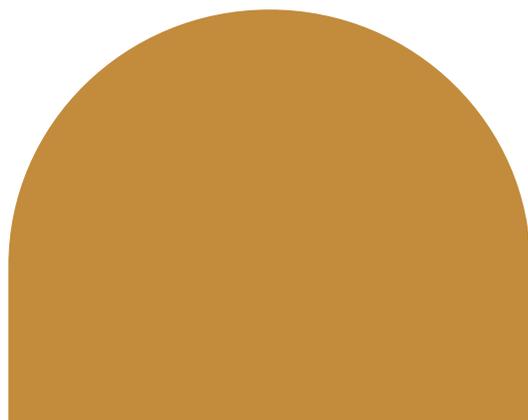


PREVENTION FIRST 

CHICAGO STRATEGIC ACTION COUNCIL

A shared vision for improved substance use prevention services for youth in Chicago.

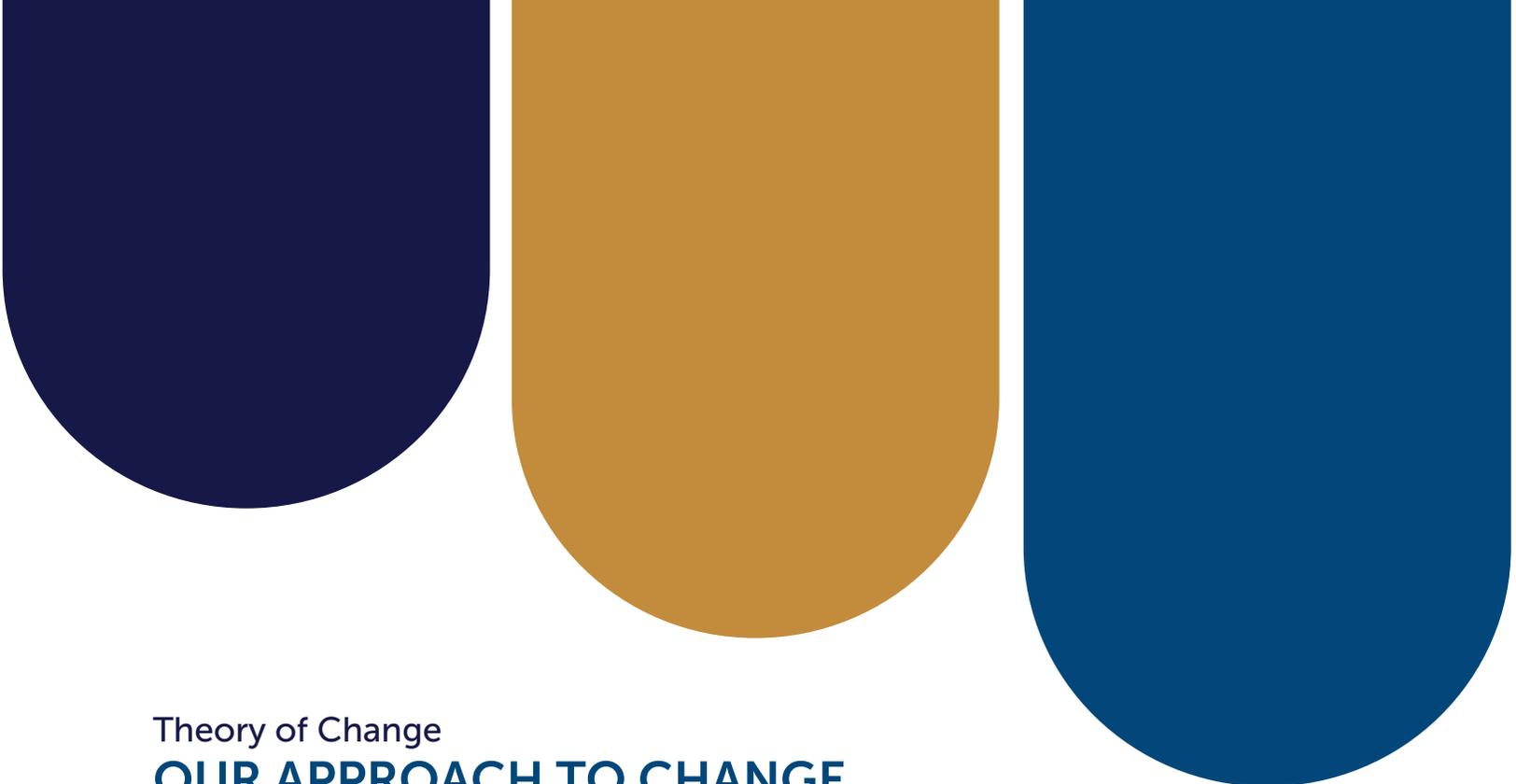
September 2024





ABOUT THE CHICAGO STRATEGIC ACTION COUNCIL

The Chicago Strategic Action Council (CSAC) is a collaborative group of substance use prevention providers, funders, and community organizations working together to transform prevention services for youth and families in Chicago. This is our common agenda that outlines how our collaborative activities are intended to produce a series of short- and long-term outcomes that extend our focus into activities that will address the organizations and systems carrying our prevention services.



