AUSTIN

COMMON AGENDA
Expand access to early learning programs, create safe community spaces for families, and support economic stability and success for parents and guardians in order to prepare children for success in 3rd grade and beyond.

BOLD GOAL
By 2025, Austin Coming Together members will provide high quality early learning opportunities to 3,900 low-income children living in the Austin Community and will assist 2,775 residents in securing and retaining living wage employment.

Looking Back
Austin, located 10 miles from Chicago's central business district, was once considered a country village. Annexed by the City of Chicago in 1899, Austin grew into a dense urban neighborhood of mainly middle class residents of European descent. By 1950, Austin featured an advanced streetcar system, architecturally significant churches and the noted Columbus Park with its lagoons, golf course and winding paths.

Austin's demographic profile shifted dramatically beginning in the late 1960s and by 1980 Austin's population was predominantly African American. Like other west-side communities, Austin experienced housing disinvestment, vacancy, and demolition, as well as loss of jobs and commerce as its white population moved to the suburbs and to Chicago's Northwest Side.

The Austin Neighborhood Network was formed in 2010 after a group of like-minded community leaders, calling themselves Austin Coming Together (ACT), joined forces to discuss how to better coordinate efforts to create systemic change in their community. In 2016, in partnership with United Way, ACT released Thrive 2025, a strategy which sets bold “impact goals” to help Austin improve early childhood education outcomes and access to living wage employment opportunities for residents.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>NETWORK FUND</th>
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Photos courtesy of Austin Coming Together
LOOKING FORWARD

Austin is moving forward in reaching its bold goal of providing high-quality learning opportunities to low-income children and ensuring residents have access to living wage employment. So far, Austin Coming Together (ACT) has connected 916 children to early learning programs (25% of goal). In just six months, ACT has doubled job placement prospects, with 20 residents having secured living wage employment.

Other Austin Neighborhood Network highlights include:

- Since 2011, and as part of the Neighborhood Network, ACT has built an impressive network of more than 60 non-profit, faith-based, public, and private members.

- ACT administered first annual survey to assess the impact of the Neighborhood Network model on the community, using the findings to better serve the residents of Austin.

- Received $50,000 from the Chicago Community Trust’s African American Legacy Grant, which provides training and technical assistance to help organizations build their capacity to practice Restorative Justice in their community.

- Received a $5,000 grant from the Woods Fund for community organizing and training of community stakeholders in the Neighborhood Network.

- To support their early education bold goal, ACT was selected by the Erikson Institute to administer Early Development Instruments to better connect children and families with appropriate social service agencies and develop stronger early education outcomes.

- To support their workforce development bold goals, the Austin Career Connection has launched the Access United program this year, placing nearly 50 clients in trade apprenticeship programs.