Abstract: 150 words:

In Southwest Detroit, the number of children who need child care vastly outnumber available licensed child care slots. Enhancing informal child care, unlicensed care provided by family, friends, and neighbors, is a promising strategy to improve child outcomes for children experiencing vulnerability by providing them with access to high quality early care and education in home-based settings. The W.K Kellogg Foundation, three community partners, and researchers formed a collaborative to develop, test, and implement strategies to enhance informal child care by adhering to the key principles of community based participatory research (CBPR). Focusing on the community context and the lived experiences of the partners, the project works to ensure that participant voices are incorporated into the design and implementation of the strategies.

Title: Integrating participant and researcher voices in the design and evaluation of programs

In 2018, three community partners and a team of researchers from Mathematica established a collaborative to develop, test, and implement strategies to enhance the quality of child care provided by unlicensed family, friends, and neighbors (i.e., informal caregivers) to Detroit’s children and their families. Our project, funded by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, is part of the Hope Starts Here Initiative, a city-wide initiative to make Detroit a world-class city for its children and their families. Transforming children’s early care and education to ensure that children experience high-quality early learning is a central area of focus. In partnership with three community partners, Mathematica has explored ways to amplify community voices in all aspects of the project and subsequent evaluation.

This roundtable session will first define and then explore key principles of community based participatory research (CBPR). It will then examine the ways researchers and community partners used this methodology to encourage community leaders and residents to shine their light on the path forward. Attendees will leave the session with a better understanding of the work the collaborative has done and how they could apply aspects of the collaborative’s process to their own work. Our session will focus on three pillars, grounded in CBPR;

* **We built rapport.** Collaborative work requires trust between partners. For our group, we created a space for honest conversations about the role that traditional research has played and continues to play in minority communities. Our work is also characterized by human-centered design activities which are highly collaborative brainstorming and problem-solving activities used to identify creative ideas and solutions. We used these activities in our meetings to foster rapport, trust, and idea generation.
* **The community partners designed their solutions for enhancing informal child care.** In recent years there is increased awareness in research and evaluation that participant voices are central to informing policies and programs that serve them. Doing so ensures that programs meet the needs of and is representative of the lived experiences of the participating communities. We will share our experiences in designing solutions to meet the needs of Southwest Detroit residents.
* **Members of the collaborative shaped the evaluation.** From designing the data collection tools, to reading translations of our materials, to reviewing evaluation results, we have worked to gather input from all members of the collaborative. All tools and results are reviewed by the community organizations and revised based on their input before they are submitted to the client.

After sharing our lessons learned from the perspective of researchers and community partners, we propose spending the rest of the session asking attendees to discuss in small groups how they have engaged in CBPR principles in their work, or what considerations they may make in future projects.