



Success Equation Action Plan for 2012

***Vision:** To inspire and sustain a local movement to reduce the incidence of poverty and its impact on children in Buncombe County through education, collaboration, and public policy advocacy, resulting in a community where all children thrive.*

The Success Equation is a catalyst and movement builder to reduce the impact and incidence of child poverty in Buncombe County through the following roles:

- As policy advocate at local, state, and federal levels.
- As convener and connector to enhance promising strategies and collaborations – with a special interest in site-based/neighborhood-based programming and empowerment.
- As champion for creative, provocative ideas where conditions seem ripe for adoption.

Marketing, outreach, and community engagement

Develop print, video, and online materials to support the action plan and for the following goals:

- Develop a social marketing strategy, across the county and in communities where site-based initiatives are running, to shift attitudes on poverty and inspire cooperation in addressing the issue.
- Highlight effective public policy as fundamental for realizing the vision of the Success Equation.
- Recruit individuals, organizations, faith groups, civic groups, and businesses to the 2012 Action Plan.
- Position the Success Equation as a resource on child and family poverty.
- Link people, ideas, and resources for informal and spontaneous efforts that reduce the impact and incidence of child poverty.
- Communicate the 2012 Action Plan and report updates on progress.

Action plan

These ideas represent input provided through our focus groups and Success Equation Summit.

1. Bridge gaps in public assistance, and remove other barriers to success, for families moving out of poverty.

2012 goal: Set and launch a public policy agenda through the following steps:

- a. Analyze the myriad of benefits (including public housing and public transportation) to identify the income thresholds where families are most at risk.
- b. Identify the level at which key policy decisions would need to be made to reduce those risks and identify local private programs that may be able to support families during these risk times or “benefit cliffs.”
- c. Work with local public benefit providers (e.g. DSS and HACA), private providers, and recipients to recommend key policy changes and innovative partnerships to foster economic stability and employment/educational opportunity for families on assistance.
- d. Identify a realistic and timely advocacy strategy for realizing these changes at appropriate local, state, and federal levels.
 - i. Consider ideas for waiver requests as one strategy.

2. Help communities develop local sites that support and empower families, improve access to services and social connection, and increase educational, vocational, health, and parenting skills.

2012 goal: Connect and support existing/emerging sites for the following purposes:

- a. Identify specific communities (representing both rural and urban sites) to partner with for this work. Look for communities where resources and/or leadership are already present.
- b. Hold a community listening and exploration session to share models, identify opportunities for collaborations, and prioritize work.
- c. Commit resources towards implementing evidence-based program models that lift families and children out of poverty. One example is the Communities In Schools site coordinator model.
- d. Identify collective benchmarks and evaluation tools that can communicate the impact of these models to the broader community and potential funders/investors.
- e. Promote community engagement and empowerment at sites.
- f. Strengthen collaborations with DSS, Health Dept., Nurse Family Partnership, School Systems, city/county transportation systems, and HACA in meeting the needs of families at the sites.

3. Provide more young children with quality learning and care experiences - including those not enrolled in child care programs.

2012 goals:

- a. Identify and convene a group of advocates, providers, and parents to define a replicable, sustainable model for home-based care and child care cooperatives. Create a roadmap for launching the idea and involve the communities identified in idea #2.
- b. Support existing or emerging outreach that improves parent education in support of their child's healthy development during the early years – especially at community-based locations.
- c. Support the local advocacy efforts of Buncombe County Cares About Child Care to increase funding that expands access to quality center-based care for low-income families.

4. Improve transportation options and accessibility for low-income communities.

2012 goal:

- a. Learn and share information on the various plans and decision-making processes that impact public transit services.
- b. Connect low-income service providers and persons with existing regional and county-level transportation planning efforts such as Land of Sky's Livable Communities Initiative.
- c. At sites identified in idea #2, look for opportunities to meet transportation needs identified by local sites with local assets/resources or creative collaborations.

5. Increase jobs that pay living wages and job training and vocation education to access jobs.

2012 goal:

- a. Support the advocacy for the county living wage effort led by Just Economics.
- b. At sites identified in idea #2, look for opportunities for job-training and development that foster entrepreneurial businesses and cooperatives along with more traditional models.

6. Expand access to safe, affordable housing.

2012 goal: For our first-year, this issue will fold into idea #1 one above as we look at public assistance for affordable housing.