All Children Thrive

INSIGHTS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND COMMUNITY-DRIVEN CONCEPTS
All Children Thrive Goals

+ Eliminate infant mortality
+ Eliminate disparities across neighborhoods in the health of children
+ Ensure all 5 year olds have a “healthy mind and body”
+ All children read by third grade

Design Thinking

THE PROCESS

Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center (CCHMC) and Design Impact (DI) employed a design thinking approach over the course of 8 months to generate innovative concepts that would support our community on its journey to become a place where all children thrive. Design thinking is a process that employs empathy, creativity, and rationality to define, explore and solve problems. The design thinking process focuses on understanding and building empathy with users, considering divergent possibilities, and learning through action. The design process is iterative so that despite various phases of action, individuals are encouraged to continue questioning and testing ideas. The process includes discovery, synthesis, ideation, and prototyping.

Design thinking considers the fact that the communities we design with have critical, but often hidden, assets that may hold the solutions to the problems we seek to solve. The inclusive nature of this process engages the voices of those that are often left out of decision-making. This focus on participatory design ensures that all insights and ideas are steeped in the real-life experiences of the people most affected by the systems we are addressing in this project.

GENERATING TRANSFORMATIVE IDEAS

The design thinking approach represents only one aspect of the overall process of the All Children Thrive Learning Network. While other portions of the process focused on creating a commons for sharing information or developing work-teams that focused on process improvement, the design thinking approach was aimed at generating transformative ideas for our community.
Vision Session

To kickoff the project, the All Children Thrive Learning Network held a Vision Session at the Cincinnati Zoo for Avondale and Price Hill residents, CCHMC and DI team members, educators, agency partners and community leaders from the two communities. Throughout the session, we heard that barriers within our social systems create barriers for both communities and individuals, organizations face challenges with communication, funding, and collaboration, while communities and individuals struggle to acquire basic needs such as safe housing, healthy food, and transportation.

We heard barriers:

“In healthcare, your zip code matters more than your genetic code.”
— Healthcare Professional

“Infant mortality is a canary in the coal mine.”
— Obstetrician-Gynecologist

“We want to go door-to-door, but I don’t want to open our door because I don’t want them to see the state of our house.”
— Community Member

We also heard opportunities to:

Strengthen Relationships
- Build personal connections
  - How might we base our work on meaningful relationships between community members and service providers?
- Improve collaboration between organizations
  - How might we create an environment where organizations can work together to identify challenges and work toward solutions?

Improve Access
- Realign services with end users
  - How might we facilitate and ensure users have their basic needs met (e.g., transportation, laundry, healthy food)?
- Increase awareness of resources
  - How might we leverage word of mouth and personal relationships to connect more people to services?
- Meet people where they live
  - How might we make services more accessible and convenient?
- Create clean and safe environments
  - How might we take a holistic approach that includes physical spaces when developing solutions?

Expand Inclusion
- Include families and communities in the process
  - How might we support and empower community leaders and families to share their voice? How might we listen?
- Be more inclusive in service delivery
  - How might we develop solutions that speak to boys, men, and immigrants?
“To know that people actually listened to me made a world of difference. Today showed me I matter and my ideas count.”

—Community member
Avondale Resident

Discovery

OUR PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

Improving the health and wellness of children requires a deep understanding of and empathy for families’ needs and opportunities, both explicit and unarticulated. To gain that understanding, we used a research methodology that combined Community-Based Participatory Research (CBPR) with an ethnographic design. This combination deeply rooted insights in community voice and leveraged a variety of sources for learning.
Peer Researcher Methodology

We collaborated with five mothers from Avondale and Price Hill using a Peer Researcher model rooted in the principles of equity and partnership found in CBPR. CBPR is a research approach developed in the 1940s by Psychologists Kurt Lewin and revitalized by educator Paulo Freire. It radically asserts that research should be done in partnership with community by leveraging community interest and knowledge to drive action and social change.

Our partnership began with a Peer Researchers-DI team, deciding together what questions to ask in resident interviews and how to best ask those questions. Then, DI prepared Peer Researchers for fieldwork through a two-day training on conducting interviews empathically and ethically, and on using Photovoice as a tool for critical reflection. At the end of the training, we decided together who to interview and what messages to use to best reach participants. For the next two months, Peer Researchers and DI co-interviewed parents and reflected on what we learned together after each interview. After finishing the research, Peer Researchers worked with the DI and CCHMC team for the remainder of the project. Together, we synthesized findings, developed opportunity spaces, generated ideas, and crafted concepts to test those ideas.

