



# FUNDING THE NEXT GENERATION

## OUR MISSION

The mission of Funding the Next Generation is to have local budgets prioritize positive child and youth development, and shift resources from downstream expenditures (such as punishment and institutionalization) to upstream expenditures (such as wellness services, youth opportunities, and educational enrichment). We build the capacity of stakeholders in cities and counties to win budget battles and fight for dedicated funding for children, youth and families. The primary strategy is to promote effective new city and county multi-cultural, multi-racial, and multi-issue coalitions that advocate for expanded funding for young people who are disadvantaged and subjected to unjust and stigmatizing policies. During the next two years, we aim to see that these coalitions are more diverse, have expanded partners, and are better equipped for the challenge of transforming the budget landscape.

The coalition strategies we support through technical assistance and shared learning opportunities include budget analysis, public education, policy development, community organizing, negotiating with elected officials, and facilitating the creation of a coalition funding agenda that is based on input from community residents who are often excluded from the decision-making process. We aim to have youth become core members of their community coalitions, and leading spokespeople for budgets that reflect their needs.

With the cry “jobs not jails” and “counselors not cops,” young people are demanding a shift in public priorities toward prevention, which must be grounded in a shift in how money is spent. When children, youth and families who are underserved and subjected to punitive policies have equal access to a full range of opportunities and supports, their health and welfare will vastly improve. By working to have equitable funding for prevention institutionalized into local budgets this initiative seeks policies and programs that result in healthy child and youth development, and supportive communities that promote physical well-being and a sense of belonging. The sense of empowerment that comes from successfully fighting for changes in public expenditures fosters self-worth and positive future

## GOALS AND STRATEGIES

1. Creation (or strengthening) of diverse county or city-wide multi-cultural, multi-racial coalitions that work across issues and sectors to increase local discretionary resources for wellness, prevention and youth opportunity, i.e. services and community assets that promote child and youth development, family support, educational success, and/or health and mental health for families and young people who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or who have experienced injustice.

### Work plan

- Continue outreach and education throughout the state to identify leaders and organizations with the skills, credibility, community partners and motivation to mount a city or county campaign to increase resources. This will include meeting with organizations and networks

throughout the state, as a speaker, convener, or adviser; and convening a statewide conference to report learnings and share information about dedicated local funding for disadvantaged children, youth and families.

- Provide technical assistance to the lead organizations/organizers in building strong coalitions.
    - Continue to build a technical assistance team with the diverse skills needed by the participating coalitions. Include a budget expert, political strategist, pollster, lawyer, graphic artist, policy analyst, community organizer, and communication expert on the team.
    - Create a Learning Community of participating coalitions, i.e. the leaders of the coalitions who meet together bi-monthly for information-sharing, support and training. With the technical assistance team described above, conduct 8 annual training/learning community sessions that address the needs of the coalition leaders.
    - Provide anywhere from semi-weekly to monthly coaching sessions (in person or by phone) to coalition leaders.
    - Participate, as needed, in community meetings, hearings, negotiations, or coalition meetings at the participating sites.
  - Provide technical assistance to coalitions in addressing the challenges of involving community-based organizations, which include fear of retribution by elected officials and funders, lack of time to participate in coalition actions and activities, and lack of understanding of their legal rights and responsibilities in terms of public policy advocacy.
  - Provide technical assistance to lead organizations and organizers on strategies that will engage more grassroots residents in the work of the coalition.
  - Provide technical assistance to lead organizations that will expand their partnerships and members, including more social justice groups and groups supporting juvenile justice reform, as well as faith, labor, civic and business groups.
  - Develop and refine educational materials, tools and research papers about the need for increased local funding for wellness, prevention and youth opportunity, i.e. services and community assets that promote child and youth development, family support, educational success, and/or health and mental health for families and young people who are socioeconomically disadvantaged or who have experienced injustice - and the process for achieving it. This will include a second edition of the first manual, as well as a new manual on conducting a ballot measure campaign for increased resources for children and youth.
  - Identify 4 – 8 diverse and most promising coalitions and provide them with seed funding for staff, polling or other essential needs to do their work. Benchmarks for selecting the communities to receive funding will include having a credible convening organization, a coalition that brings together diverse voices and is committed to collective action for more equitable funding, a staff person with the requisite motivation and skills, and the ability to leverage the funding that will be allocated.
    - Develop protocol for allocating funding.
    - Garner at least 1:1 match money to allocate to community coalitions.
    - Sub-contract the funds, and monitor the subcontracts.
2. Increased awareness by the general public, civic leaders and local legislators about the inequitable and unbalanced distribution of community resources, and the impact on the health, well-being and future of communities.

