

More than an MOU: Finding & Helping More Homeless Children

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Illinois Action for Children



illinois
action for
children

About you!

- **Name**
 - Role, organization, community
 - Region of the state
 - Something you do each day to start the day out right (or most days...)



Expectations

- **Today:**
 - Take risk, be flexible, learn with us
 - Be present, let go of to-do lists, etc.
 - Put away technology
 - Play around with new ideas
 - Ask questions and connect throughout the day
 - What else?

Objectives

- Identify programs and services in the community
- Understand how one community increased engagement and enrollment of homeless families
- Understand one new strategy you can try at home





Enrolling More Children from Priority Populations

- Screen children 0-3, 3-5 for program
- Weighted eligibility
- **Homeless**, child welfare
- Other risk factors
- Highest need



What is Very High Need in Illinois?

Children who are/have:

- **Homeless**
- Teen parents
- Child welfare system
(foster care/intact family)
- Developmental delays or disabilities
- Poverty and deep poverty
- Active duty military
- Linguistically isolated, new immigrant, refugee

Obstacles to Enrolling Homeless Children In ECE Programs

What obstacles do you think prevented you from reaching your enrollment goals?

- Transportation
- Systems are not aligned
- Families are not aware of information
- Work schedules
- Basic needs of families come first
- Communication barriers, language & culture => also between systems



Let's Chat!

- What have been your experiences serving children from priority populations? Homeless?
 - What have you tried?
 - What did you expect?
 - What actually happened?
 - What did you learn?

“Pipeline” to facilitate enrollment

Who serves children from priority populations?

Make a list

Start with those you know very well

Set up a meeting with the director

Ask if they would join you for an experiment

Use a script

Give them a script

Make it easy

Create infrastructure to process referrals

Create a visual map

“Who does what how often using what tools?”

Make protocols clear

Check in weekly

CREATING AN EFFECTIVE
ENROLLMENT PIPELINE

An effective
Enrollment
Pipeline...

Has more touch points!



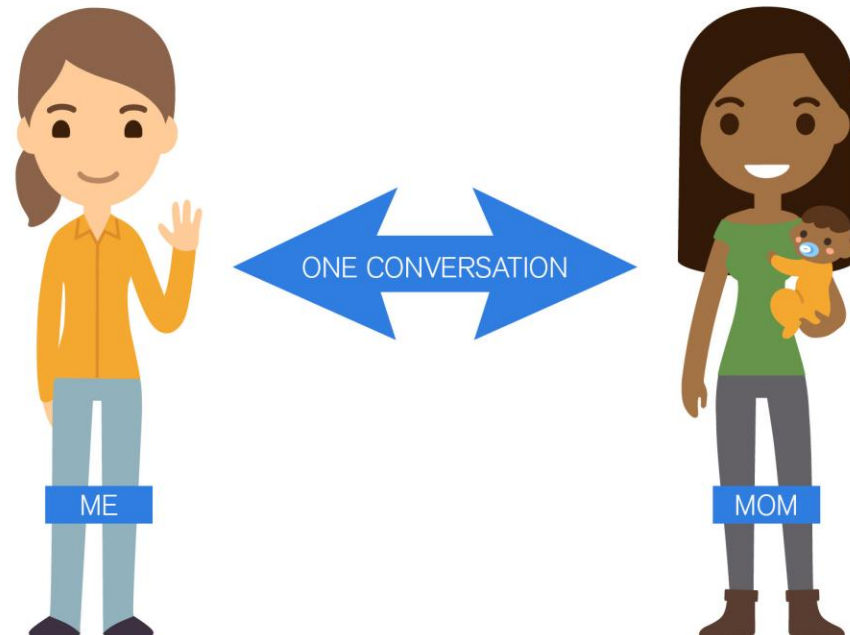
CREATING AN EFFECTIVE
ENROLLMENT PIPELINE

The traditional approach is a lot of work for little reward.

The usual way to recruit families is to have conversations with individual families at information tables, community events, etc.

Sharing this information one-on-one, you may be at an event for several hours, talk to 20 families and end up with a single referral.

