# Bright Beginnings Collective Impact
## *Final Evaluation Report*
### July 2017

**SPARK POLICY INSTITUTE**
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*A Research Report*

# SUMMARY

Bright Beginnings has seen great success in terms of building the foundations for a strong collective impact initiative. It has contributed to increased cross-sector collaboration, increased awareness of and commitment to early childhood development from diverse stakeholders, and mobilization of resources towards parents and young children. Evaluation efforts found many indicators have transitioned from an exploring or developing phase into a fostering phase. The initiative can now refine and create structures and processes that build on that foundation to further positively impact the children and families of Monterey County.

Collaboratives are primarily investing in two approaches to progress: cultivating community members and leveraging established institutions. All Collaborative Action Teams (CATs) have increased participation in 2016-2017. CATs are engaging in a variety of activities to improve early childhood outcomes in their communities. Many activities are programmatic and educational in nature and are geared toward Kindergarten readiness and childcare. There are some activities building an early foundation for engaging community members in policy advocacy at the community and county levels in the future.

CATs appreciate Bright Beginning's provision of tangible resources for families (free books, childcare at meetings), which increased community participation and early childhood development opportunities. CATs also valued technical supports for more effective and strategic Initiative implementation. The evaluation team makes several recommendations for areas of continued focus in the coming year. The main next steps were: clarifying responsibilities, expectations, and involvement opportunities for all stakeholder groups; improving communication; and better articulating strategies and outcomes related to the six common indicators and other results.

# INTRODUCTION

Bright Beginnings, in partnership with Spark Policy Institute, conducted an evaluation of its collective impact efforts for the 2016-2017 grant year. This report describes and summarizes final evaluation findings, including recommendations for improving the initiative's efforts in the upcoming grant year. To complete this evaluation, Spark relied on primary and secondary data including:

- **Phase One:** An online survey, administered to members of the Monterey County Children's Council (MCCC), the Bright Beginnings backbone, Policy Advocacy Network (PAN) members, Community Action Team (CAT) representatives and CAT facilitators. The survey was designed to capture how the initiative is implementing the five conditions of collective impact, as defined in the Bright Beginnings Theory of Action.

- **Phase Two:** Key informant interviews with CAT leaders, members, and facilitators. The interview was designed to focus on CAT activities and outcomes related to elements of collective impact deemed most important for this year, including community involvement; champion development; CAT activities and outcomes, including capacity building; Bright Beginnings' impact on communities; and supports needed.

- **On-going:** A document review of secondary data related to the initiative, including Bright Beginnings newsletters, CAT Spotlights conducted by Spoke Consulting, and evaluation subcommittee meeting notes.

The following report summarizes key findings from the Phase One survey conducted in December 2016 and findings from Phase Two interviews conducted in April 2017. This evaluation focuses on generating insights to inform strategic management of the initiative (by looking at progress along Bright Beginnings theory of change) and was not designed to make evaluative judgments on the overall results of the effort.

# PHASE ONE KEY FINDINGS

In April 2017, Spark sent online invitations to sixty-one CAT facilitators, CAT members, Backbone members, and MCCC members to participate in the survey. A total of 28 people responded to the survey, including 13 CAT facilitators/members and 15 Backbone and/or MCCC members. Overall, based on the stakeholder survey, Bright Beginnings made progress over the past year in terms of increasing collaboration and action towards improving the early childhood system in Monterey County. Many of the key collective impact elements have moved into the Fostering phase of the Bright Beginnings Theory of Action; and some areas are still mainly in the Exploring and Developing phases. It's important to note that the collective impact approach is an iterative process where each element is inter-related and builds on the others. The Phase One survey revealed the following key findings:

- **Common Vision.** Bright Beginnings has facilitated the development of a common overall vision of the initiative goal *to ensure that young children, from the prenatal stage through age 8, have what they need to succeed*, among county leadership and the communities with which it works. The initiative is still working to expand participation among diverse individuals, organizations and sectors and has increased outreach and communication to the broader community. The initiative is now working to inform and mobilize community members and organizations to contribute to the work.

- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities.** While Bright Beginnings uses defined values to guide the work and there are many activities happening at the local and county levels, there are opportunities to better align activities with the Bright Beginnings action plan to create a cohesive movement.

- **Shared Measurement.** Bright Beginnings has seen some positive movement in creating a shared data system. For example, many members value shared measurement and Bright Beginnings has started to provide technical assistance around data collection to some of the CATs. However, there are opportunities to clarify what types of short-, medium-, and long-term data should be collected and how, so that members can measure progress and use information for decision-making.

