



Forward Together

A FIVE-YEAR ROADMAP

**FOR THE CENTRAL OKLAHOMA TEEN
PREGNANCY PREVENTION COLLABORATION**

honestly
YOUTH SEXUAL HEALTH

Special Thanks

Without the contributions and support of the following organizations and individuals, the following plan, and our work as a whole, would not be possible. From all of us at **honestly** and The Central Oklahoma Teen Pregnancy Prevention Collaboration, thank you to:

- Advisory Council Members, Past and Present
- Teen Empower
- Variety Care
- Amplify: Youth Health Collective
- Metriarch: Oklahoma Women's Public Health Think Tank
- Waxman Strategies

We also want to thank **honestly's** Board of Directors for their leadership and commitment to the Collaboration:

- Stephanie Mendenhall
- John Allen
- Erick Worrell
- Seth Paxton
- Mickie Smith
- Heather Healey Whiteside
- Lyndi Zavy

To **everyone** who has contributed perspectives, insights, and feedback in development of this plan, know that we are grateful, and we will continue to uplift your voices in everything we do.

This plan and its implementation would not be possible without generous support from the **Kirkpatrick Family Fund** and the **Arnall Family Foundation**.

And finally, this work would not be possible without the unwavering support of our community. **To the youth, caregivers, partners, and advocates of Oklahoma County:** Your resilience, insights, and commitment drive our Collaboration's mission forward. Together, we are building a future in which opportunities for youth to pursue education, careers, and well-being are not limited by teen pregnancy, ensuring they have the information and healthcare they deserve.



To: You
From: **honestly**

Dear friends,

Thank you for being here with us. The past five years in Oklahoma County have been complicated and unpredictable. Since the development of the Collaboration's last strategic plan, our communities have weathered major changes — from public health crises to policy shifts, many of which have had enormous impacts on our lives, and on youth health and wellness.

Despite numerous changes along the way, the teen birth rate has dropped by 27.3% from 2019 to 2023 — surpassing the goal set in *Momentum Matters!*¹ This reflects the collective commitment and collaboration to support young people in our community. While there is still more work to be done, this achievement shows the power of bringing together diverse stakeholders to make a measurable difference in the lives of Oklahoma's youth. Every member of the Collaboration has played a vital role in supporting youth sexual health and wellness in our community. We give special thanks to the peer, school, and community educators who have remained committed to this work, even when it has felt hard, or at times impossible. Thank you for your leadership and determination.

In 2025, we at **honestly** find ourselves at a moment of transformation with new leadership, a new(ish) name, and new challenges to face. While we are evolving, we remain committed to our role as the backbone organization — supporting and amplifying the work of our partners. We are deeply grateful for your continued partnership as we work together toward a shared vision. Despite our progress, there is so much work left to do. Oklahoma remains ranked the fifth highest state in teen births; the criticalness of this issue is exacerbated by misinformation and politicization around youth health care and education policies.² State-level decisions have impacted access to vital resources that support young people in our communities. Given the importance of these issues, it's crucial that we find constructive ways to advance policies and programs that empower and provide essential support to Oklahoma's youth.

We have learned many lessons over the past years. We know that the Collaboration's strategic plan must be reflective of the adaptability and resilience that this work requires. We recognize that honestly must be a fierce advocate for young people and for our partners, and that supporting youth means showing up in ways we haven't in the past. We are ready for that.

This strategic plan lays the foundation for our shared work over the next five years. But it is just the beginning. We will be reaching out to you to create new spaces and use existing ones to carry out the work necessary to achieve our collective goals. We will continue to partner with you to make sure our strategies align with your needs and your approaches to making change.



Yours,
honestly

1. Vital Statistics 2022. Oklahoma State Department of Health (OSDH), Center for Health Statistics, Health Care Information via Oklahoma Statistics on Health Available for Everyone (OK2SHARE). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://www.health.state.ok.us/ok2share/>

2. Teen Birth Rate by State. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Published February 25, 2022. Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/pressroom/sosmap/teen-births/teenbirths.htm>

Setting the Table

The Current State of Youth Sexual Health in Oklahoma City

Since the creation of the last strategic plan (Momentum Matters, 2019), our state has faced many challenges.³ The COVID-19 pandemic transformed schools and health care delivery, making fundamental changes to how people receive information and care, including impacting educators' opportunities to engage with young Oklahomans and provide them with the tools necessary to improve their overall health and wellbeing.

