

Chicago Strategic Action Council (CSAC) Funders Roundtable

On July 22, the [Chicago Strategic Action Council](#) (CSAC) brought together over 20 philanthropic partners, Illinois Department of Human Services public funders, and community-based prevention providers for an in-person roundtable at Prevention First's Chicago office. Facilitated by Pilar Audain of [Truth, Racial Healing & Transformation Greater Chicago](#), the gathering marked a significant milestone: funders and providers sitting at the same table to have a candid, systems-level conversation about the future of Chicago's prevention ecosystem.

The dialogue surfaced several themes that will shape the CSAC's work on funding and strategic alignment. Participants identified fragmented, siloed funding as one of the most significant barriers to prevention impact, with providers noting that rigid grant deliverables often make it difficult to serve young people and families holistically. There was broad agreement that prevention requires long-term, sustained investment, and that traditional funding metrics are often poorly suited to capture what meaningful change looks like in practice.

The conversation also centered community deeply. Participants challenged the room to move beyond studying and evaluating communities toward genuinely resourcing, hearing, and co-developing with them, including by centering lived experience in research, governance, and organizational leadership. Funders reflected on how their own reporting requirements and grant structures could be revisited to better support this vision, and several named specific internal conversations they planned to bring back to their organizations.

The energy in the room reflected a genuine, cross-sector desire to move from conversation toward coordinated action. The CSAC is committed to honoring that momentum as a convener between funders and providers and a host for future collaboration.