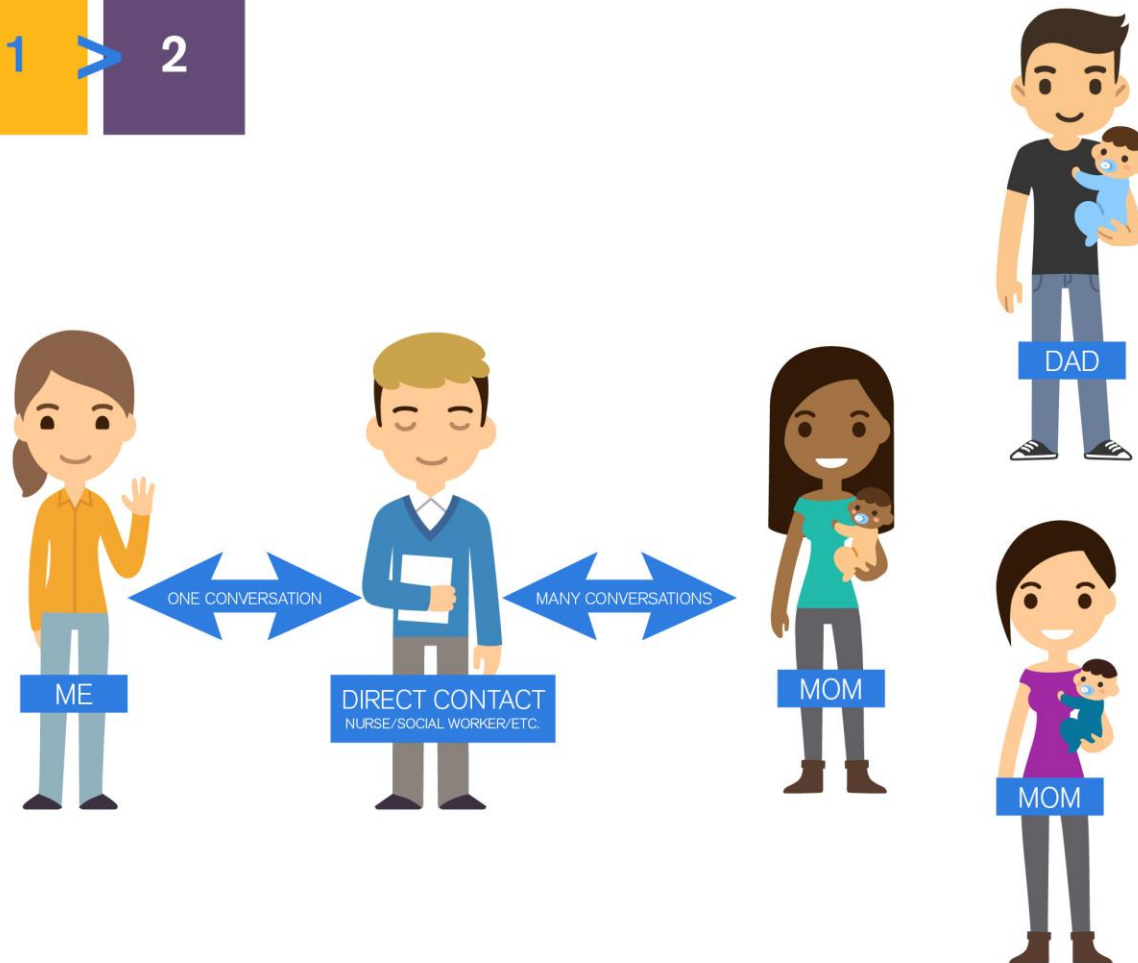
This is a “one degree” pipeline.



