

Minneapolis Promise: Reflections on the Journey

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In 1997 the President's Summit unveiled a vision for America rooted in five essential resources necessary for healthy development. The Summit provided vision, passion, and a call-to-action for city and state delegates to expand access to these resources. America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth, under the leadership of Retired General Colin Powell, became the national vehicle for supporting community and state initiatives. The goal was to connect two million American youth to all five fundamental resources. The strategic design called for launching hundreds of local Communities of Promise, running largely on volunteer energy, networked and supported by the national office, and drawing on commitments made by hundreds of employers and national organizations to support the spread of the five fundamental resources. The strategy was more akin to the launch of a movement than the national replication of a program. This placed a premium on local communities building their own plans and strategies for increasing access to the five fundamental resources.

The Minneapolis delegation quickly and enthusiastically began planning. Their resolve was likely buoyed by several contextual factors, including a sense of collective capacity and efficacy grounded, in part, in a legacy of community innovations in supporting children and adolescents. And we had our national reputation—as incubators of these innovations—to uphold. More importantly, the delegation was

well aware that the kinds of developmental resources advocated by America's Promise are crucial for the well being of both youth and our community. We also know that Minneapolis, like all urban centers, has difficulty bringing these resources to scale. The President's Summit and America's Promise gave us the push to re-examine civic life and imagine how we could move the developmental needle forward.

This report reflects our process, roadblocks, achievements, and shortcomings. Though it draws on structured interviews, archival resources, and participation by the authors in the process, it is intended as a professional (and perhaps personal) reflection on the complicated process of making and sustaining change in a large urban community. This is not a formal evaluation of Minneapolis Promise. Instead, it offers a conceptual framework for the stages and processes of community change and reflects on what we did via Minneapolis Promise and what we might do if we had the courage, resources, and energy to truly transform how a city supports its young.

Organizational Structure and Strategy

The hard work began upon the delegation's return. We had caught the fire in Philadelphia, but returned with little in the way of recommended action plans or national guidance on what to do next (America's Promise was not in place or staffed for several months following the Summit).

We needed a leadership team and a plan of action. The initial delegation expanded its representation, seeking cross-sector participation and youth engagement. A leadership group of 20 was formed, with chief executive officers from city government (the mayor), the public school district (the superintendent), the Minneapolis United Way, the YMCA, the Mentoring Partnership of Minnesota, leading community and corporate foundations, youth-serving not-for-profits, and the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board.

The Minneapolis United Way offered to serve as host and convener. Minneapolis Promise ran largely on a bare-bones budget of under \$100,000 a year to support a half-time coordinator, a full-time youth involvement specialist, an AmeriCorps Promise Fellows program, and a small communications budget.

The first year of America’s Promise was dominated by a series of meetings aimed at building a strategic plan. This was, not surprisingly, an arduous task. We were breaking new ground on several fronts, with no history or roadmaps to guide us, all on volunteer time over-and-above the demands of ongoing work. Our challenges included building group cohesion across multiple sectors, imagining how traditional delivery systems could become collaborative, and activating the participation of the public, neighborhoods, families, faith communities, and youth without a coherent, easily accessible delivery system.

We created our strategic plan after a Summit debriefing for the community, several leadership group meetings, and an all-day retreat. The planning process was swift—due in part to group members with experience in launching collaborative efforts (such as Success by Six). The agenda has six primary objectives and strategies for addressing each. We revisited our strategic plan annually through 1999.

Strategies were modified but core objectives remained the same.

We then sought mechanisms for implementing the plan. Task forces, each “staffed” by volunteer leaders from the Leadership Team, were created for the youth involvement, commitment, and public awareness/citizen involvement goals.

