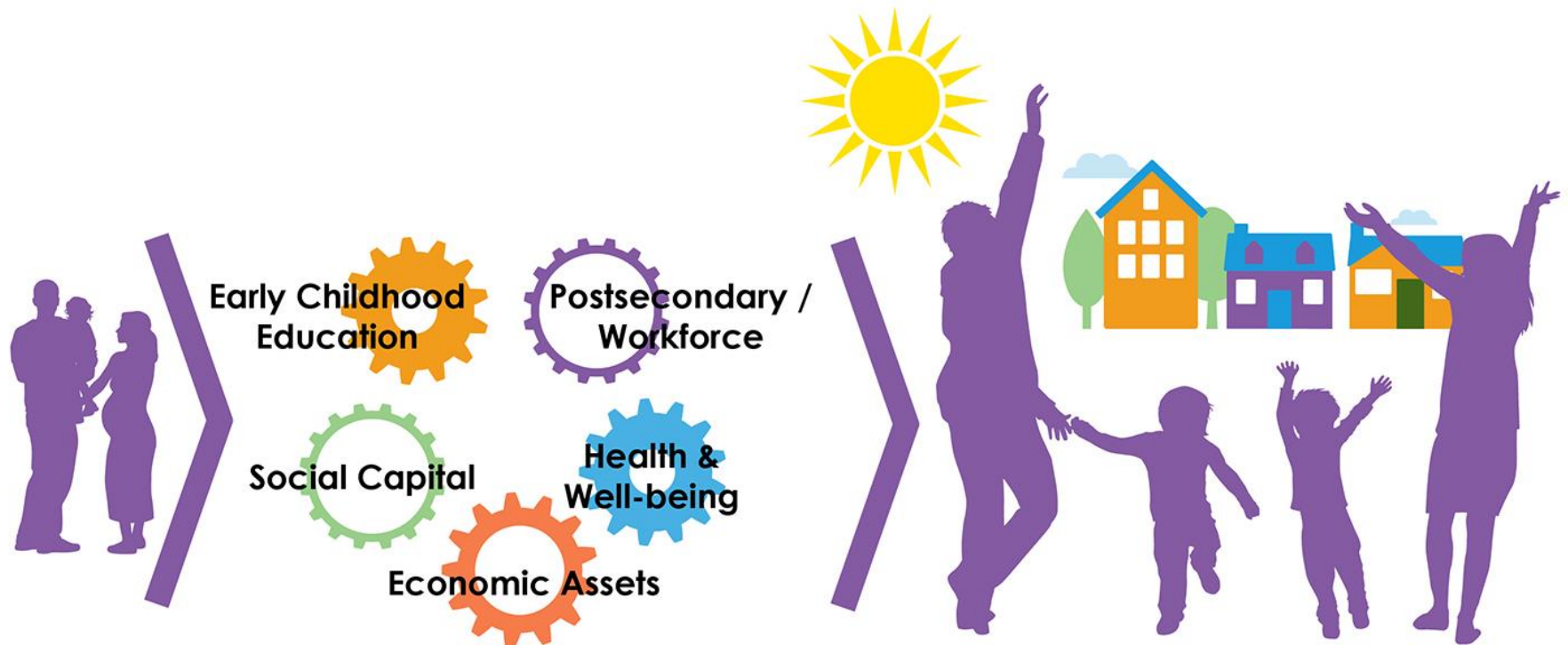


# Core components



# Emerging 2Gen Theory of Change

## Two-Generation Theory of Change for Whole Family Success



Core components + Child and parents together = Family success



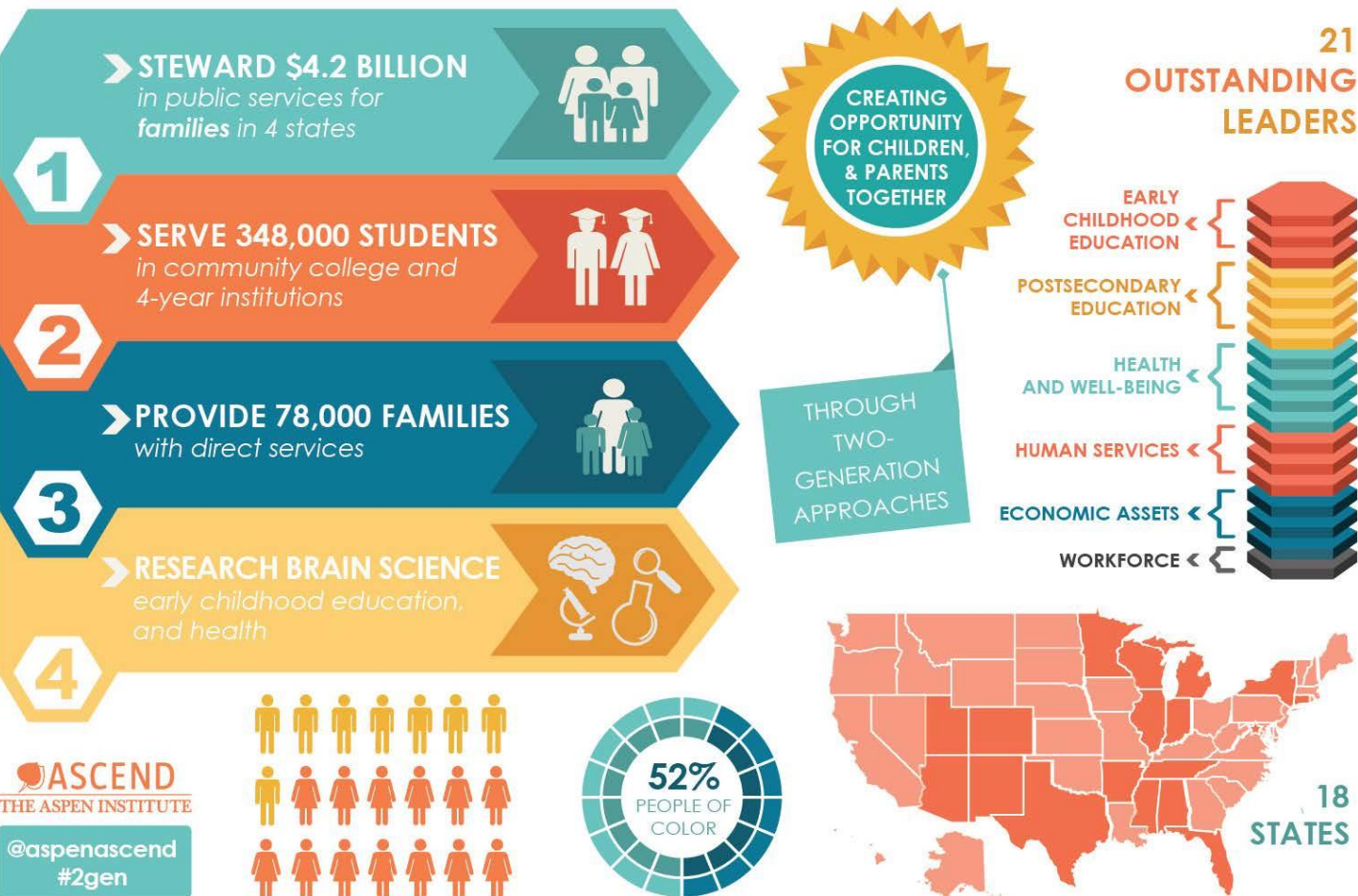
# Ascend Network = Solutions and Leaders

Mobilize empowered **two-generation organizations and leaders to influence** policy and practice changes that increase economic security, educational success, social capital, and health and well-being **for children, parents and their families.**

