



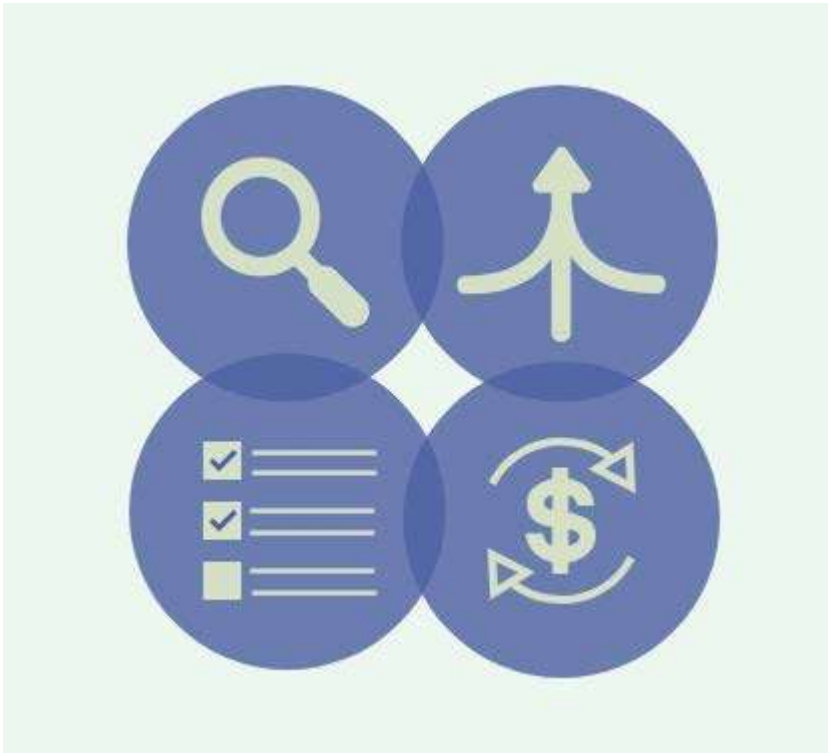
# *Children's Cabinet Toolkit: A Roadmap for Getting Started and Cultivating Collaboration*

*5/21-22, Harvard ERL, May 2019 BAM Convening*

*The Children's Funding Project & The Harvard Education  
Redesign Lab*

# The Children's Funding Project

FIND. ALIGN. GENERATE. EVALUATE.



The Children's Funding Project is structured to:

- Increase understanding of the *Find, Align, Generate, Evaluate* policy levers.
- Showcase communities that map their resources, blend and braid funding, create new dedicated revenue, and assess effectiveness of funding.
- Strengthen local capacity by providing training, tools, and coaching.
- Build momentum for a more pro-active approach to children's funding.

# *Children's Cabinet Toolkit: A Roadmap for Getting Started & Cultivating Collaboration*

Created for mayors and their staff by:

The Children's Funding Project & the Harvard Education Redesign Lab

With thanks to the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative

## *TOOLKIT COMPONENTS:*

1. Children's Cabinet Toolkit: A Roadmap for Getting Started
2. Talking points
3. Building a Cabinet
4. Managing a Cabinet
5. Setting Goals
6. Choosing Indicators

# *Children's Cabinet Toolkit:* *A Roadmap for Getting Started & Cultivating Collaboration*

## **PURPOSE:**

- To provide practical information and resources to launch a children's cabinet in your local community
- To help localities accomplish the goals outlined in the BAM Measures of Success framework "Committed Leadership"
- Intended for mayors and staff, but content is also relevant for a broad range of municipal leaders

# ● WHAT ARE CHILDREN'S CABINETS & WHY DO THEY MATTER?



- In most municipalities, there is no designated forum for regular collaboration among all the government agencies that serve children and youth.
- A children's cabinet provides a space for government agencies and community stakeholders to create a shared vision for kids in your community and then work together to make that vision a reality.
- By seamlessly coordinating the supports and services that your community provides, children's cabinets address young people's holistic needs as they grow and develop.