How well did we follow through in addressing each of the six objectives in our ambitious plan? Our strongest work was in addressing objectives 1 (youth engagement) and 2 (commitments). A coalition of adult and youth leaders developed a rigorous and comprehensive plan for a public education campaign aimed at mobilizing adult relationships in the lives of youth. Unfortunately, funding from the local philanthropic community never emerged, for reasons that are unclear. However, several coalition members, including WCCO-TV (CBS), launched campaigns encouraging adult engagement in the



lives of youth. Similarly, significant strategic action did not occur around objective 4 (mobilize action by schools, neighborhoods, congregations, and families) or objective 5 (promote and encourage innovations), but several organizations, including the Minneapolis school district, incorporated the five resources into their work.

Initially, we sought the engagement of St. Paul in a broader Twin Cities Community of Promise. Partially because St. Paul did not have a delegation at the 1997 President’s Summit, there was no cross-sector leadership group to keep pace

with the Minneapolis planning. We decided to move forward with a focus on Minneapolis while remaining open to building a cooperative bridge to our sister city. We also thought about incorporating the suburbs of Minneapolis, but the rapid development of the Minnesota Alliance with Youth was mobilizing both greater Minnesota and the Twin Cities suburban areas. We decided to focus on Minneapolis and to work collaboratively with the Minnesota Alliance.

Important dialogue occurred on how to promote the five resources. The target was

Overview of Minneapolis Community of Promise Strategic Plan

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGIES
1. To ensure youth participation in all aspects of services and activities that affect them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Educate key Minneapolis leadership about the importance of increased youth involvement ■ Hold youth mini-summits in locations comfortable to youth to get their advice and counsel and connect them to the five resources ■ Establish youth councils in multiple neighborhoods and provide technical assistance ■ Listen to youths’ assessment of the quality of existing programs designed for their benefit ■ Expand service-learning opportunities
2. Generate commitment from corporations, nonprofit organizations, and service clubs to accomplish Minneapolis Promise objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Implement 50 new commitments ■ Assist commitment-makers to follow through
3. Build public awareness and understanding of the importance of promoting developmental assets and resources for enhancing success among city youth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Launch a citywide public education effort
4. Mobilize multiple sectors within Minneapolis to take formal and informal action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify, recruit, convene, and assist sector leadership
5. Promote and encourage innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Capture and disseminate innovations
6. Provide technical assistance and resources for addressing each of the five fundamental resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Develop opportunities to convene and support groups and leaders

to ensure that all youth experienced all five resources, but we knew the delivery systems in Minneapolis (as in all cities) tend to focus on a single resource (e.g., mentoring organizations focus on the caring adult resource, service learning initiatives focus on civic engagement). We debated whether our focus should be on enhancing and expanding current delivery systems or breaking new ground by developing processes by which places and programs could deliver all five resources simultaneously. This latter approach, theoretically, could be advanced by helping neighborhoods, congregations, and schools incorporate all five resources into their strategic plans. Ultimately, we leaned toward a more holistic approach, encouraging and advocating existing systems and programs to deliver all of the five resources.

New community change efforts always inherit a social context. In Minneapolis, one legacy was the widespread understanding of the concept of developmental assets developed by Search Institute, a Minneapolis-based nonprofit. Many schools, congregations, and community organizations had begun work to advance developmental assets prior to 1997. To minimize conflict around “dueling paradigms,” the Leadership Team adopted an approach of treating the five fundamental resources and the 40 developmental assets as kindred and overlapping approaches to youth development and encouraging audiences to see the approaches as complementary. Because of the compatibility of the two visions of positive development, no evidence has emerged of conflict or confusion about the “targets” for Minneapolis youth.



The Impact of Minneapolis Promise

As the Minneapolis Promise Leadership Team passes the torch to the Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board (in June 2001), we can reflect both on the changes that have transpired since 1997 and on the challenges that remain.

