

Integrity Framework

Purpose	This Integrity Framework is the Collaboration Council’s formal statement of the beliefs, expectations, assumptions, and behaviors that build and sustain a thriving community for everyone. This framework is the basis for our integrity as individuals and as an organization, and we agree to hold ourselves and each other accountable to it. We do this by intentionally aligning all our work with all elements of the framework - using it to guide decision making, behavior, strategy, structure, systems, and assessment across the organization and throughout our interactions with those affected by what we do. We acknowledge the unconventional focus and language of this guiding framework and affirm that the principles it describes require courageous learning, unlearning, and relearning as we engage with the community. It expresses joy and hopefulness for things that may not yet be true for everyone or in all aspects of their lives AND, at the same time, obligates us to do what it takes to meet a real set of expectations now and into the future. This is a living document that is rooted in what we understand to be true today. We are committed to engaging graciously when misalignment happens - clarifying, revisiting, and reimagining as needed to best support our community.		
Approach: Creating collaborative opportunities for people to learn about, understand, shape, and participate in thriving communities across Montgomery County			
Areas of Focus	Affirmation & Agency AA	Interdependence, Connection, & Belonging ICB	Community Aligned Systems CAS
Community Outcomes	• People feel a sense of, and genuinely have, power/agency over their lives (AA1) • People can meet their basic needs (shelter, food, environment, health, education, play, work) and experience lives in which the social determinants of health are being met (AA2) • People feel and experience affirmation of their full humanity (AA3)	• Individuals feel they are part of a culture that brings together people and ‘systems’ that help everyone connect and thrive in relationship to each other and the environment (ICB1) • People feel a sense of connection and belonging to family, place, and the broader community of Montgomery County (ICB2) • People appreciate the need for and the benefit of being in partnership with others in order to achieve beneficial community outcomes (interdependence emphasis) (ICB3)	• Organizations/Governments are engaging with and responsive to the people and entities most affected by their work and decision making (CAS1) • The people designing, implementing, upholding systems (programs) are knowledgeable of, have experience with, are guided by, and accountable to beneficial community outcomes (CAS2) • People (both within and outside) are influencing systems for the benefit of the community (CAS3) • Community capacities (systems, structures, policies, and processes) are responsive, accountable, and adaptive in order to coordinate the best use of resources and assets for full community benefit (CAS4)

Dignity, Empathy, & Understanding

We will treat all people with dignity for who they are and everyone will be recognized as a whole person who is balancing their lives to be safe, happy, secure, and successful as a person.

We approach engagement with others with an open mind - creating space for others to speak; listening to understand, confirm, and acknowledge what they are communicating to us; and ensuring they feel valued and appreciated

We treat each other with kindness, appreciation, and honesty. We speak without the intent to hurt or harm others and acknowledge the harm we may cause

Gracious Intolerance of Misalignment - Integrity & Accountability

Our work will be informed by and be responsive to the community we are a part of and those affected by our work (clients, families, volunteers, staff, partners)

We commit to aligning our actions and behaviors, both individually and collectively, with the full intent of this Integrity Framework

We identify what it will take to improve alignment, recognizing what we may need to negotiate or compromise and taking responsibility for imperfect decisions and situations

We are honest about what we are able to do and when we can do it; we follow through and do what we say we will do; we ask for help when we need it; and, we are transparent and will provide an explanation when we are unable to meet a commitment

We actively acknowledge and discuss areas of misalignment that we experience within the organization AND with those we interact with outside the organization. We minimize negative judgement while focusing on the true nature of what feels misaligned and why it feels that way

Anyone affected by our behaviors and actions who believes they are not aligned with this framework has a right to raise their concerns and deserves to be heard and acknowledged

Partnership

We rely on and actively engage in strong relationships based on collaboration and sharing

We consider how our behaviors, actions, and decisions, both individually and collectively, impact others affected by those choices

We work to ensure that all partners (internal & external), as well as those most affected by our actions, are given voice and listened to; appreciated and acknowledged; and kept honestly informed

Innovation & Creativity

We ask ourselves and others to consider what it takes to accomplish desired community outcomes and willingly adapt to and adopt new behaviors, processes, plans, and strategies that improve our individual and collective ability to serve our community

Growth & Improvement

We support and reinforce personal growth for people, including ourselves, by actively extending beyond comfort zones, providing spaces where learning/relearning occurs, and taking risks and pursuing challenges

The following perspectives inform the Collaboration Council's worldview and approach to community-centered work

Anti-Racist / Anti-Oppressive: Actively identifying and dismantling policies, practices, and assumptions that perpetuate racism, white supremacy, and other forms of oppression

Systems Thinking: Acknowledging and identifying the systems that influence peoples' lived experiences and understanding of how things work around them (personal, organizational, institutional, and societal)

Community-Driven: Centering the lived experience, knowledge, and decision-making power of the people most affected by programs and services

Trauma/Recovery-Informed: Designing and delivering services with an understanding of how trauma affects individuals and communities, and supporting recovery as a path to resilience and well-being

Community Engagement (weaver)

AA

ICB

Advancing community-centered responsibility and accountability by fostering the integration of the experience, knowledge, and skills of the people most affected into the design, implementation, and assessment of programs supporting the health of youth and families

Community is engaged when the people most affected by something have the power to use their lived experience to influence the design, implementation, and assessment of the things that affect their lives

Scaffolding (builder)

AA

CAS

Supporting the development of the people and the entities serving youth and families so that they have the talent and systems to competently deliver what it takes to advance community-driven and validated outcomes through their work.

People are scaffolded when they have access to the education and resources that support their ability to do community-focused work both as individuals and as part of agencies/institutions

Convening (weaver, builder)

AA

ICB

CAS

Promoting the practice of bringing people together in spaces for connecting with others to collectively establish shared understanding, outcomes, values, responsibility, accountability, and support around determining and following through on what it takes to create and sustain a thriving community for youth and families.

People are convened when brought together to build interpersonal relationships, develop shared values, and establish shared understanding with others. It is about the connection and commitment to each other as opposed to the act of working or accomplishing tasks together (see collaboration), but may be a preliminary step toward collaboration and advocacy

Supporting Collaborative Work (weaver, builder)

ICB

CAS

Facilitating the ability of those entities serving youth and families to work together - (1) ensuring community members are seamlessly accessing and engaging the resources and services that help them thrive no matter who the providers are and (2) supporting the coordination and interconnections providers need to be effective.

Collaboration is supported when there is an environment that reinforces and makes it possible for entities to coordinate work around shared purpose, shared goals, shared resources, and shared responsibility

Advocating for Community-Focused Systems Change (visionary, disrupter, weaver)

ICB

CAS

Creating and sustaining transformational change by bringing attention to and building a shared understanding and appreciation of the frameworks, perspectives, values, models, and theories that honor people's lived experience and validated data about what it takes to thrive AND amplifying that message in ways that influence and change power dynamics and top-down decision making to ensure it promotes the practices and systems that advance positive outcomes and/or interrupts and dismantles those that do not.

People are advocating for community-focused systems change when their lived experience, both individual and collective, improves our understanding of what it takes for everyone to thrive in our community and leads to changes in systems and structures that align with that understanding