Additionally, over the last five years, school boards and parents have placed greater scrutiny on educators and their curricula. In response, the Oklahoma legislature introduced 12 bills that address parental rights concerns regarding curricula and three specifically on sex education curricula. In 2023, providers in the state lost access to the Title X family planning program, impacting their ability to deliver evidence-based comprehensive care to people of all ages.

These changes have forced Oklahoma educators, providers, and advocates to expend ⁵ exceptional time and effort adapting their work to ensure that young people receive the vital education they need to make informed decisions about their health and autonomy. To meet this moment, our communities have reimagined how to do the work; experts have the tools they need to deliver for young people, but we must be nimble, responsive, and engaged to ensure we can continue to deliver.

The teen birth rate has long been an important measurement tool to understand youth sexual health and wellness. Teen pregnancy impacts the entire community, but data reveals significant disparities in birth rates among marginalized populations.

3. Momentum Matters. Honestly Youth Sexual Health. Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://honestlyokc.org/our-work/momentum-matters/>

4. Legislative Tracker™ 59th Legislature, 2nd Regular Session (2024). Metriarch. Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://www.metriarchok.org/legislative-tracker/>

5. Wiessner, D. Oklahoma not entitled to federal family planning grants, US court rules. Reuters. Published July 15, 2024. Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://www.reuters.com/legal/government/oklahoma-not-entitled-federal-family-planning-grants-us-court-rules-2024-07-15/>

Black, multiracial, and Hispanic communities experience higher teen birth rates than other race and ethnicity groups due in no small part to historical and systemic injustices.⁶

Over the past decade, members of the Collaboration and committed stakeholders have made meaningful progress in advancing youth sexual health in Oklahoma City and reducing the teen birth rate. Since 2019, Oklahoma County's teen birth rate has decreased 27.3% — surpassing the Collaboration's goal of a 25% reduction set in the Collaboration's previous strategic plan, *Momentum Matters*.

Youth educators and caregivers continue to show up to provide comprehensive sex education despite the challenges and concerns about their capacity to deliver sex education in the face of an increasingly adversarial political landscape. This strategic plan seeks to meet this moment and deliver for Oklahoma City's young people, while creating enough space for innovation and iteration to be responsive to changes in the coming years.

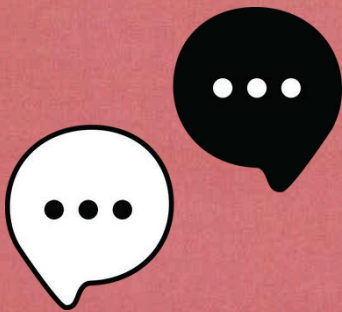
Our Process for the Strategic Plan

As the backbone organization, **honestly** is charged with setting the strategic direction for the Collaboration through the development of a comprehensive plan. Our team used 2024 as an opportunity to deepen conversations with partners, revisit Collaboration members' priorities, and identify gaps and opportunities to support the Collaboration in the coming years. Partnering with Waxman Strategies, a mission-driven consulting firm, the honestly team adopted a "listening first" approach, utilizing surveys, meetings, interviews, and conventions to explore what has worked and what hasn't in our partnership over the past five years. Recognizing that Collaboration members and partners are the true experts in the current climate and community needs, the **honestly** team invited members to complete a survey and participate in listening sessions focused on member-surfaced priority issues. Through individual discussions with key stakeholders — including educators, caregivers, community leaders, and members of advisory boards — we gained deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities within the community. Your insights shaped the recommendations for the next strategic plan.

6. Trends in Teen Pregnancy and Childbearing. Office of Population Affairs (OASH). Accessed December 16, 2024. <https://opa.hhs.gov/adolescent-health/adolescent-sexual-and-reproductive-health/trends-teen-pregnancy-and-childbearing>.

Our Common Agenda

The **honestly** team and our Collaboration partners recognize that Collective Impact has more power to enact lasting, impactful change than any organization working alone, and that this impact begins with a common agenda to serve as a shared north star. For the forthcoming years, honestly commits to partnering with stakeholders and our community behind this collaborative approach and common agenda:



Together, **honestly** and the Collaboration will create an environment that supports the sexual health of youth. This will include fostering the conditions that reduce teen birth rates, decrease sexually transmitted infection (STI) incidence among young people, and expand access to comprehensive, medically accurate, age-appropriate education and resources for youth and their caregivers.