It was far beyond our financial and staffing capacity to implement a rigorous system for tracking how many Minneapolis youth gained access to one or more of the five resources during our watch. One approximation comes from annual reports of the 70 Minneapolis commitment makers—corporations, agencies, and nonprofits—who “promised” to implement or expand strategies for delivering the five

resources. When these commitment-maker reports are aggregated, the numbers suggest the following changes since 1997:

- 9,365 youth gained access to caring adults via mentoring programs;
- 4,088 youth gained access to safe places and structured activities after school;
- 4,680 children and adolescents benefited from services, medical and otherwise, aligned with the healthy start promise;
- 4,864 youth gained access to workplace experiences aligned with the marketable skill assets; and
- 8,011 were given opportunities to engage in community service.

About 30,000 promise-related experiences are reported by the 70 commitment makers. We do not know much about the quality or duration of these experiences or whether they would

have occurred without Minneapolis Promise. There may be additional promise-related experiences—in neighborhoods, congregations, families, or informal, one-on-one actions by caring adults—which are undetected by this reporting methodology.

One impact of Minneapolis Promise is the “institutionalization” of the five promises within the city’s social infrastructure. The Minneapolis United Way—which gave leadership and financial support to Minneapolis Promise—has strategically grounded its youth development work in the five promises. The Beacon School movement in Minneapolis flourished in the last three years and uses the five promises as organizing principles for the design and development of its programs. This synergy between Beacon schools and Minneapolis Promise was fueled by the strong leadership of the Minneapolis YMCA in both initiatives. The new Volunteer Resource Center of the Twin Cities, a merger of the



Minneapolis and St. Paul Volunteer Centers, has built the five promises into its strategic plan. The University of Minnesota has become a University of Promise, with intent to mobilize teaching, research, and outreach around America’s Promise. The Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, a pioneering, intergovernmental agency begun 15 years ago, has adopted the five promises as an overarching framework for guiding its work. It is too early to tell how these strategic commitments will play out. They are good and important developments that require leadership, resources, and ingenuity to translate into efforts that actually touch the lives of kids.

Perhaps our most important impact is the new youth-engagement energy in the city. Led by a task force of youth and adults, youth participated and were meaningfully engaged in five youth mini-summits in 1998 and six in 1999. These summits empowered young people to take action in creating a more promise-rich city. Across the 11 summits, nearly 200 youth were involved in the planning, over 50 organizations assisted in implementation, and ultimately, 2,900 youth participated. Growing out of these summits has been the establishment of Youth Councils in several city neighborhoods.

In 2000, twenty city youth designed and implemented a process to evaluate and give feedback to a range of youth development program settings including parks, community centers, and agencies such as the YMCA and Boys and Girls Clubs. The purpose of this assessment, called “Youth on a Mission,” was to encourage youth-serving agencies to see themselves through the eyes of the young people they serve and involve.

The concept of youth engagement, embedded in Minneapolis Promise, has spread throughout the city as an important youth development strategy. There is increased conversation about this strategy, increased self-scrutiny by institutions

Developmental Asset	% of Youth With This Asset
Experiences long-term support from caring adults	37
Lives in a neighborhood where adults know and connect to its kids	31
Experiences school as a caring environment	27
Perceives that adults in Minneapolis value youth	21
Perceives that youth are given useful roles to play in community life	28
Engages in providing help or service to others, one hour or more per week	50
Spends three hours or more per week engaged in the creative life (e.g., music, drama, dance)	19
Spends three hours or more per week in after-school programs (e.g., sports clubs, organizations)	54

and organizations, and an emerging social pressure to become intentional about youth engagement. Like all cities, Minneapolis has a long way to go before it operates more on the view that youth are community resources rather than problems to be controlled. But the balance is beginning to shift.

Searching for a New Way

This four-year journey in building a Community of Promise has left us with shared impressions and understandings about Minneapolis and its capacity to provide developmental supports for all of its young.

The Vision

The five fundamental resources resonate with the people of Minneapolis. Few doubt the importance of these developmental supports. Indeed, Minneapolis has a significant tradition of focusing on the elements of healthy development. This tradition—which includes the Youth Coordinating Board, creation of a prototype Success By Six initiative, early implementation



of alternative schools, investment in neighborhood revitalization, and wide public discussion of Search Institute's framework of developmental assets—may have paved the way for America's Promise and a civic willingness to try again to mobilize resources to grow healthy, caring, and successful youth.

