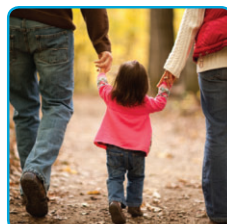
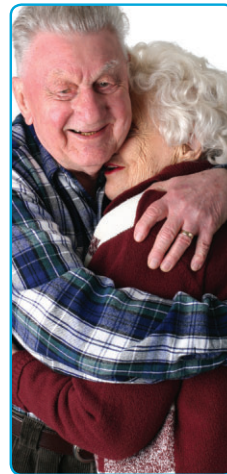




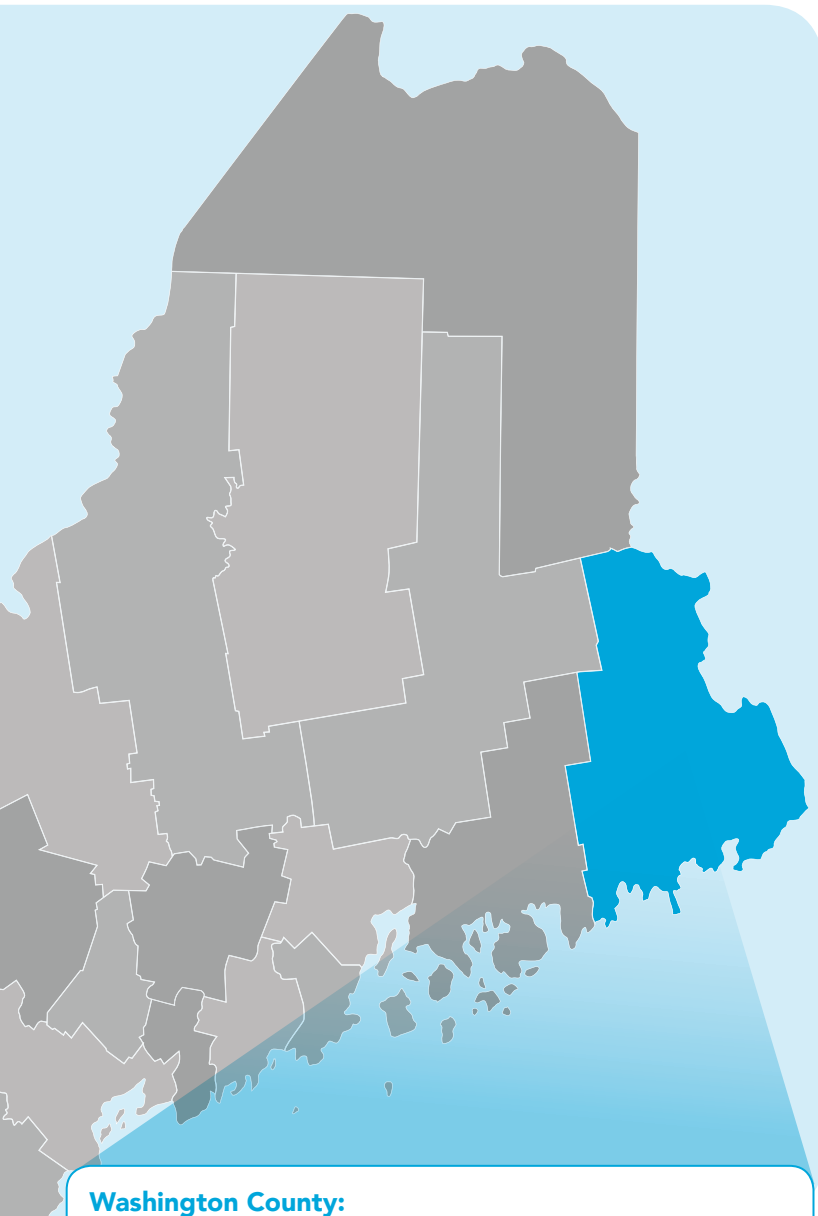
*The Community
Caring Collaborative*



Strategic Plan 2016 – 2018

MISSION

To nurture and sustain collaboration that expands resources and increases hope, health, and well-being for people in Washington County, Maine.



Washington County:

- is home to 33,000 people, of whom 3,600 are Passamaquoddy tribal members. In a county that's over twice the size of Rhode Island, that's just 11 people per square mile.
- experiences Maine's highest unemployment rate and lowest median household income. One in three children live in poverty.
- is one of eleven counties nationwide where the life expectancy for women is declining. Life expectancy for tribal members is fifty years.
- produces 85% of the world's wild blueberries, has the highest tides in the continental US, boasts over 700 miles of rugged coastline, and is 88% forested.
- has one of the most aging populations, a declining overall population, and a shrinking workforce.