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE ENROLLMENT PIPELINE

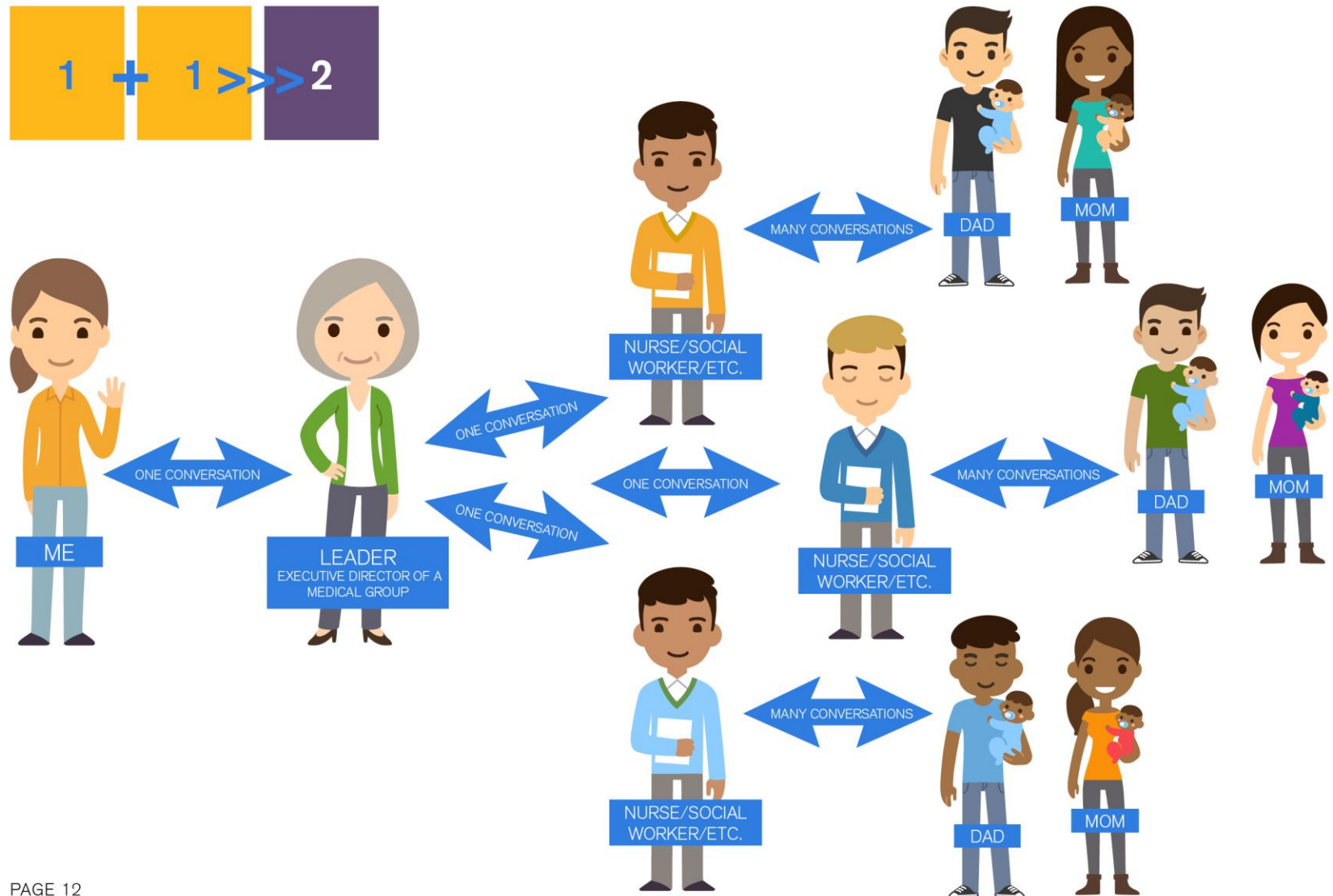
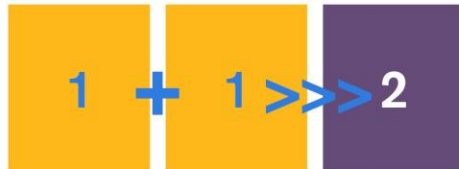
Make it MORE Effective: A Two Degree Pipeline

$$1 + 1 > 2$$



CREATING AN EFFECTIVE ENROLLMENT PIPELINE

Make it MOST effective: A Three Degree Pipeline





STEP

1

Identify potential pipeline partners.



STEP

2

Prioritize your contacts.