The Frustration

Rallying around visions of healthy human development does not seem to be our problem. Actually creating the multiple changes needed to significantly move the human development

needle forward is our problem. We are an optimistic, can-do kind of city. We develop innovations that are the envy of other cities. But in spite of our good intentions and good works, there is something elusive about this human development enterprise. We know it, we feel it, we worry about it, we experiment more quickly than others—but we haven't figured it out yet.

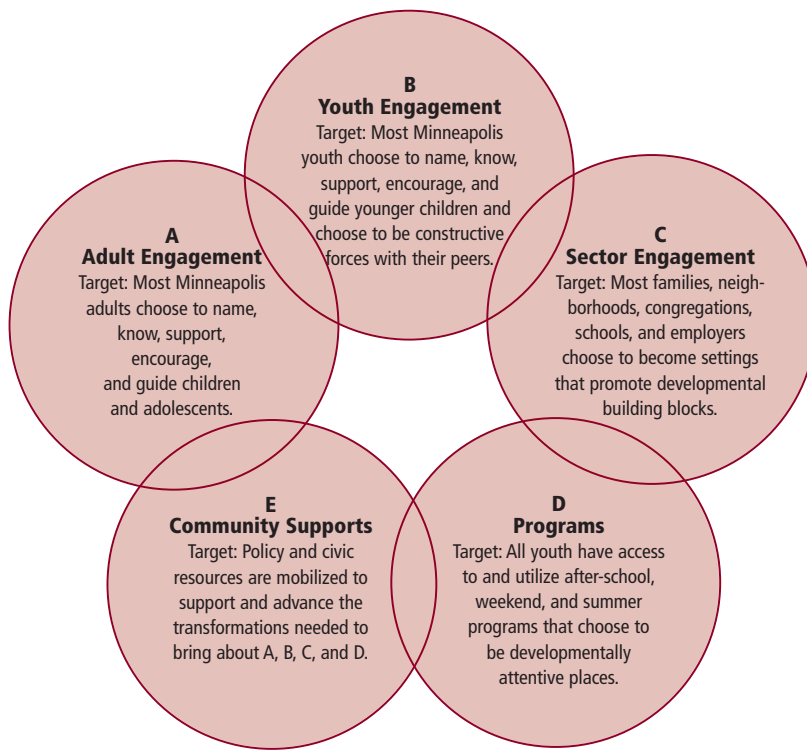
It is painfully clear to our city's leadership that the developmental supports needed by all of our kids are in disrepair. In the 1999–2000 school year, the Minneapolis School District administered Search Institute's survey of developmental assets to a cross-section of 10,618 students, grades 6–12. The 40 assets, like the five resources of America's Promise, seek to conceptualize the developmental opportunities and experiences that forecast healthy outcomes for children and adolescents. As such, the assessment is a barometer showing how well a city is promoting the building blocks of development rather than more traditional barometers that count problem behaviors (e.g., alcohol use, teen pregnancy, violence).

This data—which is actually as strong or stronger than parallel data in other American cities—implicates just about every sector of a city and signals a kind of rupture in the developmental infrastructure for which there are no simple solutions. It may well be that these indicators of resources/assets would be even less savory had Minneapolis Promise and earlier incarnations of human development collaborations not occurred.

Exacerbating our shared frustration are social trends that interfere with raising resource/asset-rich kids: Adult fear of youth, emotionally and/or physically absent parents, age segregation built into the fabric of our cities, high rates of social mobility within urban centers, and the over-reliance on schools to fix everything.

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Circles of Energy for Raising Healthy and Successful Kids



Re-imagining Community Change

What is clear at this moment is a deep and shared sensitivity to the immense and complex challenge of increasing access to and use of essential developmental supports. While the participants in Minneapolis Promise celebrate our accomplishments, we know we have only scratched the surface. We see too many lives untouched by our efforts. Profound change seems beyond our grasp. Though we are tired and ready to move on, there remains a dogged determination to rethink and re-imagine.

