



Generational Opportunities to Achieve Long-Term Success (GOALS) Phase I Final Report

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Executive Summary

Overview

The Generational Opportunities to Achieve Long-Term Success (GOALS) program provides comprehensive, residentially based services to Arapahoe County families experiencing homelessness. Using a 2Gen framework, GOALS was initiated and developed collaboratively by Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree and is implemented through a partnership with Family Tree. Family Tree is a nonprofit organization operating multiple programs for adults, children and families and is responsible for implementing GOALS, while Arapahoe County Human Services provides key funding, technical assistance, and support for the process and outcome evaluation of the program.

GOALS sets out to effectively help families living in poverty gain stable housing, economic security, and family well-being. While providing these services, GOALS seeks to add to the body of evidence on the effectiveness of a 2Gen approach to helping vulnerable families escape poverty. Toward this end, GOALS is conducting both formative and outcome evaluations. This report describes the findings of the formative evaluation, or Phase I of the GOALS implementation, which took place from January 2019 to June 2020. This formative evaluation focuses on the process of conceiving, planning, launching the program, and the experiences of the first families served. Information on the Phase I families — their lived experiences, characteristics, and engagement at GOALS — is described. A synthesis of feedback from these residents and key management team stakeholders on the early phase of program development is provided, concluding with lessons learned from Phase I to inform implementation of Phase II.

GOALS formative efforts included convening a leadership team of local agencies to assess needs and services available in the community for homeless families and conducting focus groups with unstably housed families who provided important feedback and suggestions for potential services. A permanent facility was secured, and the preliminary service model was developed. The Center for Policy Research (CPR) was contracted to provide technical assistance and conduct the evaluation research.

The GOALS program model incorporates the 2Gen hallmarks of connecting services for both parents and children to achieve outcomes in five domains, which include physical and mental health, early childhood education, postsecondary and employment pathways, economic assets, and social capital. Through intensive, wrap-around residential services, GOALS utilizes motivational interviewing techniques to conduct comprehensive case management work with families to identify needs and resources, access services from partner agencies, secure permanent housing, and create a plan for economic stability and family well-being. Central to GOALS implementation is the eventual co-location at GOALS of key service providers, including workforce programs and an early childhood education center.



Feedback from key management stakeholders from Family Tree and Arapahoe County Human Services reveals an optimistic and clearly aligned vision for GOALS implementation and its eventual impact. This group believes that convening a leadership team with representatives of area agencies helped define program needs, identified necessary resources, and propelled the program forward. The partnership between Family Tree and Arapahoe County Human Services was explored and the benefits of leveraging their respective expertise was acknowledged. Challenges to this partnership were identified, including an initial lack of clarity on roles and expectations and differences in organizational resources and cultures. The extensive demands on GOALS staff that were required to integrate 2Gen principles and coordinate partnerships, while also launching a 24-hour, residential-based service center, were noted. Overall, the key stakeholders shared a willingness to learn as services unfolded and an expectation that effective implementation would include both successes and challenges.

Families Served in Phase I

Seven families, composed of 10 adults and 22 children, from both single- and two-parent families, participated in GOALS Phase I. The families came to GOALS with many challenging lived experiences common to poverty, including very low-income levels, homelessness, limited education, as well as barriers such as felony convictions, substance abuse, engagement with child welfare, and mental health concerns. The first families began their residence at GOALS in July 2019. Families resided at GOALS for an average of nine months. Unfortunately, the implementation of GOALS Phase I overlapped with the global COVID-19 pandemic. GOALS operated continuously during this period, but internal and external services were curtailed, and social distancing protocols interfered with residents' interactions with staff and one another. The Phase I families reported their current housing situation in the exit survey as in their own home, with family members or in transitional housing.

Although Phase I families identified economic assets as their primary concern, they focused on a variety of issues during their tenure at GOALS. Mental health concerns were present for most families. While a member of most of the families found employment during their stay at GOALS, these jobs were often short lived. Three of the seven families had a child or children in out-of-home placement, so family reunification was a top priority. With GOALS assistance, families worked to overcome barriers, such as the lack of a valid driver's license and other transportation issues. GOALS helped three families secure childcare.

Through interviews and exit surveys, residents indicated that GOALS was most helpful in supporting the education of their children, securing childcare, and meeting the needs of both parents and children. Former residents spoke very highly of the assistance provided by their Navigator case managers. Like the key management stakeholders, they also expressed optimism about GOALS potential positive impact for families. The regular Family Voice meetings and family activities hosted at GOALS were appreciated and were missed when moved to a virtual platform when COVID forced limitations of services. Case management notes and direct feedback from residents illustrated some of the challenges of communal living, such as



residents not doing their fair share of chores, behavior infractions and conflict, and house rules or practices that seemed unfair.

For the most part, most residents felt like their circumstances after their residence at GOALS were about the same as before and the services provided were not especially helpful. This feedback should be interpreted with caution. Much of these residents' engagement was during the pandemic and it is possible their circumstances would have taken a turn for the worse had they not been involved in GOALS. In addition, many of the Phase I families faced complex and difficult challenges, some of which went beyond GOALS purpose and capacity.

Summary of Lessons Learned

While limited due to COVID, the services and practices implemented by GOALS align well with the hallmarks of the 2Gen framework. Key lessons learned from Phase I include:

- **Optimism about GOALS 2Gen potential remains high.** Both GOALS leadership and the residents who participated in Phase 1 implementation are optimistic about the potential positive impact from GOALS' 2Gen, wrap-around residential program model. Continuing to revisit GOALS shared mission, vision, and goals with all levels of program staff, partner agencies, and residents will help translate this optimism into effective programming.
- **Community Leadership Team has positive impact.** The engagement from community partners in the conception and early implementation of the GOALS program had a positive benefit to GOALS development. The shared mission and vision, from the top down across key partner agencies, was critical to rolling out a complex multi-agency collaborative program and helpful to securing important funding, leading to a robust service model.
- **The partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree is positively evolving.** The active partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree in the development and implementation of GOALS has leveraged the assets of two very different entities. While this partnership has drawn on the respective resources and strengths of each agency, differing expectations and ways of operating created some challenges. Continued attention to the components of effective partnerships, including shared expectations and clear communication, should continue to be a focus moving forward.
- **Human resources need to be well aligned with heightened expectations for 2Gen implementation and meeting the needs of residents.** GOALS 2Gen framework, together with heightened expectations for collaboration and evaluation, and the inherent challenges of operating a residential program made considerable demands on the GOALS staff and to Family Tree's implementation and the launch of GOALS services. These demands stressed GOALS early staff members, contributing to turn-over in key positions. Additional human resources in program management became necessary to meet both the external and internal requirements of the GOALS program. In addition, ensuring staff have the traits to work with families facing serious challenges and being



fully trained on the 2Gen framework, trauma-informed approach to case management is important to ensuring stability and continuity of service delivery.

- **Phase I families experienced complex barriers, and additional screening criteria could increase engagement.** The lived experiences and barriers of the resident families during GOALS Phase I were challenging and difficult to effectively address. While this was anticipated, efforts to serve families demonstrated the need for policies and procedures for resident enrollment and engagement and staff development. As issues were identified through the ongoing Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process, efforts were made to respond to and address challenges. Some families faced significant substance abuse issues that required treatment that the GOALS program was not designed for and was unable to provide. Other families presented safety risks to both staff and residents due to an unwillingness to follow facility rules. Finally, some of families had open active child welfare cases that demanded the focus of families and may have distracted from GOALS other economic security and family well-being priorities. Through the CQI process, CPR added additional screening criteria to further refine the target population of families enrolled in GOALS in an effort to further define the population best targeted for the GOALS program.
- **Program performance measures require consistent data collection and updates to enhance applicability.** Developing and adapting measures to report on performance is important to ensuring the families being served are receiving the services they need. CPR developed a set of measures, including the 2Gen Index to track and report on key outcomes, however the tool was not widely completed as designed by program staff, suggesting further training or adaptations may be necessary. CPR also created an ongoing CQI process to review data as collected, which is critical to ensuring the program is on track to achieve desired outcomes. Data-driven decision-making is dependent upon consistent and complete data collection and documentation in the GOALS Connect management information system.
- **Family Voice meetings and family activities build social capital.** Encouraging and supporting participant voice in the development and ongoing service delivery model ensures the program is responsive to family needs while supporting engagement. Regular Family Voice meetings serve the dual purpose of soliciting residents' thoughts and opinions while also building a social network among residents.
- **Onsite services will enhance program delivery and client satisfaction.** The promise of onsite services did not come to fruition as planned during Phase I due to the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders. Phase I families hoped for more support and guidance from staff when looking for housing and accessing services, in addition to more support in building community while living in the GOALS facility. With the planned move in of onsite service providers, Phase II will be able to test the effects of these onsite service providers.
- **The GOALS model integrates 2Gen hallmarks and components, which well positions implementation in Phase II.** During the second phase of operations, GOALS will have



the opportunity to coordinate and integrate 2Gen features into its programming more deeply.