KEY BENEFITS

We witnessed several key benefits to our peer researcher approach:

+ Citizen Empowerment: It creates the space for community members to play an active role in the process of saying what needs to be known about and done in their own communities.

+ Deeper Research: It lowers the barriers between participants and researchers—a barrier which can keep participants from sharing the kinds of deep experiences that drive relevant design.

+ Unheard Voices: It leverages community insider knowledge about and connections to often-excluded populations that our partner organizations often struggle to engage.

+ Improved Outcomes: It ensures that we generate culturally relevant solutions that are therefore able to achieve the outcomes they seek.

Peer researchers are co-collaborators and co-designers in a creative endeavor that empowers and invigorates their communities.
Photovoice

We began this highly participatory and inclusive process by leading five peer researchers through photovoice. Photovoice was originally developed by Caroline Wang and Mary Ann Burris in 1992 as a way to enable rural women of Yunnan Province, China, to influence the policies and programs that affected them. In our work, peer researchers took photos related to health and wellness in their communities. They gathered twice to collectively share out and make sense of their images and connect those images to their hopes and aspirations for their neighborhoods. These sessions enabled the team to practice empathy, or taking the perspective of another, and build rapport as a team before interviewing other community members about their lives. Additionally, these discussions unveiled more universal core beliefs mothers held around community love and their desire to break family cycles of trauma.

Next, our peer researchers and team members from CCHMC and DI crafted interview questions. Pairs of researchers interviewed Avondale and Price Hill caretakers and synthesized the research into insights. Having such a diverse team of researchers ensured that our work leveraged the expertise of local residents as well as research, medical, and social service professionals.

“This is Lydia and her daddy. Due to daddy working so much, she will climb in bed and snuggle next to him. These small moments she may forget but as a photo we’ll laugh and talk about this moment forever.” —Valerie, Price Hill

“United women who trust each other. We unite and get together in different ways throughout our lives.” —Maria, Price Hill

“Looking at this (abandoned) building when I walk past every day reminded me of how our kids really don’t have a place to be free.” —Marquesa, Avondale
“This lot has been like this forever—empty with that boat. Many times we see it full of trash, even furniture! We have too many empty lots. It feels like an empty garden to grow food or just beautiful flowers. Maybe even benches for people to sit during their walks to stores and home as a resting place.”
—Valerie, Price Hill

“This represents second chances. There are a lot of vacancies. They could be trade schools, housing, or be used to build more jobs for residents.”
—Dominique, Avondale

“Even the hardest material/person needs support.”
—Latisha, Price Hill

“Most job opportunities are at restaurants for low pay and no benefits. It limits people’s growth and opportunities.”
—Dominique, Avondale

“Looking at this (abandoned) building when I walk past every day reminded me of how our kids really don’t have a place to be free.”
—Marquesa, Avondale
The peer researcher methodology and other methods of inclusion occurred within a larger ethnography of two neighborhoods. We wanted to understand how several indicators of health and wellness manifested in the everyday lives of residents. We looked for common insights from multiple sources (i.e. parents, professionals, community leaders) and across multiple domains of life (i.e. home, school, clinic).

Besides caretaker interviews, we spoke with home health visitors, community leaders, agency directors, and educators. We also observed families at health clinics, after-school programs, and organized community events. We volunteered at mothers’ groups and closely followed a family from each community through their daily routines.

**Research Participants**

**Interviews**

15 Avondale Residents
- 11 individual interviews
- 1 group interview with 4 fathers

10 Price Hill Residents
- 10 individual interviews

5 Peer Researchers
- 3 Avondale residents
- 2 Price Hill residents

**Observations**

2 Home Visits
- Avondale
- Price Hill

2 School Visits
- Rockdale Elementary
- Carson Elementary

**Stakeholders**
- Health Department
- Cincinnati Public Schools
- Church
- Community Healthcare
- Workforce Development
- Other Community-Based Organizations

**Avondale Residents**
- 11 individual interviews
- 1 group interview with 4 fathers
- Age range: 21-46
- Highest education level: kindergarten to some college
- Average number of kids: 3.6
- African American
- Latino
- Appalachian/White

**Price Hill Residents**
- 10 individual interviews
- African American
- Latino
- Appalachian/White

**DEMOGRAPHICS**

1 Clinic Visit
- CCHMC Pediatric Primary Care Clinic

4 Community Events
- Neighborhood Family Strong Dinner
- Mom’s Group
- Grandmother’s Group
- Breastfeeding Group
“Being with you helped me get rid of that fear to speak up, and helped me feel confident about suggesting what things were necessary amongst the Hispanic community; it helped me give my community a voice.”

