

## A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA

Whereas strong cities are built on strong families that support their children, youth, neighbors, and community;

And whereas personal success and community success require a full measure of safety, health, education, encouragement and opportunity to contribute to the community;

And whereas Gainesville, Florida, aims to be the best kind of place for all its children and youth;

And whereas meeting this aim requires partnership among all sectors of our community, including the sectors of government, education, business, residents, environment, faith-based, civic, and rights and advocacy;

Therefore, be it resolved that the City Commission of Gainesville, Florida, adopts the National League of Cities' "City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth" by committing to insure sustained effective investment in children and families, particularly in the Platform's key concerns for action on early childhood development, youth development, education and after-school programs, youth life-transitions, family economic success, and the health and safety of individuals, neighborhoods and the community.

And, further, the City of Gainesville commits to the NLC Platform's process to:

- 1) Establish a community task force of public, private and non-profit leaders, plus parent and youth representatives, to develop a plan for "Strengthening Family and Community Success" by identifying needs, opportunities, and action priorities (including consideration of the NLC Platform's "Key Action Steps");
- 2) Establish effective City-County-School collaboration through regular meetings between the city (and county?) commission(s), school board, and superintendent that focus on shared priorities and the development of joint action plans to promote and advance family and community success;
- 3) Encourage and support youth voice, engagement and leadership through a youth council, appointment of youth to City boards and committees and/or community-wide youth summits; and
- 4) Measure progress over time through the use of reporting on a community "scorecard" or set of benchmarks that tracks key outcomes and places them within the context of a broader report on the status of children, youth and families in each socio-economic stratum.

Ordained and established this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 200\_\_\_\_\_, etc.

TO: The Mayor and City Commissioners

FR: Commissioner Jack Donovan  
EO Officer Jimmy Williams

RE: Recommendations from the NLC Summit on *“Building Stronger Communities through City Partnerships for Children, Youth, and Families,”* 9/30-10/2/07, San Antonio, TX

Below is a list of best practices recommended by participants in the NLC’s “2007 National Summit on Your City’s Families,” which focused on the theme “Building Stronger Communities: City Partnerships for Children, Youth and Families.”

We would recommend that we adopt the first recommendation and give consideration to the others in pursuing the first.

1. Adopt a detailed version of the NLC’s “City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth.” (attached). Seventy cities had adopted some version of the Platform as of 6/11/07, including three Florida cities – DeBary, Pembroke Pines, and Sunrise, FL. Savannah, GA, was the first.  
(Recommended by Cliff Johnson: Exec. Dir, NLC Institute for Youth, Education, Families)
2. Chart the course to success in community meetings of committed people with annual follow-up meetings to review audits of expenditures and results for accountability. But don’t let your overseeing cast a shadow that scares the fish.  
(Recommended by Kip Holden , Mayor Baton Rouge, LA)
3. Work to and from a shared vision with agreed-upon goals and measurements. Partners should include agencies like Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Chambers of Commerce, etc. and local media.  
(Recommended by Cynthia McCollum, incoming NLC president; Madison AL council)
4. Money must be present to make participants interested and focused.
  - Make assignments to organizations/people well-positioned and eager to do the task.
  - City pays for “Family Support Workers” to support and problem-solve for resource-less kids/families in schools.
  - Bond issuance for key resources, from family housing to an art museum.
  - Not “at the table,” but “on the bus” – have a destination and a schedule to get there.
  - Invite not just the “usual suspects”, but the unusual parties as well.  
(Recommended by Charlie Royer, former mayor, Seattle, WA; president, Institute for Community Change)
5. The City Commission(ers)/Mayors can serve well as conveners of community stakeholder and contributor forums.  
(Recommended by Cliff Johnson)
6. Start with creating a picture of “what success looks like.”

- The key to economic prosperity: educate the children (and do so by empowering the Mothers – teach them to advocate for education).
- Best communication strategy: Get out the stories (of effort, learning, success); Draw Attention, Attention, Attention/Communicate, Communicate, Communicate.
- Tax revenue funding is needed in partnerships to serve needs. Money sharpens focus.
- Accountability standards are a must.