- **COVID-19 impacts were significant.** The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on program service delivery was felt by Phase I families. A major feature of the GOALS model, co-location of services with other programs on the GOALS campus, was unable to be realized.

The Phase II evaluation of the GOALS program is currently underway. This impact evaluation will compare long-term outcomes for families who participate in the GOALS program against a comparison group of similar families who did not receive services at GOALS. This rigorous research design will begin to build evidence to support the GOALS intervention in breaking the multi-generational cycle of poverty among homeless and unstably housed families.



Introduction

Overview of GOALS

The GOALS program seeks to improve overall well-being for families experiencing homelessness by enhancing self-sufficiency through residentially based, whole family/2Gen services (parent, child, and family). Cheryl Ternes, Director of Arapahoe County Human Services, conceived of the GOALS program in 2015 in response to the need for quality services for homeless families in the Aurora area. Leveraging her experience as an Ascend Colorado Children & Families Health and Human Services Fellow at the Aspen Institute, Ternes sought to apply a 2Gen framework to services for the homeless, a somewhat uncharted type of service for both 2Gen programs and Arapahoe County.

Ascend at the Aspen Institute serves as hub for 2Gen knowledge and collaboration and provides this description of the framework:

“Two-generation (2Gen) approaches build family well-being by intentionally and simultaneously working with children and the adults in their lives together. As children, parents, and families grow and change across their lifespan, 2Gen approaches align opportunities to help families pursue their goals and thrive, optimizing each person’s potential along the way. The results are healthy parents with family-supporting jobs, healthy children meeting developmental milestones, and better-connected individuals able to participate in civic and family life.”¹

“By addressing the needs of both the parents and the kids, we avoid segmentation where one service provides for a child and another provides for a parent, without knowledge or consideration of how the needs of the parent and child are related to one another. With 2Gen, we can combine individual services to develop an overarching plan to meet the family’s needs and better help them move forward in their path out of poverty.”

— Cheryl Ternes, Arapahoe County Human Services Director

The 2Gen approach addresses several aspects of family well-being, including physical and mental health, early childhood education, postsecondary and employment pathways, economic assets, and social capital. Ascend has identified the hallmarks of a 2Gen approach as:

- Centered on families with integrated services.
- Removing barriers and coaching family members toward self-set goals.
- Partnering with diverse service providers for comprehensive services.
- A commitment to racial equality and measuring family outcomes.
- Additionally, the 2Gen approach relies on the self-determination and lived experience of clients, or family voice, to guide program development, implementation, and intervention service delivery.

Listening to families who are among the target population of clients to be served by GOALS is a priority for the development of the program and ongoing service model. All levels of leadership

¹ <https://ascend.aspeninstitute.org/resources/understanding-2gen/>.



and staff agree, as stated by Arapahoe County’s Deputy Director of Human Services, “we need to hear from families when our services are not meeting their need. That's how we get better.”

Aligned with these 2Gen hallmarks, Ternes and her staff convened a leadership group of area service providers to forge partnerships, identify both resources and gaps in services, and further articulate the vision and design of what a 2Gen residential program for homeless families should encompass. Family Tree, a local non-profit operating House of Hope, a short-term residential program for women and children and other family-serving programs, was selected to implement the GOALS program. An early priority was locating an appropriate facility to house the families and operate as a service hub for partnering organizations. In partnering with Family Tree, CEO Scott Shields commented that “while we've always done some aspects of the 2Gen approach, it was important to recognize that we could do it more intentionally and at a much deeper level, taking advantage of the opportunity to provide a more deep and meaningful service to the whole family unit, adults and children included.”

The leadership team met regularly and participated in critical planning and insight gathering to inform the development of GOALS. Key activities included mapping area service resources and gaps and conducting a focus group with individuals with the lived experience of homelessness or housing insecurity. After a thorough search for an appropriate property, Family Tree secured four buildings on the former Excelsior Youth Services’ Oxford Vista campus in Aurora, Colorado, in 2018 to be utilized for GOALS programming. When planning for the implementation of services began in earnest, Arapahoe County acquired the services of CPR to conduct a two-phase formative and outcome/impact evaluation. A management team, led by Human Services’ contracted project manager Valerie Brooks, began to meet regularly to define services, partnerships, and evaluation tools. The management team included representatives from Family Tree, Arapahoe County Human Services, and CPR.

The implementation of the GOALS program is dependent on multiple sources of funding, but Arapahoe County Human Services provided significant funds to Family Tree during the startup phase and provides the ongoing core operational funding through a fee-for-service arrangement. However, due to the pandemic and the need to physically distance, Family Tree was unable to maximize the fee for service model due to lower than anticipated occupancy rates during the initial implementation phase.

In full implementation, approximately 15 families at a time are housed for a range of four to up to nine months. During a family’s period of residence at GOALS, services are provided to address obstacles to self-sufficiency and transition to stable permanent housing. Clients work with a case manager Navigator to identify needs, create goals, identify and access services, and track progress. GOALS launched with a “soft opening” in August 2019 in a temporary space in one of its buildings on the campus while the permanent residential building, the Shenandoah building, was extensively renovated. Renovations to Shenandoah were completed in July 2020 and GOALS service formally began in September 2020. Central to the vision of implementation



of the GOALS program was the coordination and co-location of services for GOALS clients on the GOALS property. The eventual use of the four buildings will include:

- Arapahoe County Human Services satellite offices and services, including benefits eligibility, childcare navigator
- AD Works and CWEE workforce development services
- Ability Connections Colorado, a Head Start preschool
- Aurora Mental Health Center

Unfortunately, the full implementation of the GOALS program and co-location of services by other programs was interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. While GOALS provided services continuously, other services were delivered remotely and service providers did not come onto the GOALS campus as originally planned, which caused unforeseen challenges.

Service Model

The overall purpose of the GOALS program is to assist the whole family in achieving long-term economic security. The identified preconditions necessary for economic security include healthy and functional families with parents earning a livable wage and children developing to their potential. Central to GOALS implementation and the application of the 2Gen framework is access to diverse services, provided by both the program itself and multiple community partners at the GOALS campus. The GOALS program objectives include improving family well-being, enhancing the parents' ability to support their families, and developing children's skills for the next generation self-sufficiency. "If we can get all these services together at one location, including housing, some really great things will come out of it," said Bob Prevost, Arapahoe County Human Services Deputy Director.

The types of services provided by GOALS and community partners to meet these objectives are illustrated here:



Table 1. Program Objectives

Improve Family Well-Being	Enhance Parent’s Ability to Financially Support Family	Develop Children’s Skills for Next Generation Self-Sufficiency
Services to Meet Objectives		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Safe and stable congregate housing and meals (GOALS) · Parenting education and support (GOALS and partners) · Recreation opportunities (GOALS and partners) · Self-sufficiency planning case management (Residential and Post-Residential) (GOALS) · Social capital development (GOALS) · Access to health insurance and other benefits (Partners) · Family counseling (Partners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Employment program, including job search, adult education, job training and skill development (Partners) · Post-secondary education (Partners) · Health and mental health treatment (Partners) · Financial literacy training (Partners) · Work supports (GOALS and Partners) · Homelessness diversion (Partners) · Childcare (Partners) · Support for overcoming barriers to employment (GOALS and Partners) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Early childhood education (Partners) · After-school and summer tutoring (Partners) · Developmental screening and intervention (Partners) · Social and emotional development (GOALS and Partners) · Recreation (GOALS and Partners) · Health and mental health treatment (Partners) · School-based services (Partners) · Enrichment programs (Partners)

The voices of families experiencing homelessness and housing instability were central to the development of the GOALS service model. Families provided input and feedback early in the development process, a focus group was held with clients of the Center for Work Education and Employment (CWEE), one of Arapahoe County Human Services’ employment services providers and later, three focus groups were facilitated by CPR with Arapahoe County Human Services clients who met the target population criteria. Families shared information about services desired and obstacles faced in accessing services and affirmed the value of wrap-around services provided onsite at GOALS. While interest in participating in supportive services was expressed, so too was the desire for personal and family self-determination in how the services are administered. To learn more about the integration of Family Voice in the GOALS program, CPR prepared a research brief, [available here](#).