Closing the gap between the developmentally attentive city we ought to be and the current reality requires an orchestrated, comprehensive, long-term, citywide movement that has eluded us. It will take new thinking, new strategies, and new resources in a coherent “package” we don’t yet understand. But there seems to be both a civic will and readiness to re-imagine how we

unleash the developmental power of this city. It is toward this re-imagining we now turn. We have been encouraged to posit a course of action, drawing on our experiences in community-based youth development, and to “stir the pot.” Perhaps this is a Minneapolis Promise legacy—the willingness, even eagerness, for rethinking what Minneapolis can be and how we might get there.

Building a Developmentally Attentive City

The target that ought to guide the people, places, and policies of Minneapolis is to organize city life in a way that gives all children and adolescents ready access to opportunities, experiences, resources, and relationships that address universal developmental needs. Meeting these needs is crucial for raising caring, competent, and successful human beings. The job of meeting these needs requires engaged and effective



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families, of course. But the task requires more than family. Always has, always will.

There are developmental targets known to have universal import for all youth, regardless of family income, race, ethnicity, or political and religious persuasion. Some of these core building blocks of development include support and affirmation, empowerment, boundaries articulated and monitored, structured time use, social skill and value development, the press for academic achievement, and the nurture of positive identity.

In Minneapolis—as in other cities in Minnesota and throughout the nation—many youth (perhaps most youth) lack engagement with people and places needed to access these developmental building blocks. Furthermore, in imagining a developmentally attentive city, we must think about breadth, depth, and

redundancy. Breadth in that *all* kids experience people and places who promote these building blocks. Depth in that young people experience *all* of these developmental building blocks. Redundancy in that all kids have *multiple* people and settings promoting these building blocks of positive human development.

Minneapolis—as a community of people and a community of social institutions—is not organized to provide breadth, depth, and redundancy. To move in these directions, it is essential to conceptualize (and then mobilize) the sources of energy in Minneapolis which have power and potential to promote the developmental resources/assets that all kids need.

There are, we submit, five sources or circles of energy for promoting the developmental strengths all kids need (and deserve).

In this model, circles A, B, C, and D have *direct* impact on the development of youth. A common thread across A, B, C, and D is the primacy of relationships in positive child and adolescent development. All youth in Minneapolis ought to experience adults who connect to them in positive ways across multiple years *and* multiple peers who exercise positive peer influence *and* families, neighborhoods, schools, and congregations that purposefully become developmentally attentive settings *and* multiple programs transformed into optimally developmentally attentive places. Activating all four of these energy systems—yoked together in a shared and common purpose to build developmental strengths—is necessary for attaining breadth, depth, and redundancy.

Several assumptions are embedded in this framework. The first is that relationships are the “oxygen of human development.” Much of what needs to happen in meeting the developmental needs of youth occurs through sustained and meaningful conversations with many caring and attentive people. This “oxygen” can and must

be delivered in many contexts and settings. Second—reiterating an earlier point—is that kids need and deserve more than attentive family and schools. They need a city of people and places that ooze developmental attentiveness wherever they are—in neighborhoods, in public places, in shops and stores, in work settings and on playgrounds, in their families and in their friends’ families, in schools and houses of worship. Third (supported by a variety of fields including resiliency, youth development, and child and adolescent psychology) is the “pile up” of these positive building blocks across the four circles promotes “outcomes” that communities value including school success, civic engagement, caring for others, the affirmation of diversity, and effective and responsible work.

Circle E (community support) has an indirect but important influence on youth. These are supports needed to build capacity and empower

all citizens and sectors to become developmentally attentive. These dynamics include:

- Public policy that encourages such transformation
- Proactive print and broadcast media encouraging citizens and settings to move toward (rather than away from) our young
- Extensive training and technical assistance
- Public consensus and shared vision on what all of our kids need and deserve
- Social norms that press all of us toward engagement and accountability
- A corporate sector actively dedicated to family strengths, youth development, and strong schools
- A philanthropic community willing to join hands in supporting a long-term, multi-strategy effort to build a developmentally attentive city.