(Recommended by Sylvia Lovely: CEO, KY League of Cities)

## 7. Build financially stable communities one family at a time

- VITA is one means:
  - Establish a VITA program and fully equipped VITA sites (including software)
  - Reach people before the “Fast Tax Returns!” people do to avoid citizens sacrificing a big percent of their returns
  - Build partnerships with IRS, banks, etc.
  - Help people establish bank accounts: “Earn It – Keep It – Save It”
  - Help recruit volunteers site coordinators, tax report preparers/assistants, quality reviewers, greeters/welcomers, etc.
  - Schedule well (eg, M-Th, 5-8:00 pm, Sat 8-12 noon)
  - Attend to Privacy Act concerns

(Above recommended by Thelma Collins, Mayor Itta Bena, MI)

- Provide tax break (EITC) education program – leaflet at MLK celebrations
- Implement a City Welcome Baby project, with letter from mayor, gift bag, parent info and contact names.
- Establish “City Market” (locally owned co-op)

(Above from Margaret Bozik, (Community/Econ Development, Burlington, VT)

- Establish bank accounts (“Bank On San Francisco) for the unbanked who rely on high fee check cashers (at an average cost of \$800/year) – or give them debit card option.
- Get bank commitments to help.
- Contact NLC Asset-Building Initiative

(Above recommended by Leigh Phillips, assistant treasurer, San Francisco, CA).

## 8. Financing the Strengthening of Youth and Families

- Create an endowed City college fund for every city kid who can qualify for college. Denver’s fund goal is \$300 million, with \$146 million raised privately so far.

(Recommended by John Kickenlooper, mayor, Denver, CO)

- Sponsor a City child development center.

(Recommended by Brian Peruta, council member Enfield, CN)

- Require building a child care center for any construction over 75,000 sf, paid for or built by developer. Nexus study reports annual child care costs generated by development equal \$111 per residence and \$5.27/sf for offices

- Garner support for ensuring adequate child care services funding: Quantify unmet needs; Develop an overall strategy; Establish community linkages; Engage local developers; Ensure connections between City departments.

(Above recommended by Richard Bloom, mayor Santa Monica, CA)

- Hold a referendum on funds for children protection services (eg, Oakland’s Measure Y with money to police and fire departments for training to prevent child prostitution)

(Recommended by Anne Marks, Human Services, Oakland, CA)

9. Assist new immigrants to assimilate (and to want to assimilate)
  - Provide ID cards (serve also as library cards and debit cards/\$150 storage)  
(Recommended by Kica Matos, Community Services, New Haven, CT)
  - Establish summer day camps 20 immigrant kids/20 native kids with religious congregations and college students providing lunches, volunteers, arts and soccer, uniforms – opportunities for fun, for hearing each other's ideals/goals/practices, and for learning differences aren't deficiencies.
  - Advocate and honor immigrant business enterprise (Results of Willmar MI support of immigrant business since mid-1990's: 22 Latino, 6 Somali, and 9 other immigrant businesses established, raising City retail sales by \$80 million).  
(Above recommended by Les Hietke, mayor, Willmar, MN)
10. Build City/School/Business Partnerships to invest in people and the common good
  - Out-of-School initiatives – free education opportunities for all parents,
  - A-Teams – Afterschool Arts, Academics, Athletics (4000 youth in Baltimore)
  - Funded by City and Business, housed by public schools, workforce development agencies, and community colleges  
( Above recommended by Sabrina Sutton, Community/Human Development, Baltimore)
  - Divide overly big schools into academies (guided by advisory committees) with end industries/businesses and professional personalized learning in mind  
(Recommended by Conrado Garcia, principal, Moody High, Corpus Christi TX)
  - For After-School programs, seek grants (eg, Annie E. Casey Foundation), partner City/Schools/Business, Homework first followed by crafts/skills/games led by VISTA volunteers, specialized/unusual clubs, tutoring in literacy, dental and immunization services, all together resulting in higher test scores and reduced petty crime.
  - Have a crystal clear vision and commitment to desired outcomes, insure stakeholders communicate together, don't fear the wolves, find multiple funding sources, Believe, get parent support, have People On Watch (12 hour police-trained volunteers provided a POW tin badge and gas money) to be extra eyes and hearts at hot spots  
(Above recommended by Verna Griffin, council member, Tukwila, WA)
11. Build a Movement to Improve the Outcomes
  - Use the NLC Platform on Strengthening Families for the structure.
  - Establish a Youth Futures authority.
  - Get multiple agencies to collaborate (35 in Savannah GA)
  - Empower with funding (\$500,000/year in Savannah)
  - Insist on transparency and accountability
  - Work from a matrix for each action step planned, specifying the Action Step (based on the NLC Platform), Start Up Date, Completion Date, and Accountable/Lead agency.
  - Get key people on board, starting with one.  
(Recommendations by mayors Kip Holden of Baton Rouge, Otis Johnson of Savannah, and Julie Ruelas of San Fernando CA; and alderman Lloyd La Croix, Rapid City SD
12. Order and distribute copies of Sidney Gardner's Cities, Counties, Kids and Families: The Essential Role of Local Government
13. Do a Channel 12 spot to present our Platform resolution and some of the recommendations of this NLC conference.