Theory of Change

OUR APPROACH TO CHANGE

Our collaborative work is most effective when it addresses the interconnected parts of the substance use prevention system. When this system causes inequitable outcomes, we believe we must enhance our focus to include not only individual and community- level interventions, but also interventions to the underlying policy, funding, and institutional structures that make up the substance use prevention system.

Chicago Substance Use Prevention Services Providers (CSUPS) are agencies funded by the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS) Division of Substance Use Prevention and Recovery (SUPR) to implement individual and community level interventions through evidence-based substance use prevention programs and strategies. As partners in the CSAC initiative, we commit to this enhanced focus by aligning our work to transform the underlying policy, funding, and institutional mechanisms within substance use prevention in Chicago.

Systemic change is possible when we collaborate to transform how the substance use prevention system in operates, so that it produces better outcomes through culturally- responsive methods and strategies.

COLLABORATIVE

SYSTEMIC

CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE

VISION

We imagine a transformed system of care where substance use prevention providers in Chicago are unified in our approach, have access to flexible and targeted funding, are deeply connected to the community, and are centering racial equity in all that we do.

VALUES

Racial Equity

Our core purpose must ensure that race is no longer a determining factor in substance use outcomes. To achieve that, we must imagine and design a transformed system of care that centers and includes the needs of racial groups who continue to be most impacted and burdened by the crisis of substance use.

Trauma-Informed

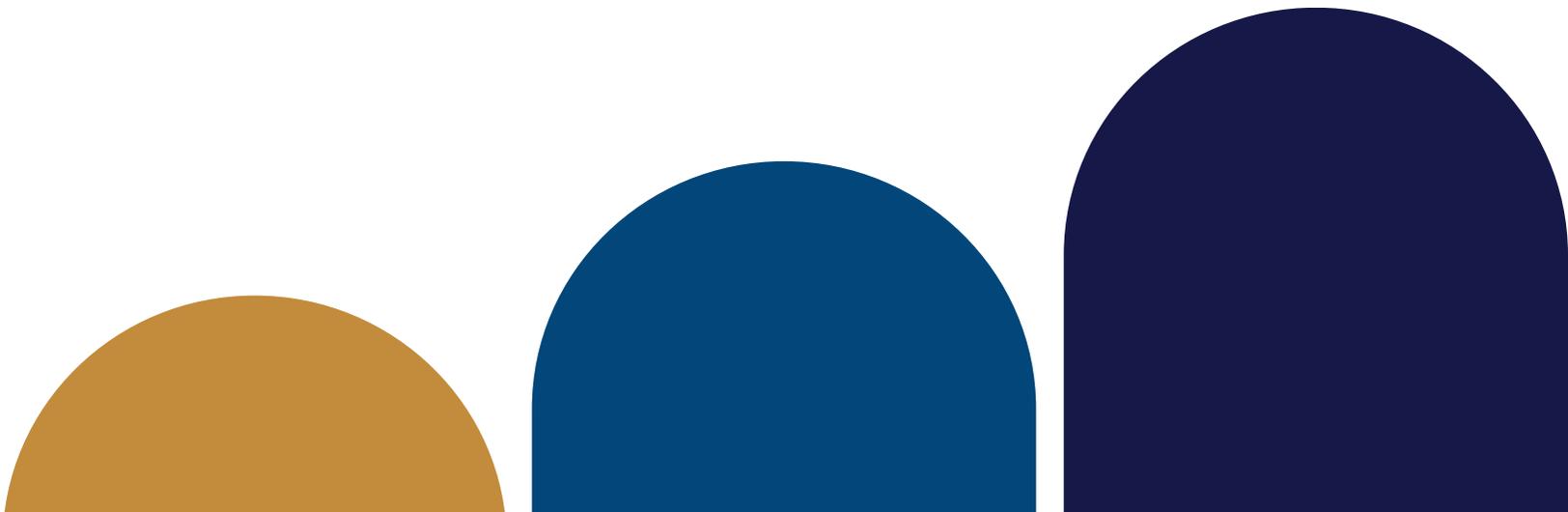
Our work must operate through a trauma-informed lens of health equity, that recognizes the long-term impacts of generations of trauma inflicted by racism and other forms of oppression.

Collective Impact

We believe our impact together is stronger than our impact alone. Collectively we can achieve change at levels that reach deep and wide, that have lasting impact for generations to come. Working together to achieve unity of purpose, approach, and method is of critical importance.