—Maria, Peer Researcher
Price Hill Resident

Synthesis

IDENTIFYING CORE OPPORTUNITY SPACES
Synthesis is how we identify themes amongst hundreds of data points and is guided by the following tenets:
engage in multiple possibilities, visualize the data, and identify opportunity spaces. Through synthesis, the team began to understand which of the things that were heard, saw, or felt during discovery could lead to new ideas around change.
Recognizing Patterns in the Data

One of the most challenging parts of the design process is making sense of the data that comes out of the discovery phase with the intention of identifying key opportunities for innovation. This part of the process is messy and requires the group to remain open to multiple possibilities and maintain the belief that the right avenues will emerge.

We began by translating our field notes into insight statements, or statements that reflect deeper learnings on the issues. Then, a small team of DI and CCHMC staff and peer researchers sorted these 365 insights into themes, looking for patterns and connections during an internal Synthesis session.

We then translated these themes into 29 opportunity spaces through a process of creating “How might we?” statements. This process turns what feels like lists containing a barrage of details about the problem into a focused but open discussion about the possibilities that new designs might offer.

Finally, a larger team of DI and CCHMC team members, peer researchers, and representatives from Avondale and Price Hill community organizations used selection frameworks in an external Synthesis session to downsize the number of opportunities. As a group, we considered which opportunities were the most exciting, the timeliest, addressed the deepest-root causes, and had the most potential to create a Cincinnati where all children thrive. Through this process, we were able to identify three guiding principles and nine core opportunity spaces.

Guiding Principle: **EMPATHIZE**

Many systems and services don’t consider the broader context of the lives of the people they serve. As a result, they don’t meet people where they are. To create a region where all children thrive, we need to build empathy into the fabric of our actions. We must see what families see, and feel what they feel, in order to develop relevant solutions.

**KEY INSIGHTS**

- Past legal and criminal issues impact parents’ ability to parent. They follow caretakers for years, making families more anxious when they are most vulnerable, such as when they seek medical help for their child or have to seek new housing or look to secure employment.

- Supporting non-traditional caretakers leaves room for children to reconcile and reconnect with biological parents, as one Avondale foster parent explained: “I don’t let them call me mama. I want them to know they have a mother. I don’t want them to feel like they have to cut her off.”

- Desperate to get ahead via educational opportunity, many caretakers enroll in for-profit colleges. In this flawed system, they acquire student debt, which affects not only their credit scores for housing, but their mental health and ultimately their resiliency and self-esteem.

- When healthcare providers question the legitimacy of black fathers as caretakers, they create barriers to fathers being involved and make them feel unwelcome and misjudged.
In order to realize their own vision, individuals and communities must have the opportunity to act on their power. Although countless services exist to help people, many families do not have a meaningful stake or role in the systems that serve them. By challenging our assumptions about the way things are and should be, we can shift the power from systems to individuals and communities.

Guiding Principle: EMPOWER

Trust is essential to establishing healthy relationships, whether between service providers, neighbors, or families. In order to engage meaningfully with one another, we must acknowledge the barriers that currently exist and actively work to build trust. By nurturing our relationships with each other, we can begin to collaborate on real solutions for thriving children.

Guiding Principle: TRUST

KEY INSIGHTS

+ Many parents have been outlearned by their children by the time their child reaches the third grade or the curriculum has changed since they were kids. While parents care about education, they are at a loss for how to help beyond the basics.

+ When organizations engage residents in solving problems, residents become more confident, they become more confident advocates on other issues in their community; when you involve community members you activate advocates.

+ Poor environmental conditions (e.g. abandoned buildings, unsafe sidewalks, crime) keep children from playing outdoors and in the parks. One Avondale caretaker explained, “Parks are the place to go but they have nothing to offer;” we must transform the block into a place where kids can be kids.

+ A father can’t read but has his 6-year-old read to him and colors with her as well. “You don’t have to be able to read to create a good literacy experience with your child.” —Community Leader

+ Helping without expectation can be transformative. Two mothers reflected on how shocking it was for another peer researcher to bring a friend’s child to a Photo Voice session: “That’s love right there.”

+ Hospital responses to emergencies can create an environment of distrust at a moment when caretakers are especially vulnerable. When an Avondale mother took her baby to Children’s Hospital ER after he swallowed a cleaning product, she was met by a chaplain and a social worker. She was furious and afraid, exclaiming, “I’m a good mom!” She refused to meet with anyone except a doctor or nurse.