National  
League  
of Cities



Institute for  
Youth, Education,  
and Families

# A City Platform

FOR STRENGTHENING FAMILIES  
AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR  
CHILDREN AND YOUTH



Developed by NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families and endorsed by NLC's Board of Directors, the platform presents a framework to guide and assess local progress on behalf of young people and their families that has been adopted by cities of all sizes across the nation.

# **A City Platform for Strengthening Families And Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth**

**E**very day, mayors and city councilmembers throughout America are reminded that children, youth, and families are the lifeblood of their neighborhoods and communities.

Strong cities are built on a foundation of strong families. For this reason, the actions that municipal leaders take to strengthen families and improve outcomes for children and youth play a key role in boosting the health and vitality of their cities and towns.

## **A Platform for City Action**

The National League of Cities (NLC) Council on Youth, Education, and Families, under the leadership of former San José Mayor Ron Gonzales, worked throughout 2005 to develop a platform or agenda for municipal action and leadership on behalf of children, youth, and their families.

More recently, America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth, the nation's largest cross-sectoral alliance of government, nonprofit, corporate, and community organizations focused on positive youth development, joined with NLC to challenge every city and town across the nation to take concrete steps toward positive, significant results for children and their families.

Research shows that if children receive five essential resources – caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, effective education, and opportunities to help others – they are five to ten times more likely to stay in school, avoid drugs, alcohol, and trouble with the law, and grow up to be engaged citizens. By adopting this platform, cities and towns have a roadmap to connect children and youth with these Five Promises, helping to greatly increase the odds of children thriving in their communities.

We all know that local circumstances and needs vary greatly. The two-part platform for city action encourages municipal leaders to move forward by building upon their own unique mix of assets and opportunities:

- The platform's first part highlights an essential "infrastructure," key functions and processes that play a crucial role in effective or sustained investments in children and families.
- The second part of the platform calls upon municipal leaders to take a series of more specific action steps in each of seven issue areas: early childhood

development; youth development; education and afterschool; health and safety; youth in transition; family economic success; and neighborhoods and community.

Some may view this platform as quite ambitious. Without question, it asks mayors and other city leaders to place the needs of children, youth, and families high on their city's agenda . . . and then to keep them there.

## **The Costs of Inaction**

At the same time, the costs of failing to act are enormous. They are reflected in individual lives, municipal budgets, and prospects for city growth and revitalization.

When families fail, children – our next generation of citizens, workers, and leaders – all too often fail as well. We see the toll of family failure in higher rates of child poverty, child abuse, school failure, and a host of related societal problems. And we know that it takes nearly Herculean efforts to reverse the damage to children when families cannot support and nurture them.

Many of the highest costs of family failure land squarely on the doorsteps of our city halls, as spending for public safety, education, and human services rise and the strength of the local workforce and economy is undermined.

This platform does not represent a catalog of everything that city leaders can or should do to strengthen families and prevent these failures. Rather, it provides starting points for city action – practical steps that every city and town can take to build stronger families and improve outcomes for its children and youth.

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For a fuller statement from NLC's Council on Youth, Education, and Families that presents the case for municipal leadership to strengthen families and highlights the costs of inaction, see *Strengthening America's Families: What Municipal Leaders Must Do* in the Publications section at [www.nlc.org/iyef](http://www.nlc.org/iyef).

## I. Essential “Infrastructure” for Sustained Progress

Every community must have a structure, mechanism, or process for carrying out each of **four essential tasks** that strengthen families, improve outcomes for children and youth, and sustain the community’s efforts over time:

- 1) *Identify needs, opportunities, and priorities for future action* through a city commission, mayor’s task force, or other group that brings together leaders from the public, private, and non-profit sectors as well as parents and other community residents.
- 2) *Promote effective city-school collaboration* through regular meetings between the mayor and/or city council, school board, and school superintendent that focus on shared priorities and the development of joint plans of action.
- 3) *Encourage and support youth voice, engagement, and leadership* through a mayor’s youth council, appointment of youth to municipal boards and committees, and/or community-wide youth summits.
- 4) *Measure progress over time* through the use of a community “scorecard” or set of benchmarks that tracks key outcomes and places them within the context of a broader report on the status of children, youth, and families.

## II. Key Action Steps to Consider

Mayors, city councilmembers, and senior city administrators have many opportunities to act on behalf of children, youth, and families in their communities. Initial steps to consider include:

### Early Childhood Development

- 1) Work with local United Ways and other community groups to prepare educational kits offering tips for new parents in the most commonly spoken languages, and distribute them through local hospitals and physicians.
- 2) Provide information for parents that helps them find and assess the quality of available child care and preschool options, utilizing

both print and web-based materials developed in partnership with community agencies.

