Strengthening Black Families

GRANTMAKERS OF WESTERN PA
FUNDERS BRIEFING
JUNE 26, 2015
A Case for Philanthropic Investment

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- Mark Lewis, President & CEO
Session Overview

- Articulate the importance of a family-centered approach to grantmaking

- Look at POISE’s Strengthening Black Families Strategy as a case example

- Engage in a broader dialogue around family-centered approaches in philanthropy

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Session Highlights

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#strongblackfamilies
@gwptweet
Catch Phrase Rules

- You can’t use any word in the phrase
- You can’t say “rhymes with” or “sounds like” or “begins with”
- You CAN act it out
- After each correct answer, pass the cards to the next person at your table
- You have 3 minutes to see how many you can answer
- The team with the most answered WINS!

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A Focus on....
Family Matters
The Family

- One of 5 core social institutions (e.g. family, religion, economic, education, government)

- Family provides support (e.g. instrumental, informational, social, emotional)

- First—teacher, responder, ally
The Black Family

- Critical Importance
- Universal and Targeted Role
- Demonstrated resilience and perseverance
- “Survival of the tribe”
the family is one of the strongest and most important traditions in the black community.... [Slaves’] loyalty to the family defied the efforts of slave owners to promote a casual attitude among blacks toward this all-important institution. (Franklin, 2007)
Public & Professional Spheres
Why?

- Complexity and controversy
- Individual and community
- Institutional supports rather than kinship and mutual aid networks
Inherent functions of the Black family
- Outsourced
- Weakened
- Silenced

Continue to see a wide range of harmful socio-economic outcomes in the Black community
The Response

- Lift up the importance of the Black family in supporting the health and well-being of individuals and communities.
- Re-engage the family as a core social institution.
- Strengthen and support the family in its role and function.
- Counter and buffer against policies and practices that harm the Black family as a core institution.
Strengthening Black Families Program Strategy

- Community Engagement
- Grantmaking
- Research and Policy Change
- Thought Leadership
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy 1</th>
<th><strong>Community Engagement</strong></th>
<th><strong>Grantmaking</strong></th>
<th><strong>Research and Policy Change</strong></th>
<th><strong>Thought Leadership</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Creating venues for community learning and dialogue that defines “Strong Black Families”.</td>
<td>Investing in programming to promote positive family interaction.</td>
<td>Advocacy to promote public policy that positively impacts Black families.</td>
<td>Shifting mindsets regarding the Black family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POISE Role</strong></td>
<td>Catalyst and Grantmaker</td>
<td>Grantmaker</td>
<td>Grantmaker and Catalyst</td>
<td>Convener and Catalyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience(s)</strong></td>
<td>Black Community, Policymakers, Nonprofit Leaders, General Public</td>
<td>Civic, Faith, Nonprofit Community</td>
<td>Policymakers, Nonprofit Leaders, Local Philanthropic Community</td>
<td>Local Philanthropic Community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategy 2</td>
<td><strong>Community Engagement</strong></td>
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<td>Co-Convenor and Catalyst</td>
<td>Convener</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Audience(s)</strong></td>
<td>POISE Foundation</td>
<td>Faith and Civic Community</td>
<td>Policymakers, Local Media, Local Philanthropic Community</td>
<td>Local Philanthropic Community, Nonprofit Community, Faith and Civic Organizations, General Public</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
SBF Demonstration Grant

- Promoting Positive Family Interactions (PPFI)
- Released RFP in October 2013
- 26 initial responses
SBF Demonstration Grant

- Invited 10 organizations to submit full proposals
- Selected 4 organizations to receive the grants
- Shifting the paradigm for organizations
- Opportunity for POISE self reflection
Grantee Organizations

- Amachi Pittsburgh
- Melting Pot Ministries
- The Center that C.A.R.E.S.
- University of Pittsburgh, School of Medicine—Department of Family Medicine
Cohort Learning Process

- Share
- Problem Solve
- Learn
- Reflect
- Plan
- Build Relationships
- Co-Create

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POISE Foundation Journey
Lead with Learning

- Developmental evaluation
- Emphasis on strategic learning
- Evaluation is treated as a part of the work itself
Learning Across Multiple Levels

POISE  Grantee  Family

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POISE: Emerging Themes

- Shifting the paradigm means shifting the paradigm
  - Identify and contend with existing paradigms
  - Internal and external shifts
- What does it take to do “this” work?
  - Principles
  - Frameworks
  - Practice

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Grantees: Emerging Themes

- Shifts in frame leads to shifts in practice

- Move “From-To-So That.....”

As a result, grantees are beginning to:
- Create a space and time for family (environment; community of families)
- Address the relational aspect of family
- Build more authentic relationships with and among families
- Leverage the family and community of families in their work
- Reframe core competency areas using a family lens
Families: Emerging Themes

- **Shifts in experience**: PPFI project becomes one of the few spaces where the environment is “all things family”

- As a result, families:
  - Experience new things together
  - Hear and communicate with one another
  - Explore and intentionally think about what it really means to be family
  - Plan and develop skills for individual and family wellbeing
  - Develop new avenues and resources of support

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I think because like everybody talking about things that were going on in their house and basically sharing a lot of things that came out that was going on in your house you didn’t even realize what was going on...

It was from both perspectives, us being adults and the kids were able to address the issues that they had with us-the parents ‘I’m not going to get mad’ be honest, what do I do that you don’t like, that you would like for me to change?’
It was fun because my son and I don’t get that extra, you know that extracurricular time that extracurricular activity like we need to get, like we used to, especially when I wasn’t working, so playing a game was fun, to be able to watch back and look at the fun we were having brought a big smile to my face...

You know how they feel, you get insight, how they feel about you, my mom explains, you get to find out how they really feel, they express their issues” [get to find out what they talked about or learned during the session]

Every since the Family Matters, my mom has been on me, I can’t do anything [how does that make you feel?] It makes me feel that she cares more, but then it gets annoying
The Family and the Field
A Snapshot
What if?
In our approach, we....

- Lifted up the importance of the Black family
- Engaged the Black family as a core social institution
- Strengthened and supported it in its role
- Countered and buffered against harmful policies and practices
In our practice, we asked…..

- Are our current investments strengthening the institution of the Black family?
- Are we leveraging the value and power of the indigenous characteristics of the Black family?
- How might we fund in our core areas of interest using a family lens?
In our practice, we invested in efforts that...

- Strengthened, supported and leveraged the family in its role as a core institution.
- Helped families develop the capacity to be change agents in community revitalization.
- Convened and developed a knowledge base among key stakeholders on the topics of strengthening Black families and family-centered approaches in the Black community.
What if?
Family Matters
In closing….

Remarks

Final Thoughts

Reflections

TELL US WHAT YOU THINK

“All Things Family”

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