# ● TOOL 1: TALKING POINTS



## What's Included:

- Elevator pitch
- Fast Facts
- Key talking points for different audiences
- Framework for crafting compelling messaging

## Purpose:

This tool is designed to help mayors use their bully pulpit to obtain buy-in for children's cabinets from government agencies, community stakeholders, and the public. This tool will support the development of compelling messaging that will introduce the concept of a children's cabinet and communicate its value to different audiences.

## SAMPLE ELEVATOR PITCH:

*“Schools are working hard every day to help children in our community succeed, but too many are struggling, especially those who are poor. Since kids are only in school for 20% of their waking hours, we need to look beyond schools to make sure all kids have the supports they need to thrive. Children’s cabinets are an innovative strategy for doing this. Through a children’s cabinet, the school district and all the government agencies and community organizations that serve kids like recreational centers, enrichment programs, libraries, and health clinics work together to coordinate services and resources--both in and out of school.”*

## FAST FACTS:

Children's cabinets operate at both state and local levels. Over 30 states have established coordinating bodies such as a children's cabinet, and there is growing momentum in local communities.

Children's cabinets are nonpartisan and have been established in both Republican and Democratic-led administrations.

Children spend only 20% of their time in school. Children's cabinets help to ensure that kids have access to an array of comprehensive supports, activities, and resources during the 80% of the time that they are not in school.



## KEY TALKING POINTS FOR DIFFERENT AUDIENCES:

*For parents concerned about equity...*

*For a private healthcare organization...*

*For the head of a child-serving municipal department or agency...*

# FRAMEWORK FOR CRAFTING A COMPELLING MESSAGE:



## ● TOOL 2: BUILDING A CABINET



### What's Included:

- Guide to crafting a vision and mission statement
- Three key questions for determining the structure of your cabinet

### Purpose:

While children's cabinets in localities across the country share common features (the common goal of improving cross-system collaboration, for example), they often differ in their structure. The components of these structures (e.g. who is a member, where is the cabinet housed, etc.) impact everything from the activities that cabinets undertake to how often they meet (and therefore how quickly they can get things done). As the adage goes, form follows function, so mayors should be able to clearly articulate the cabinet's vision and mission before identifying the details of its structure. This tool will help you make the decisions necessary to establish a children's cabinet.

## STRUCTURING YOUR CABINET:

- 1. Who will the members of the cabinet be?*
- 2. Where will the cabinet be housed?*
- 3. How will the cabinet be established?*

## 1. WHO WILL THE MEMBERS OF CABINET BE?

### CABINET MADE UP OF:

- Municipal departments and agencies such as the parks and recreation department

### CABINET MADE UP OF:

#### OPTION 1

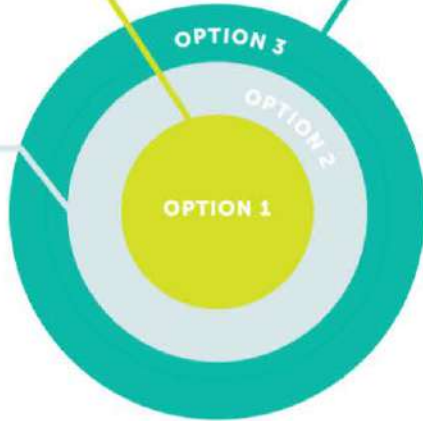
- Coalitions, collaboratives, intermediaries, or collective impact groups focused on children, youth, and families
- Representatives of major public stakeholder groups (health/medical, early childhood, higher education, local business association, chamber of commerce, providers, etc.)

