

PREVENTION FIRST

CHICAGO STRATEGIC ACTION COUNCIL (CSAC)



Funding & Strategic Alignment — Who We Are

Our citywide workgroup brings together prevention providers, community partners, and public health stakeholders to strategize on an improved funding environment that supports prevention services across Chicago. Our purpose is to identify and recommend funding policies that more closely reflect community needs, reduce administrative burden, and create the conditions needed for high-quality, equitable prevention work.

Our workgroup aims to host a Funders Roundtable event, building shared understanding and momentum across funders and partners to strengthen prevention infrastructure and address systemic funding challenges.

Why Funding & Strategic Alignment Matter

Funding for prevention services is often restrictive, fragmented, and imposes an undue administrative burden on prevention service workers. With the Funders Roundtable, we seek to articulate opportunities for aligned funding that allows prevention systems to be effective, sustainable, and responsive. Strategic, aligned funding allows:

- ▶ Prevention investments that reflect local priorities and meet youth and families where they are
- ▶ Prevention providers to spend more time delivering services and building relationships, therefore increasing impact and reach
- ▶ The true cost of high-quality prevention work to be supported, including workforce stability, training, and organizational infrastructure
- ▶ Prevention systems to deliver coordinated, long-term benefits, including improved youth outcomes and reduced reliance on crisis-response and treatment systems



What We Are Building

We are developing actionable funding strategies that will shape the Funders Roundtable agenda and ground our cross-sector conversations. Our key priorities include:

Aligning funders, goals, and timelines

Supporting funding decisions that reduce duplication across agencies and create a coherent strategy across public, private, and philanthropic partners.

Removing restrictive barriers

Eliminating unnecessary limitations, such as food/transport rules and rigid programming requirements, to improve flexibility and increase reach in schools.

True-cost models

Advocating for flexible funding that reflects the actual cost of high-quality prevention work, including staffing, training, supervision, data, and building sustainable infrastructure.

Investing in workforce stability

Utilizing funding to strengthen the shared infrastructure and systems developed by the Improved Service Quality workgroup that allow prevention services to scale up.

Centering community and provider input

Ensuring the voices of the prioritized audiences and service providers are heard, and that their expertise shapes how funding is allocated.

How We Demonstrate Impact

Our recommendations presented at the Funders Roundtable aim to create system-level change in the prevention ecosystem – change that funders can see, measure, and support. Indicators of this progress will include:

- ▶ Greater alignment and decreased duplication across prevention agencies and funding partners, enhancing cross-agency coordination and data-sharing
- ▶ More flexibility for providers, increasing the reach and impact of their youth-facing time, therefore preventing costly crisis interventions down the line
- ▶ Stronger workforce stability driven by more incentivizing, sustainable funding models
- ▶ More equitable, community-driven funding decisions



Resources Needed

To successfully organize the Funders Roundtable, we invite partners and funders to:

Participate in co-designing the Roundtable, ensuring the agenda and key conversations are reflective of community needs

Support the development of shared infrastructure and sustainable workforce initiatives emerging across all CSAC workgroups

Engage openly in dialogue about flexible and equity-centered funding strategies

Fund access to high-quality data and research expertise to inform coordinated funding decisions and ensure investments are guided by current evidence

Invest in sustainable, community-driven prevention systems and champion cross-sector alignment