Screening and Enrollment

Potential clients are referred by select partner organizations, including Arapahoe County Human Services, other Family Tree programs, Arapahoe Douglas Works (ADWorks), CWEE, and homeless liaisons from two area school districts. Referral partners have been trained to screen potential clients for eligibility, which includes both single and two parent families who are receiving or are eligible for TANF/Colorado Works and are unstably housed or experiencing homelessness. Families must have a child under 18 or be expecting a child. Referring partners utilize a script that describes GOALS, its congregate living environment and the types of services provided. If a family is interested in participating in the program, they are provided with more information, given a tour of the facilities, and enrolled as space is available.

Once enrolled and moved into GOALS, a staff Navigator gathers information on the family background and needs through a comprehensive intake process. The information gathered



provides the foundation for a family plan, with goals co-created by the family and a staff Navigator.

A well-defined target population is key to program success both for families and staff. The GOALS program was designed to be open to all families experiencing homelessness or housing instability served in Arapahoe County, Colorado. Ensuring an inclusive and equitable program open to all families meeting a set of criteria became important for the stability, safety, and success of the GOALS program.

Safe and Stable Congregate Housing and Food

Families housed at GOALS have their own room within the facility and prepare their own meals with food provided. Families living at GOALS must agree to congregate housing, to live on a drug-free campus, to follow the facility's rules and policies, to participate in a chore schedule, and to participate in the weekly community voice meeting and ongoing and regular engagement with the Navigator.

2Gen Case Management Using Motivational Interviewing

Case management is an essential part of the GOALS approach. While at GOALS, families and individuals work with onsite Navigators to set goals, identify barriers and strategies to overcome obstacles, identify and access needed services, and track progress. Navigators use a trauma informed, strength-based case management approach that includes motivational interviewing using a 2Gen framework to build trust with the family and to develop a case management plan that works for the family. Case management notes are tracked within the GOALS Connect online management information system.

Intervention Service Delivery

Families living at GOALS will eventually have access to a variety of onsite services, such as employment services, recreation, counseling, education, health screenings, high-quality childcare, and other services provided offsite. Both on- and offsite services are offered by community partners, like employment programs AD/Works and CWEE, Aurora Mental Health, and other public and private agencies.

GOALS Eligibility Criteria	
✓	Receiving or eligible to receive benefits in Arapahoe County
✓	Homeless or unstably housed
✓	Has one or more children or currently pregnant
✓	Agrees to live in congregate housing
✓	Agrees to drug free environment
✓	Agrees to participate in GOALS programming
✓	Motivated to change life for the better

Building Evidence for Efficacy of the 2Gen Approach and Continuous Quality Improvement at GOALS

Utilizing a 2Gen approach to help families living in poverty achieve economic self-sufficiency and family well-being is an emerging field. GOALS seeks to contribute to the evidence of effectiveness of the 2Gen framework in general and specifically to services for homeless families. Toward this end, Arapahoe County Human Services engaged CPR to conduct both



formative and outcome evaluations, with the formative evaluation informing program development to enhance the potential for creating and capturing impact during the outcome evaluation. The formative evaluation has included technical assistance from CPR to develop and implement the GOALS program. CPR assisted with the development of the intervention components, documented program implementation, created an intervention manual, piloted survey instruments, and created an online management information system called GOALS Connect for case management and data collection purposes. CPR participated on the project management team, conducted regular site visits, trained staff on the intervention, and trained referral partners to ensure referrals were in line with the target population the GOALS program is intended to serve.

Embedded within the formative evaluation has been the development of a CQI process, based on data collected through GOALS Connect. The CQI process has been ongoing throughout the formative evaluation and is driven, in part, by regular data-based dashboard reports on referrals, enrollments, and services provided. The CQI process has identified issues and program implementation challenges, enabling program leadership to address concerns as identified. Several improvements in program implementation have been made as a result. These program improvements include:

- Refinement of the family screening, referral, and enrollment process to incorporate information on families' engagement with Child Protection Services. While it is expected families may have interactions with Child Protective Services, some situations are so complex and demanding, the full extent of GOALS services cannot be fully utilized.
- Development of clear and consistent policies and house rules for residents.
- Refinement of expectations and training for GOALS staff.
- Ongoing support and expectations for collection and recording of client information in the GOALS Connect data system.

Incorporating lessons learned through the Phase I formative evaluation and based on the data prepared through the monthly CQI process, CPR is conducting an impact evaluation of the GOALS program in Phase II. The impact evaluation is designed to build evidence to support the GOALS intervention in moving homeless and unstably housed families out of poverty. In Phase II, CPR will use a random assignment evaluation design to test the impacts of the GOALS intervention against a comparison group. The impact evaluation will assess and compare outcomes of GOALS families compared to a comparison group of similarly-eligible families — outcomes will be assessed using tools developed during the formative evaluation, follow-up telephone surveys, and administrative data. The purpose of the evaluation will be assessing if the GOALS model was implemented as intended, and if families served by the program saw improvement in the areas of economic stability, housing, employment, health, and well-being, compared to the families in the control group receiving "business as usual" services.



Phase I Formative Evaluation Methods

The formative evaluation had two main goals:

- 1) Develop, implement, and manualize the GOALS intervention at a residential services campus that supports homeless and unstably housed families in addressing barriers to economic security in an effort to break the cycle of poverty using a two-generation (2Gen) framework.
- 2) Test components of the GOALS intervention to ensure service needs of families are being met, while achieving outcomes related to housing stability, economic security, and family well-being. CPR implemented a CQI approach to data collection, analysis, and reporting to ensure alignment of program services with achieving outcomes in preparation for a Phase 2 impact evaluation.

The formative evaluation spanned 18 months, from January 2019 through June 2020. The evaluation focused on documenting and collecting information from the following sources:

- Interviews with program architects, project management team members, and key stakeholders.
- Screening tool developed to identify the target population.
- Baseline survey designed to collect demographic and background information on the families housing, education, employment, and health and well-being history.
- 2Gen Index designed to establish baseline and follow-up measures of 2Gen outcomes including family well-being, economic security, and children's development of their potential.
- Case Management records
- Service records
- Brief exit survey
- Telephone follow-up interviews designed to gain Phase I family perspectives on participation in the GOALS program and program exit information.

The research questions for the formative evaluation include:

- What value did convening a leadership team of community stakeholders bring to the formation of the GOALS program and its 2Gen framework?
- What are the perceptions of members of the management team and other key stakeholders on the process thus far in conceiving, planning, and implementing the GOALS program?
- Were referring partners able to identify, refer, and enroll families from the target population in the GOALS program?
- What are the characteristics and lived experiences of GOALS Phase I families?
- What has been the experience of GOALS clients served during the "soft opening" of the launch of the GOALS program?



- What lessons can be learned from the early stages of GOALS development and implementation?

Feedback from Key Stakeholders

CPR gathered feedback from GOALS program architects, planners, and implementers on the development and priorities for the program. Researchers conducted telephone and video interviews in April 2021 with several key stakeholders. The stakeholder interviewees included core members of the project management team:

- Cheryl Ternes, Arapahoe County Human Services Director
- Scott Shields, Family Tree Chief Executive Officer
- Valerie Brooks, GOALS Project Manager (Contractor to Arapahoe County)
- Bob Prevost, Arapahoe County Human Services, Deputy Director
- Susie Street, Family Tree Division Director for Housing and Family Stabilization Services
- Georjette Dhliwayo, Project Management Administrator
- Rynn Sango, Family Tree GOALS Program Director

The focus of the stakeholder interviews was on GOALS' application of a 2Gen framework, the roles and values of the leadership and management teams in launching the GOALS program, the qualities of the core partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree, the blended service model with other partner service agencies, and lessons learned during the development of the program. All the interviewees, with the exception of two-Family Tree staff members, have been involved in program planning since very early in the process.