- **Continuous Communication.** Bright Beginnings provides communication about initiative progress and updates within the initiative through newsletters and an updated website. There is a need to increase internal communication channels and feedback loops to clarify roles, responsibilities, expectations, available resources, and CAT needs.

- **Backbone Infrastructure and Support.** Backbone supports, such as facilitators, convenings/trainings, and technical assistance, has greatly helped CATs move their work forward. As mentioned above, there is a need to clarify overall initiative direction, expectations, roles, and responsibilities, so that CAT members have a clear understanding of how their activities align with the broader initiative and the types of supports available to them.

- **Learning Culture.** Bright Beginnings has established a culture of respect and humility, signaling a strong foundation for a culture that supports ongoing learning. However, there is not yet consistent, regular use of data, monitoring and evaluation to support ongoing feedback and course correction across the initiative. The next step is for the initiative to create structures that support ongoing analysis and learning for all members of the initiative, establish regular systems for community feedback on initiative progress strategy and implementation, and use that learning to make informed decisions.

- **Collective Impact Capacity.** Bright Beginnings has started to increase the skills and leadership of those involved, with a focus on supporting capacities of community members and parents, service providers and agencies, and has begun to develop influencers and champions for increasing awareness and commitment to early childhood development.

Phase One survey respondents were also asked to comment on ways for Bright Beginnings to work with other initiatives to increase its impact on early childhood development. The majority of survey respondents recommended Bright Beginnings align decision-making structures, goals, outcomes, indicators, communication, and branding with other initiatives to create one Cradle to Career effort. Bright Beginnings' recent decision to re-prioritize the initiative-specific backbone as a logistical and strategic support team for the initiative and increase

> ### *Further Reading*
> - ***Strategic plan:*** http://bit.ly/2xB6efK
> - ***Full mid-year survey brief***: http://bit.ly/2wQ8BuI
> - ***Survey findings summary***: http://bit.ly/2w16DKI
> - ***Year 1 evaluation:*** *http://bit.ly/2glNxVA*
> - ***Theory of action:*** *http://bit.ly/2glJysc*

collaboration with Bright Futures by forming a combined Advisory Group (covering goals 1 and 2 of Bright Futures), aligns well with stakeholder recommendations, though it remains to be seen if this set up will be sufficient to address all concerns about roles and structure.

Beyond aligning early childhood efforts, the evaluation found the greatest opportunities for improvement include **increasing mutually reinforcing activities among county partners, building collective impact capacity in communities and among leadership, and creating and implementing a shared measurement system**. (For more information on priorities identified by Phase One survey respondents, see the mid-year executive summary link on the previous page). In February 2017, Spark worked with Bright Beginnings to facilitate a convening for CATs to come together, review data, and share activities and outcomes with each other. Discussions during the convening and post-convening debriefs revealed a need for the initiative to clarify overall strategy, including aligning CAT work with initiative-level goals and identifying short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes that map to those goals. As a result, Phase Two of the evaluation was designed to dive deeper into the work happening on the ground, including CAT activities, outcomes, and needs.

# PHASE TWO KEY FINDINGS

During the Phase One debrief process, Bright Beginnings staff recognized **the need to examine the work of the CATs to articulate progress and outcomes, and help inform initiative-level strategies** for moving toward greater initiative-level impact. Phase Two of the evaluation was designed to support this prioritized need.

In April 2017, Spark invited thirty-eight CAT members, leaders, and facilitators to participate in phone interviews. A total of nineteen people participated in interviews, including two facilitators and seventeen CAT members and leaders (ranging from 2-3 respondents per CAT). Based on a specific need to more effectively understand CAT progress on collaborative development and implementing strategy, the interview was designed to focus on CAT activities and outcomes related to three elements of collective impact, including mutually reinforcing activities, collective impact capacity, and learning culture.

More specifically, interviews were intended to gain a better understanding of CAT progress towards initiative goals, including community involvement; champion development; CAT activities and outcomes, including capacity building; impact on communities; and supports needed.

## COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM COMPOSITION AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

All CATs recognize the importance of diversifying participation, seeing the need to have both established institutions important to early childhood development and the voice of parents and community members at the table. Institutions are perceived as critical because they can leverage resources and relationships to implement strategies; and community participation is necessary to ensure the work is effective, sustainable, and tailored to community-specific culture and needs. Currently, CATs are showing success using different approaches, creating a unique peer-to-peer learning opportunity for diversifying participation and increasing community mobilization.