STEP

3

Plan your outreach approach.



STEP

4

Plan what to say.



STEP

5

Connect with your potential partners.



Activity

- Think of “pipeline” partners who serve priority populations in your community
- Take a sheet of paper and write down...
 - The name of an organization serving each group
 - One organization for each line
 - 2-3 MINUTES

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Activity

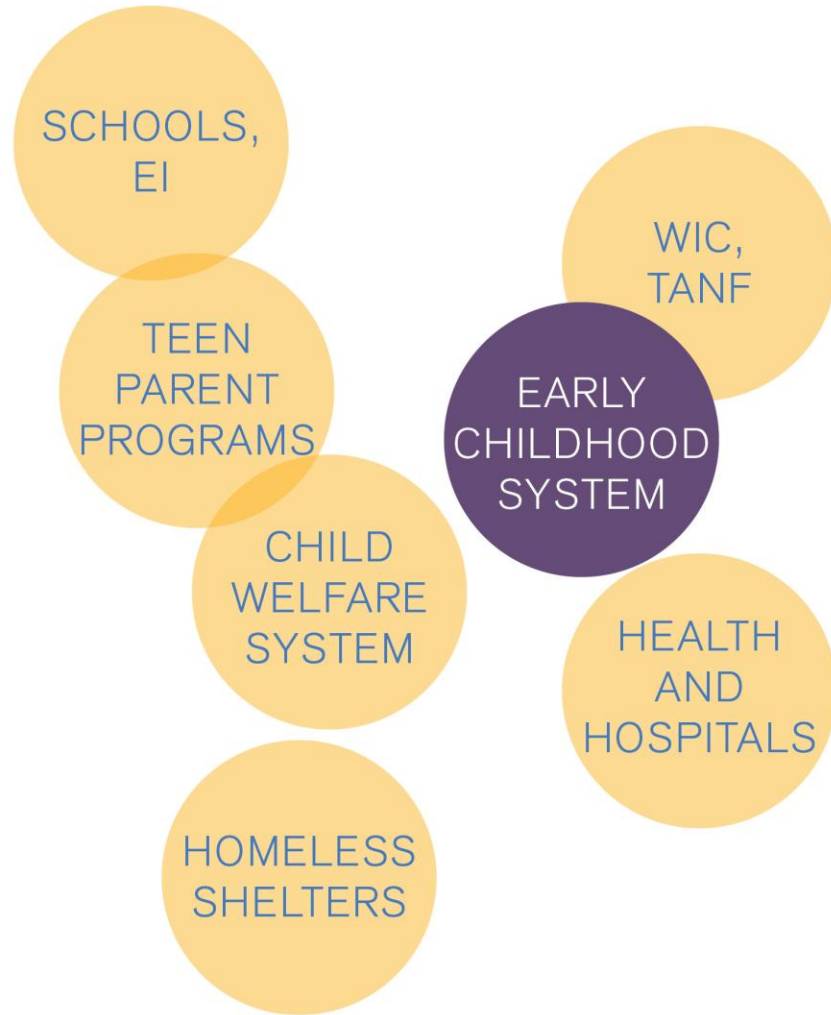
- NEXT –
 - Use a **CIRCLE** to mark if you have **worked with** the organization **but don't know a name**
 - Use a **STAR** to mark if you **generally** know a person **by name at the organization**
 - Use a **HEART** to mark if you **have a relationship** and **can call or email them**

Reflection: Pipeline Partners

- Look at your list of possible partners
 - Who do we have relationships with now?
 - Who is a willing partner (motivated) now?
 - Are they referring families now? Why, why not?
 - **Who is an easy partner to help us find families to connect to early learning now?**
 - **Do we have a partner who would be willing to partner with us to test a few ideas now?**