Insights and Themes from Stakeholder Interviews

Several themes emerged from the interviews with the stakeholders:

1. Aspirations for the impact GOALS will eventually have with families remain high among the informants, particularly related to the co-location of services and the application of the 2Gen framework for services.
2. Establishing a leadership team of Arapahoe County service providers and other stakeholders was very useful to creating the service model and building support for the GOALS concept, producing concrete outcomes in securing resources.
3. The extensive collaboration between Arapahoe County Human Service and Family Tree effectively leveraged both organizations' resources and experiences but presented challenges too. Clarifying expectations of each partner at the early stages of the project would have been helpful and will continue to be useful for the partnership going forward.
4. Operating a 24-hour residential facility for multiple families experiencing homelessness is inherently a challenging endeavor, and the structure of the partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree, along with the application of the



2Gen framework to services and the demands of a formal evaluation, are new and different expectations for Family Tree and its implementation of programs. It is important to acknowledge the full impact of the heightened expectations this project places on Family Tree and align human and financial resources accordingly. Evaluating and aligning additional human resources for onsite coordination and implementation could further enhance Family Tree’s ability to effectively meet these diverse expectations.

5. Many of the informants expressed a high tolerance for the ambiguity inherent to starting a new project and understanding that the program model is evolving and growing. Recognizing the pilot nature of this project, informants suggested that while there were things they could have done differently, the trial-and-error process of rolling out the program has been and will continue to be useful.



Aspirations and Program Vision

Overall, the informants reported high aspirations for the potential impact that a 2Gen residential program could have in helping homeless families. Most of the interviewees praised Ternes’ original vision for the GOALS program and viewed it as the foundational and enduring guide to program design and implementation. Ternes credits her experience with Ascend at the Aspen Institute as a source of inspiration for applying the 2Gen framework to a program for homeless families. The prospects of coordination and co-location of service partners were particularly important for most, based on the expectation of positive impact for families.

“The whole awesome vision about this program is that families are living at this residence, most of the services are on site, and you also have a navigator who is helping coordinate all the services.”
— Valerie Brooks, Contracted Project Director, Arapahoe County Human Services

Leadership Team

The early convening of a loosely organized leadership team of Arapahoe County service providers and other stakeholders was the first of

“The leadership team helped us shape a more fully baked programmatic model that we then brought forward to implement.”

— Scott Shields, Family Tree CEO

many steps to build ownership of the GOALS program and integrate the 2Gen framework within



GOALS development. The leadership team’s purpose was to assess needs, identify resources, and further clarify the vision for a residential program for homeless families. Georjette Dhliwayo, Arapahoe County Human Services Program Administration Director, described the relationship between the 2Gen approach and the formation of the leadership team this way:

“Part of the 2Gen approach is really understanding that different agencies have different expertise, and if we're going to really move the family forward, we have to partner up with the experts in the community to be able to break whatever cycle we're trying to break. . . . So that was Cheryl's focus, really bringing all these partners together so we link arms, and together we help break some of the cycles for families and not necessarily feeling that we had to do everything and reinvent the wheel, but rather, augment what we had internally with what the community could provide.” — Georjette Dhliwayo

Valerie Brooks, the GOALS project manager, further described three desired roles for the leadership team: to assist in securing funding, to help find a site for the residential facility, and to provide complementary services to eventual residents. All of the stakeholders who participated in the leadership team expressed positive opinions about the role and value of convening this group as one of the first steps in creating the GOALS program. Specific examples of how the leadership team helped launch the GOALS program include:

- The City of Aurora Deputy Manager helped GOALS break down barriers and provided insight on how to work within the city constructs regarding zoning and regulations related to operating a residential facility.
- Also, within the City of Aurora, the Homeless Liaison was an effective champion for a successful funding request for building renovations through the city council.
- The leadership team identified service partners in advance of the start of services at GOALS, enabling partnership discussions to move directly to the provision of services. Unfortunately, the COVID -19 pandemic interrupted plans for co-location and direct service provision with many partners, but there are signs this will get back on track as services begin to return to normal.
- Funding from the State of Colorado’s Division of Housing for building renovations was secured, again with champions within the department. As Scott Shields described, “We had people on that team who were doing things behind the scenes that I'll probably never know about to really make that funding happen and they had to go all the way to the state board to get the vote for funding.”

Both Ternes and Shields suggested participation in the leadership team was positively influenced by Arapahoe County Human Services’ role as the convener, effectively leveraging the agency’s existing relationships, role, and reputation.



Management Team and Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree Partnership

Once a site for the GOALS program was identified, program planning began in earnest through the management team, facilitated by Valerie Brooks. The management team, composed of representatives of Arapahoe County Human Services, Family Tree, and CPR, met and continues to meet regularly to plan and oversee the implementation of the GOALS program.

Participation in the management team reflects both Arapahoe County Human Services' and Family Tree's investment in the success of the program. Scott Shields, Family Tree CEO, described the value of partnership this way: "The assets are when partnerships work, there's a synergy there that is producing results that no one organization can do by itself. Partners are sharing risk and sharing the rewards. I can't point to this type of relationship in any other program at Family Tree where there's just such a vested interest in the best interests of the people we're serving."

While Arapahoe County Human Services contracts with many different organizations to serve its clients, the formative and pilot nature of the GOALS program and its related evaluation diverge from other experiences. Likewise, Family Tree operates a diverse suite of programs, funded by both philanthropic and public sources, across multiple county jurisdictions, but the active engagement of a funding and program partner like Arapahoe County Human Services is unique. Bob Prevost, Deputy Director for Arapahoe County Human Services, described Human Services' participation this way:

"The value of our participation in the management team is that it shows our level of commitment to GOALS. We want Family Tree to know that if they need something, we're there to help. That's why I have so many people at the table, because if there is a question, the answer can't be, 'I don't know. We'll have to get back to you on that.' Instead, we have an expert at the table to answer the question."

Family Tree and Arapahoe County Human Services enjoy a strong partnership and commitment to implementing the GOALS program. The nature of this partnership is complex, evolving, and improving. All the informants were confident it will yield positive benefit to the families served by GOALS. However, it has not been without its tests and many of the informants suggested it would have been helpful to explore and set expectations for this partnership early on in program development more fully. There are contrasts

It's important to recognize human services, and community-based nonprofits operate very differently. How we do our work, how they do their work, I'm not saying one is right, and one is wrong, they're just different. So, at GOALS, we're trying to align different cultures."
— Scott Shields, Family Tree CEO



between the two organizations that inherently pose challenges for an effective partnership.

“I think the challenge is sort of a David and Goliath thing, we’re Goliath sitting at the table and David is maybe a little bit overwhelmed at times. Hopefully, we don’t force anything. We’re there to support, not to lead Family Trees’ efforts. They are the experts in running a residential program like GOALS.” — Bob Prevost, Arapahoe County Human Services Deputy Director

2Gen Program Staffing and Resources

One of the key strengths of the 2Gen approach is the extensive access to services for clients due to the partnering that occurs between multiple service agencies. Nevertheless, coordinating organizational partnerships and services is time consuming. Family Tree faced the simultaneous demands of running a residential facility while also managing relationships and collaborations with multiple service providers. Given the staffing demands of this dual responsibility position, in hindsight, adding additional staff to support the program coordinator position in achieving multiple priorities simultaneously could have alleviated some of the initial implementation challenges. GOALS will benefit from having added this support moving forward.

Another staffing issue during the formative stage of the GOALS program was turnover in the Program Director position. Responsible for the day-to-day operation of the 24-hour residential program, meeting the expectations of Family Tree, and managing and formalizing service arrangements with other partners, Program Directors found the position very challenging; two were hired and stayed in the position only briefly. In hindsight, more attention might have been paid to developing programs and procedures prior to the start of services.

“This position requires one person to be doing multiple things at all times. For instance, we had to build guidelines and expectations for residents and what that looks like and how those are implemented. So, in my particular job, I’m building policies and procedures, while I’m also training and supporting staff, and also hiring new staff and training them. I’m also having challenging conversations with residents. I’m the one that is asking people to exit if their behaviors and the things that are happening in the house are just not manageable. So, I think there’s a lot of things that would definitely burn somebody out very quickly.”
— Rynn Sangos, GOALS Program Director

A third staffing issue that emerged was the need to address uncomfortable resident issues. This included interactions with the child welfare system and dealing with unrealistic client expectations and goals. These issues required sensitive responses within established legal frameworks and requirements. In hindsight, more time should have been expended on anticipating these challenges and developing policies and appropriate responses.