CATs are composed of different individuals, organizations and sectors and are taking different approaches to the work. Almost all CATs have seen increases in participation over the 2016-17 grant year. Some CATs have a diverse group of services providers, agencies, and parents participating in the work on a regular basis, whereas others are largely driven by one group of people or sector. For example, one CAT's school district has a well-established relationship with the city, has energized and active champions, and leads most of the work. In another CAT, community members and parents are driving the work to prioritize their needs using a culturally grounded, grassroots approach. In both communities, interviewees report seeing changes such as increased collaboration and awareness of Early Childhood Development (ECD) issues. The different approaches are taken based on the available resources, existing relationships, cultural norms, and perceived needs.

Regardless of approach, almost all CATs see the need to diversify participation in some way. For example, one CAT with strong parent involvement is interested in engaging more organizations or agencies, principals, and teachers in the work; and many CATs with strong participation from agencies and organizations are hoping to engage parents and teachers in a meaningful way. Several CATs are also interested in involving the business and faith communities (Bright Beginnings has created talking points to help CATs engage in outreach to these audiences), as well as informal childcare providers and caregivers, community leadership development organizations, and other community partners. Taken together, CATs have a diverse group of people and organizations committed to the Bright Beginnings vision. By leveraging individual CAT approaches and experiences with stakeholder engagement, Bright Beginnings can strengthen capacity for the entire initiative. Additionally, a shared learning approach aligns with needs and desires that CATs have voiced and would contribute to creating a learning culture for the overall initiative.

## CHAMPION DEVELOPMENT

One of the key strategies identified by Bright Beginnings to elevate the work happening across the county is to support existing and develop new champions. Whether champions exist at the individual, organizational, or policy level, they are key to increasing awareness, engagement and action toward creating change. **Every CAT identified some members as champions, yet the type of champion varies across CATs.** In some CATs, the focus is on developing new champions among parents or community members who are personally connected to the issue. These champions are emerging at the ground level through Bright Beginnings efforts. The second approach involves leveraging community leaders, service providers, or representatives of organizations or agencies that are already in positions in which they can be championing early childhood development professionally. These champions are supported to focus attention on and promote Bright Beginnings through their established networks. Although most CATs are focusing on implementing one of these strategies, a few have been able to use both approaches simultaneously to move the work forward.

- **Cultivating community champions** – While the grassroots approach may take longer, building trust and self-efficacy is vital to laying the foundation for developing community champions with lived experience, especially among those that have been historically and systematically disenfranchised. Generally, CATs developing new champions are focused on implementing participatory approaches that build relationships, trust, and open communication. One CAT laid the foundation for increased self-efficacy, confidence, and socialization among parents and other community members through participatory approaches like collecting qualitative data using arts and crafts. The process built on existing strengths and resiliency in a way that empowered individuals to voice their needs and feel confident enough to learn how to advocate. CAT leaders provided technical assistance and support to parents to prepare them for advocacy, resulting in two presentations to the Board of Supervisors and a transition in CAT leadership so that parents are more confident in driving the work forward themselves. Another CAT is starting a *Promotora* program, which is based on training parents and community members with lived experience to engage and educate other parents and community members about early childhood development. Other CATs also leveraged existing parent and community member champions to bring perspective to the work and ensure actions aligned with actual community needs.

- **Leveraging institutional champions** – Community leaders and organizational level champions are critical to creating change by leveraging their resources and position to elevate and advocate for early childhood development, including increased access to policymakers and ability to spread communications regarding Bright Beginnings to audiences vested in early childhood advancement. Generally, CATs leveraging existing champions are focused on strategically engaging community leaders and professionals already embedded in early childhood development work. For example, several CATs noted that leaders of local organizations, agency representatives and school administrators are champions for early childhood development in their communities. In most cases, these members had already been advocating for early childhood in their communities through programs or through direct access to policymakers. Utilizing this strategy, Bright Beginnings provided these champions the additional value of increased connectivity to other champions, creating an opportunity to coordinate around how to strengthen impact together and leverage their existing programs and activities to increase the reach of messages around the importance of early childhood development.