- 3) Offer family literacy activities appropriate for families from diverse cultures and backgrounds in community-based settings such as public libraries.

### Youth Development

- 4) Enlist youth to map local resources and needs, and support other youth-led service activities that tap the potential of young people as community assets.
- 5) Identify and improve safe places for children to play and youth to get together in every neighborhood in order to promote physical activity, healthy development, and positive interactions with peers.
- 6) Expand opportunities for youth participation and leadership through programs offered by city recreation departments, libraries, museums, and other youth-serving organizations.

### Education and Afterschool

- 7) Encourage family involvement in schools by sponsoring “First Day” celebrations and providing release time for city employees when they attend parent-teacher conferences or other school events.
- 8) Develop a blueprint for how the city, schools, business leaders, community groups, and parents will work together to support and improve student achievement, high school completion, and postsecondary access.
- 9) Establish a local afterschool coalition or task force, including both city agencies and community-based providers, that works to identify new funding sources and create quality standards for afterschool programs.

### Health and Safety

- 10) Partner with local health care providers, pharmacies, and other interested groups to highlight the availability of federal and state-funded health insurance for children and their families.

- 11) Publicize local efforts to recruit foster and adoptive families for children who have lost their parents or cannot safely live at home.
- 12) Work with school and law enforcement officials, social service agencies, and community or faith-based groups to reduce truancy and keep children safe and on track in school.

### Youth in Transition

- 13) Establish or support a mentoring initiative that connects young people to caring adults, recruiting volunteers from municipal agencies, local businesses, faith communities, fraternal organizations, and civic groups.
- 14) Support the development of alternative high schools and other options for struggling students that emphasize rigor, relevance, and relationships while responding to their diverse needs.
- 15) Build stronger linkages among key institutions (e.g., police departments, city human service agencies, juvenile courts, and foster care agencies) to help vulnerable youth, including those leaving systems of public care, children of immigrants, homeless youth, and pregnant or parenting teens.

### Family Economic Success

- 16) Launch or support a citywide campaign to help ensure that low-income working families receive the federal Earned Income Tax Credit and other key benefits for which they may be eligible.
- 17) Support or sponsor financial literacy courses or personal financial counseling to help families develop savings plans, repair credit, avoid predatory lenders, and plan for homeownership.
- 18) Provide transitional jobs for disadvantaged youth and adults who need temporary, wage-based employment as a stepping stone to develop work skills and enter the regular labor market.

### Neighborhoods and Community

- 19) Sponsor street fairs, neighborhood celebrations, and multi-cultural community events to bring families together and build stronger ties among neighbors.
- 20) Create joint-use agreements with school districts and forge partnerships between school leaders and community-based groups to turn schools into centers of community life.
- 21) Hold media events, community forums, and site visits to local programs serving children, youth, and families as a way of keeping their needs in the spotlight.



**National League of Cities**  
1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20004-1763  
[www.nlc.org/iyef](http://www.nlc.org/iyef)  
Message Line: (202) 626-3014

**AMERICA'S  
PROMISE**



*National League of Cities is a proud partner of America's Promise – The Alliance for Youth, working to positively impact the lives of 15 million young people over the next five years through the power of the Five Promises. Find out more at [www.americaspromise.org](http://www.americaspromise.org).*



National League of Cities



June 29, 2007

Dear Municipal Leader:

The National League of Cities (NLC) and the America's Promise Alliance invite you to participate in a growing nationwide initiative by municipal leaders to improve the lives of young people and their families by adopting the *City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth*. We invite you to join us in supporting this initiative by formally adopting the City Platform through a mayoral proclamation, city council resolution, or other public announcement in your community.

Developed by municipal officials from cities of all sizes and from every region of the country, the platform outlines four essential tasks necessary for sustained progress on behalf of children, youth, and families at the city level. This document can be used as a framework to guide and assess local action, and also offers a menu of concrete ideas to pursue. By adopting the platform, your city can highlight its commitment to and achievements in strengthening families.

The platform is a key part of the efforts of America's Promise and NLC to ensure that young people receive five fundamental resources or "Promises" that will make them five to ten times more likely to stay in school, become engaged citizens, and avoid drugs, alcohol, and trouble with the law. The Five Promises are: caring adults, safe places, a healthy start, an effective education, and opportunities to help others. Municipal officials across the country increasingly recognize the importance of these Five Promises to the future vitality of our nation's cities and towns.

