

POWER & PARTNERSHIP LADDERS

STEM Charging Stations

Explora Science Center & Children's Museum

Albuquerque, NM | JUNE 2019



Project Description:

Working statewide to activating existing community venues as "STEM Charging Stations"; building capacity among early childhood providers and educators, libraries, parents, and caregivers to provide science-rich learning experiences in community settings.



Reflections: Creating the Stem Charging Stations Power & Partnership Ladder

Explora Team: CCI Project Lead Tara Henderson of Explora reflects on her their experience working with the Resident Power and Organizational Partnership Ladders:

Using the Resident Power Ladder when "residents" aren't your primary contacts: "It was challenging in some ways because . . . the end ripple impact is families and children, but we're working with [organizational] partners to build their capacity. And because they are working in communities all throughout the state, I'm never going to have contact with their families. So it's challenging because I'm building the capacity of someone who is going to take it back to their community. For some of it, it's challenging to think about where are the residents when I'm never going to be in connection with them."

At the same time, Tara reports that the tool could be useful in other ways: "We have other programs running that aren't part of this community catalyst work that I could see this working really well with the tool, because they are working a lot closer with families."

The Ladders and other empowering practices: Tara also pointed out that this ladder does not always capture some important nuances of her community catalyzing practice: "Sometimes, you made a purposeful choice about doesn't come thru on why you made that choice or why this person is where they are on that power ladder. We were talking about our Summit and the group who did the catering isn't connected to early childhood, isn't connected to the family and isn't connected to the providers, but they do a lot of job development around individuals who are experiencing homelessness or something like that. So it was a community-invested organization, but those little bits didn't necessarily come thru on the power ladder." She pointed out the importance of thinking about, "How do you communicate why you chose that particular group even though they didn't fit with the rest of the program?"

On using the Organizational Partnership Ladder: "This one . . . was with the different organizations, so it was a lot more applicable [to our work]. It's one that I think we are going to be implementing sooner than the other one--having a lot more conversations around it and working with different departments at Explora to think about how that plays out."

On navigating the ideal "rung" for various partners: "My Department is focused on being out in the community, whereas a different department is focused a lot more in museum. They are very, very different environments. Being out in the community, I'm forced to think about people in different roles, because you're playing in their territory." Tara found the ladder to be a helpful tool for considering "how you co-create something together, and when are you OK with people staying at certain rungs on the ladder. Not everyone is going to be in a position where you're creating something together or they're taking the lead."

Advice for other libraries or museums seeking to use these tools in their community catalyzing work or supporting folks to move "up the ladder.": "It goes back to having relationships and relationships take time to build. Take the time and effort into that so you can think of and work at where people's strengths are best utilized." Also, "it's OK to have someone as the expert and you're only the client."

ABCD Team: ABCD Team Site Consultant Deb Wisniewski shared her reflections on working with Tara on Explora's Resident Power Ladder:

"We decided to focus on just one activity, the summit they organized, since there were a lot of pieces to putting that on. I think that was helpful . . . in terms of seeing where it made sense to have organizational folks take care of stuff (e.g., receiving and processing the registrations for the event) vs. where family and community folks could move up the ladder."

"We discussed what can they do next to think about how to bump people up the ladder. Tara's response was to reach out to the broader network so we talked about what that would look like: (1) First they would connect with people who attended the event. Out of the approximately 120 people who attended, 83 had responded to the final questionnaire that they would like to be involved in the planning of the next event. (2) Her next step was to email/survey those people to find out what they want to do next. [We also discussed making] personal one-to-one invitations to folks that they know would be particularly keen to step up."

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RESIDENT POWER LADDER

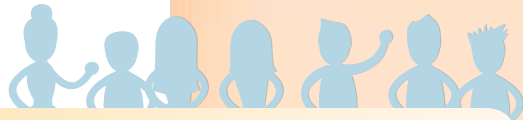


AT PROJECT LAUNCH



NOW

IDEAL



"Residents" are defined as...
young children and their families.

in control

Speak at plenary

advisors

Planning group

Plan agenda

Facilitate sessions

Get materials for swag bags

Get materials for giveaways

info sources

recipients

Print & design signage, programs, etc.

Wayfinder

Find sponsors

Set up registration system

Cleaning and room setup

Set up registration & check-in

Cater snacks & meals



AT PROJECT LAUNCH



NOW

IDEAL



in control

FDP, Toy Lending Library, ECAP, CNM, Beverly (teacher aid) *Early Childhood Summit*

New Mexico State Libraries, state and local *Librarian Professional Development Workshops, STEM to READ Activity Trunks*

CNM Early childhood educators *Math and Science in the Early Childhood Classroom course at community college (CNM)*

Toy Lending Library, ECAP *Activity Postcards*

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Toy Lending Library, ECAP *Activity Postcards*

NM PBS, ECAP *15-second public service spots*

Edgewood Library, Congregation Albert, Parents Reaching Out, Acoma Head Start, Jefferson Elementary Preschool, Gallup Head Start, Five Sandoval Pueblos, Toy Lending Libraries (Gallup, Albuquerque, Las Cruces) *Growing a Scientist Workshop*

FDP, Toy Lending Library, ECAP, CNM, Partnership for Community Action, Kevin from Five Sandoval Pueblos Head Starts, Christina Kent from Early Childhood Center, Beverly (teacher aid) *Early Childhood Summit*

New Mexico State Libraries, state and local *Librarian Professional Development Workshops, STEM to READ Activity Trunks*

CNM Early childhood educators *Math and Science in the Early Childhood Classroom course at community college (CNM)*

NM PBS, ECAP *15-second public service spots with voiceover of "Play with me and let's discover."*

Edgewood Library, Congregation Albert, Parents Reaching Out, Acoma Head Start, Jefferson Elementary Preschool, Gallup Head Start, Five Sandoval Pueblos, Toy Lending Libraries (Gallup, Albuquerque, Las Cruces) *Growing a Scientist Workshop*

Toy Lending Library, ECAP *Activity Postcards*

advisors

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info sources

Partnership for Community Action *Early Childhood Summit*

Partnership for Community Action, Kevin from Five Sandoval Pueblos Head Starts *Early Childhood Summit*

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recipients

Kevin from Five Sandoval Pueblos Head Starts, Christina Kent from Early Childhood Center, Beverly, teacher aid *Early Childhood Summit*

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Prepared for the Institute of Museum and Library Services by the DePaul University and ABCD Evaluation Team in collaboration with the Explora Science Center & Children's Museum. Photos courtesy of the Explora Science Center & Children's Museum.

TO LEARN MORE:

Explora Science Center & Children's Museum www.explora.us
 IMLS Community Catalyst Initiative www.imls.gov/ccli