Both approaches and types of champions are necessary for changing the early childhood support system in Monterey County. To support development of these approaches, Bright Beginnings could work to more effectively facilitate peer-learning between CATs to build capacity around both approaches to champion engagement and

leadership development. Of note, this evaluation was not able to address if the emerging approaches, though considered necessary, are sufficient to ensure adequate capacity for producing large-scale, community-level impact. This question should be addressed in future evaluation efforts to inform campaign efforts.

## Community Action Team Strategies, Activities and Reported Results

CATs are engaging in a variety of activities to improve early childhood outcomes in the county. The focus of each CAT varies slightly, depending on who is involved in the work and the perceived needs of the community. CATs have seen a variety of process results as an outcome of their work, including infrastructure development for collective impact and early shifts in awareness and participation. Information provided by the CATs through qualitative interviews was reviewed and themed, with three main categories of activities emerging across CATs. These categories represent the primary focus of CAT work for the year and include: community outreach and events, capacity building, and data collection and use. Table 2 provides activities and direct results summarized across CATs for each of these categories.

### Table 1. Summary of CAT Activities and Results Reported by CAT Interviewees

| Category | Activities | Results |
| --- | --- | --- |

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| Category | Activities | Results |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Community outreach and events related to Early Childhood Development (ECD) | • Informal community outreach and engagement (to families, organizations, and businesses)<br><br>• School Attendance Campaign<br><br>• Kinder Family Festival to increase Kinder registration and immunization<br><br>• Kinder Readiness Challenge<br><br>• Kinder Summer Academy<br><br>• Summer Boost<br><br>• Out-of-School Time (OST) supports and services<br><br>• United Way Monterey County grants to improve quality affordable childcare | • Increased awareness of and emphasis on ECD among community members and organizations<br><br>• Increased awareness of and connections to community resources<br><br>• Increased capacity to effect change through connection to funding opportunities and policy advocacy support<br><br>• Increased number of kindergarten registration packets handed out to parents and families<br><br>• Increased number of incoming kindergartners with access to preschool through summer academies |
| Capacity building and champion development | • Relationship building and leadership development through participatory processes<br><br>• Partnering with other organizations to provide training and/or support (e.g., Somos Mayfair to train CAT members on community advocacy)<br><br>• The Family, Friends, and Neighbors (FFN) Research and Network Project<br><br>• Implementing *Promotora* model to train community members and facilitate peer-to-peer learning around ECD | • Increased self-efficacy and confidence among parents to advocate for ECD (e.g., parents presenting at the Board of Supervisors meeting)<br><br>• Increased parent skills and capacity to lead and/or facilitate the work moving forward<br><br>• Increased capacity for partner organizations to effectively advocate for ECD<br><br>• Increased cross-sector, cross-system, and cross-initiative collaboration between:<br>   o Parents and service providers;<br>   o School districts and the city;<br>   o Different agencies; and<br>   o Bright Beginnings and Bright Futures. |

| Category | Activities | Results |
|----------|------------|---------|
| Data collection and use | • Collecting and using quantitative and qualitative data to assess community members needs and improve strategy implementation<br><br>• Kindergarten Readiness Assessment (KRA) Pilot Project to improve and standardize Kindergarten readiness assessments<br><br>• Childcare Assets Mapping | • Increased awareness of the challenges faced by community members related to ECD<br><br>• Increased ability to provide targeted information and/or resources to parents |

CATs are engaging in a variety of activities to improve early childhood outcomes in their communities. Many activities are programmatic and educational in nature and are geared toward Kindergarten readiness and childcare. Other activities are focused on building the foundation for engaging community members in programs or policy advocacy at the community and county levels in the future. Most of the observed outcomes are in the early stages of change, including increased knowledge around early childhood resources and needs, as well as increased skills and capacity to create change. **As the initiative works to articulate overall strategy and theory of change, it may be helpful to consider how current activities align with overarching goals and how the initiative can drive and better capture small wins and outcomes that contribute to those goals**.

## BRIGHT BEGINNINGS SUPPORTS

Overall, CATs value the support offered by Bright Beginnings because they have improved the quality and impact of their work. Specifically, CATs identified the following supports as most helpful to moving their work forward:

- **Facilitator support.** CATs greatly value the facilitator support being offered and feel that it has been crucial to driving the work forward. Notably, the role of facilitator has shifted over the years depending on CAT activities and needs including facilitation, project management, and technical assistance. This flexible approach has been effective and the initiative should continue to tailor this support to meet CAT needs.

- **Tangible resources provided, such as free books and childcare at meetings.** These supports have increased attendance at events and have been tangible and helpful items available to families.