The Community Caring Collaborative is a partnership of more than 45 tribal, county, and state agencies together with community-based non-profits and volunteers. The CCC supports the open exchange of information with partners working together to create a collaborative that is greater than the sum of its parts. Based on shared values, the collaborative deepens trust, encourages relationships that reduce competition, and increases effectiveness across agencies and systems. As a result, we are removing barriers to services and opening up opportunities so vulnerable populations and whole communities experience a continuum of support that addresses their concerns and aspirations. We are creating trauma- and poverty-informed, family-driven, culturally-competent, and strength-based responses and supports that help all community members. The CCC has a dual role in supporting individual agencies as well as community members. We also convene partners to align resources and incubate programming for far-reaching impact. In this way, collaboration is the basis for transformational change.

OUR STORY

The Community Caring Collaborative started in 2006 to address the issues of at-risk infants, young children, and their families. The goal was to create a strength-based system of care that would meet emerging needs in order to improve outcomes for our youngest population and their families.

Equally important was the creation of a collaboration that removed barriers between agencies and worked together to change the quality of services and the outcomes for residents of Washington County. CCC-developed programs such as Bridging, Early Childhood Consultation and Outreach, and the Hope Fund have served to strengthen the continuum of supports in Washington County, and reflect success of our dual commitment to support individuals and organizational partners at the same time.

The knowledge gleaned from years spent together as a collaborative has informed our strategic planning for the coming years. We are building on a practice of authentic collaboration that promotes individual agencies' effectiveness as well as working together to develop place-based, responsive programming.

Collaboration across systems is essential to develop transformational change and to address broader issues of increasing success and opportunities. To this end, we have learned that we must address poverty and its impact on health, education, and well-being. Single agencies and entities cannot do the work alone. It requires ongoing collaboration and the ability to build and advance a shared agenda holistically and responsively. For individuals living in poverty to achieve increased health or educational attainment, for instance, requires that communities remove the barriers that impede these hopes and goals.

The Community Caring Collaborative has become a backbone organization that convenes and supports partners in incubating programming that is effective and collective. Throughout its first major leadership transition, going from its first director to its second, the CCC has utilized its history and values to respond to new areas that must be addressed collaboratively in order to improve lives in Washington County. The process of slowly changing hands was carefully planned over three years. The result is that the CCC is strong and robust with a clear image of its process for expanding resources and opportunities and for how it promotes far-reaching change. The CCC is poised to not only continue its work on shared issues such as addressing poverty and deepening authentic collaboration but also developing a viable means of measuring its impact across agencies and in the lives of community members.

GOALS

The impact of poverty has been felt throughout our county. It has depleted hope and discouraged community members and those seeking to serve them. It is an issue that can only be addressed if agencies and disciplines join in creating innovative strategies to change outcomes in all sectors.

The Community Caring Collaborative has clear goals established with input from all its partners. The goals reflect the need for a responsive, resilient backbone agency built and staffed to strengthen the collaboration so that it can create resources that produce measurable change for Washington County and its residents.

Our 2016 – 2018 goals are:

1. Strengthen partners' individual and collective capabilities for effective action.
2. Improve outcomes for vulnerable populations and advance systemic change.
3. Operate a lean, cost-effective, innovative organizational model.

2016 – 2018 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goal 1. Strengthen partners' readiness and capability to create transformational change.

The CCC recognizes that collaboration is a developmental process that deepens relationship, increases trust, and creates capacity. It requires systematic, ongoing cultivation through structured dialogue and learning across agencies, communities, and issues. It is always evolving and requires the ability to bring people together and to nurture relational health in order to achieve the goals of the shared agenda.

CONVENING

The CCC convenes partners from across sectors in multiple settings. Convening, in this context, means creating opportunities that encourage partners to build the trust necessary for healthy relationships. These relationships allow partners to work more effectively and lead to improved outcomes for individuals and families.

- a. Facilitate monthly CCC Council meetings of leaders of partner agencies to work collaboratively to achieve collective impact across agencies.
- b. Bring together a Work Group of front line service providers in an environment of trust to nurture deep, mutually supportive relationships and forge integrated responses that meet individual and community needs.
- c. Hold regular meetings with State Agency Partners to remove barriers and change policy at the state level to increase the ability of the CCC to be successful and to promote its model of collaboration and programs.
- d. Conduct an annual Visioning Day which brings partners together to identify needs, dreams, and potential innovations.
- e. Organize forums and special gatherings to respond to emerging issues, challenges, and opportunities.
- f. Inform policy makers about the needs of rural vulnerable populations to contribute to state and federal policies that strengthen the array of services and the safety net for community members.

