


[www.poisefoundation.org](http://www.poisefoundation.org)



# Strengthening Black Families

GRANTMAKERS OF WESTERN PA  
FUNDERS BRIEFING  
JUNE 26, 2015



# A Case for Philanthropic Investment

- ▶ Karris Jackson, Vice President of Programs
- ▶ Aerion Abney, Program Officer
- ▶ Dr. Cherie Collins Sims, Consultant/Subject Matter Expert
- ▶ Derric Heck, Program Manager—The Center That C.A.R.E.S.
- ▶ 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

# Session Highlights

Twitter: @POISEFOUNDATION  
#strongblackfamilies  
@gwptweet

“All Things  
Family”



# 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!

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 Black Family

*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

# The Impact

- ▶ 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



# POISE Foundation Journey

[www.foisefoundation.org](http://www.foisefoundation.org)



# Strengthening Black Families Program Strategy

- ▶ Community Engagement
- ▶ Grantmaking
- ▶ Research and Policy Change
- ▶ Thought Leadership



## Strengthening Families and Our Community

For Information: Call 412/281-4967 or text: 4POISE to 72727

**POISE**  
FOUNDATION

[www.poisefoundation.org](http://www.poisefoundation.org)

|                    | <b>Community Engagement</b>   | <b>Grantmaking</b>   | <b>Research and Policy Change</b>  | <b>Thought Leadership</b>   |
|--------------------|---|--|--|---|
|                    | Creating venues for community learning and dialogue that defines “Strong Black Families”. | Investing in programming to promote positive family interaction.   | Advocacy to promote public policy that positively impacts Black families.          | Shifting mindsets regarding the Black family.   |
| <b>Strategy 1</b>  | Engaging Local Media About Positive and Diverse Images of Black Families                  | Request for Proposals – Promoting Positive Family Interactions   | Support a Scan of Local Policies Disproportionately Impacting Black Families       | Strengthening Black Families Presentation to the Pittsburgh Philanthropic Community               |
| <b>POISE Role</b>  | Catalyst and Grantmaker   | Grantmaker   | Grantmaker and Catalyst  | Convener and Catalyst   |
| <b>Audience(s)</b> | Black Community, Policymakers, Nonprofit Leaders, General Public                          | Civic, Faith, Nonprofit Community  | Policymakers, Nonprofit Leaders, Local Philanthropic Community                     | Local Philanthropic Community   |
| <b>Strategy 2</b>  |   |  |  |   |
| <b>Strategy 2</b>  | Strengthening Black Families National Advisory Committee                                  | Strengthening Black Families Interfaith Breakfast and Discussion – ‘Supporting Places for Families to Build and Learn’ | Strengthening Black Families Forum for Black Elected Officials in Allegheny County | Strengthening Black Families Conference   |
| <b>POISE Role</b>  | Convener and Catalyst   | Convener   | Co-Convener and Catalyst   | Convener  |
| <b>Audience(s)</b> | POISE Foundation  | Faith and Civic Community  | Policymakers, Local Media, Local Philanthropic Community                           | Local Philanthropic Community, Nonprofit Community, Faith and Civic Organizations, General Public |

# 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



# PPFI in Practice



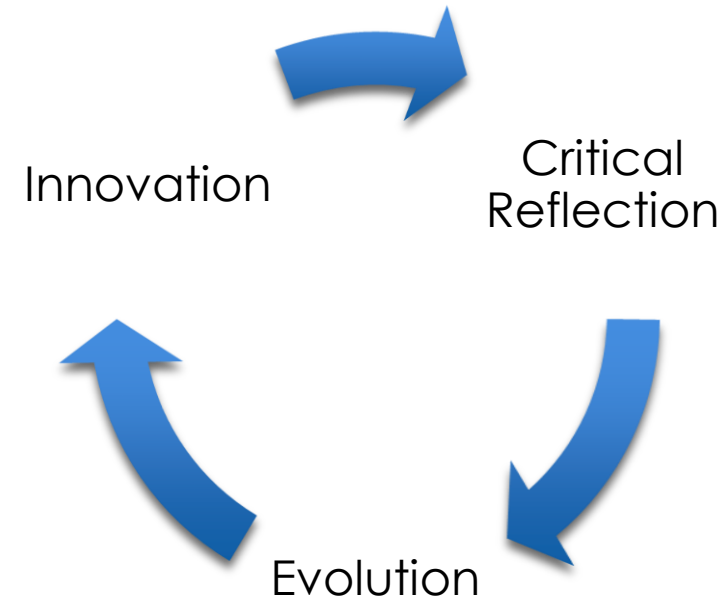
# POISE Foundation Journey

[www.poisefoundation.org](http://www.poisefoundation.org)



# 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

# 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



# 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:* PPFII 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



# Families: New Experiences

- ▶ 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?'*

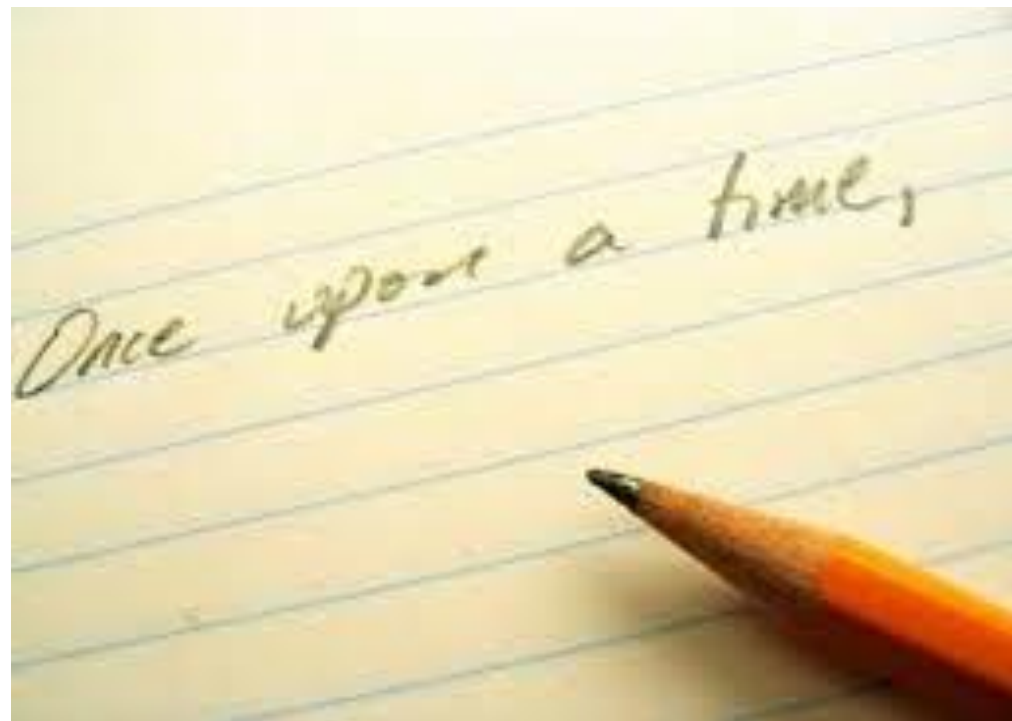
# Families: New Experiences

- ▶ *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



Reflections



“All Things Family”

# To remain connected...

Website: [www.poisefoundation.org](http://www.poisefoundation.org)

Twitter: @POISEFOUNDATION  
#strongblackfamilies  
@gwptweet