Vocabulary



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

- The Collective Impact model seeks to provide structure and clarity about how to address complex social issues. In this model, people and organizations from different sectors come together to collaboratively work towards a shared goal.
- Successful Collective Impact initiatives distribute leadership among various roles — which could take the form of steering committee members, workgroup co-chairs, or implementation partners. Central to Collective Impact is the role of the backbone, a core leadership function designed to facilitate the larger work of the group.

BACKBONE

- The backbone's role is to provide structural support to the members. The backbone staff facilitate, coordinate, and project manage the initiative.
- Examples of honestly's responsibilities as the backbone organization for our Collaboration include facilitating meetings and training opportunities, convening Collaboration members and partners, advocating for policy changes to create a safer environment for sex educators to deliver their curricula, and providing targeted and iterative support to Collaboration members on an as-needed basis.

COLLABORATION

- Collaboration members carry out the critical work to further the initiative's goal of reaching young people, their caregivers, and the wider community to educate and engage them in service of keeping youth healthy and well.
- Members further their organizations' individual impact by engaging with the Collaboration to innovate, reinforce, and inform the group goals and collective approaches.

Measuring Success

Assessing our shared progress on this agenda will require an evaluation plan with clear metrics. While the teen birth rate remains a key metric to assess progress towards our shared goal, we recognize the importance of using other public health metrics to help capture the breadth of our strategic contributions to this landscape and allow us to feature the Collaboration's wide influence on young people's overall sexual health and wellbeing. Broadening these measures is a key component of meeting the needs of young people. These could include activity metrics — for example the number of young people and caregivers receiving education interventions delivered by Collaboration members — or additional public health metrics used by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), such as condom usage and percentage of students who sought STI testing.

Leveraging data to advance youth health and wellness will necessitate creating deep alignment around the collective identification and definition of shared measures. Achieving this alignment will require robust, thoughtful Collaboration member-guided conversations regarding the types of measurement we should collectively pursue. This work will rely on ongoing partnership between the backbone (honestly) and members of the Collaboration to decide what data and metrics should be measured, and how to collect and analyze those measures.

Shared Values

Just as the work of Collective Impact requires a common agenda, it also requires those in the collective to approach the work with a set of shared values. From the early days of the Collaboration, its work has been grounded in a foundational understanding that there are a wide array of challenges impacting the ability of youth in our communities to be sexually healthy and well, and that many of those include systemic challenges rooted in historically unjust economic and social systems. Systemic racism, homophobia, and transphobia all create barriers to youth health and wellness, impacting our communities and our work.

As a result, **the Collaboration recognizes that no two young people will have exactly the same experiences or needs, and that creating the environment where all young people can thrive requires us to acknowledge and honor those differences as we conduct our work. honestly** and the Collaboration recognize that fairness and justice must be infused into all aspects of the work we do, and that deep engagement with communities — especially those that have been systematically disadvantaged — is necessary to achieve a fully inclusive Oklahoma County where all youth have the power to reach their full potential.