"The CCC brings me greater hope than any other group or project I have seen or felt in two decades in Washington County." – Parent supported by CCC programming.

"Because of the CCC, I feel more confident in helping families move towards change." – Provider in partner agency



LEARNING

Trainings are designed to address the shared agenda and goals of the collaborative. Trainings develop a common language for the community and they support best practice. The training agenda is created with input from the community and our partners, and is responsive to emerging concerns. Evaluations of the trainings indicate that this approach is having a profound effect on participants and that it is improving skills and knowledge across time.

- a. Develop ongoing trainings specifically in areas that reflect CCC's values and expertise in collaboration and program incubation to support an increase in shared knowledge and improve responsive practices and policies across the collaborative.
- b. Host an online collective training site to share information and opportunities for participation for individual agencies' training.
- c. Deliver training to prepare professionals to operate with fidelity to models developed by the CCC.
- d. Develop train-the-trainer programs in all CCC model programs to ensure that training can occur outside of the CCC.
- e. Develop and offer trainings to host agencies to disseminate skills and principles and share CCC expertise to improve services.
- f. Offer and deliver technical assistance to other organizations to improve community capacity and quality of services and supports to vulnerable populations locally and in other regions.

The CCC holds an annual Visioning Day during which partners are invited to dream. It is a day to imagine and create responsive supports together that change outcomes for community members. The CCC then actualizes envisioned ideas into functional programs. The following programs all came from Visioning Day.

Family Futures Downeast is a two-generation program for parents and children that creates opportunities for academic and workplace success and will break cycles of generational poverty. FFD was designed in partnership with University of Maine at Machias, Washington County Community College, Child and Family Opportunities, Axiom Education and Training Center, partners in the CCC, and with parents throughout Washington County. Now recognized as a promising two-generation strategy by the White House Rural Council, Family Futures Downeast is securing resources for its first three years of funding and is approaching implementation.

The Hope Fund is a CCC barrier removal program that offers financial support for one-time expenses that interfere with a family's ability to safely provide for their children. Approximately seventy-five families per year receive awards. With less than \$10,000 the Hope Fund was able to prevent homelessness for 14 families. Providers from CCC partner agencies apply on behalf of their client/families in a process that simultaneously improves outcomes for partners and the families they serve.

Friend and Mentor Program will train and support an expanding group of community volunteers in creating strengths-based relationships with neighbors working to move out of poverty and achieve personal goals. Comprehensive training in areas of CCC expertise will include: strengths-based approaches that are informed in trauma, poverty, and substance abuse, making appropriate referrals, and understanding boundaries. The CCC will administer training, supervision, and financial resources for barrier removal.

Goal 2. Improve outcomes for vulnerable populations and advance systemic change.

CCC supports 1-3 innovative new projects or strategic partnerships annually to improve the well-being and future outcomes for vulnerable populations in Washington County and beyond. CCC serves as the nurturing, convening arena for the identification of needs, project development, incubation of responsive models, and collaborative development of new programming.

CREATING

The CCC invites its partners to dream, to imagine what could be, as a means to improve the future. It functions as a safe environment that encourages innovation, that is responsive and grassroots, and that brings people and resources together to improve lives, empower individuals, and create opportunities and hope.

- a. Empower groups motivated by annual Visioning Day to take action by organizing and supporting their work around specific initiatives that arise.
- b. Support the CCC-generated Poverty Core in the creation of multi-system approaches to reduce poverty through trauma- and substance abuse-informed strategies in education and economic workforce development.
- c. Support the CCC-generated Poverty Busters in the development of shared programming to remove financial barriers for low-income community members and increase poverty-related education countywide.
- d. Support the CCC-generated Neighbor Group in the creation of safe, accessible opportunities for peer-to-peer supports to strengthen low income participants' pathways out of poverty.
- e. Develop universal mentoring program for at-risk community members to build on individual strengths, remove barriers, and decrease issues of isolation and hopelessness.
- f. Convene partners to assess and strategize services for elders to support respectful aging in place.
- g. Develop results-based evaluation tools for each incubated program to monitor and improve impact of individual programs as well as measure collective impact.

Barrier removal:

In order for families to thrive, the barriers that prevent success must be removed. Someone may need a gas card, childcare, a security deposit, or social/emotional support to push through that which is preventing their success. CCC encourages and creates programs and policies that focus on barrier removal as a means of changing futures.



