



From: Kristin Hempel <KHempel@eastconn.org>
Sent: Monday, March 07, 2016 7:36 PM
To: HSTestimony
Cc: marygrace@jblei.com; Richard Tariff
Subject: testimony in support of *S.B. No. 390 AN ACT CONCERNING A TWO-GENERATION INITIATIVE.

Madam Chair and members of the committee.

My name is Kristin Hempel; I am the Assistant Director of Adult Basic Education at EASTCONN and am on the Board of Directors for CAACE, the Connecticut Association for Adult and Continuing Education. I am a resident of Mansfield.

We would like to speak in support of *S.B. No. 390 AN ACT CONCERNING A TWO-GENERATION INITIATIVE.

What kind of difference does a 2Gen model really make?

The research is clear. The stories are powerful.

When resources are organized in a seamless and braided fashion – when those who need, can access wrap-around supports – then children benefit, parents benefit, families benefit, communities benefit. *Connecticut* benefits.

I have a story. Its about a young mother – I'll call her Anna – who dropped out of school to raise her child, but soon felt the struggles of raising her growing family without a high school diploma. But options were limited. She couldn't go to school without childcare, which she could not begin to afford.

Luckily, Anna lived in Plainfield where an innovative partnership had a GED class located in the same facility as a Head Start program.

Because of those coordinated services, she went to class while her daughter attended day care. That mother earned her GED.

Already we have a powerful story of two organizations working together to provide simultaneous, co-located high quality learning opportunities for parents and their children. However, Anna's story continues.

In addition to GED classes, Anna's Adult Education program offered wrap-around services like transition support. Although she didn't go straight to college because of her children's needs at the time, we followed up when the time was right. Starting college part time, Anna earned her Associate's, then her Bachelor's. All while continuing to be an involved parent and a frequent volunteer in her children's schools.

Now employed at EASTCONN, Anna will soon be cheering her daughter across her own graduation stage.

This exceptional teacher, whose story is a 2Gen model, inspires us to forge partnerships and find creative solutions to barriers.

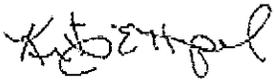
I recognize that this is only one story, but those of us in Adult Education can share many more stories of tenacity and perseverance leading to success. The varied roadblocks our students face, sometimes on a daily basis, would overwhelm me. And while many of them

find a way through, there are many more for whom the roadblocks become insurmountable obstacles. In the face of such roadblocks, 2Gen clears a path.

Imagine the number lives impacted, if we simply embraced the 2Gen approach statewide. With adequate funding, we could eliminate barriers, minimize inefficiencies, and focus on the whole family.

SB390 provides opportunities for parents to be learners and workers while also being involved parents. It ensures a path toward economic-sufficiency for our underemployed while protecting the foundation of the family.

We need you to fight for competitive funding for SB 390 and 2Gen, to clear the path for partnerships that address the needs of the adult and the child, providing high-quality, targeted and coordinated services that will lead to stronger families, stronger communities, and a stronger Connecticut.



Kristin Hempel

Assistant Director for Adult Basic Education

Windham Mills: 322 Main St, Willimantic, CT 06226

o: (860) 455-1609

c: (860) 771-1691

f: (860)450-0853

Khempel@eastconn.org