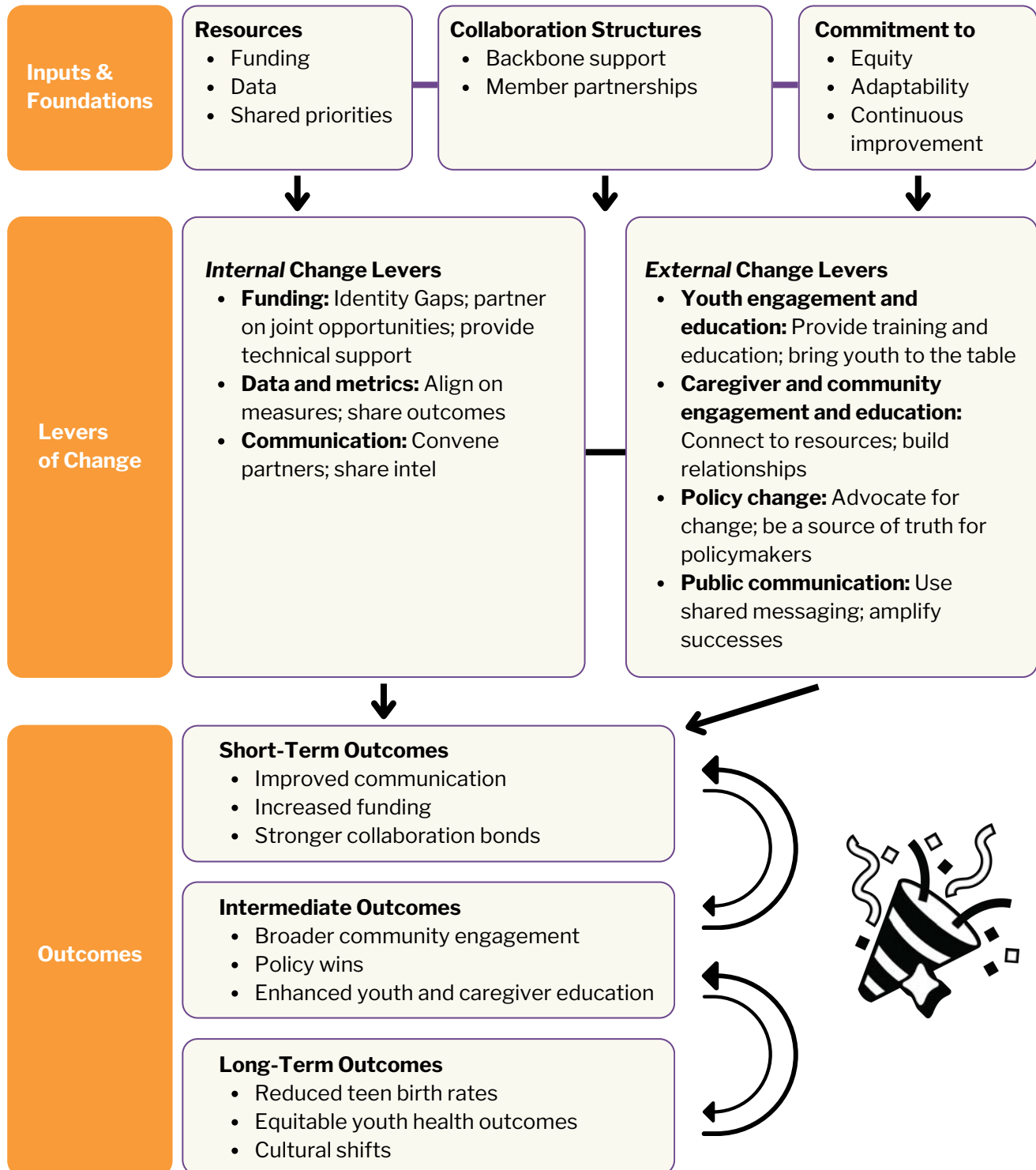
Forward Progress

honestly, the Collaboration, and our wider community have gone through significant changes since the last strategic plan. Meeting this moment requires the Collaboration members, partners, and the backbone organization (**honestly**) to refine our work, find creative ways to support one another, create space for innovation and iteration, and grow in our capacities as we adapt to a new and shifting climate.

This plan provides strategic direction for the next phase of the Collaboration's work, organized around levers of change that the Collaboration can use to create impact and drive the common agenda forward. Through the strategic planning listening sessions and survey, Collaboration members and partners provided clear guidance on what they need to carry out the Common Agenda. This guidance was translated into seven strategic levers of change: Funding, Data and Metrics, Collaboration Communication, Youth Engagement and Education, Caregiver and Community Engagement and Education, Policy Change, and Public Communication.

Over the coming years, Collaboration members will partner with **honestly** to develop specific goals and objectives within these levers based on shared priorities, shifting internal and external needs, and current events. Many of the activities described in this plan are reflective of work that is already underway by both Collaboration members and the **honestly** team, but will remain essential to achieving the Common Agenda, and can continue to be improved and strengthened through collective action.

Theory of Change



Internal Change Levers

The following levers of change are housed within the work happening inside the Collaboration — how members and the backbone (honestly) are sharing information with each other, aligning around approaches to measuring success, and securing the necessary resources to provide stability to the work. These levers help strengthen the bonds of Collaboration members and the backbone organization and strengthen the collective power of our organizations.

Funding

Accomplishing the goals of this strategic plan will only be possible with adequate funding for the Collaboration members carrying out the work. Deeper partnerships between members and support from the backbone organization will increase opportunities for shared innovation and opportunities to access funding. Investing in this work as a collective will enable all of us to grow our fundraising capacities and create a stable foundation from which we can advance youth sexual health and wellness in Oklahoma County.