The Unfolding Process

The process of conceiving of the GOALS program, convening the Leadership Team, identifying a facility, and starting services has been underway since 2015. Most informants indicated that much had been learned along the way and recognize the importance of continuing to learn. Valerie Brooks described it this way:

“I do hope as we keep moving forward, we really do keep in mind we're still learning, I think the process of GOALS services unfolding has to be a whole continuous improvement process. We're all still thinking 2Gen, what's working, what's not working, we need to ask the families that and we need to be flexible enough to make changes as we go.” — Valerie Brooks, Contract Project Director, Arapahoe County Human

While all the informants had ideas about how things might have been done differently, most recognized the full development of the GOALS program will take more time and will likely include a few missteps. The vision for GOALS is clear and uniformly held by all the informants, and this long view is helpful to navigating the ambiguities inherent in a new, ambitious program.





GOALS Phase I Residents

Enrollment for Phase I of the GOALS program began in July 2019 and continued through August 2020. During this period, seven families were enrolled and resided at GOALS. The characteristics, lived experiences, and perceptions of these residents were gathered as part of this formative evaluation to inform future GOALS development. A review and analysis of multiple data sources demonstrates several key findings about the early experience of GOALS services:

1. The seven families who resided at GOALS during Phase I came to the program with many complex challenges, in addition to experiencing homelessness. While it was expected the GOALS residents would face multiple barriers, the severity or focus of some of the actual challenges was more extensive than anticipated. In addition to poverty and homelessness, residents faced mental health barriers, substance abuse, and extensive engagement with Child Protective Services.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic added further complications for residents and the administration of the GOALS program. Over half the Phase I residents' time at GOALS was during the COVID-19 pandemic, with its related restrictions. While GOALS provided services throughout the pandemic, the full-service model, including co-location of services by partner organizations, could not be implemented due to COVID-19 restrictions.
3. Phase I families stayed at GOALS for an average of 9.5 months and participated in a range of 1 to 18 case management meetings with program Navigators each month.
4. The 2Gen Index, a tool intended to track families' perceptions of progress and provide guidance to goal setting and case management, was administered to families near the start of their residence at GOALS. The results suggest families were most concerned about economic issues. The 2Gen index was administered only once to Phase I families, instead of as intended on a monthly basis and at program completion. It is unclear why the assessment was not administered as intended, but it could suggest the tool, in its current form, did not meet the needs of families or Navigators, which should be explored further.
5. An analysis of case management records suggests the topics addressed most often were mental health issues, employment and challenges to employment including transportation-related issues, engagement with child protective services, behavior sanctions, and expressions of concern about other residents and GOALS staff. While this information is useful, more consistent collection and recording of client activities within



GOALS connect could provide a fuller picture of families’ activities and engagement at GOALS.

6. An exit survey with families after they departed GOALS suggests families perceived improvement in their family’s circumstances related to their children’s education. Similarly, former residents rated GOALS assistance with finding childcare and serving the needs of both parents and children as the most helpful aspects of their experience. In most areas, however, former residents indicated their circumstances were unchanged and GOALS was the not helpful in securing permanent housing.
7. Information gathered through interviews with some former residents illustrates the strong influence GOALS staff members had on the residents’ experience at GOALS, the challenges and frustrations of residing at GOALS during the pandemic, the need for resident accountability to the shared responsibilities of communal living, and the potential for mutual support among residents and the GOALS program as a whole at improving the lives of resident families
8. While the pandemic limited both offsite and onsite classes and family activities, residents reported appreciation for the Family Voice meetings and other family-based activities at GOALS.

Screening and Eligibility

The screening and referral process used by partner agencies identified 16 potential family residents. After intake, seven families enrolled in GOALS and nine families choose not to participate, were ineligible, or could not be contacted after the initial referral. Some of those who declined to enroll found alternate housing, most often with a family or friends, and were not interested in a communal living environment. Still others faced more significant barriers to economic stability and needed help with substance use and more intensive mental health treatment before participating in the program. The referral sources for the Phase I families are illustrated in Table 2.

Arapahoe County Human Services	3
AD/Works	1
CWEE	2
Family Tree	1

Profile of Families Served in Phase I

Lived Experiences and Characteristics of GOALS Families

The makeup and family characteristics of the Phase I residents, as self-reported during the intake process, are summarized in Table 3.



Table 3. GOALS Family Characteristics		
Number of families		7
Number of adults		10
Number of children		22
Family structure		
Single-parent household		4
Two-parent household		3
Children’s age range		Newborn to 15 years
Parent gender		
Female		6
Male		4
Adult ethnicity		
Caucasian		50%
African American		30%
Hispanic		10%
Mixed		10%
Adult average age		37

Families came to GOALS with lived experiences often associated with poverty, as illustrated in Table 4. Consistent with GOALS eligibility requirements, all of the families were homeless or unstably housed and currently receiving or eligible for TANF. The families did not appear to lack medical coverage, and all were utilizing food stamps. Families reported very low incomes, and none of the families had educational experiences beyond high school. Less than one-third were employed at enrollment, and the families had moved an average of two times in the last year. Only three families owned a car.

Table 4. GOALS Families Lived Experiences		
Earned \$10,000 or less in last year		100%
Housing at enrollment		
Unhoused, emergency or transitional housing		57%
Family or friends’ home		43%
Last grade completed		
High school		43%
GED		29%
Less than high school		29%
Public benefits		
Food stamps		100%
TANF		60%
At least one family member with medical coverage		100%
Currently employed		29%
Own a car		3
Average number of times moved in past 12 months		2

During the course of working with their Navigator, families revealed additional challenges to family well-being and self-sufficiency, including felony convictions, substance abuse, and



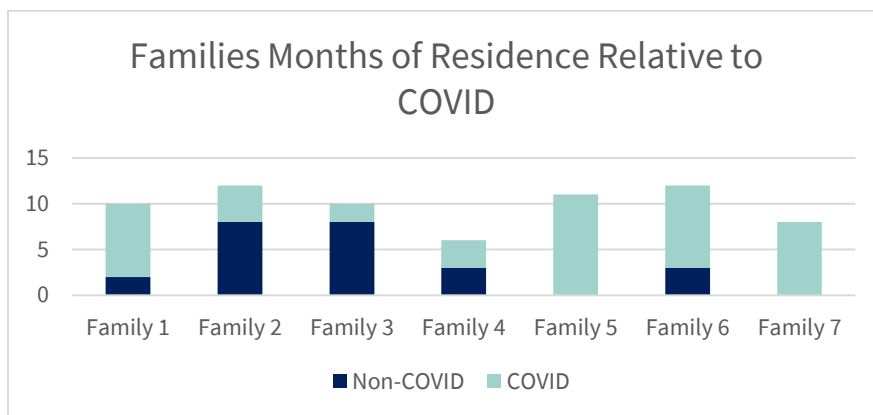
engagement with Child Protective Services, specifically with children in out-of-home placement. See Table 5.

Table 5. Families with Additional Challenges	
Families with at least one felony convictions	3
Families with child in out-of-home placement	3
Identified current or previous substance abuse (actual number may be greater)	3

Residents' Experience at GOALS

The seven families who resided at GOALS during the Phase I period began their experience in temporary housing on the GOALS campus in the Shenandoah building while the permanent facility was renovated. Those residents still engaged at GOALS moved into the new facility when it was completed. Each family had its own room with beds, but shared restrooms and the kitchen with other residents. Families were expected to participate in regular Family Voice meetings and split chore responsibilities. Families were required to engage in case management with a Navigator and to participate in activities related to their identified goals, including job search, classes, and accessing services.

The Phase I families lived at GOALS for an average of 9.5 months, with enrollments starting in July 2019 and continuing until June 2020. Like the rest of the world, the GOALS program and its residents were hugely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Phase I families' periods of residence relative to COVID -19 restrictions is illustrated here:



At the beginning of the pandemic, like all families, the GOALS families were under stay at home orders and were required to adopt quarantine, social distancing and testing protocols, with limitations of services from GOALS. While the GOALS program remained open and continued to serve families, schools, businesses, and government offices closed. Efforts to co-locate partner services on the GOALS campus came to a halt. Residents lost newly found jobs and were able to only access external services remotely, while also attending to the needs of their children who were not able to go to school or daycare. The regular stressors associated with communal living were amplified by the need for social distancing. Combined, over half of the residence



periods of Phase I families occurred during COVID. It is not possible to separate the impact of COVID-19 from the experience of Phase I families, which poses some limitations to the ability to assess the GOALS Phase 1 implementation.

Case Management

While residing at GOALS, residents participated in regular case management meetings with their assigned Navigators. On average, families engaged in 4.8 case management meetings each month. However, the average range of case management records per family ranged from 1.3 on the low end to 18 on the high end. It is unclear if this variation in the number of case management meetings reflects actual practice or is suggestive of the burdens of record-keeping on the staff.