### CABINET MADE UP OF:

#### OPTION 1

#### OPTION 2

- Business leaders
- Unions
- Civic leaders
- For-profit institutions
- Advocates
- Parents
- Youth
- Philanthropy



#### OPTION 1

*Try to include all departments or agencies who have serving children and youth as part of their mission.*

#### OPTION 2

*In this option, representatives of stakeholder groups outside of municipal government are included as regular members in the cabinet.*

#### OPTION 3

*This option allows for the addition of members who represent the perspective of an individual or single organization, rather than the perspective of a whole stakeholder group. If private or for-profit entities are added as members, it is important to be intentional about maintaining neutrality by balancing those perspectives with the addition of parents, youth, and advocates.*

## CHOOSE IF:

### OPTION 1

Your primary or initial goal is to break down cross-agency silos and better coordinate people, data, and money within your municipal government.

This option will yield the smallest children's cabinet. Benefits of a small cabinet include consistency of participation and accountability, more flexible and nimble speed of progress, all voices being heard.

Note: In this structure, other stakeholders (providers, intermediaries, business leaders, advocates, parents, etc.) provide input through participation in subcommittees or community forums.

### EXAMPLE:

#### Denver Children's Cabinet

As mandated by executive order:

- Director of Children's Affairs;
- Managers of Dept. of Human Services, Parks and Recreation, Safety, Finance, Environmental Health, Community Planning and Development;
- Chief of Police;
- Directors of Corrections and Undersheriff, the Office of Economic Development, Peak Performance, the Office of Strategic Partnerships, Development Services, Denver's Road Home, Career Service Authority, Denver Housing Authority, Community Health Services;
- City Council Member;
- City Librarian;
- Denver Public Schools representative;
- Denver Preschool Program representative;
- and a board member of the Scientific and Cultural Facilities District.

### OPTION 2

Your goal is to foster collaboration across both municipal agencies and with non-governmental stakeholders.

### OPTION 3

You want to take advantage of opportunities to collaborate with civic and business leaders who can leverage the power of people or resources to make change.

You want to provide a forum for community discussion and direct conversation with municipal leaders.

#### Fairfax SCYPT

- Fairfax County Public Schools Members (9),
- Fairfax County Government Members (10),
- Community Members (15) (including voices from early childhood, faith-based organizations, families, health care, business, philanthropy, nonprofits, higher education, advocacy, and out of school time)

#### Louisville Cradle to Career Cabinet

Initial cabinet members included at least one high-ranking representative from the pillar lead organizations—Metro United Way, JCPS, 55,000 Degrees, and KentuckianaWorks—in addition to Mayor Greg Fischer, Superintendent Hargens, and representatives from the school board, city government, health care, higher education, and many local nonprofits, businesses, and foundations.

# ● TOOL 3: MANAGING A CABINET



## What's Included:

- Guidelines for playing your right role as a cabinet member participant
- Meeting agenda format tool
- Guidelines for cabinet ground rules

## Purpose:

Once you have developed a mission, vision, and structure for your cabinet, it's crucial to lay the groundwork for how your cabinet will function. To keep cabinet work productive and action-oriented, we suggest that the cabinet use this tool to put structures in place within its first several months. It may be helpful to have a staff person prepare drafts of the roles, agenda, ground rules, and guidelines for presentations based on the resources below, and then have the cabinet members react to and provide feedback on these documents before approving them formally. This tool will help you make the decisions necessary to establish a children's cabinet.

# GUIDELINES FOR SETTING CABINET ROLES:

ROLE	DESCRIPTION	RESPONSIBILITIES/REQUIREMENTS
<b>CHAIRPERSON</b>	<p>A cabinet chair (or co- chairs) who can facilitate meetings is critical to keeping cabinet meetings focused and maintaining engagement from members. If a cabinet has dedicated staff, this person might be supplemented by a director (job description example here) who does more of the daily work like grant writing or agenda creation.</p> <p>In cabinets established by a mayor or municipal executive, the mayor or municipal executive will most likely act as the chair.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• May be the mayor or convener of the cabinet OR be elected by fellow members of the board</li></ul> <p>If not the mayor, then...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should be recognizable by director-level personnel as a peer</li><li>• Has accumulated experience within the child and youth development field</li><li>• Should run meetings with an eye on staying on time and topic-oriented, and returning group discussion to actionable items</li></ul>