To support robust funding for Collaboration efforts...

The *backbone* will:

- **Facilitate.** Disseminating funding opportunities with Collaboration members to ensure visibility, and coalescing Collaboration members to discuss needs and opportunities related to funding, prioritizing those that address systemic barriers and promote health equity.
- **Lift.** Publicly crediting Collaboration members for their achievements with funders, the media, and community members.
- **Support.** Providing technical and strategic support to members on grant applications and other funding opportunities.

The *members* will:

- **Identify.** Communicating needs with the backbone to maximize opportunities for partnership and support.
- **Discuss.** Using conversation spaces to identify community gaps and opportunities to fill them.
- **Partner.** Working with Collaboration members when appropriate to partner on projects and funding opportunities.

Data/Metrics

Data and metrics are central to tracking and amplifying the success of the Collaboration members and are powerful tools for communicating the continued need for investment in our work. While federal and state data show that comprehensive sex education beneficially impacts the teen birth rate, there is an inevitable lag between intervention and measured outcome. Through work groups, facilitated by the backbone, Collaboration members should align on which member activity and public health metrics they would like to collect to demonstrate our efficacy and impact. Measuring data is key to showing the impact Collaboration members are making for a variety of audiences including parents, our own tracking, and prospective funders.

To ensure that the Collaboration can monitor and share its successes...

The *backbone* will:

- **Compile.** Identifying and capturing data on youth health in central Oklahoma, strategically disaggregating and analyzing the data to understand and address health disparities. Measuring touch points, achievements, and public health outcomes.
- **Connect.** Strengthening relationships with state data collectors, creating pathways for data-sharing across the Collaboration, and aligning on metrics to measure.
- **Distribute.** Providing members with clear, timely, and user-friendly access to newly compiled data, state data, and original data analyses.

The *members* will:

- **Utilize.** Including the data in key communications to show the positive impacts of comprehensive sex education and grow support among target audiences, including policymakers and funders or potential funders.
- **Share.** Supporting the backbone's efforts to compile, analyze, and redistribute data and metrics to members.
- **Align.** Participating in the strategic selection of shared metrics to maximize the Collaboration's impact.

Collaboration Communication

The work of the Collaboration will be most successful if members are informed, empowered, and engaged with one another. Communication within the Collaboration needs to be robust, strategic, and efficient to enable the cross sharing that maximizes the diverse skills, perspectives, and backgrounds at our table.

To grow the connective tissue of the Collaboration and ensure information is traveling in a way that supports collective impact...

The backbone will:

- **Convene.** Strategically bringing members together (in-person and virtually) to facilitate cross sharing of information.
- **Report.** Serving as a resource hub for the Collaboration and regularly sharing out the collected resources and intel to inform and empower, making resources accessible to diverse audiences.
- **Revisit.** Periodically evaluating and refining the Collaboration's structure and decision-making processes, maintaining transparency with members about any changes while staying nimble to adapting environments.

The members will:

- **Share.** Providing useful intel, resources, and learnings to the backbone and wider group.
- **Request.** Asking questions to help identify gaps and needs.
- **Engage.** Acting on new information from the Collaboration and following up with partners.

External Change Levers

These levers of change reflect the work the Collaboration is doing out in the world — educating and engaging young people, their caregivers, and the wider community, influencing the broader political environment that impacts this work, and effectively amplifying key messages to public stakeholders.

Youth Education and Engagement

Engaging and educating youth is the core of our Collaboration's work and the dedicated educators and medical providers delivering direct services hold up this pillar. A core function of the Collaboration is to support their needs, while at the same time ensuring that young people have a seat at the table to communicate their preferences and desires.

To empower youth with the education and resources that will keep them sexually healthy and well...

The backbone will:

- **Train.** Providing educators and community leaders with training opportunities and learning sessions to share best practices.
- **Translate.** Communicating the needs of direct service providers and youth to key stakeholders and partners and connecting resources to meet those needs.
- **Innovate.** Nimble and creatively working to strategically approach settings and adapt programs for changing climates.

The members will:

- **Educate.** Continuing to provide comprehensive, medically accurate, age-appropriate sexual health information to youth.
- **Advocate.** Bringing youth and educator needs to the Collaboration table for joint problem-solving.
- **Compile.** Collecting and reporting relevant implementation and service data to assess the Collaboration's progress and identify gaps.