+ Communities that foster a sense of belonging create the safe space for individuals to seek and offer help. For instance, in Price Hill, immigrant women from Holy Family Church support one another by providing food, clothing and emotional support.
Ideation is the phase of the design process where we generate new ideas. They may be big, small, wild, or just a twist on an old way of doing things. During this phase, the team applied best practice design principles such as immersion in the research, engagement of diverse voices, keeping an open mind, and stretching the imagination.

“I am a mother—yes I was a peer researcher. I also work to survive. I work two jobs. I share myself at every meeting: my views, my life, my story. Yet to hear others, to allow others to share their story, it brings the purpose of this effort to a higher level.”

— Valerie, Peer Researcher
Price Hill Resident
Community-Driven Ideas

We believe that all ideas should stem directly from those individuals who are impacted the most. In order to ensure representation of all stakeholders, DI and CCHMC brought together nearly 60 participants in a single six-hour ideation session.

The purpose of this session was to:
+ Create an open and creative environment where all ideas and voices could be heard
+ Share distilled learnings from four months of discovery work
+ Convene diverse teams of participants to generate ideas at a system, community, and family level in each of our nine opportunity areas

DI and CCHMC team members, peer researchers, caretakers from Avondale and Price Hill, educators, and community leaders brainstormed hundreds of ideas in response to creative stimuli including video testimonials, influential people and characters in children’s lives, and childhood games and activities, and personas, which are included on the following pages. A persona is not a biographical representation of a single person, but represents the learnings of our ethnographic work. Inspired by community members, they allowed us to stay true to the perspectives, unmet needs, and aspirations of those we talked to.

DI and CCHMC later refined these ideas scribbled on Post-its into 32 basic concepts with greater clarity and punch. We then used techniques like selection frameworks, forced ranking, and community feedback to narrow down the list to our top 20 concepts to present at the All Children Thrive Learning Session.
Tyler is so different from Marcus and Simone! He is always asking questions—he has a big curiosity for a 3 year old. Tanisha has been talking about how we need to get him enrolled in preschool, about how there is a program at Rockdale that he could be in. I’m going to walk over and check it out next week, but I am worried. When the kids stay with me, I don’t have a bed for them and am not sure how well they can learn if they can’t sleep all night. There seems to be a bunch of organizations that want to help my kids learn, but what about the basics?

As I look forward, I see my family in Avondale. Maybe we’ll all move closer to the Towne Center. I heard there’s going to be a grocery there soon. Regardless, I see Avondale getting better, and I am going to get better with it.

HOW MIGHT WE build a system that recognizes the complexities of people’s lives and enables them to move forward from their past into the better life they want?

HOW MIGHT WE connect with people in ways that are familiar to them?

HOW MIGHT WE respect and celebrate the different kinds of families that exist today?
Our faith is very important to us. We go to church to pray and I meet with the other Latino women in our congregation once a month. They are like my sisters. After Carlos was robbed, they took care of us—bringing us food and watching the children.

I am so proud of my children. They are learning to speak English in school. I struggle to help them with their homework but I make sure they complete it every night and I ask them to read to me. Ana helps translate things for me when we go out. Sometimes my appointments are during the day and she misses school to help me—I couldn't survive without her. I would like to learn English, but I'm not sure where to go. Ana's school has a class for adults, but it's in the evenings. Carlos and I agree it's important for me to be home in the evenings to prepare the evening meal. Even if I could go, the class gets out after dark and I would be afraid to walk home alone.

I know that some Americans don't trust immigrants and don't want us here, but I am grateful to be in Cincinnati and I have faith that someday things will get easier for us—it's in God's hands.

We don't always feel safe in our neighborhood—there are heroin users in our building and we often see needles outside. A man overdosed on the steps last week. We've talked to our landlord about the problem, but he doesn't do anything. We don't go outside at night anymore because Carlos was beaten and robbed last year after coming home from work after dark. We couldn't call the police, though—they'd send us back to Guatemala. Only our three youngest children have papers and we couldn't bear to be separated. We stay here because our family and church are close by.
He struggles sometimes—he acts out and can be violent at school. He goes to counseling, but they're threatening to expel him. Last week the school called and said they had some free bikes for the kids—he was so excited! When I called back they said he couldn't have one because he was suspended. He was crushed. It broke my heart.

Thank goodness for Ms. Butler, Tamara's pre-school teacher. I told her about what happened and she helped get my kids “adopted” for Christmas so they got some really nice gifts.