2Gen Index

Since comprehensive case management is a cornerstone to the GOALS intervention, CPR developed the 2Gen Index tool to serve the dual purpose of capturing changes in residents' perceptions of their family's well-being and providing resident-led guidance to the case management process. The 2Gen Index tool was intended to be administered at enrollment, once a month during residence, and at the end of service, but it was not utilized in this way. For the Phase I families, the 2Gen Index was administered once, mostly near the enrollment period. Even with this limited application, the tool provides useful information on residents' perceptions of their experiences and challenges.

The 2Gen Index asks respondents to gauge their family's experiences in five areas:

- Children's education
- Children's assets
- Livable wages
- Family resources
- Family support

Respondents were asked to rate their family's situation relative to a scoring system of 1 to 4:

- 1: An area of concern
- 2: An area in need of attention
- 3: Stable but could improve
- 4: Doing well

All seven families completed one 2Gen Index; the compiled averages of their responses to each of the five domains were calculated and are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6. 2Gen Index Results Summary

Domain	Average Rating	Rating Category
--------	----------------	-----------------



Children’s education: My child participates fully in education	3.02	Stable
Children’s assets: My child has the resources to avoid risky behaviors	3.10	Stable
Livable wages: I (we) can secure and maintain a job	2.47	Needs Attention
Family resources: Our basic needs for housing and self-sufficiency are met	2.73	Needs Attention/Stable
Family support: I (we) can manage and support my (our) child(ren)	3.23	Stable

Overall, the families rated their situations as stable relative to their children’s education, assets, and the ability to manage their children. Earning a livable wage and meeting basic needs like housing were both rated as needing attention.

The 2Gen Index includes a total of 27 individual items, grouped into the five areas described above. The individual items with the highest (an average of 3 or above) and lowest (less than 3) compiled average ratings across the index are presented in Table 7.

Table 7. 2Gen Index – Identified Areas of Strength and Concerns					
Assets			Concerns		
Item	Average	Category	Item	Average	Category
We have access to health and mental health care.	4.00	Doing Well	I (we) am able to save money for unexpected expenses.	1.57	Concern/ Needs Attention
I (we) am confident I can effectively parent my child.	3.67	Stable/ Doing Well	I (we) am fully employed at a livable wage.	1.57	Concern/ Needs Attention
I (we) can manage our child’s behavior.	3.67	Stable/ Doing Well	I (we) am fully employed at a livable wage.	1.57	Concern/ Needs Attention
My (our) physical and mental health is not an obstacle to having a job.	3.57	Stable/ Doing Well	My (our) income covers our essential expenses.	1.71	Concern/ Needs Attention
My child attends school regularly.	3.33	Stable	Family members have support for dealing with any trauma they have experienced.	2.67	Needs Attention
We have safe and stable housing and enough healthy food to eat.	3.29	Stable	My child participates in recreation and enrichment activities and programs.	2.67	Needs Attention
I (we) have the job training, minimum education, and/or skills for employment earning a livable wage.	3.29	Stable	I (we) are active in our child’s education (communicating with teachers, help with homework, etc.).	2.75	Needs Attention/ Stable
			Our family does things together.	2.80	Needs Attention/Stable



The statements rated as areas of immediate concern were related to earnings, income, and resources to meet basic expenses. Interestingly, safe and stable housing and enough food to eat received a compiled average rating of stable, perhaps in reflection of residence at GOALS and not the recent experience of homelessness. Other areas in need of attention were engagement with children’s education, children’s recreation and enrichment, doing things together as a family, and support for dealing with trauma.

The one statement with an average rating of “doing well” is access to health and mental health care. This is consistent with information gathered during the enrollment process indicating families had at least one family member with health care coverage. Other areas rated as stable were regular school attendance, the job training needed for employment, and safe and secure housing and food.

Parents rated their ability to effectively parent their children and manage behavior as stable, bordering on doing well. Similarly, respondents did not believe their physical and mental health was interfering with their ability to work. Other evidence reported in this report suggests the residents’ perceptions on these items may have been more positive than their situations actually demonstrated.

Given challenges with data collection, the 2Gen Index was not administered as intended, and its value and efficacy are unclear. Moving into Phase 2, CPR will provide ongoing technical assistance and follow up with staff to ensure proper routine and reliable completion of the 2Gen Index. The 2Gen Index will be an important tool to complete at both program entry and exit to measure 2Gen outcomes related to family, parent, and child.

Case Management Records

Navigators summarized the issues discussed and the content of the regular case management meetings in the GOALS Connect database. As part of this evaluation, the case management records for the Phase 1 families were reviewed and themes relative to residents’ challenges and overall experiences were identified. This analysis is limited to only those items reported by residents and Navigators, and in turn, recorded by GOALS Navigators in GOALS Connect. As such, they may not reflect all the issues faced by residents or every case management session. See Table 8 for the most common issues addressed in case management sessions.

Table 8. Common Issues Identified from Case Management Records	
Issue	Families Impacted
Mental health challenges	5
New employment	5
Lost employment	4
Issue with driver's license	4
Behavior sanction	4
Lack of transportation	4



Table 8. Common Issues Identified from Case Management Records	
Child Protective Services engagement/family reunification	4
Complaints about residents and/or staff	4
Securing childcare	3
Substance abuse and/or addiction monitoring	3
Lack of engagement with GOALS	3
Ongoing or acute health issues	3

Mental health and substance use. Most of the Phase I families engaged with external mental health services, including therapy, medication administration, and substance abuse treatment. The case management notes included numerous references to family members’ anxiety, mood deregulation, depression, and erratic behavior, which in some cases, led to behavior consequences within GOALS and the engagement of Child Protective Services. Members of at least three families were required to participate in regular drug testing.

Employment and transportation. Most families found new jobs while residing at GOALS, but unfortunately, this employment was often short lived, due to COVID-19 shutdowns, the short-term nature of jobs, or termination. More than half of the families had issues acquiring a valid Colorado driver’s license, which impacted employment opportunities. In three cases, the obstacle to a valid driver’s license was unpaid parking or traffic tickets. Most families had general issues with a lack of transportation, and in many cases, GOALS was able to help by providing bus passes, arranging for car repairs, or securing a car seat.

Following facility rules. More than half the families had a member who was sanctioned for behavior by GOALS staff. Most of the sanctions were related to angry and abusive behavior and resulted in one adult and one family being removed from the GOALS program. In another instance, an adult refused to submit to a COVID test after repeated warnings. This too resulted in the removal of the family.

CPS/family reunification. At least three families began their GOALS residence with active engagement of Child Protective Services and a child(ren) in foster care or other out of home placement. All three families focused largely on reunification with the children during their residence at GOALS, with one family successful in securing reunification with their child. The other two families had supervised and unsupervised visits with their children while at GOALS, but the children did not reside at GOALS. Child Protective Services was engaged with at least one other family at GOALS, in response to parent behaviors observed by or reported by children to GOALS staff.

Behavior. Case management meetings often included expressions of concern or complaints about the behaviors of other residents and members of the GOALS staff. Families not doing their fair share of chores and conflict between family members were common issues. Some residents reported feelings that the other residents or staff were treating them or others



unfairly. Some felt GOALS staff’s response to issues was overly harsh and could have been better managed.

Childcare. For each of the families needing childcare, finding and securing childcare was a common topic. Two babies were born to parents at GOALS. One had health issues that prevented participation in childcare (prior to COVID-19). The other baby was in ill health at birth due to maternal drug use and was placed in out-of-home care. A few families experienced ongoing or acute health care issues, including surgery for removal of tumors and substance abuse detoxification and treatment.

Engaging in program. For three families, Navigators reported multiple challenges at getting residents to engage in case management meetings or GOALS participation requirements.

Housing. One topic not widely reported on in the case management notes was directing and supporting clients in finding secure housing upon departure from GOALS. While this may reflect a lack of documentation on the Navigators’ part, it could suggest that finding secure housing was not as common a topic as other issues. Further evidence of this comes from the resident exit survey, described in the next section, which shows that the majority of Phase I residents reported they did not find GOALS helpful in securing housing.

GOALS Connect is also intended to record families’ individual goals and progress towards meeting these goals, as well as the activities or services residents engage in, both within the GOALS program and through external service providers. Unfortunately, data collection in these areas is not consistent. While utilization of the GOALS Connect system has been a topic within the CQI process, it continues to be an ongoing concern. It is possible the system could be updated to increase ease and usefulness for Navigators, and this should be explored further.