Trust & Humility

As a Council, our relationships with each other must be deeply rooted in trust and the belief that we are all working towards a shared vision. As Council Partners, we come together eager to learn from each other and leverage our collective strengths with a unified approach.





Opportunities for Change

As partners, we seek to transform our collective approach to substance use prevention strategies at the organizational and systemic levels. Our collaborative work is intended to extend the boundaries of our individual programs by taking on those change initiatives that require large scale change and cross-sector coordination in the prevention services ecosystem.

Improved Quality of Prevention Services

To provide high quality prevention services to youth, families, and communities, prevention providers need improvements in policy, strategy, and capacity to attract and retain appropriately skilled staff.

Better Alignment in Funding Strategies

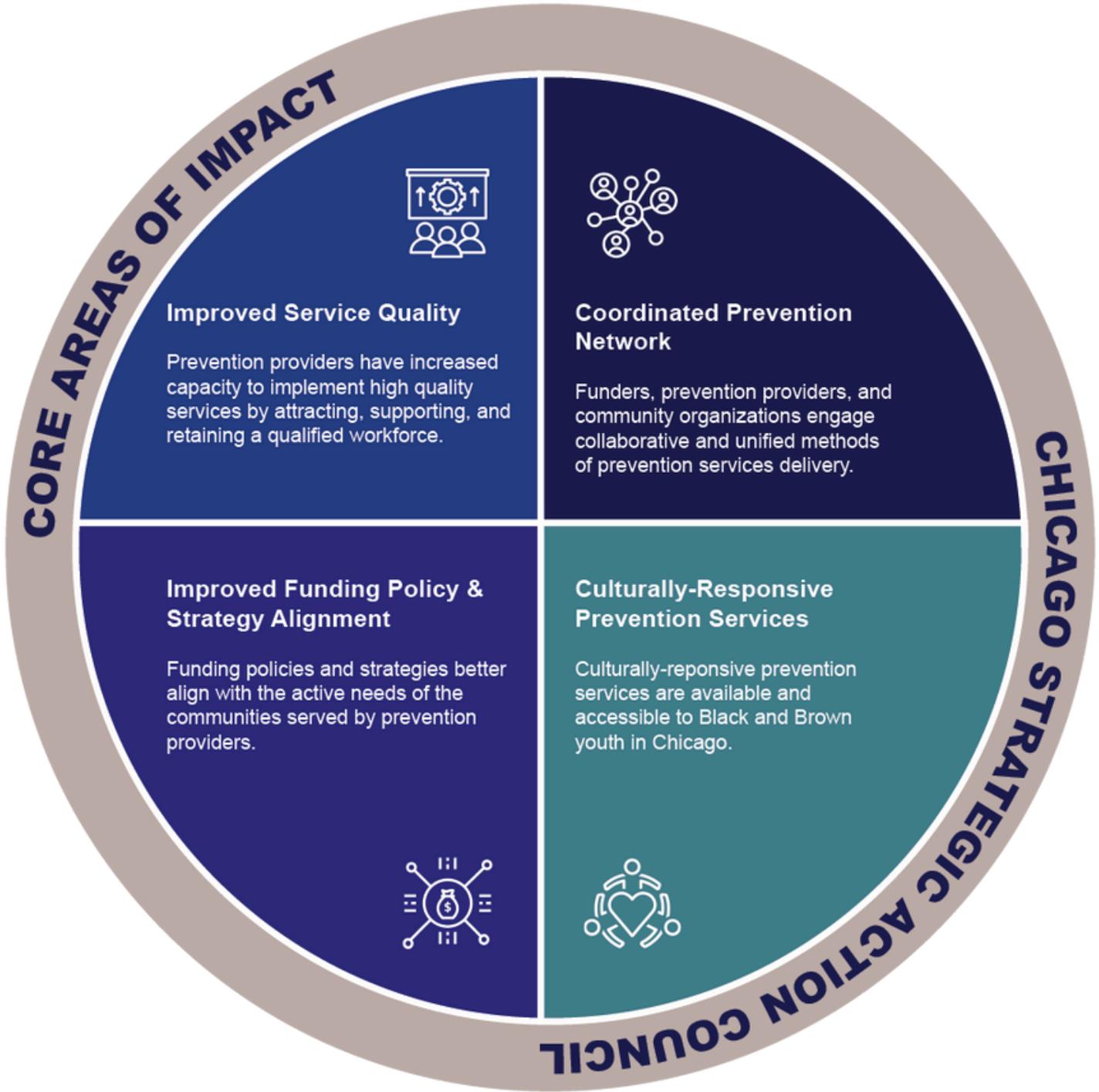
Funding for prevention services should meet the actual needs of the communities served by prevention providers. Significant changes are needed to funding models to increase support not only for current, but also emerging prevention methodologies.