I'm not worried about Tamara. She's a real bright kid and does well in pre-school. She likes to read and is very active. Last year she fell off a swing and broke her arm. She was screaming and crying and I was so scared—I brought her to the ER right away. When I got there, they had me meet with a social worker. I was mad—I'm a good mother! They can't take my kids from me. I refused to speak to anyone but the doctor.

My grandmother passed away last October. I miss her so much. I'm trying real hard to get along with my mom. I need her help picking up the kids from school and practice sometimes. I don't like it, but I think it's good for my kids to know their grandmother. Now that she doesn't work such long hours, I'm hoping she's got more patience. I told her that she's not allowed to discipline the kids.

I know things will get better in the future. I just got a raise at work and I'm saving to leave this place.

HOW MIGHT WE support and strengthen bonds that can be sources of healing and love?

HOW MIGHT WE build trust to tackle fear and violence in the community by leveraging everyday acts of compassion?

HOW MIGHT WE build trust across service providers and between service providers and families?
Our Top 20 Concepts

Pals with Paws

Pals with Paws is an animal-assisted intervention program that brings therapy animals into schools to work with at-risk children and children reading below grade level. A certified therapy animal and a trained counselor or dog handler work in partnership to provide a fun, positive, and therapeutic environment for students. Therapy dogs are used to help students improve their literacy skills by providing a motivating and non-judgmental environment. The children read to the dogs, which reduces stress so that they are better able to learn.

The Reel Neighbors

In partnership with local media, this series of short documentary films gives the Cincinnati community a peek into the interwoven lives of several residents of Avondale and Price Hill. Watch as community organizers, neighbors, and local business owners grapple with and overcome challenging issues around health, education, safety, and more. Filmgoers can participate in equity initiatives through related calls to action.

It Takes a Village

It Takes a Village leverages existing infrastructure to provide a hub for, by, and with the local community. Public schools or churches are open seven days a week to provide a space for families to play and learn together. Job training programs, organized social events, unstructured play spaces, language classes, and access to technology are just some of the resources made available to families in Avondale and Price Hill.

Positive Policing

Positive Policing is a program that builds trust between local police and the communities they serve through inclusivity and positive reinforcement. Rather than focusing solely on punishing offenses, officers give “positive citations” to those who do good things in the community. In addition, they build relationships with residents by visiting kids at local schools dressed as superheroes, organizing social events with community members, providing a “no questions asked” helpline, and spending time chatting with neighbors at local parks and restaurants.

Take Back the Block

Take Back the Block is a community-driven movement to create safe spaces in Avondale and Price Hill. A series of streets are transformed into “freedom trails” through better lighting, building maintenance (painting, landscaping, etc.), trash cleanup, and a neighborhood watch/escort program. Dedicated homes act as “safe zones” for local community members.

Time is Money

Time is Money is a program that builds and strengthens the community by offering incentives to those who are willing to donate their time or skills to vulnerable families living in their neighborhood. Volunteers earn credit for scholarships, gift certificates to local businesses, or hours for services that they or neighbors provide. For example, a neighbor may tailor clothing in exchange for English tutoring or mow the lawn of an elderly neighbor to earn tickets to the Cincinnati Zoo.

Families First Policy

The Families First Policy encourages unconditional positive regard in hospitals that serve low-income families. Intended to improve user experience and build trust, initiatives include dedicated hours that offer Spanish translation services for immigrant families, “re-branding” the social worker to improve the relationship between staff and patients, and recording all caretakers (fathers, grandparents, etc.) at the time of registration to prevent interactions that feel judgmental or exclusionary.

Loans for Life

Loans for Life provides funds to those who are not traditionally deemed credit worthy. People from low-income households apply for small loans with low or no interest rates to either meet life’s basic needs or invest in their future (i.e. security deposits, tuition, small business start-up costs, etc.). The program is funded either through local foundations or employers. In the latter scenario, an employer might provide a small loan to an employee to repair their car so that they have reliable transportation. The loan is paid back by deducting small amounts each month from the employee’s paycheck.

The Support Force

The Support Force brings resources directly to the community. Giving new life to vacant or abandoned neighborhood buildings, the Support Force is staffed by trained community members that help families “navigate” the system by connecting them to services and organizations based on their individual needs and visions for the future. In addition, the Support Force offers tutoring services, parenting support, nutritious meals, and social activities.
The Learning Caravan & Creamery is a fun and educational program run by parents and local community members. After school, a bus picks up children enrolled in the program. Local high school and college students are on board to help them with their homework in exchange for volunteer/community service credits. This is particularly beneficial for children whose parents are unable to assist them because of busy work schedules, language barriers, and other challenges. At the end of each session, the Learning Caravan & Creamery stops at a local park or recreation center for supervised play and ice cream before dropping the children off at home.