A Master Plan for a Developmentally Attentive Minneapolis

Adult Engagement

1. Invite Minneapolis youth to teach the city what behaviors, postures, and gestures (by neighbors, parents, guardians, teachers, police, coaches, parishioners, store owners, etc.) “help me know that people care about me.” Emphasize inclusive listening strategies.
2. Engage Minneapolis adults—in neighborhoods and gathering places—in a dialogue process to name developmental targets (e.g., support, boundaries, competencies) and adult actions that promote these targets. Establish points of agreement on targets and actions that unite the people of Minneapolis—across race, ethnicity, income, politics, and theology. Tap the wisdom in communities of color. Identify perceived obstacles to building relationships.
3. Using information learned from 1 and 2 above, launch a massive, multiyear communications effort to (a) transform how adults see their developmental power and capacity, (b) provide practical action steps for adult engagement, and (c) provide inspirational stories of adult engagement. Use communication strategies that reach all adults in Minneapolis.
4. Create and distribute practical adult engagement tools (e.g., brochures, manuals, videos, scripts) in all languages flourishing in our city.

Youth Engagement

5. Invite youth throughout the city to be partners with adults in crafting and launching this citywide movement; position youth as leaders in the movement.
6. Position youth as the voice of the movement (e.g., create a youth-led speakers’ bureau that floods the city with presentations, workshops, and trainings on developmentally attentive adults, neighborhoods, schools, coaches, parents, libraries, police, places of worship, and

youth organizations; position youth as co-architects of the citywide communication strategy; and enable youth to identify and recognize adults who matter in their lives.)

7. Dramatically expand the opportunities for youth to engage in the governance of places and settings in which they have a stake; provide technical assistance for this organizational transformation.
8. Transform the ways adolescents connect to children. Just as adult energy needs to be unleashed to support youth, youth energy is needed to support, nurture, and know those who are younger. Develop opportunities and resources with youth to affect this transformation.

Sector Engagement

In study after study, American youth tell us that most of the places and settings they spend time—in neighborhoods, schools, programs, congregations, places of work, and even their own families—are not caring, attentive, or empowering. Minneapolis is no exception. The target is to figure out, with the help of youth, how to create developmentally attentive socializing systems.

9. With youth and adults working together, build blueprints for developmentally attentive families, neighborhoods, schools, congregations, public spaces, and youth organizations; disseminate these to all youth-serving settings, with youth as our primary communicators.
10. Develop practical resources to assist in organizational sector transformation, including training and technical assistance.
11. Disseminate innovations in sector transformation.

Youth Development Programs

12. Celebrate the current program landscape; follow the lead of YCB's What's Up project and market the vitality and importance of these programs to families and funders.
13. Identify and develop programs needed to address the developmental needs of all kids (e.g., there are few spaces in the city where 16–20-year-old youth can gather to talk, connect, or listen to music).
14. With youth in the lead, assist current programs to self-identify how to increase their developmental attentiveness.
15. Provide training and technical assistance to youth programs on their program design, evaluation, volunteer retention, and fundraising.
16. Publicly celebrate the volunteers and staff who work in this sector.

Mobilizing Community Supports

17. Design and implement a citywide training center through which any neighborhood, congregation, school, youth organization, business, or media partner can receive assistance in its role in creating a developmentally attentive city.
18. Develop a consortium of media partners to collaborate in moving the city from awareness to action, and in moving the public perception from "youth as problems" to "youth as resources."
19. Create public celebrations of teachers, other youth-serving professionals, volunteers, asset-building adults, children, and adolescents.

