

Maryland's Two-Generation Approach to Mitigating the Benefits Cliff

Christina Church, Two-Generation Program Officer

What is a Two-Generation Approach?

Improves outcomes for **whole families** by coordinating and aligning services, policies, and systems to promote economic self-sufficiency and security.



Maryland's Two-Gen Approach

How we got started:

March 2017

- Gov. Hogan signs Executive Order establishing the Two-Generation Family Economic Security Commission and Pilot Program.
 - Chaired by the Lt. Governor
 - Includes interagency leaders, legislators, local government representatives, advocates, and members of the public.

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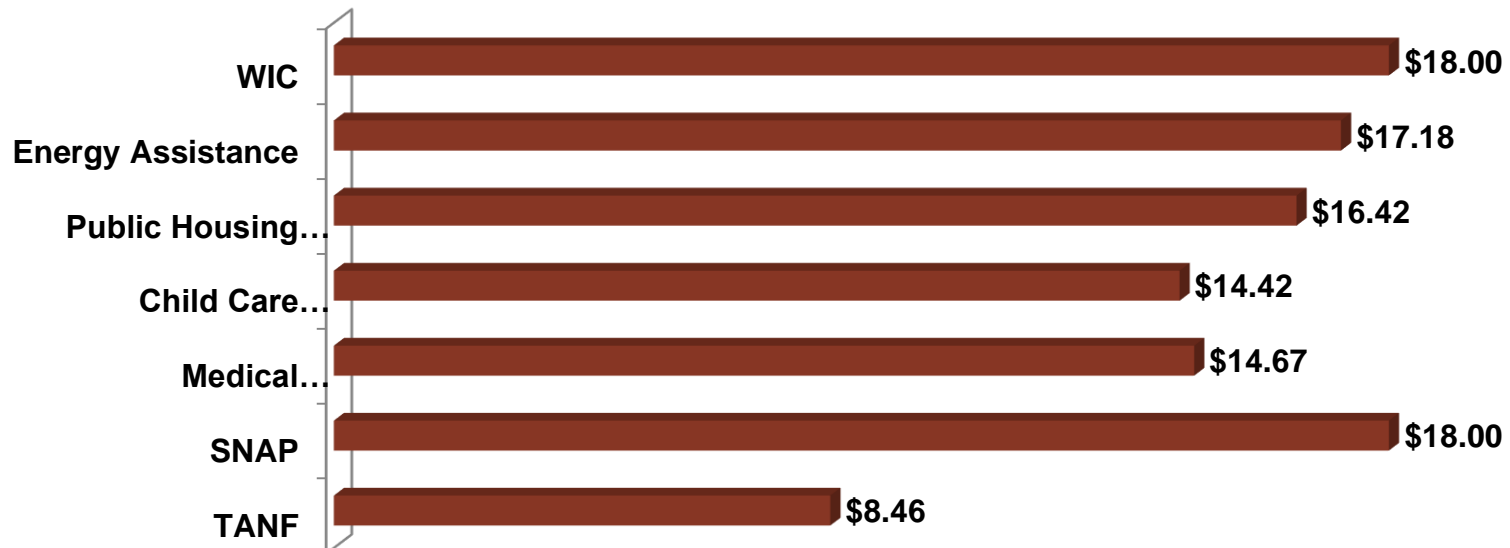
- The Commission “investigates policy challenges, opportunities, and recommendations regarding the mitigation of multigenerational poverty” using the Two-Generation approach.

Two-Gen Commission Findings

Families who are no longer eligible for benefits are still not self-sufficient.

- 14/24 jurisdictions have higher cost of living than nat'l average (*MD Commerce 2018*)
- **Benefits cliff effect:** spending power is reduced as family income increases
- Single parent with two children needs \$21/hour to break even on their corresponding loss in benefits.

How Much Can You Earn Before You Lose...



Two-Gen Commission Recommendations

1. **Mitigate the benefits cliff** through a variety of transitional supports for working families.
2. Create a **Two-Generation officer** position to coordinate intra-agency, interagency, and public-private activities around serving whole families.

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What Happened Next:

- Governor Hogan announced **child care voucher expansion**
- **Child support pass-through** (up to \$100/1 child, \$200 for 2+).
- **Transitional cash benefit** for TANF families for three months following employment.
- Increased the **Earned Income Tax Credit**
- **Joint service delivery** for TANF/WIOA in select areas
- Piloting **whole family approach to serving TANF families**
- Interagency pilot for **Refugee Family Education**
- Interagency **pilots for special populations**
- The **Opioid Operational Command Center**
- No Wrong Door culture:
 - All state employees trained in Governor Hogan's Customer Service Initiative
 - **MD THINK** integrated data system

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What's Up Ahead:

- **Maryland families will be safe and economically stable**
 - More transitional supports for families new to employment
 - Keep funding innovative practice on the local level
- **Application of Two-Gen lens across programs, policies, and agencies**
 - Braiding funds, promoting interagency collaboration, revising policies
- **Evidence-based practice**
 - MD THINK Common Customer Intake Process
 - University of Maryland evaluation of transitional cash benefits
 - Results-Based Accountability framework for evaluating pilot programs
 - Working toward whole family outcome measures

Thank you!

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