- **The *Porque Me Amas* Campaign** was highlighted as a valued resource, helping to increase awareness of how parents and caregivers can support early learning by reading and talking to babies and small children.

- **Convenings and peer-to-peer learning.** Opportunities for CATs to come together are seen as extremely valuable as they provide platforms for CATs to share ideas and resources. CATs would like more of these networking opportunities in the future.

- **Talking points and marketing.** While the survey showed that some supports were not being used or people were unaware of them, during the interviews, some people expressed appreciation for the talking points and marketing tips provided by Bright Beginnings. They reported that these tools have been helpful for raising awareness and engagement among different audiences, including the business and faith communities.

- **Cross-initiative collaboration.** Several participants appreciate the increased collaboration with Bright Futures and see it as a way to streamline the work.

- **Technical assistance.** CATs recognize Bright Beginnings has provided increased access to funding opportunities, policy advocacy support, Strive model technical assistance, and data and shared measurement support. This has helped CATs to plan, implement, and begin to measure their work more strategically.

- **Flexibility.** CATs appreciate Bright Beginnings' flexibility in allowing them to take different approaches to the work in a way that is responsive to local needs because every community has different strengths and challenges and therefore require adaptive approaches.

## Supports Needed

CATs also shared additional supports needed and ideas for how the initiative can improve overall.

- **Direction and leadership.** CATs generally feel disconnected from leadership and there is a lot of confusion about who is leading the initiative and what the various roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders are. CATs would like increased clarification of goals and direction, more clearly defined roles, activities, and responsibilities of the CATs, the MCCC, the Backbone (staff and support roles such as Facilitators), and the newly formed ECD Advisory Group, as well as clarification around what leadership expects from CATs in terms of the outcomes they are responsible for achieving and measuring. At the same time, CATs would like to be supported and recognized for the diversity of approaches they are taking to meet the needs of their local communities, including the policy-driven, school-focused, and community-centered approaches. The staff should aim to provide strategic clarity and definition without prescribing specific approaches in ways that could undermine CAT ownership of local projects.

- **Communication.** Generally, CATs feel that initiative-wide communication has improved over the past year. However, CATs feel there is an opportunity to create more direct information channels between CATs and leadership in the context of clarifying roles (e.g., feedback loops that allow bi-directional communication flow). Additionally, CATs would like increased opportunities for communication and peer-to-peer learning between CATs. CATs sometimes feel their activities are isolated from the larger initiative and miss opportunities for collective learning, informed adaptation, promotion support, resources, and collective action to reach larger scale change. As Bright Beginnings is increasingly defined as the first part of Bright Futures' Cradle to Career Initiative, those roles and relationships will also need to be clarified. It may be useful to keep in mind how a well-articulated framework that celebrates CAT diversity and articulates how the work fits together can provide greater clarity while aligning with the needs expressed by those working at the local level.

- **Shared measurement and data.** CATs would like clarification and support in understanding and implementing a shared measurement system. Specifically, many would like to understand the value-add to creating a shared measurement system, as well as a common definition of what shared data actually means. Many feel there is lack of clarity around leadership expectations related to data collection, and that qualitative data and participatory evaluation are under-valued. Because there is not a theory of change that links activities to shorter term outcomes to the six common indicators, CATs have little guidance on what activities and shorter-term outcomes are preconditions to achieving some of those longer-term indicators. Consequently, CATs do not know what to measure or how to measure it. Additionally, there has been missed opportunity to capture and communicate short-term outcomes and small wins that are preconditions to achieving the long-term indicators defined by the initiative. A few CATs have used and appreciated data and evaluation support from First5 and a Strive model consultant, which supported their efforts to work toward measuring interim outcomes.

- **Funding.** Overall, CATs have greatly appreciated the funding opportunities (e.g. United Way) made available to them, especially the spirit of aligning funding to locally defined priorities. A couple CATs did not apply for funding because they felt they were not ready to apply given their stage of development and/or because funding opportunities did not fully align with their approach or current objectives. CATs would like additional assistance in obtaining funding that is aligned with their needs, including leadership advocating for CATs and parents in the funding and policy space. Clarification of overall strategic direction and the shared measurement and data strategy (as described above) may also help to attract aligned funding. Additionally, CATs would like increased ownership of the CAT budgets that Bright Beginnings provides.