SUSTAINING

Programs are supported by the CCC until they are sustainable as stand-alone entities or appropriately placed in partner agencies, which can take anywhere from a few months to multiple years. Shared ventures may remain part of the CCC operating core.

- a. Secure ongoing funding for the Hope Fund and Flex Funds as a part of CCC's operating core commitment to remove financial barriers for individuals and families working with CCC partners.
- b. Continue relationships with public and private entities to secure start-up and implementation funding for Family Futures Downeast and other incubated programs.
- c. Complete the transitioning of developed programs to appropriate partner agencies. An example is Nurse Bridging becoming a part of Washington Hancock Community Agency, while the CCC continues to work on establishing a full reimbursement continuum across multiple payer systems to secure the program, which serves vulnerable infants, children, and families.
- d. Identify an organizational host and establish a reimbursement mechanism for Early Childhood Consultation and Outreach (ECCO) in collaboration with DHHS Office of Child and Family Services to secure ECCO as a viable service for children in home, educational, and childcare settings across Maine.

REPLICATING:

The CCC continues to develop tools for replication of all its best practice programs so that strategies and programming can help other communities across Maine and beyond.

- a. Finalize Hope Fund policies and guidelines, evaluation tools, and funding strategies to train and advise other communities in the replication of this model.
- b. Develop tools for replication of incubated model programming including writing curriculum and train-the-trainer curriculum to support fidelity-based expansion of any CCC model in other communities.
- c. Modify training materials, program policies and procedures, and evaluation tools when appropriate for use with other vulnerable populations.
- d. Write program curriculum, staff training, and train-the-trainer manuals for all newly developed programs that have the potential to serve other communities.
- e. On an ongoing basis, update CCC collaboration materials to improve ongoing technical assistance on authentic collaboration for other communities.
- f. Identify and train professional consultants to ensure clinical expertise for future replication of CCC models.
- g. Maintain up-to-date training tools for other CCC-developed models, such as Poverty Busters, Neighbor Group, and Flex Funds to train and advise organizations in programs that remove poverty-related barriers.

"By being responsive to the needs of those it serves, The Community Caring Collaborative inspires hope & cultivates choices that improve outcomes. We are changing the future collaboratively." – Marjorie Withers, Co-Director and Founder, Community Caring Collaborative



Goal 3. Operate a lean, cost-effective, innovative organizational model.

With an intentionally small staff and relationship to a fiscal sponsor, the CCC avoids duplication of existing infrastructure and offers partners the backbone supports necessary for collective change. The CCC model is based on investing resources in its partners and in creating collective impact far beyond the dollars it utilizes to operate. Its convening capacity allows the CCC to have a broad reach in terms of outcomes with a low investment of money and staff.

EVALUATION

The CCC is leading the collaborative into a process of sharing data and developing the means to measure the impact of all its programs. It is sharing evaluation strategies, developing ways to share data, and with its partners exploring the mechanisms to increase the alignment of programming across systems as a means for effectively changing outcomes and improving lives at a population level.

- a. Expand internal capacity to frame and measure the impact of convening partners and aligning efforts for collective action.
- b. Develop and continue to use evaluation tools for CCC-incubated programs to strengthen performance-level accountability and ensure continuous quality improvement.
- c. Share evaluation techniques and practices with all partners.
- d. Develop capacity for cross-site evaluation and shared evaluation to measure impact and inform the system.

MEMBERSHIP

Members of the Collaborative are partners who make the mission possible and who make daily change in the lives of individuals and families they serve. Part of the work of the CCC is to make certain that our partners' needs are met, that the Collaborative is inclusive and welcoming, and that all necessary voices are at the table at all times.

- a. Invite new members in alignment with CCC priorities to ensure representation and engagement of partners in collaborative programming.
- b. Create orientation process for new members to encourage full engagement.
- c. Increase diversity of sectors represented in the collaborative to increase its scope and capacity so that it can more effectively inform and impact change.



COMMUNICATIONS

The ability to listen and to hear our partners is of essence to the CCC. The Collaborative builds shared platforms for communication that serve its partners and inform community members and others about opportunities to join in shared work.

- a. Utilize strategic plan documents to update CCC outreach materials and website to maximize communication with partners, funders, and community members.
- b. Develop tools to manage membership, donors, and event registration.
- c. Assess website and site management to ensure an effective communications hub.
- d. Establish a plan for expanding communications to diversify outreach methods and engage key audiences.
- e. Build recognition of partner achievements into all appropriate communications (website, etc.) to strengthen the collaborative and honor the work of the partners.
- f. Maintain and expand relationships with local and statewide media to promote CCC visibility and assist in engaging new members.
- g. Build phone and web conferencing capacity for distance meetings and events.
- h. Build a shared calendar of events across all partner agencies.
- i. Develop a library of resources to inform the community and our partners in areas that affect our communities.
- j. Build a shared data communication system.
- k. On a yearly basis assess CCC website and communications tools with all partners to ensure continuous quality improvement.



ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The CCC serves as a model for being responsive to staff, to its partners, and to the community. The organization invests in its employees by encouraging them to grow in terms of their abilities, interests, and expertise. It is always aware of the impact of the organization on its partners and their ability to create transformative change in Washington County.

- a. Maintain ongoing healthy relationship with CCC's fiscal sponsor to ensure fiscal stability and human resources support.
- b. Update CCC position descriptions for staff and contractors to ensure clarity of roles and responsibilities.
- c. Hold yearly evaluations of all staff.
- d. Include partners in yearly assessment of the CCC as an organization.
- e. Support transition process of CCC's leadership to ensure transparency in the succession process as well as appropriate competencies across the staff.
- f. Create process to maintain three-year, rolling financial projections to align resources and programmatic priorities.
- g. Create annual plan of work that is informed by the partners and includes updating of objectives in strategic plan to ensure a shared vision and goals for the CCC.
- h. Share yearly work plan with all partners and funders.

FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

The CCC has been fortunate in the partnerships it has developed with funders which have played an essential and appreciated role in sustaining the collaborative. Because many of the programs incubated by the CCC have relevance for other areas, the CCC has increased its capacity to earn income from its training and technical assistance program. To further our financial resources, the CCC is diversifying how it sustains itself and its programming in the future. It will continue to have partnerships with foundations dedicated to collaboration, collective impact, and improving well-being for vulnerable populations. It will continue to review and apply for state and federal funding opportunities when appropriate. New initiatives designed to sustain the CCC include annual giving and major donor programs. Additionally, the CCC will develop relationships with sponsors around specific programming that meets their interests.

- a. Continue and expand efforts to identify and secure foundation and government grants and contracts to support ongoing and emerging CCC activities and programs and their replication.
- b. Initiate broad-based annual appeal to diversify revenue streams and fundraising approaches.
- c. Establish system of inviting, engaging, and acknowledging annual sponsors and in-kind contributors to encourage and diversify partner and community investment.
- d. Develop and implement fee schedules for technical assistance, training, and products to increase CCC's earned income capacity and sustainability.
- e. Integrate ongoing major and planned gifts into fundraising plan to broaden base of support.
- f. Develop full menu of fundable aspects of CCC to promote and secure support for core commitments and program activities.
- g. Develop ongoing multi-year partnerships with funders to create positive change that impacts Washington County in measureable ways.
- h. Launch a major gifts initiative to support shared poverty programming such as The Hope Fund.

SHARING LEARNED KNOWLEDGE

To ensure that programs developed by the collaborative can be replicated, the CCC has designed training manuals and offers individualized technical assistance across Maine and beyond. It is a means of sharing knowledge and improving outcomes beyond Washington County. The following chart is a look at incubated programming and the materials that have been developed (or are under development) to ensure replication with fidelity to the CCC model.

TRAINING	DESCRIPTION	AVAILABILITY
CCC Collaboration Materials: Creating Authentic Collaboration	Comprehensive materials on all aspects of creating authentic collaboration, including the CCC as a case study.	Available in 2016 Accompanies Training and TA on collaboration.
Infant Family Support Specialist Curriculum (IFSS)	40-hour training for providers working intensely with infants, children and their families in topics including: substance abuse, poverty- and trauma-informed care, early childhood development, cultural competencies, Wraparound principles, self-care, and more.	Available currently as training for Bridging providers. Available upon request for groups of up to 15 providers needing specialized training. IFSS train-the-trainer curriculum under development in 2016.
Early Childhood Education and Outreach (ECCO) curriculum	Comprehensive training for providers supporting children with regulatory challenges including topics in: mental health consultation, early childhood development, creating supportive environments for children, and more.	Training and train-the-trainer curriculum are being developed in 2016.
Poverty Programming Replication Tools	Tool kit for replication of Hope Fund, Poverty Busters, Poverty Core, and Neighbor Group offers organizations and communities proven processes for addressing poverty barriers	Technical Assistance and replication tool kits available currently.



The Community Caring Collaborative
247 Main Street, Suite 2, Machias, Maine 04654
PO Box 224, East Machias, ME 04630
office 207 255 8000 fax 207 255 8004
www.cccmaine.org
Creating opportunities through collaboration