Improved Prevention Services Coordination

Remaining connected to the network of prevention providers is critical to the quality, consistency, and availability of prevention services. Prevention providers need opportunities to convene, connection, and coordinate their efforts to offer a more unified approach to substance use prevention services in Chicago.

Accessible and Culturally-Responsive Programming

Black and Brown youth in Chicago often do not have access to culturally-responsive substance use prevention services that address the unique cultural, social, and historical factors that impact substance use. Improving the organizational and systemic landscape of substance use prevention services must incorporate this lens.



IMPACT



ACTION PLAN

2025 - 2028

Improved Service Quality

Primary Goal: Increase capacity for prevention providers to attract and retain a qualified workforce and implement high quality services.

Activity 1: Develop an educational resource guide for CSUPS Providers that focuses on leveraging organizational culture as a pathway to improved employee well-being and increased service quality.

Activity 2: Develop partnerships with educational institutions to create pipeline and career development opportunities for students entering the field as prevention specialists.

Activity 3: Create structured pathways for prevention specialists interested in organizational leadership by creating professional development opportunities, workshops, and leadership development courses.

Short-Term Outcome: Prevention service providers expand their capacity to create an organizational culture that supports employee well-being.

Mid-Term Outcome: Organizations are able to provide livable wages, benefits, and quality professional development to their staff.

Long-Term Outcome: Youth, families, and communities in Chicago experience high quality substance use prevention services.

Funding Policy & Strategy Alignment

Primary Goal: Recommend funding policies and strategies that better align with active needs of communities served by prevention providers.

Activity 1: Develop and publish an advisory white paper of recommended strategies for funding, grantmaking, and evaluation based on evidence-informed, emergent, and community-driven prevention practices.

Activity 2: Develop a strategy to address grant funding restrictions (e.g., restrictions on food).

Activity 3: Create an info-graphic resource of the real cost of prevention services that encourages more flexible funding models.

Activity 4: Offer learning opportunities and technical assistance to prevention providers that improves understanding of indirect cost allocation and internal strategies for maximizing grant funding.

Short-Term Outcome: Funders are evidence-informed when developing funding strategies.

Mid-Term Outcome: Funders and grant making organizations have more flexible funding strategies that align with the current and emerging needs and methodologies of funded agencies.

Mid-Term Outcome: Funded agencies have increased capacity to meet staffing and program needs.

Long-Term Outcome: There is increased investment in prevention services that is more aligned with current prevention methodologies.

Coordinated Prevention Network

Primary Goal: Funders, prevention providers, and community organizations will engage a more coordinated approach to prevention services.

Activity 1: Create a systems map of the substance use prevention system in Chicago to identify leverage points for change, opportunities for collaboration, and to improve connectedness among prevention providers.

Activity 2: Convene an Executive Round Table with leaders of CSUPS Providers to connect about their organization's work, discuss challenges, share resources, and increase opportunities for collaboration.

Activity 3: Organize opportunities for providers, community groups, and other organizations to build network connections within the prevention services ecosystem.

Activity 4: Develop recommendations for a common data collection and reporting framework that can be implemented for all CSUPS funded agencies.

Short-Term Outcome: Stakeholders — including funders, prevention providers, and community organizations — will have a better understanding of the existing prevention services ecosystem.

Mid-Term Outcome: CSAC partners will build stronger relationships that enhance collaborative efforts, facilitate better information sharing, and ensure a coordinated response to emerging needs.

Long-Term Outcome: Substance use prevention services in Chicago will be more effectively tailored to the community's needs, ultimately improving the quality and impact of services provided.

Culturally-Responsive Prevention Services

Primary Goal: Provide resources, tools, and support to help prevention providers incorporate culturally-responsive practices and perspectives into their prevention methodologies.

Activity 1: Create a comprehensive resource guide for prevention providers that includes research, training resources, directories, and other tools to support implementation of culturally-responsive substance use prevention programming.

Activity 2: Create a self-assessment tool for substance use prevention providers in Chicago, focusing on their ability to deliver culturally-responsive programs. The tool should help providers assess their practices, policies, and capacity for serving Chicago's diverse communities effectively.

Activity 3: Provide technical assistance to prevention providers support the implementation of culturally-responsive prevention methodologies.

Short-Term Outcome: Prevention providers in Chicago have increased access to resources that improve their capacity to implement culturally responsive substance use prevention methodologies.

Mid-Term Outcome: Black and Brown youth, families, and communities disadvantaged by prevention system inequities have access to culturally responsive substance use prevention programming.

Long-Term Outcome: Prevention providers resources to assess their methodologies and programs to incorporate a culturally-responsive lens.

PREVENTION FIRST

Chicago Strategic Action Council

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