Dream Delivery
Without a means of transport, many families living in poverty cannot access basic needs like furniture. Dream Delivery is a social enterprise that employs people from the community that need a second chance, including those with a criminal record, to pick-up and deliver very low-cost beds and cribs to families in need in Avondale and Price Hill. The beds are procured through donations and other low-cost resources (Craigslist, Freecycle, college dorms, etc.). Drivers can either provide their own transportation or use donated vehicles.

Choose Your Own Adventure Camp
Designed for the whole family, Choose Your Own Adventure Camp is a free camp during the summer months that encourages creativity, play, and community building. Housed in a local park, children can choose what they want to do each day at camp. Activities include art-making, acting, sports, obstacle courses, science, and language classes. Parents can participate in their own activities like cooking and wellness classes, container gardening, yoga, language classes, or they can just relax and socialize in the parent cafe. Representatives from various service organizations are on site to connect parents to any resources they may need.

Justice Promoters
Justice Promoters empowers immigrants by educating them about their rights, as well as helping them understand and navigate the process of becoming a citizen. Justice Promoters operates as a volunteer/community service program for graduating law students in the Cincinnati area. Designated locations are set up in high-density immigrant communities where volunteers offer free legal advice and assistance to families once per semester. Families who require it are aided with interpreters.

The Reverse Classroom
In collaboration with parents, teachers create weekly, personalized resources that aid parents in helping their children understand and navigate the process of becoming a citizen. Teachers check in on both the child and parent’s progress at existing parent-teacher conferences.

MENtor Me
MENtor Me pairs young men without father figures with older men from their own neighborhood. Many young men (ages 16-24) don’t have access to positive male role models who can provide support and guidance on fatherhood, relationships, and making the most of life. By connecting men within the same neighborhood, MENtor Me builds positive relationships that support young men in building family and community resilience. MENtors are volunteers who share what they’ve learned from their own lived experiences and counsel on life skills and decision-making.

1-800-Translate
1-800-Translate is a phone and digital service that allows non-English speaking parents to access a translator to support their children’s education. The line allows parents to text an image of a homework assignment, call the line and get in touch with tutors who can provide immediate help in the desired language. 1-800-Translate operates during after-school hours when students are most frequently working on their homework.
The Family School

The Family School is a place where families can learn together. Armed with curricula and staff that encourage and support whole family learning, The Family School provides a space where multiple generations can grow together in education. The Family School focuses on providing personalized attention to each family and their needs, while leveraging the community setting as a space for collaborative learning among families. The Family School employs staff (teachers, tutors, volunteers) who are responsible for specific families, leaving no family in the community behind.

RWD FFWD

RWD FFWD works to build a regional business environment that creates employment opportunities for ex-offenders. The central program of RWD FFWD is an incubator that supports small businesses and start-ups that are oriented toward employing ex-offenders, but the organization also works to further its mission through wrap around services like second chance business reviews and ex-offender employment training for existing businesses. Moving beyond these direct services, this new organization is a catalyst for policy change and renewed opportunity in our region.

Pop’s Rooming Service

Pop’s Rooming Service satisfies the need for more shelters for fathers and their children in Cincinnati. Since this issue impacts families throughout our city, Pop’s isn’t in a single location, but is a service that connects fathers with temporary housing where the family lives. The service works to find housing opportunities through existing providers (like IHN), and when this is not possible, it provides fathers with stipends that enable them to pay for housing with service partners, such as local motels, HUD, and others.

The Leadership Accord

To build equity and inclusion into the civic and social fabric of our city, communities affected by poverty need to have a voice at decision making tables. The Leadership Accord is a region-wide policy change adopted by social-sector organizations. Adopters of the accord pledge to include members of their customer community on their board. This inclusion fosters individual empowerment and relationship building, and more importantly, opens circles of power to the diversity of our region.
“I learned a lot today. I feel good about it. I’m going to do more in my community since I’m leaving here. I do some things but I don’t do enough. I need to stand up and make my kids stand up for their community.”

— Lizzie, Community Member
Avondale Resident

Prototyping

TESTING OUR CONCEPTS
Prototyping takes concepts refined after ideation and turns them into quick mock-ups to test in the real world. During this phase, the team captures feedback from stakeholders, celebrate learning and failure, and make adjustments as needed.
Moving From Ideas to Reality

Prototypes can be simple tests of a service or a bare-bones physical model, but they are always used to get valuable feedback from users to uncover which ideas are worth pursuing and which might need refinement.