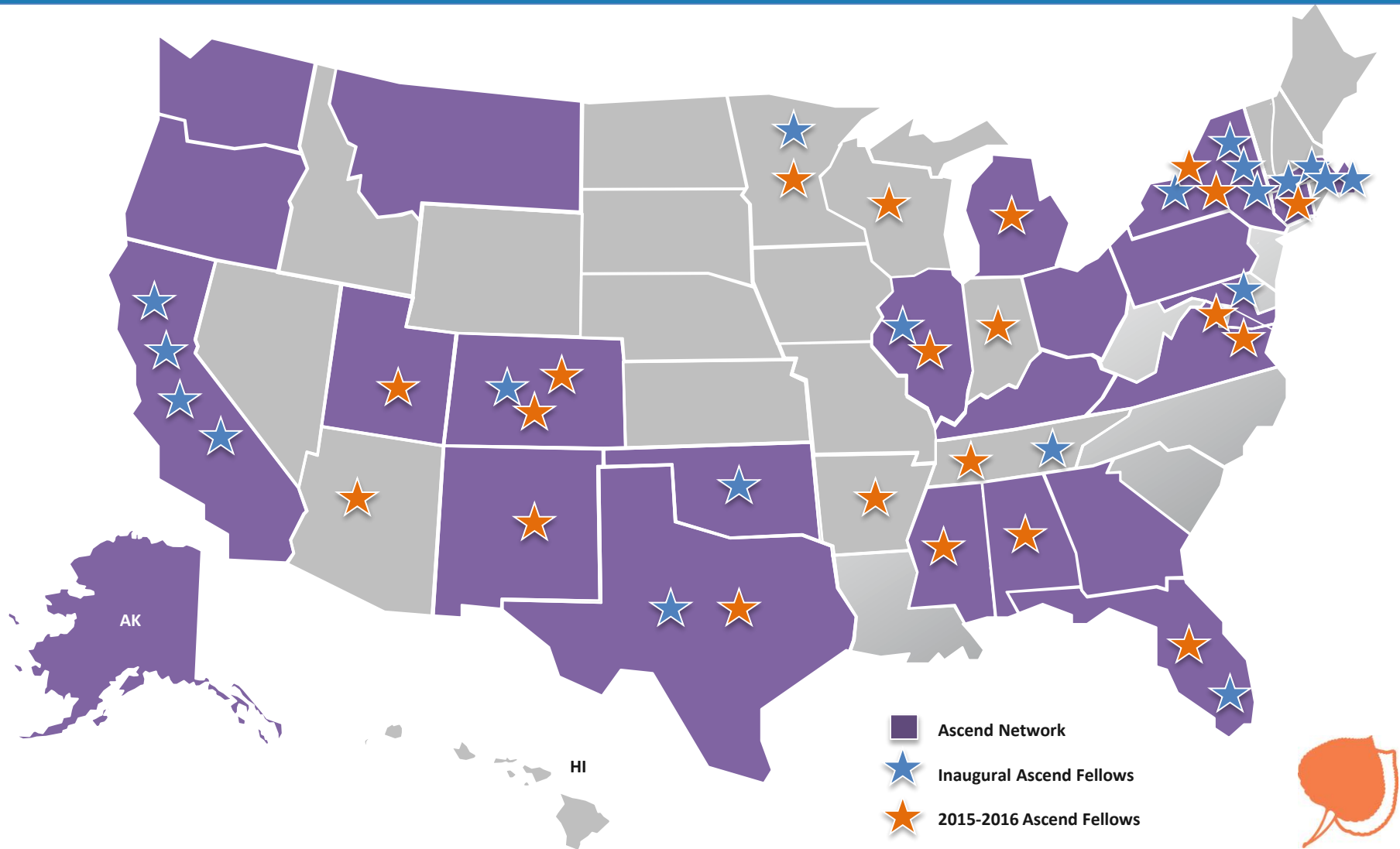


# 2Gen Leaders at Local, State, National Levels

## ASPEN INSTITUTE ASCEND FELLOWS 2015



# Fueling 2Gen Change in Place



# What are we learning about families?

- Family norms and structures are very **diverse** across the U.S.
- Families are **resilient** in spite of the widening opportunity gap
- Single mothers are the only group that **believe their children will be better off**
- Access to **quality healthcare is a worry and priority**
- Families **feel more socially isolated** and less likely to connect with neighbors and institutions