20. Develop policies and procedures within schools, the police department, parks and recreation, and other public sectors that encourage the systems to accent relational, community-building, developmentally attentive modes of operation.
21. On behalf of youth whose troubled or troubling behavior draws them to public services, assist these services (e.g., health, child protection, juvenile justice, social services) to implement strategies that build developmental strengths.
22. Engage all city corporations and major employers in supporting this movement, both in their internal operations and their external advocacy.

Leading and Orchestrating the Movement

23. Invite an ambitiously inclusive group of 100 youth and adults to frame the vision.
24. Position three civic leaders and three city youth to be spokespersons for the movement.
25. Develop a collaboration of Minneapolis "partners" to catalyze the movement, with sufficient funding to move this shared work to the front burner. In turn, these partners might choose to co-develop a new entity fully engaged in this movement.
26. Build a new set of metrics for assessing how well Minneapolis is becoming developmentally attentive. These might include percentages of the following: children and adolescents who are connected to caring adults; students who are connected to the same teachers across multiple years; adults who know the names, birthdays, and interests of six kids they are not related to; stores that youth find welcoming; adults who see youth as resources vs. problems; neighborhoods where families have built a cross-family sense of social trust; and faith communities that are intergenerational in culture and program.

In Minneapolis, circle A (adult engagement) is largely a dormant energy system; B (youth engagement) is a transformation ready to happen but we've only scratched the surface; and C (sector engagement) is erratic, with too many neighborhoods, congregations, schools, places of commerce, youth organizations, and families inattentive to kids or seeing youth as problems to be controlled rather than resources to be nurtured. The Minneapolis picture on D (program access and utilization) may be a bit stronger. We know, through studies commissioned by the Youth Coordinating Board, that Minneapolis has extensive program options. At the same time, we know that about half of all city 12–18-year-olds are disconnected from these programs. It would be useful for us to think about whether the issue is access or utilization (e.g., is it a marketing issue, a program quality issue, a transportation issue?).

The Vision of a Developmentally Attentive Minneapolis

We understand the immense and complex challenge of orchestrating the transformations, collaborations, and sustained energy needed to move on all of these fronts simultaneously. We also understand that any city moving down this path faces a series of obstacles and challenges. We submit that this blueprint is not the complete picture of all that needs to happen to raise healthy and successful kids. Cities like Minneapolis also need to attend to the economic vitality of families, to affordable housing, and to safety; to continue providing the services and interventions needed by troubled and troubling adults and youth; and to continue reducing some of the risks that thwart positive development. With that said, we consider it essential (and achievable) for Minneapolis to pursue a multi-pronged, sustained effort to unleash all of the



A developmentally attentive environment would give all youth access to caring adults.

energy systems needed to approximate this vision of a developmentally attentive city. The strategies of change have less to do with mandates, rules, and top-down authority and more to do with the spread of personal and collective efficacy.

It is impossible in this space to chart out in detail all of the strategies and tactics needed to move forward. We advocate the simultaneous pursuit of a set of actions in the hope that this initial template and strategies will kindle the civic conversations needed to come together in a new way, with new energy, with partners and players who rally the city in a shared enterprise, uniting us across historical turf, animosities, and divisions. After all, when it comes to promoting the building blocks of human development, we are all teammates pursuing a common goal.

A “master plan” for growing a developmentally attentive Minneapolis ought to include the 26 strategies listed on pages 64 and 65. These are organized around the five circles of energy described earlier. We hope this plan both triggers the deep, cross-sector, intergenerational conversations needed to critique, expand, and refine the plan and leads to an alignment of people and resources to catalyze a citywide movement.

This is a modest proposal for the transformation of a community. It is not so much about the implementation of a program as the orchestrated unleashing of the capacity that is lying dormant in this great city. It is long-term, grass-roots, collaborative, intergenerational, and consensus-building. It is ambitious, with unknown pitfalls sure to emerge. It is necessary and urgent and Minneapolis has the people, the leaders, the resources, the heritage, and the progressive inclination to pull it off.



Thanks for the nudge, America’s Promise.
May we have the courage to sprint into the next stage of imagining and creating a city that attends to all of its young.

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