# SETTING A REGULAR AGENDA

1. *Welcome*
2. *Administrative items*
3. *'Meat and potatoes'*
4. *Member/subcommittee updates*
5. *Action steps*
6. *Adjourn*



# ESTABLISHING NORMS AND GUIDELINES

*How will you keep your meeting from becoming dominated by one voice and ensure that a broad range of stakeholders feel empowered to speak?*

*How will you prioritize equity in all discussions?*

*How will you make sure you're not derailed by sporadic attendance?*

*How will you keep your meetings from becoming a "show-and-tell?"*

# ● TOOL 4: SETTING GOALS



## What's Included:

- A framing activity to help brainstorm impact statements
- Guidelines for goal setting
- An activity to align your cabinet's goals with work being done by other child- and youth-serving organizations and collaboratives locally
- Examples of cabinet goals from other localities

## Purpose:

This tool is intended to help the mayor determine the major shared goals that will drive the cabinet's work. Based on the needs of your constituents, what goals for children and youth can your coalition rally behind? These tools will help you devise a list of goals for your children's cabinet that align with existing initiatives and that help your cabinet advance its vision for your community.

# GOALS & IMPACT STATEMENTS

## Goal should...

- Be big picture and broad. The goal itself can be one big picture word such as “healthy” or no more than a short sentence such as “children are mentally and physically healthy.” These broad goals will inform the specific indicators and outcomes that are monitored by the cabinet.
- Be informed by the needs of your community. Goals should set a target to improve outcomes and diminish the barriers that your children, youth and families are currently facing. The needs of your community may be identified by data from focus groups, community outreach, recent reports (e.g. KidsCount), current events, etc.
- Align with the work of the cabinet. Use the big picture goals to better organize and motivate the current work of the cabinet. Goals can be inclusive of the projects, programs and services members want to promote.

# GOAL SETTING ACTIVITY

- 1. Identifying the goals of child-serving bodies in your locality*
- 2. Find commonalities among those goals*
- 3. Align themes with your results statements*
- 4. Finalize your goals*

# ● TOOL 5: CHOOSING INDICATORS



## What's Included:

- Guidelines for strong indicators
- Helpful tips for identifying indicators
- Examples of indicators and dashboards
- A template of a dashboard to keep track of your own indicators
- A list of online resources of child and youth indicators

## Purpose:

This tool is intended to help staff choose indicators for the cabinet to track in order to measure progress in achieving their shared goals. Keeping track of data can be daunting, but is imperative in order to determine if you are moving the needle on outcomes for the child and youth population.

# DASHBOARD OF INDICATORS TEMPLATE

<b>Goals</b> List your shared goals below	<b>Dashboard of Indicators by Age Group</b> 1st row = Primary Indicators 2nd row = Secondary Indicators 3rd row = Data development				
<b>Cabinet Goals</b>	Early Childhood 0-5	School Age 6-10	Middle School 11-14	High School 15-18	Young Adults