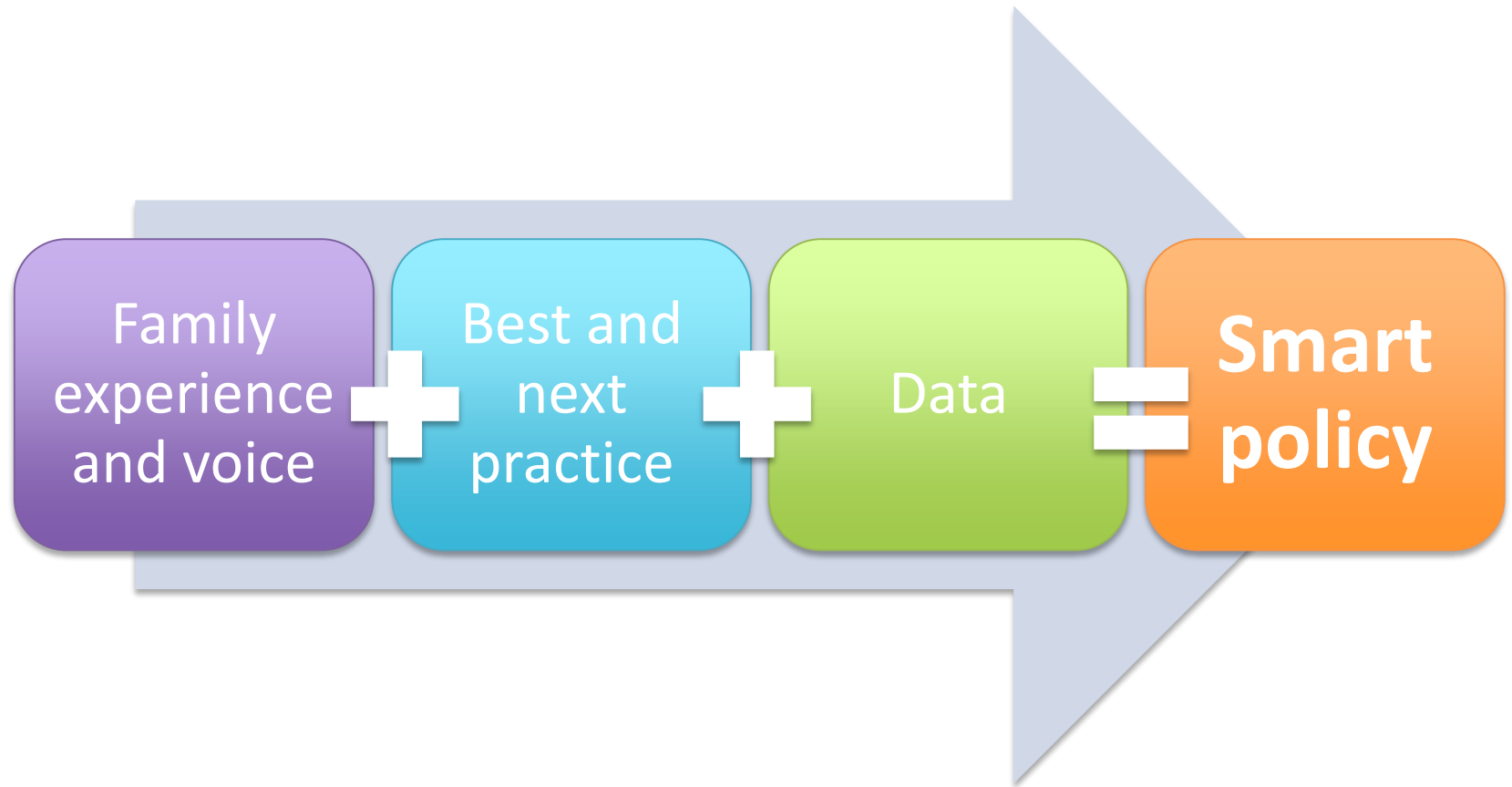
# What are we learning from the Network?