A traditional community system

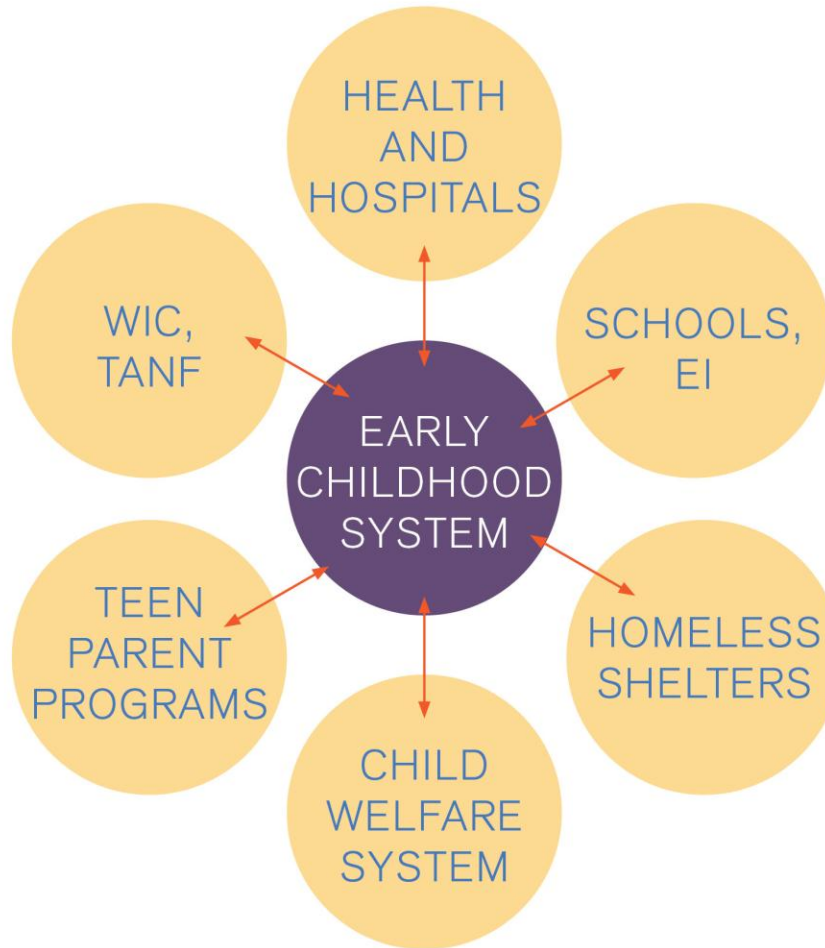
EXAMPLE



- Disconnected systems.
- Some sharing, based on relationships.
- Silos, no time, limited resources.
- Territorial, afraid to share waiting lists and information.

A better, more effective community system

EXAMPLE



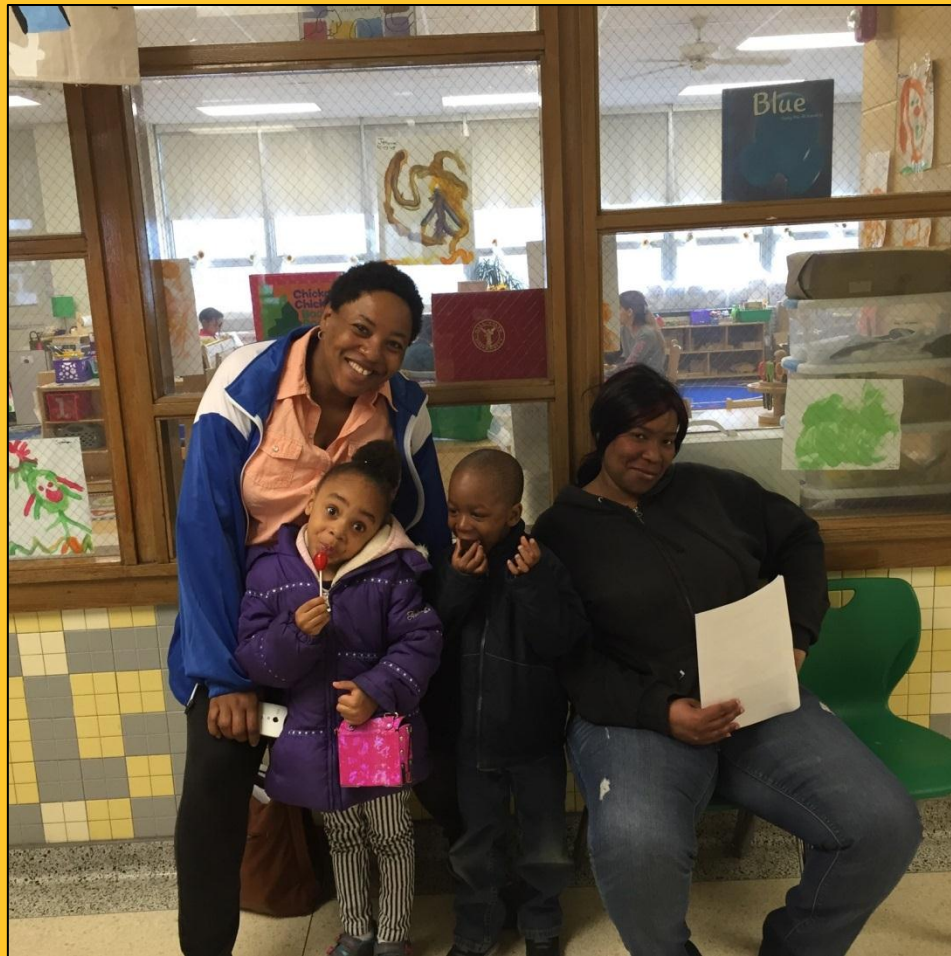
- Cross-training.
- Shared voice across organizations.
- Sharing information and resources.
- Enrollment, documentation.
- Facilitate referrals from multiple organizations.