Departure from GOALS and Exit Survey

Upon or after a family’s’ departure from GOALS, Phase I residents were asked complete a brief exit survey. Six of the families completed some parts of the survey, with two completing it at their departure and four completing it several months later as part of a short interview with CPR staff. The families were asked to characterize the reason for their departure and housing status at exit, reported here in Table 9.

Table 9. Self-Reported Reason for Departure and Housing Status	
Reason for departure	(N=6)
Ability to pay market rate	1
Challenges related to GOALS residential and other programs	1
Conflict with staff or other residents	1
Reached the limit of residential services available at GOALS	2
Other	1
Housing status at exit (n=4)	
In my own home or with a partner	2



In a family member or friend’s house	3
Interim housing or safe haven	1

The exit survey inquired how the family’s circumstances had changed (better, about the same, worse) as a result of participating in GOALS. In most areas, a majority of families indicated their circumstances were about the same. One area, education for children, was rated as better. A few respondents indicated they were worse off in some areas, but these were generally single responses. See Table 10.

Table 10. Exit Survey: Changes in Family Circumstances (N=6)	
Have your family’s circumstances changed?	
Better (50% or more)	About the same (50% or more)
Education for children	Employment
	Job skills
	Children’s mental or physical health
	Access to public assistance
	Overall family well-being
	Overall ability to support family

The exit survey asked how helpful GOALS was in several areas (helpful, neither helpful or not helpful, or not helpful). Only four individuals completed this part of the survey. Areas where GOALS was considered helpful by the majority of respondents were obtaining childcare, access to services, and meeting the needs of both parents and children. A majority of respondents felt GOALS was not helpful in getting stable housing or creating a supportive network. See Table 11.

Table 11. Exit Survey – How Helpful was GOALS? (N=4)	
Helpful (50% or more)	Not helpful (50% or more)
Getting childcare	Getting stable housing
Providing access to services	Creating a supportive network of people and services
Meeting the needs of both parents and children	

Interviews with Families

CPR interviewed four families several months after they departed from GOALS. With the exit survey as the prompt, parents were asked to describe their experience at GOALS. Transcripts of these interviews were analyzed, and several common themes were identified.



GOALS Has Potential to Improve Family's Lives

All the interviewees expressed the belief that a 2Gen residential program with wrap-around, onsite services like GOALS has great potential to be of benefit to families experiencing homelessness. Some expressed this with regret that their personal experience at GOALS did not live up to this potential, but all acknowledged the possibility this model has for improving the lives of families.

"I really want the program to be successful. Because if the right people are there and managing it, it can help people. And it could steer them in the right direction. Because everybody on the street has their own story. So, meet them where they're at and then try to move forward with them." — Former GOALS Resident

The GOALS Staff Had Influence on Resident's Experience

Most of the interviewees spoke very highly of the assistance received and relationships with their case manager Navigators. Navigators were described as accessible, helpful, and effective in problem solving and securing resources. Respondents shared some disappointment about abrupt turnover among Navigators, resulting in feelings of disconnect from the GOALS program.

"They would really research and look into things for you. Like before (my Navigator) left, she made sure she found me some assistance for my car, and I got my car fixed. (Another Navigator) would do the same type of things too, really try to look into and try to fix that for you." — Former GOALS Resident

Consistent with some of the complaints recorded in case management notes, some interviewees questioned the responses and actions of program leadership in response to volatile situations, particularly related to making reports to Child Protective Services.

"If you feel like somebody has something going on with their kids, don't try to just call CPS right away. Try to see what's going on, like a lot of assumptions were made there. And instead of making people's lives easier, it made people's lives harder." — Former GOALS Resident

In both positive and negative ways, the interviewees reported that GOALS staff had strong influence on their experience.

Securing Childcare

Two respondents expressed appreciation for the Navigators help and effectiveness in securing childcare. The analysis of case management notes confirms childcare as issue important to families and about which GOALS was helpful.

"She helped me find daycare for my kids. And she helped me meet my needs, like if I needed something when I was in the program and even after that. When I needed something, like for example diapers, I call her, or I send her a message and she will always help me." — Former GOALS Resident



Accountability for Communal Living Quality

Two of the interviewees shared frustration about other residents' behavior and lack of participation in shared chore responsibilities. This feedback was consistent with concerns expressed in case management meetings, with the respondents suggesting more accountability to shared responsibilities would have been welcomed.

"That place is your place. And you don't pay anything. Because in this country, you have to work for all your expenses. But Family Tree, they give you a place to stay and they give you a home . . . We have these chores . . . and some of the families, they don't do anything. So, the kitchen isn't all clean this week. And then if I come to you, it's like I complain too much. I'm not complaining too much. I just want to keep the place clean for everybody." — Former GOALS Resident

Building Community and Family Voice Meetings

Some of the interview respondents indicated the weekly Family Voice meetings, where residents were able to address issues related to a communal living environment and their personal situations, were valued.

"I like the way that we have these Voice meetings . . . we can talk about positive and negative things within our families then fix it."
— Former GOALS Resident

One parent appreciated the opportunity to provide and receive assistance from other residents.

"When my baby was on oxygen and everything, they supported me. She was a preemie. If I had to go to the store, she could watch my baby. And when she [another participant] needed help to go to the store, I helped her. Because she doesn't have a driver's license, she needed help driving around so, that was a good experience for me, meeting other families."

Onsite Workshops and Services

Throughout their time in the GOALS program, families had limited access to onsite services and workshops; COVID-19 public health orders further complicated this. However, families found that the onsite services available to them, like cooking classes and transportation assistance, were beneficial.



“They had a cooking class that came before COVID really got bad. The kids enjoyed that. We got to learn about healthy eating and trying things. So that was something good, beneficial.”

“They did give us the bus passes when my car wasn’t working. That was helpful.”

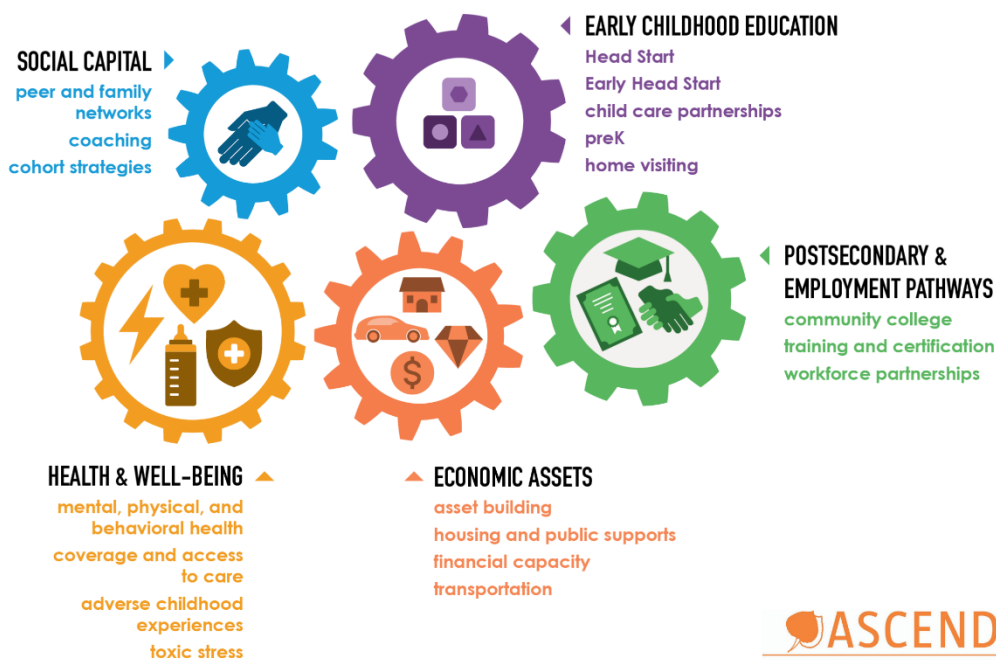
Frustrations related to COVID-19

One resident shared that she left GOALS because of the challenges of communal living during the pandemic to return to less-than-ideal housing with family. Other interviewees shared frustrations about the COVID-19 protocols implemented and the requirements to quarantine after external contact and for social distancing, suggesting these restrictions affected their ability to connect with other families in the program. While this may be true, GOALS did successfully avoid a COVID-19 outbreak, which suggests the protocols were helpful.

Experiences of Phase I Families

The information gathered and compiled through GOALS Connect records and resident feedback well illustrates the challenging circumstances of families experiencing homelessness and the inherent complexities of implementing a new program to address these families’ needs, particularly within a timeframe overlapping the COVID-19 pandemic.