- **Digital tools:** broadband access in Head Start sites and schools impacts efficacy of apps
- **Employer engagement:** tapping local employer interest in building women's economic security is important
- **Promise Neighborhoods:** shared funding streams incentivize shared data
- **Head Start:** postsecondary partnerships are not one-size-fits all
- **State policy centers:** successful policy proposals are bipartisan and focus on efficient investment of resources





# Policy informed by practice and experience





# Policy Momentum

## Top 10 for 2Gen

10 policies federal and state policymakers can pursue immediately to help parents and children break out of the cycle of poverty. **Top Ten for 2Gen** also outlines six principles to guide the design and use of two-generation approaches in any sector.

These policies were co-designed with the Ascend Network and the field and have both stakeholder and public support.

### Key Principles Include:

1. Measure and account for outcomes for both children and their parents.
2. Engage and listen to the voices of families.
3. Foster innovation and evidence together.
4. Align and link systems and funding streams.
5. Prioritize intentional implementation.
6. Ensure equity.



# Advancing *Top Ten for 2Gen*

- **National momentum for two-generation policy**
  - Growing commitment to programs that support children and their parents together
  - In a Lake Research Partners bipartisan poll commissioned by Ascend, 89 percent of Americans support a two-generation approach to lifting families out of poverty...
    - And a solid 70 percent of those polled supported two-generation programs even if implementing those programs meant increasing taxes
- **Federal and state level opportunities to advance the *Top Ten for 2Gen***
  - National proposals to improve support for families by increasing access to affordable and high-quality child care and postsecondary education programs
  - Presidential commitment to invest \$1.5 billion in an innovative, community-based upward mobility project
  - Ascend partners in states from Colorado to Connecticut are advancing a ground-breaking two-generation legislative agenda



# Place-Based Momentum

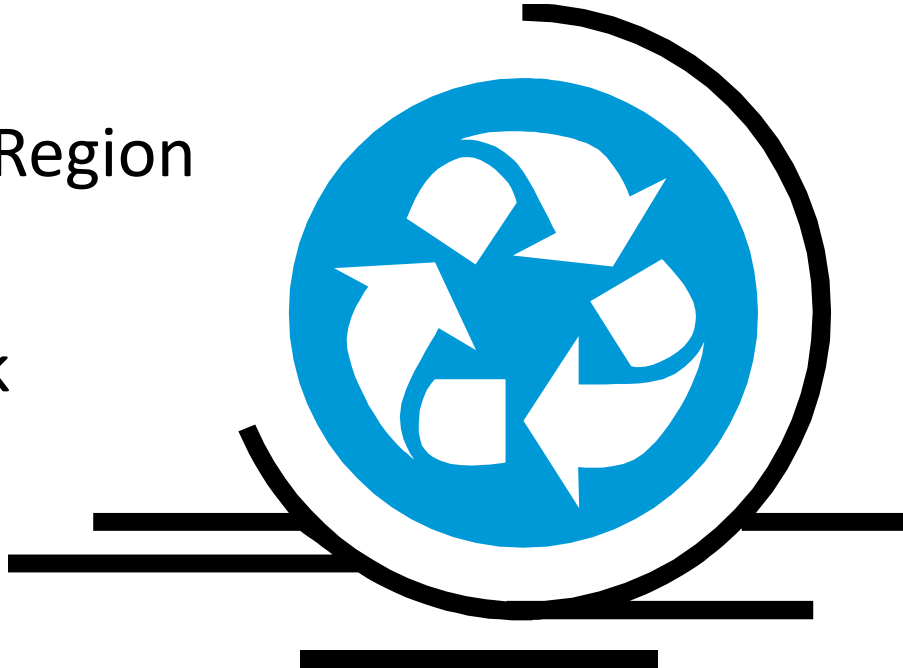
## Deepening Practice and Policy in Key Communities:

Denver, Colorado

Washington Metro Region

Sarasota, Florida

New York, New York



# Stay Connected – and Questions

move children and their parents toward educational success and economic security.



**Smart Starts for Children and Families**

**BUILDING UPON EARLY LEARNING INNOVATIONS**  
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# QUESTIONS?