North Lawndale Innovation Zone



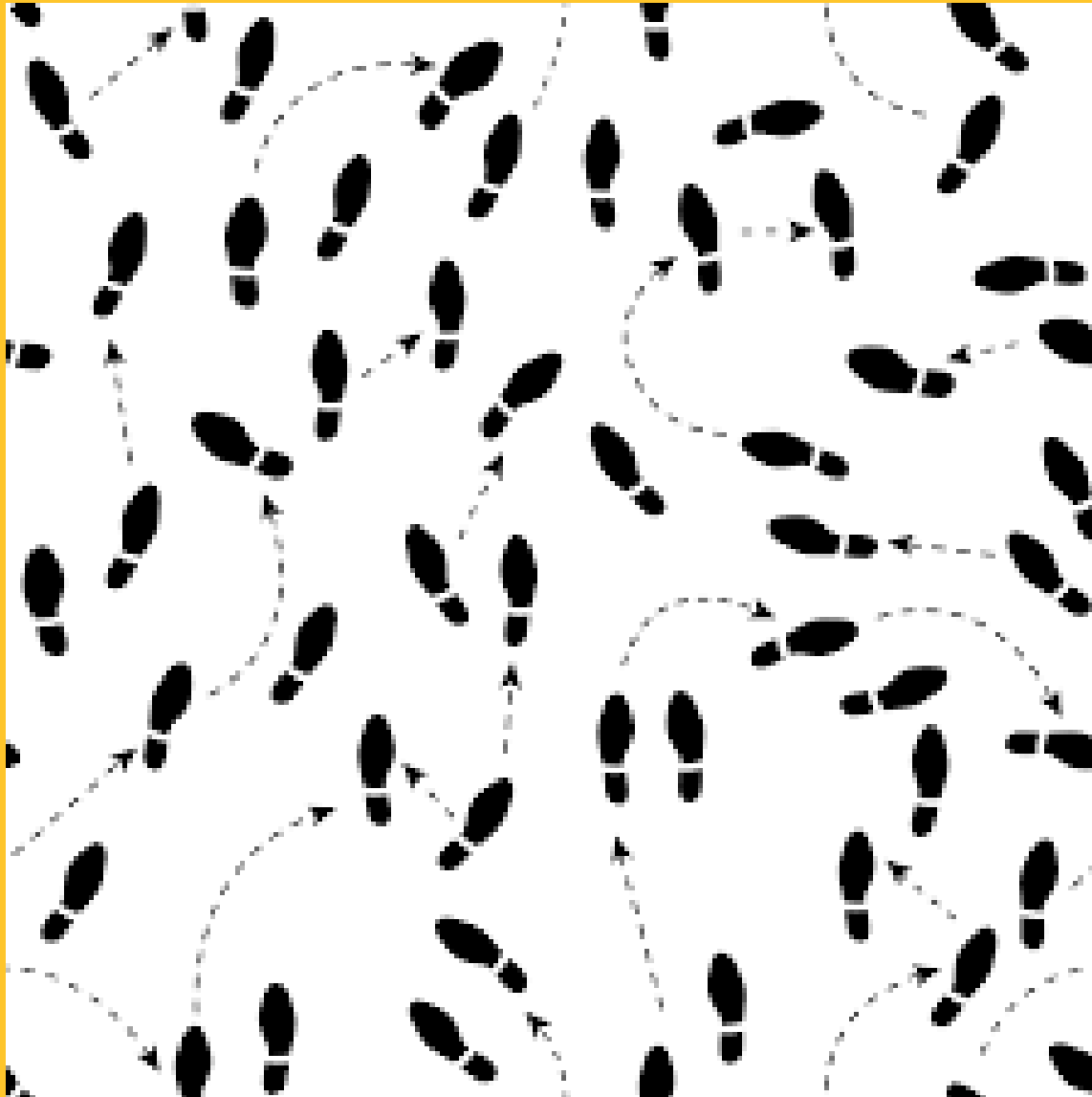
Nov 2014: We had been working with a homeless shelter in North Lawndale. A mom who had transitioned out of the shelter had no beds for her children. We were able to find a donor for new beds. This helped stabilize family and get her children into quality ECE program.