GOALS Application of 2Gen Framework





The GOALS program and intervention model is well aligned with the 2Gen framework illustrated above, as well as other 2Gen hallmarks, such as the incorporation of family voice, previously described. The Phase I implementation, even with the challenges posed by the pandemic, incorporated numerous 2Gen components into service provision. While outcomes related to 2Gen hallmarks will be examined in the Phase 2 evaluation, ample evidence of 2Gen service provision existed during Phase I. Examples of these services is illustrated in Table 12.

Table 12. GOALS Application of 2Gen Practices	
2Gen practice or hallmark	Examples of GOALS activities
Physical and mental health	Referrals and support for securing and participating in health services
Early childhood	Identifying and securing childcare resources
Postsecondary and employment pathways	Addressing barriers to employment such as valid driver’s license; collaboration with workforce programs
Economic assets	Providing safe and secure housing and food; access to benefits, bus passes, and referrals to housing resources
Social capital	Family activities* and Family Voice meetings
Integrated family services	Family-based case management
Removing barriers and self-set goals	Case management goal setting; 2Gen Index
Partnering with diverse service partners	Plans for onsite partners*; referrals to services
Racial equity and measuring outcomes	Formative and outcome evaluations
Family voice	Focus groups informing program development; Family Voice meetings; family exit surveys and interviews

*Implementation was hampered by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Lessons Learned from Phase I

This final section offers lessons learned from Phase I to apply to Phase II of the GOALS program. The ongoing CQI process provided initial identification of many issues and prompted responses in real time in preparation for an expansion of the program and Phase II impact evaluation. Expanding on and further documenting the challenges experienced in implementing a program that focuses on breaking the cycle of two-generation poverty among homeless families through this report is critical for future programs and the emerging 2Gen field.

Lessons Learned

The unique collaboration created between Arapahoe County and Family Tree that became the GOALS program is meant to be a model for breaking the cycle of generational poverty among unstably housed families and those experiencing homelessness. The program, based on a campus in Arapahoe County, Colorado, brings together a robust and diverse coalition of community partners to serve this single goal of the program. Lessons learned from stakeholders include:



Optimism about GOALS 2Gen potential remains high. Both GOALS leadership and the residents who participated in Phase 1 implementation are optimistic about the potential positive impact from GOALS' 2Gen, wrap-around residential program model. Continuing to revisit GOALS shared mission, vision, and goals with all levels of program staff, partner agencies, and residents will help translate this optimism into effective programming.

Community Leadership Team has positive impact. The engagement from community partners in the conception and early implementation of the GOALS program had a positive benefit to GOALS development. The shared mission and vision, from the top down across key partner agencies, was critical to rolling out a complex multi-agency collaborative program and helpful to securing important funding, leading to a robust service model.

The partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree is positively evolving. The active partnership between Arapahoe County Human Services and Family Tree in the development and implementation of GOALS has leveraged the assets of two very different entities. While this partnership has drawn on the respective resources and strengths of each agency, differing expectations and ways of operating created some challenges. Additional clarity on roles, expectations and responsibilities for Family Tree and Human Services would have been helpful early on, but this clarity has evolved as the project unfolded. Continued attention to the components of effective partnerships, including shared expectations and clear communication, should continue to be a focus moving forward.

Human resources need to be well aligned with heightened expectations for 2Gen implementation and meeting the needs of residents. GOALS 2Gen framework, together with heightened expectations for collaboration and evaluation, and the inherent challenges of operating a residential program made considerable demands on the GOALS staff and to Family Tree's implementation and the launch of GOALS services. These demands, coupled with a slower than anticipated process of staffing up stressed GOALS early staff members, contributing to turnover in key positions. Maintaining a full staff and adding additional human resources in program management may be necessary to meet both the external and internal requirements of the GOALS program. In addition, ensuring staff have the traits to work with families facing serious challenges and being fully trained on the 2Gen framework, trauma-informed approach to case management is important to ensuring stability and continuity of service delivery.

Phase I families experienced complex barriers and additional screening criteria could increase engagement. The lived experiences and barriers of the resident families during GOALS Phase I were challenging and difficult to effectively address. While this was anticipated, efforts to serve families demonstrated the need for policies and procedures for resident enrollment and engagement and staff development. As issues were identified through the ongoing CQI process, efforts were made to respond to and address challenges. Some families faced significant substance abuse issues that required treatment that the GOALS program was not designed for and was unable to provide. Other families presented safety risks to both staff and residents



due to an unwillingness to follow facility rules. Finally, some of families had open active child welfare cases that demanded the focus of families and may have distracted from GOALS other economic security and family well-being priorities. Through the CQI process, CPR added additional screening criteria to further refine the target population of families enrolled in GOALS in an effort to further define the population best targeted for the GOALS program.

Program performance measures require consistent data collection and updates to enhance applicability. Developing and adapting measures to report on performance is important to ensuring the families being served are actually receiving the services they need. Toward this end, CPR developed the 2Gen Index, but it was not used as intended, suggesting further training or adaptations may be necessary. CPR also created an ongoing CQI process to review data as collected, which is critical to ensuring the program is on track to achieve desired outcomes. The ongoing CQI process has been effective at prompting program adjustments in real time. Data-driven decision-making is dependent upon consistent and complete data collection and documentation in the GOALS Connect management information system. There is some evidence of incomplete data collection and documentation, which CPR has addressed by providing technical assistance and support to GOALS staff. Training staff and supporting them in data collection is an ongoing focus both at GOALS and by CPR. CPR will consider further streamlining the process and additional updates to the GOALS Connect system to enhance the ease in use and a focus on the most critical data elements.

Family Voice meetings and family activities build social capital. Encouraging and supporting participant voice in the development and ongoing service delivery model ensures the program is responsive to family needs while supporting engagement. Regular Family Voice meetings serve the dual purpose of soliciting residents' thoughts and opinions while also building a social network among residents. Unfortunately, in-person Family Voice meetings were halted during Phase I due to the pandemic and moved to a virtual platform. These meetings, together with family activities and onsite classes, are important to building the resident's social capital and residents look forward to resuming these meetings in-person once public health orders allow for it.

Onsite services will enhance services. The promise of onsite services did not come to fruition as planned during Phase I due to the COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders. Many social service agencies did not have the ability to set up office space at the GOALS campus during Phase I. Phase I families hoped for more support and guidance from staff when looking for housing and accessing services, in addition to more support in building community while living in the GOALS facility.

The GOALS model integrates 2Gen hallmarks and components, which well positions implementation in Phase II. During the second phase of operations, GOALS will have the opportunity to coordinate and integrate 2Gen features into its programming more deeply.



The formative stage of GOALS implementation identified challenges, solidified program plans, and laid the groundwork for Phase II expanded capacity and impact evaluation. Allowing room for program adjustments, staff turnover, and “not getting it right” on the first try is a realistic approach to developing a program as complex as GOALS. While the feedback from former residents suggested their circumstances mostly stayed the same after engagement with GOALS, this feedback should be interpreted with caution. Much of these residents’ engagement was during the pandemic and it is possible their circumstances would have taken a turn for the worse had they not been involved in GOALS. In addition, many of the Phase I families faced complex and difficult challenges, some of which went beyond GOALS purpose and capacity.

COVID-19 impacts were significant. The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on program delivery overall and implementation which was felt by Phase I families. Non-contact policies and heightened isolation during the stay-at-home phase of the pandemic impeded many of community building, peer, and staff support activities from occurring and critical program goals from being realized. A major feature of the GOALS model, co-location of services with other programs on the GOALS campus, was unable to be realized. GOALS was successful, however, in avoiding a COVID outbreak among the staff and residents.

Conclusion

Implementing a multi-agency program with the single ambition of breaking the cycle of multi-generational poverty for homeless and unstably housed families is challenging in the best of times. Implementing this type of program during a global pandemic further complicated the implementation of the GOALS program. However, even with the COVID-19 pandemic, the GOALS program demonstrated the potential a 2Gen approach has in breaking the cycle of poverty through a comprehensive residential program for families experiencing homelessness.

The Phase II evaluation of the GOALS program is underway. This impact evaluation will compare long-term outcomes for families who participate in the GOALS program against a comparison group of similar families who did not receive services at GOALS. This rigorous research design will begin to build evidence to support the GOALS intervention in breaking the multi-generational cycle of poverty among homeless and unstably housed families.