In order to engage individuals and organizations outside of CCHMC in the prototyping process, DI and CCHMC held two 30-minute breakout sessions at the All Children Thrive Learning Session. All Children Thrive (ACT) is a learning network comprised of community, social, and healthcare organizations that aims to serve as a catalyst to improve the quality, effectiveness, and availability of services provided to all children and families in Cincinnati.

After a brief overview of the design thinking process, participants read through the top 20 concepts and signed up to refer a concept to another individual or organization they believe would be interested, share a concept more broadly with others in their organization and/or community to gather feedback and gauge interest, and/or adopt a concept by committing to prototyping it themselves or as a team.

Remarkably, participants expressed an interest in at least one of these levels for every concept, indicating they all resonated as a meaningful way to address a real need. Thirty-two individuals from 14 different organizations and eight community members signed up to take one of the three actions.

Following the session, several organizations and families met to create action steps to move six concepts forward: the Leadership Accord, Loans for Life, Positive Policing, Justice Promoters, Learning Caravan and Creamery, and Reel Neighbors. DI will lead CCHMC through the prototyping phase of Loans for Life and Justice Promoters beginning Spring 2017.

Two additional concepts were selected for The Shift, a collaboration between the United Way and Design Impact that brought teams of professionals together to turn innovative concepts into workable solutions for the community. RWD FFWD evolved into a tech-based job training program for people who were previously incarcerated. RWD FFWD expects to launch its first internship with Wyzerr in the first quarter of 2017. Community Grandparents, a service funded by United Way that connects and fosters relationships between low-income parents and older adults, has partnered with Community Matters and will begin piloting efforts in Price Hill starting in 2017.

Prototype Concept

THE LEADERSHIP ACCORD

THE IDEA
To build equity and inclusion into the civic and social fabric of our city, communities affected by poverty need to have a voice at decision making tables. The Leadership Accord is a region-wide policy change adopted by social-sector organizations. Adopters of the accord pledge to include members of their customer community on their board. This inclusion fosters individual empowerment and relationship building, and more importantly, opens circles of power to the diversity of our region.

EXISTING RESOURCES
+ The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
+ The United Way of Greater Cincinnati
+ The City of Cincinnati
+ Cincinnati Children’s Hospital and Medical Center

GOALS ADDRESSED
- Improved health outcomes
- Reading by third grade
- Community building

RELATED INSIGHTS
+ Engaging community members as advisors on problems/solutions supports effective problem solving and leads to individual empowerment. “There are too many experts talking at and not enough listening.”
+ Residents are more comfortable when staff in organizations and schools live in their community.
THE IDEA
Loans for Life provides funds to those who are not traditionally deemed credit worthy. People from low-income households apply for small loans with low or no interest rates to either meet life’s basic needs or invest in their future (i.e. security deposits, tuition, small business start-up costs, etc.). The program is funded either through local foundations or employers. In the latter scenario, an employer might provide a small loan to an employee to repair their car so that they have reliable transportation. The loan is paid back by deducting small amounts each month from the employee’s paycheck.

EXISTING RESOURCES
+ The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
+ Haile U.S. Bank Foundation
+ Local employers (via Partners for a Competitive Workforce)
+ United Way

GOALS ADDRESSED
+ Improved health outcomes
+ Reading by third grade
+ Community building

RELATED INSIGHTS
+ Block captains are funded to provide resources around health and education, but informally ‘troubleshoot’ issues around basic needs (i.e. finding beds).
+ Caretakers have a future vision for their families, but don’t know where to start or what steps to take to get there.
+ Before you can access daycare vouchers, you need to prove you are working. But how can you attend interviews or seek employment if you don’t have childcare?
+ Caretakers desperate for educational opportunities enroll in for-profit colleges but acquire student debt, which affects their credit score for housing, mental health, and self-esteem.

Prototype Concept
POSITIVE POLICING

THE IDEA
Positive Policing is a program that builds trust between local police and the communities they serve through inclusivity and positive reinforcement. Rather than focusing solely on punishing offenses, officers give “positive citations” to those who do good things in the community. In addition, they build relationships with residents by visiting kids at local schools dressed as superheroes, organizing social events with community members, providing a “no questions asked” helpline, and spending time chatting with neighbors at local parks and restaurants.

