



Housing Opportunity and Services Together (HOST), launched by the Urban Institute with the support of the Open Society Foundations (OSF), is an innovative approach to coordinating services and programs for adults and youth in public and mixed-income housing. HOST goes into low-income neighborhoods to confront parents' key barriers to self-sufficiency—poor physical and mental health, addictions, low literacy and educational attainment, and historically weak connections to the labor force—while simultaneously integrating services for children and youth. The results of the multisite research project will influence how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and local housing agencies develop place-based supportive environments for low-income populations.

CUTTING-EDGE EVIDENCE TO INFORM POLICY AND PRACTICE

Few demonstrations model a range of service delivery options for public housing residents, and even fewer focus on those deemed hardest to house. Housing authorities want to understand how to engage residents, empowering them to improve their lives. With mixed-income communities becoming more common, housing authorities also need information on how setting affects resident outcomes. Federal policymakers and practitioners are heavily investing in place-based models (such as Choice and Promise Neighborhoods) and looking for new strategies and programs that demonstrate positive results.

HOST's multigeneration approach seeks to address the needs of the entire family, not just the heads of household. Youth services can make, or break, community revitalization. Successful youth engagement strategies can reduce vandalism, drug trafficking, fighting, and gang activity—the disorder and violence that demoralize residents and can drive others away. Youth must engage in school, community, and ultimately, the labor market to improve their own life chances and to ensure their neighborhoods' long-term viability.

PROJECT DESIGN

HOST has been designed as a three-year research demonstration with four goals

1. Implement and expand various models of supportive services through intensive case management (low caseloads and frequent contact), tailoring the services and intensity of engagement to each individual.
2. Test these models in four carefully selected sites in diverse settings—from high-poverty public housing to newly developed mixed-income neighborhoods.
3. Determine how to meet the needs of youth who require their own support system, recognizing that benefits to their parents do not necessarily trickle down.
4. Model and test innovative services and programs for both youth and adults, including:

Pathway to Rewards in Chicago—

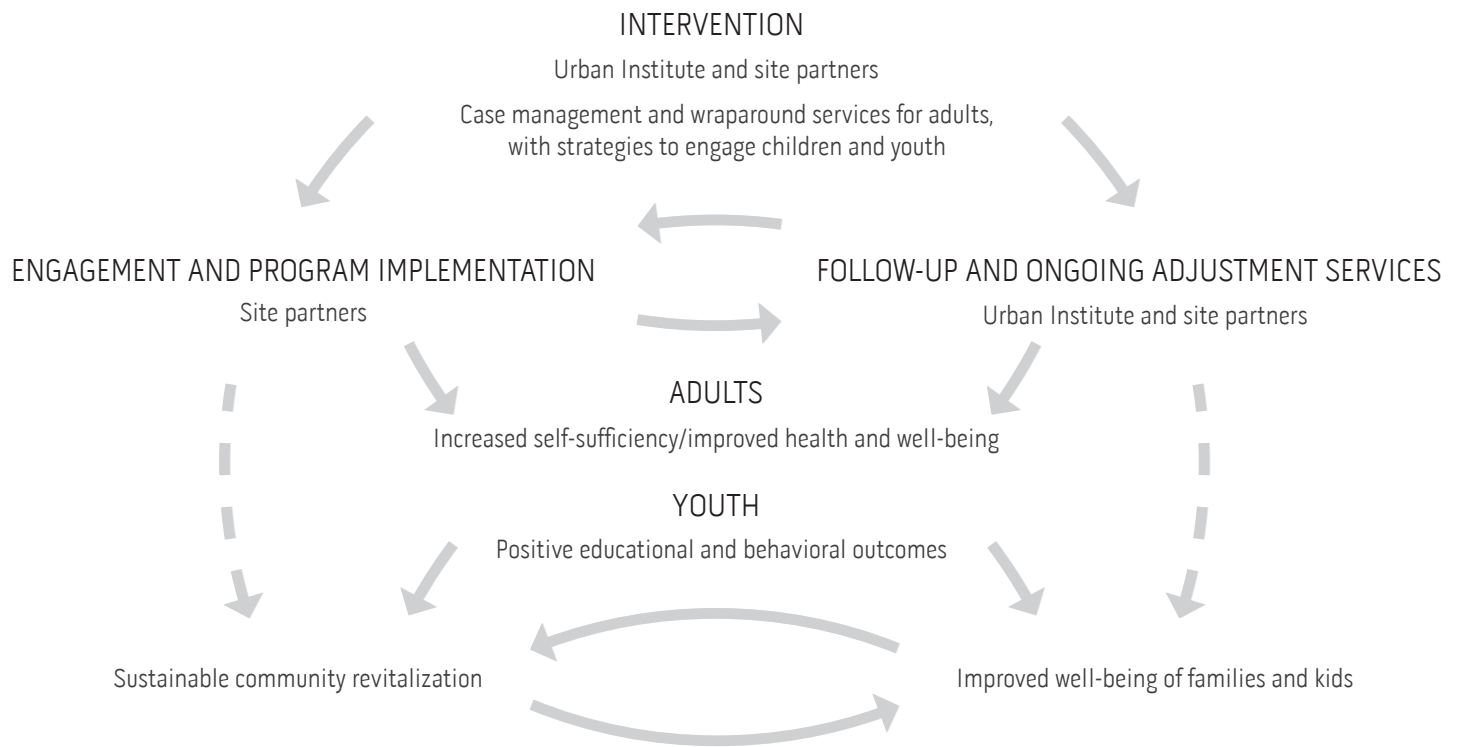
An incentive-based program developed by Project Math at the Erikson Institute that rewards youth for incremental improvements in grades, behavior, and engagement in programming. Youth earn points for achieving goals they set with their parents at the beginning of each school semester. Case managers link the youth to extracurricular activities and supports that will help them attain their goals and keep them engaged.

Innovative Changes in Portland, Oregon—

A financial literacy program that tailors the content of the curriculum to the varying needs of Portland's diverse population. For example, many Muslims are prohibited by their religion from paying or earning interest and often have difficulty establishing credit in the United States. Case managers worked with the nonprofit Innovative Changes to shape the curriculum and develop alternative credit-building strategies for these families.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Developing Comprehensive, Coordinated Service Models



HOST OPERATES WITH FOUR PARTNER SERVICES AND SITES



Chicago Housing Authority, at Altgeld Gardens Chicago's last remaining large public housing development.



Home Forward (formerly Housing Authority of Portland) - at New Columbia and Humboldt Gardens mixed-income developments.



DC Housing Authority - at the Benning Terrace housing development.



New York Housing Authority - at the Brownsville community.

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