## ● SMALL GROUP SESSION

### 1. Break into groups:

*Group 1:* Talking points

*Group 2:* Building a cabinet

*Group 3:* Managing a cabinet

*Group 4:* Setting goals & choosing indicators

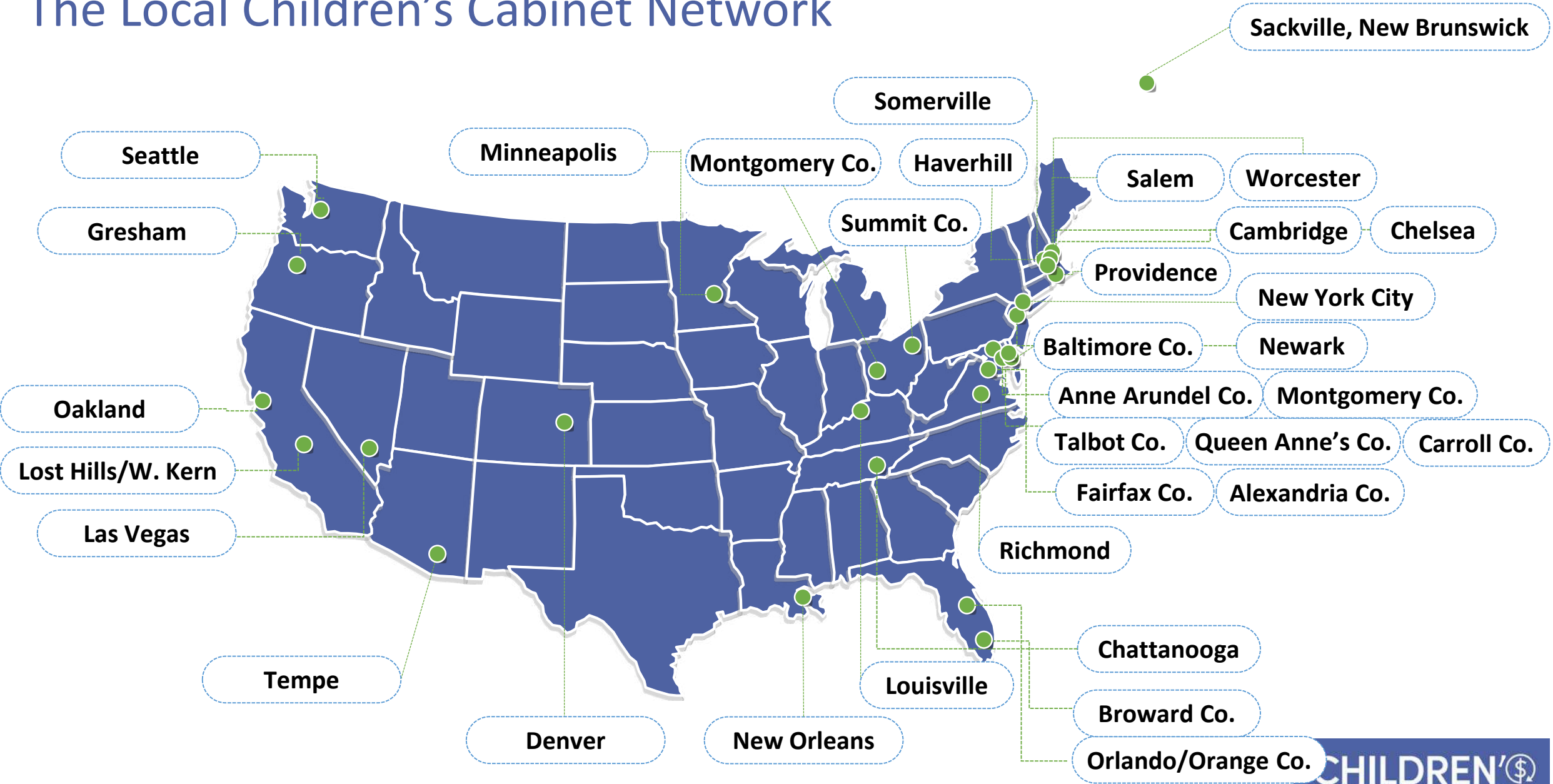
### 2. Go over the following:

1. What are the challenges you've faced?
2. What are the successes you've had, or lessons learned?
3. List outstanding questions to bring back to the larger group

## ● GROUP Q&A



# The Local Children's Cabinet Network



# ● The Local Children's Cabinet Network

Sponsored by: The Children's Funding Project, The Education Redesign Lab and the Forum for Youth Investment

Membership includes:

- Newsletters
- Virtual meetings
- Local Children's Cabinet Summit July 30-31<sup>st</sup>
- Opportunities for peer-learning and sharing
- The Children's Cabinet Toolkit + access to other resources and support

● To learn more about the Children's Funding Project:



**[www.childrensfundingproject.org](http://www.childrensfundingproject.org)**

Questions, contact:

[Elizabeth@childrensfundingproject.org](mailto:Elizabeth@childrensfundingproject.org)