Economic Mobility Exchange™
Case Study: Warren Village

Warren Village has been serving the community of Denver, Colorado since 1974. Their mission is to support single-parent families to achieve sustainable personal and economic self-sufficiency. They serve families with three programmatic areas:

• Safe & Affordable Housing
• Parent Services & Advocacy
• Early Education & Childcare.

They also utilize a two-generation approach to empower single parents and their children.

Warren Village joined the Economic Mobility Exchange in 2018. They saw EMPath's coaching model as an opportunity to enhance their services to families. Using brain science-based tools and processes would enhance their work to increase resident engagement, helping residents feel empowered to design and guide their own journeys to self-sufficiency.

“It’s been awesome. I have leveled up my skills, life, and earning power by implementing the resources and support I’ve received.” – A Warren Village Resident

WarrenVillage.org  @Warren_Village
Warren Village implemented the four Essential Elements (Coaching for Economic Mobility, Bridge to Self-Sufficiency, Goal Setting and Recognition) of the Mobility Mentoring approach with minor adaptations in two existing housing programs: First Step and housing. The housing program serves 150 families annually and the First Step program serves 10 families annually. Both programs strive to support individuals to be self-sufficient, school ready, and have a positive well-being and stable housing through the programmatic areas. From the beginning, the model has been a great fit for Warren Village, aligning with core services and mission. Warren Village found that the coaching approach provided tools and support to work smarter with program delivery, giving them a common language with clear and quantifiable target outcomes. Staff have appreciated knowing that there is consistency for how residents are supported. Residents share that they have appreciated being able to conceptualize the work and to break down steps. The tools have helped them to better define what self-sufficiency looks like.

To prepare for implementation, their first step was to educate staff about the approach and embed the person-centered language of coaching approach into all programs. They worked towards this goal with a few events, they held an official office-wide welcome and orientation webinar hosted by an Exchange Team Associate to introduce the model’s essential elements and created an implementation team to spearhead the effort. To introduce the approach beyond staff, they showed the Bridge to Self-Sufficiency to residents during a floor meeting which is held in the spring and fall annually. Residents were given the opportunity to ask questions and leave with a copy of the Bridge. Staff then reviewed the Bridge with residents during individual meetings.

For ongoing support, they incorporated discussions and the monthly Exchange webinars in team meetings for skill development. In addition, the implementation team created an opportunity to provide feedback on what was working well, what was not, and the unintended consequences that came with program changes in regular meetings. They also held peer consultations and team support in meetings when advocates were heavily using the Bridge and Goal Action Plan (GAP).

**INTERNAL TRAINING AREAS:**

1. Motivational Interviewing
2. Bridge to Self-Sufficiency
3. SMART Goal Setting
4. Executive Functioning
5. Coaching vs. Case Management and Client Self-Determination
6. Two sessions of small group practice and peer consultation.
Mobility Mentoring® Implementation Team

A team of five staff with leadership or supervisory roles, and who also attended the foundational Mobility Mentoring Essentials (MME) training, was appointed to lead the implementation process. The team met weekly and eventually biweekly.

The team attended the Implementation Roundtable with EMPath staff after MME, which helped them to think big picture about how to approach team training, as well as how they can transition from a case management culture to a coaching culture. In addition, thinking about how this impacts organizational culture and what environmental cultures need to be introduced to help people engage in new processes.

Asking these questions led them to a phased implementation process that ultimately transformed their program flow and structure. After the trainings and roundtable, the implementation team worked to integrate Mobility Mentoring tools and coaching strategies into existing program structures which involved sharing information, training, and supporting staff to use the new tools with residents.

For the training of staff, the team examined all of the content areas covered in the Mobility Mentoring Essentials training and created an internal training schedule, these internal trainings sessions were combined with peer-supported practice time.

Implementation Timeline

- **December 2018:** Joined the Exchange
- **Summer 2019:** Created a core team that attended MME training and implementation roundtable
- **August:** Introduced the Bridge to residents at Resident Advisory Committee
- **October:** Residents completed their first Bridges; Coaches introduced the Goal Action Plan
- **November:** Trained on Motivational Interviewing
- **Winter 2020:** Program Fully Implemented
- **Welcome Webinar & Orientation:**
- **Summertime 2019:** A core team that attended MME training and implementation roundtable

Lessons Learned

- To ease change to programs Warren Village strived to show how the model aligns with existing programs and supports the outcome more effectively for families.
- Having the implementation team attend the training was a significant step to implement the program. In hindsight, they would have completed the training earlier in the process.
- After the first full year of implementation, staff learned that incorporating resident input into the implementation of the program would enhance the process. Residents’ input was collected after implementation had started through a resident advisory committee. Residents commented that they felt the tools and strategies were, “more empowering and a respectful way to help work towards goals”.

Summary

The implementation of the model was a phased process that involved coordination and collaboration at all levels. The variety of initiatives for introducing the strategies and supporting staff to use the tools helped to integrate the approach into existing programs. Appointing a core team provided leadership and a focused effort throughout the process.

Over 18 months, Warren Village implemented an impactful Mobility Mentoring-informed approach that is demonstrated by program outcomes, and staff, and resident feedback. The integration of the four essential elements ultimately led to a positive transformation of their programs.