Please join over 70 other communities that have adopted the platform by returning the enclosed response form, along with your city's resolution, proclamation, or other announcement, to NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families.

Enclosed with the platform are sample resolutions, a response form, and a list of cities already participating. The NLC website ([www.nlc.org/iyef/a\\_city\\_platform](http://www.nlc.org/iyef/a_city_platform)) also contains additional helpful resources, including examples of city progress for each of the platform's action steps. If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact NLC staff at (202) 626-3072 or [karpman@nlc.org](mailto:karpman@nlc.org).

Thank you for your response and your leadership on behalf of your city's young people and families.

Sincerely,

Bart Peterson  
President, National League of Cities  
Mayor, Indianapolis, Indiana

Alma J. Powell  
Chair  
The America's Promise Alliance



## CITY PLATFORM FOR STRENGTHENING FAMILIES AND IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH



## RESPONSE FORM

We, the undersigned representatives of the City of \_\_\_\_\_, hereby adopt the  
"City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for Children and Youth,"  
developed by the National League of Cities, on this day, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, 2007.

In recognition of the vital role of municipal leadership in promoting positive outcomes for children, youth, and families, we commit ourselves to establishing or supporting an infrastructure that addresses each of the following four essential tasks as described in Section I of the Platform (*please check all that apply*):

- Identifying needs, opportunities, and priorities for future action
- Promoting effective city-school collaboration
- Encouraging and supporting youth voice, engagement, and leadership
- Measuring progress over time

In addition, we pledge to take specific action steps as described in the following items of Section II of the Platform (*please list numbers of all that apply*): \_\_\_\_\_

Our next steps in implementing the Platform will include (*please describe in 1-2 sentences*):

To signal our city's formal adoption of the platform, we have done one or more of the following (*please attach a copy, if applicable*):

- Passed a City Council resolution OR
- Issued a Mayoral proclamation OR
- Issued a press release to local media or made another type of public announcement

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**Mayor or Councilmember**

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City Contact Name

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### Address

State Zip

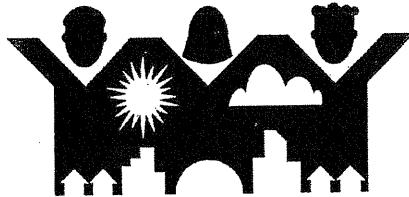
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**Phone**

Fax

E-mail

To return this form, please mail to Michael Karpman, Institute for Youth, Education and Families, National League of Cities, 1301 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, D.C., 20004, or fax it to (202) 626-3043. Questions? Contact Michael Karpman at (202) 626-3072 or [karpman@nlc.org](mailto:karpman@nlc.org).



**Cities Adopting the National League of Cities  
*City Platform for Strengthening Families and Improving Outcomes for  
Children and Youth***

Avondale, Arizona	Caldwell, Idaho
Scottsdale, Arizona	Eagle, Idaho
Tucson, Arizona	Nampa, Idaho
Duarte, California	Meridian, Idaho
Irvine, California	Rexburg, Idaho
Lancaster, California	Soda Springs, Idaho
Long Beach, California	Round Lake Beach, Illinois
San Fernando, California	Portage, Indiana
San Jose, California	Ottawa, Kansas
Temecula, California	Louisville, Kentucky
Brighton, Colorado	Murray, Kentucky
Greeley, Colorado	Baton Rouge, Louisiana
Milford, Delaware	Natchitoches, Louisiana
Coral Springs, Florida	Port Allen, Louisiana
DeBary, Florida	Salisbury, Maryland
Pembroke Pines, Florida	Grand Rapids, Michigan
Sunrise, Florida	St. Louis, Missouri
Riverdale, Georgia	Hastings, Nebraska
Savannah, Georgia	Boulder City, Nevada

*As of June 11, 2007*

Las Vegas, Nevada	Burleson, Texas
Reno, Nevada	Fort Worth, Texas
Asheville, North Carolina	San Antonio, Texas
Hope Mills, North Carolina	West Valley City, Utah
Winston-Salem, North Carolina	Colonial Heights, Virginia
Cincinnati, Ohio	Norfolk, Virginia
East Cleveland, Ohio	Burien, Washington
Lakewood, Ohio	Spokane, Washington
Lawton, Oklahoma	Parkersburg, West Virginia
Forest Grove, Oregon	
Molalla, Oregon	
Portland, Oregon	
Seaside, Oregon	
Tualatin, Oregon	
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania	
Providence, Rhode Island	
Charleston, South Carolina	
Greenville, South Carolina	
Lexington, South Carolina	
Spartanburg, South Carolina	
Alcoa, Tennessee	
Bristol, Tennessee	
Maryville, Tennessee	