## Work plan

- Develop public educational materials about the benefits of dedicated funding for youth that can be used across the coalitions. This will include materials on the cost-effectiveness of prevention over punishment. Utilize the FNG “brand” to increase the effectiveness of communication strategies.
  - Work across coalitions to maximize their collective strength in communicating through the media to the general public about the various campaigns and their common themes and recommendations, especially the importance of investing in children and youth, and the need to shift the local balance of investments from punishment to prevention.
  - Conduct trainings with the Learning Community about strategies and messaging for changing narratives about prevention and taxes. Monitor the implementation of those strategies.
  - Assist community coalitions in the creation and implementation of polling as needed.
3. Reallocation of resources from “downstream” investments, including institutionalization and punishment, to “upstream” investments that promote health and wellness and opportunity.

## Work plan

- Utilizing the budget expertise of our consultant team, assist each community coalition in analyzing its city or county budgets, and understanding resource disparities and the imbalance of resources spent on punishment vs. prevention.
  - Assist in creating graphic representations of the budget priorities and regular ways to measure expenditures over time.
  - Research and then educate the Learning Community about potential revenue streams, such as soda taxes, marijuana taxes, along with more traditional taxes and fees, such as sales, parcel, hotel, etc.
  - Research creative revenue options for the local level, including community benefit agreements, mitigations for negative impacts on communities and set-asides of existing funding streams.
  - Research and educate the Learning Community about the potential to reallocate state revenue streams currently spent more on punishment and bureaucratic systems, such as Prop 47 and various kinds of realignment dollars.
  - Help coalition leaders in each community utilize the local budget process to make demands for reallocating resources from punishment to prevention, including pushing for policies to regularly document expenditures in a more transparent way.
  - With legal support, work with each coalition to identify potential new revenue sources in their city or county – either reallocations in local budgets or dedicated revenue potential.
  - Assist in the drafting of policy recommendations for increased revenue.
  - Help each community that is ready, prepare for a campaign to pass a measure for increased revenue.
4. Youth and parents have a greater voice in the public arena and at the policymaking table to influence the community’s allocation of resources

## Work plan

- Provide technical assistance and financial support on the creation of a youth and/or parent arm of each community coalition that will be fully integrated into the strategy development and implementation of the work of the coalition.
- Conduct community-level and regional-level trainings specifically for youth in public speaking, integrating personal stories and policy demands, understanding budgets and local finances, and skillfully communicating the message about prioritizing prevention over punishment.
- Provide technical assistance to coalitions in developing strategies to promote youth voices – such as youth testimony, youth-led media conferences, youth-written opinion editorials, and youth negotiations with policy-makers.
- Assist in the development of local structural and strategy recommendations for the inclusion of youth in the local budget process, such as youth representatives on official task forces and committees, youth surveys to identify budget priorities, and youth councils making budget recommendations.

## Changes sought at the state level

5. State policy that democratizes the local budgeting process and expands the capacity of local government to invest in prevention is under consideration by elected officials.

## Work plan

- In collaboration with all participants in Funding the Next Generation and with other allies throughout the state, develop specific recommendations for expanding the capacity of local government to pass legislation to reallocate or expand local resources. This could be legislation to address the ability of voters to designate portions of the local budget to children and youth, or constitutional amendments that address the voter threshold for passing special taxes, or the ability of county and district Boards of Education to place measures related to funding services for children and youth on the ballot, or the creation of special taxing districts for children and youth services.
  - Develop policy proposals.
  - Meet with potential allies, such as CSBA, PTA, AFT, Boys and Men of Color, justice coalitions, Fight Crime Invest in Youth and other interest groups.
  - Identify and meet with potential sympathetic legislators.
  - Identify partners working on the voter threshold issue and work in coalition with them.
  - Provide TA to staff of legislators
  - Develop policy papers/fact sheets/memos as needed to support the need for policy change.
  - Utilize the governor's race to raise the problem and gain support for potential solutions.