EXISTING RESOURCES
+ District 3 Police Department
+ District 4 Police Department
+ American Civil Liberties Union
+ Fraternal Order of Police
+ Community Police Partnering Center

GOALS ADDRESSED
+ Improved health outcomes
+ Reading by third grade
+ Community building

RELATED INSIGHTS
+ Neighborhoods witness pervasive violence—including multiple murders—and yet never acknowledges or processes this trauma together. A police shooting occurred right outside of one mother’s apartment building; the body laid out publicly on the front lawn for hours during the investigation. Despite how public this violence was, no one talked about it. Her children’s teachers were never made aware, nor were their healthcare providers; as a result, the response to the children’s behaviors did not get at the root issue.
+ Children may channel potential leadership skills into bullying and violent behavior when not supported & engaged.

Prototype Concept
LOANS FOR LIFE

THE IDEA
Loans for Life provides funds to those who are not traditionally deemed credit worthy. People from low-income households apply for small loans with low or no interest rates to either meet life’s basic needs or invest in their future (i.e. security deposits, tuition, small business start-up costs, etc.). The program is funded either through local foundations or employers. In the latter scenario, an employer might provide a small loan to an employee to repair their car so that they have reliable transportation. The loan is paid back by deducting small amounts each month from the employee’s paycheck.

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+ Caretakers desperate for educational opportunities enroll in for-profit colleges but acquire student debt, which affects their credit score for housing, mental health, and self-esteem.
THE IDEA
Justice Promoters empowers immigrants by educating them about their rights, as well as helping them understand and navigate the process of becoming a citizen. Justice Promoters operates as a volunteer/community service program for graduating law students in the Cincinnati area. Designated locations are set up in high-density immigrant communities where volunteers offer free legal advice and assistance to families once per semester. Families who require it are aided with interpreters.

EXISTING RESOURCES
• Su Casa Hispanic Center
• The Greater Cincinnati Latino Coalition
• Santa Maria International Welcome Center
• VITA, Xavier University
• University Of Cincinnati College of Law School
• Legal Aid Society of Greater Cincinnati

RELATED INSIGHTS
• Immigrants have to choose between two bad options: continue living undocumented, or navigate a daunting, complicated, and time/money-consuming legal process.
• Immigrant families often have documented and undocumented members, which makes family separation more likely.
• Undocumented children are bound to have difficulty enrolling in higher education or getting a job in the future.

THE IDEA
The Learning Caravan & Creamery is a fun and educational program run by parents and local community members. After school, a bus picks up children enrolled in the program. Local high school and college students are on board to help them with their homework in exchange for volunteer/community service credits. This is particularly beneficial for children whose parents are unable to assist them because of busy work schedules, language barriers, and other challenges. At the end of each session, the Learning Caravan & Creamery stops at a local park or recreation center for supervised play and ice cream before dropping the children off at home.

EXISTING RESOURCES
• Walnut Hills High School
• Purcell Marian High School
• Hughes High School
• University of Cincinnati
• Seton and Elder High School
• Kiug School Bus Services
• First Student, Inc.
• Graeter’s Ice Cream
• United Dairy Farmers

RELATED INSIGHTS
• A mom has learned that her daughter will learn the Common CORE math system in school. She wants to help her with her homework, but doesn’t know how.
• Parents want to support their children’s education but are unable to actively help them with their homework or reading because they don’t know the language.
• Kids love unstructured play, and parents feel that children need space for self-expression. “Our children’s minds and bodies need to be occupied.”
Prototype Concept

THE REEL NEIGHBORS

THE IDEA
In partnership with local media, this series of short documentary films gives the Cincinnati community a sneak peak into the interwoven lives of several residents of Avondale and Price Hill. Watch as community organizers, neighbors, and local business owners grapple with and overcome challenging issues around health, education, safety, and more. Filmgoers can participate in equity initiatives through related calls to action.

EXISTING RESOURCES
• Golden Hour Moving Pictures
• Spotted Yeti Media
• ArtWave
• People’s Liberty
• Cincinnati Film Society
• Esquire Theater
• My Cincinnati
• Avondale Comprehensive Development Corporation

GOALS ADDRESSED
• Improved health outcomes
• Reading by third grade
• Community building

RELATED INSIGHTS
• A mother expressed how much it meant for her to share her story and her experiences, in the interview. “Young mothers don’t have anybody to talk to who cares and won’t judge. We need that. It’s important.”
• Communities that foster a sense of belonging empower individuals to seek and offer help.

Over the next year, CCHMC and Design Impact will continue to support these prototypes, as we work to ensure that all children in Cincinnati thrive.
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