# RECOMMENDATIONS/NEXT STEPS

In the coming year, in the context of new backbone staff and facilitators, Bright Beginnings has a great opportunity to apply lessons learned. Specifically, the initiative will need to clarify roles and potentially restructure their overall set-up and revamp their strategic plan, and specific project strategies. The following recommendations are based on findings from the 2016-17 evaluation results and keep this transition in mind.

- **Structure** – The newly formed Early Childhood Development Advisory Group brings new expertise into the work and should be used to create space to restructure initiative leadership in a way that aligns with the strategic objectives (and evaluation findings). It may be particularly useful to consider:
  - o The initiative will greatly benefit from clarified roles, responsibilities, and expectations for all stakeholders related to the initiative, including the MCCC, the Advisory Group, CAT members and leaders, CAT facilitators, First5 staff, United Way and Impact Monterey County, Bright Beginnings staff and structures, and the Policy Advocacy Network. Clarifying how all the moving pieces fit together will reduce confusion and contribute to a more cohesive movement.
  - o CAT facilitators have played a crucial role for moving the work forward. As CATs have evolved, so has the role of the facilitator. Some CATs may still benefit from a facilitation role, while others may need project management or technical assistance. There is a great opportunity for the initiative to re-think what this support looks like with the CATs. The discussion should also look at the role of the Backbone staff and in-kind supports provided by some CAT participants or other county-wide efforts.
  - o In restructuring the initiative, it will be important to consider the balance between providing guidance and standardized direction, while also leveraging and celebrating the unique composition and approaches of each CAT. One way to merge grassroots with grasstops is to include CAT champions in decision-making structures and processes at the initiative level.
  - o Involving parents, particularly working and low-income Latino parents, directly in Bright Beginnings governance, decision making and strategy formulation across the initiative would also be useful in ensuring strategies or action plans are effective.
- **Communication** – The recent structural changes and staff changes provide an opportunity to rethink how communication flows within and outside of the initiative. It will be important to consider both internal and external communication flow:

- o The newsletters and website have helped stakeholders understand current happenings and updates at the initiative and CAT levels. However, newsletter open and click through rates, and website visitation numbers are fairly low. The purpose and means of communication channels should be clarified as part of a strategy review.

- o Additionally, internal communication channels can be improved to help provide real-time feedback from community to initiative level and vice-versa. This may include more direct connection between Backbone and CATs, improved processes and/or communication tools that allow initiative-level partners to share resources and updates with CATs, improved processes and/or communication tools that allow CATs to share immediate needs with initiative-level partners, more regular in-person convenings, etc. The Initiative may also want to explore the potential power dynamics at play and intentionally look toward creating authentic power shifts that place people of color and local leaders (including CATs) into partnership and leadership roles within the Initiative.

- o There is also an opportunity to improve external communication flow, including intentional branding, marketing, and outreach materials that are targeted to specific audiences and leverage partner networks in a coordinated way. This may help the initiative increase county-wide awareness and participation, as well as build capacity to affect change on a broader scale.

- **Strategic Planning and Evaluation** – The initiative is undergoing a strategic review and planning process, which provides an opportunity to incorporate lessons learned. A few things to consider:

  - o While the initiative has defined six common indicators, is has not articulated short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes that explain how to create change across the six indicators (how activities lead to ultimate impacts). By defining results along a continuum, community- and initiative-level partners will be able to understand how their work fits into a larger movement. This results framework can be used alongside root cause analysis so that CATs will be able to select strategies that target specific outcomes needed to reach the ultimate goals.

  - o Feedback from CATs shows that the initial six indicators were developed in a rather top-down way (led by a team of data experts) that did not maximize opportunity to use indicator definition to build shared vision and collective understanding of challenges and possible solutions.

  - o Similarly, the initiative has created a Theory of Action based on the collective impact approach. It's important to understand the process for how change is happening and integrate that learning into operations and strategy. The strategic planning process will provide an opportunity to more clearly define indicators for the collective impact approach along a results continuum that aligns with how the initiative anticipates change to happen.

  - o As the initiative undergoes its strategic planning process, it will be important to apply a systems lens throughout the process. Ensuring stakeholders recognize the desired systems-level impact and can effectively link their work and outcomes to larger-scale change will be important for achieving true collective impact at significant, transformative scale.

Bright Beginnings has seen great success in terms of building the foundations for a strong collective impact initiative. It has contributed to increased cross-sector collaboration, increased awareness of and commitment to early childhood development from diverse stakeholders, and mobilization of resources towards parents and young children. The initiative can now refine and create structures and processes that build on that foundation to further positively impact the children and families of Monterey County.