Caregiver and Community Education and Engagement

Youth need the support of trusted, caring adults and their wider community to thrive. Particularly in the current climate, there is enormous urgency for our Collaboration to establish strong connections with caregivers and community leaders to ensure we are holistically supporting young people and have multiple pathways to reach them.

To empower caregivers and community leaders with tools and resources to support the youth in their lives...

The *backbone* will:

- **Map.** Developing a clear sense of who the Collaboration needs to reach and where they are.
- **Train.** Providing educators and community leaders with training and learning sessions to share best practices.
- **Connect.** Finding resources and ensuring they reach the correct audiences; creating linkages across the collaboration to fill gaps in caregiver and community outreach.

The *members* will:

- **Educate.** Providing tools, resources, and trainings to caregivers and community members.
- **Network.** Finding and engaging new potential partners to reach different community spaces and helping bring them into the work of the Collaboration.
- **Innovate.** Nimble and creatively working to adapt curricula, settings, and approaches in a changing climate.

Public Policy Change

Improving youth health and wellness necessitates coordinated efforts across stakeholders to advance youth-centered public policies and to block harmful policies. Working from the same state-wide playbook on advocacy will create real opportunities to address misinformation and advance policies with positive impacts for young people.

To coordinate across partners and support youth-centered policy advocacy...

The *backbone* will:

- **Coordinate.** Creating an infrastructure for conversations with partners across the state to do short- and long-term policy planning and implementation.
- **Speak.** Sharing resources and information with policymakers to advance evidence-based policies that address systemic barriers and support youth sexual health; vocalizing the needs of young people and the stakeholders serving them in public forums that reach decision-makers.
- **Lead.** Working with internal and external partners to use data and communications to drive shared advocacy strategies and approaches, particularly in spaces where Collaboration members are limited in how they can engage in policy change work.

The *members* will:

- **Engage.** Informing the backbone organization of their ability to participate in conversations around advocacy and policy strategy and contributing where appropriate.
- **Inform.** Highlighting information about the impacts of policy changes on their key stakeholder communities; openly sharing what evidence-backed youth sexual health education really looks like to bolster advocacy efforts.
- **Plan.** Working together to develop advocacy priorities and parameters for the Collaboration.

Public Communication

Increasing the awareness and understanding of the work the Collaboration is doing, and growing the public presence of the Collaboration will go a long way in garnering trust and visibility among key stakeholders. Speaking with one voice as a collective gives our movement more power and helps lift the voices of young people into spaces where they would otherwise be overlooked. The backbone has a unique and important role to play as the entity people most closely associate with the Collaboration in public spaces.

To raise the profile of the Collaboration and its members and strengthen its unified voice in spaces that reach key decision-makers...

The backbone will:

- **Amplify.** Promoting the work of the Collaboration and its members and lifting successes to key stakeholders including media, policymakers, and funders.
- **Message.** Crafting messages and talking points and making them accessible to Collaboration members so the collective can speak with one voice on newsworthy topics.
- **Speak.** Acting as the 'spokesperson' for the Collaboration and speaking on behalf of the members to key audiences.

The members will:

- **Share.** Bringing individual success stories and key milestones to the Collaboration and the backbone for amplification and raising opportunities for public engagement at the Collaboration table.
- **Reinforce.** Using the Collaboration messaging in their work and spheres of influence to strengthen its impact.
- **Inform.** Bringing the best evidence to the table to inform message development and informing stakeholders about Collaboration happenings/successes.



What's Next?

This plan is a continuation of the incredible efforts already underway by each and every Collaboration partner — and the Collaboration can't keep moving forward without *you*. The successful implementation of this plan will require sustained commitment and engagement from everyone involved in the Collaboration. Our agenda is intentionally ambitious because of the profound impact that our success will have on young people in Oklahoma County, as well as on our collective community and economic well-being.

For more information about the Collaboration, ***honestly***, this plan, and how to get involved, go to **<https://www.honestlyokc.org>** today.

Email **info@honestlyokc.org** to join our next Collaboration meeting.



The End



honestly Youth Sexual Health is an Oklahoma-based 501(c)3 nonprofit organization. Our EIN is 81-2820895. Contact us at 405.486.4974.