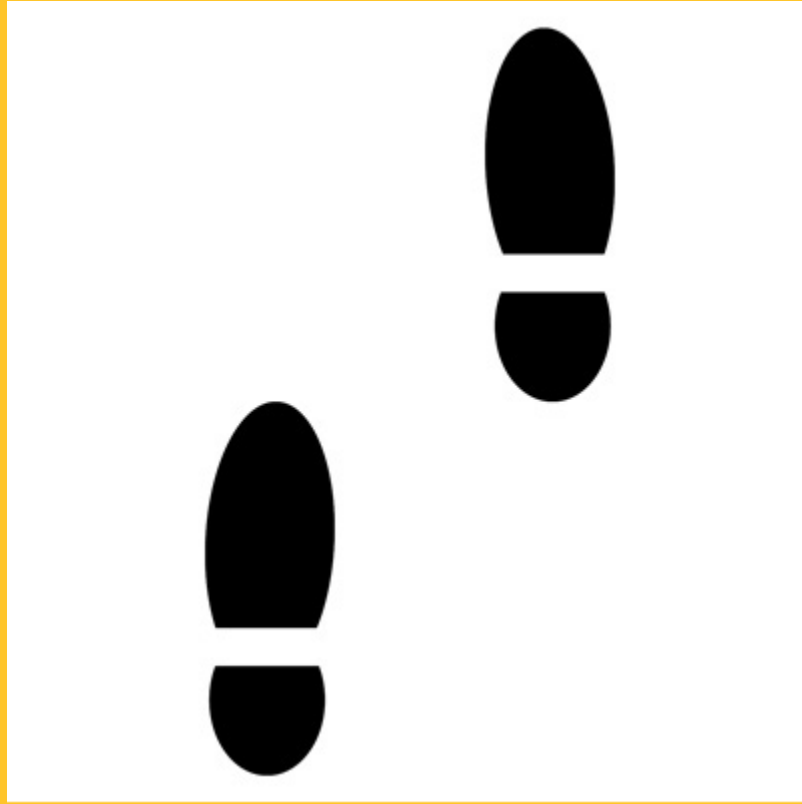
North Lawndale Innovation Zone



Fall 2015: Parents after enrolling their babies for preschool. For the first time ever, North Lawndale had 100% enrollment in CPS Prek prior to the first day of school.







SMALL STEP
+ SMALL STEP
+ SMALL STEP
BIG RESULTS

Remember, it's not how great
you start, it's how great you
finish that matters!



Small steps... small wins...

