



# CONTINUUM USER GUIDE

Beloved Community believes that people change systems.

We support organizations as they commit to diversity, equity, and inclusion practices among all stakeholders. In order to effectively inspire partner organizations towards this exploration, we start by understanding the current conditions, aspirations, and values of the diverse families in their community. The below chart illustrates how families' experiences differ as a function of their resource capacity. The values continuum is meant to be customized to account for socio-economic, race, ethnicity, immigration status, and family composition differences.

## CONTINUA:

List of continua created and provided by Beloved Community

- **EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM**  
This continuum is used with organizations to examine their strengths and weaknesses in regards to their approach to various domains that relate to worker's experiences.
- **URBAN FAMILY EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM**  
This continuum is used with organizations to examine their strengths and weaknesses in regards to their approach to various domains that relate to urban family experiences.
- **RURAL FAMILY EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM**  
This continuum is used with organizations to examine their strengths and weaknesses in regards to their approach to various domains that relate to rural family experiences.
- **PLANNED PARENTHOOD GULF COAST FAMILY**  
This continuum is used with organizations to examine their strengths and weaknesses in regards to their approach to working with families along the Gulf Coast and in Southeastern Louisiana.

## STEPS:

How to use the continua

- **STEP 1**  
Identify key dimensions that impact families' decisions about schools: i.e. transportation, work hours/flexibility, sense of safety, food access, parent education level, neighborhood dynamics, access to health/mental health supports, language access, documentation status, etc.
- **STEP 2**  
Describe how families experience those key dimensions (research-based descriptors).
- **STEP 3**  
Name family decision-making priorities.
- **STEP 4**  
Validate the continuum with key organizational stakeholders.

## DIRECTIONS:

Read and discuss one domain of descriptors on the Urban Family Experiences Continuum \*

(i.e. transportation access, work/life flexibility, food access, mental health, etc.).

- Have we accurately captured the current reality for your target populations along the spectrum?
- What's missing?
- What's inaccurate or overstated?
- How could this exercise help organizations design specific interventions for individuals and groups in their communities?



\*Note: All continua are living documents that will continually be updated as needed and new literature emerges.

## Transportation Access

Family cannot afford public transit for all transportation needs. They walk, bike, or get rides when available.

Due to financial constraints, family relies on public transit for all transportation needs and require two or more lines of transit for daily routines.

Due to financial constraints, family relies on public transit for all transportation needs and has access to a single public transit line for daily routines.

Family has access to 1 car, but it may be unreliable depending on timing. When the car is unavailable, they resort to taxis or miss school drop-off.

Family has access to at least 1 reliable car or lives within walking/biking distance of all daily routine destinations.

Family has 2+ reliable cars, capacity for taxis or private buses, biking, and access to a single public transit line ride for daily routines.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**

## Work-life Flexibility

Adults are not employed, under-employed or have precarious seasonal employment.

Adults work hourly, minimum-wage jobs with weekly scheduling that is out of their control.

Adults work daily projects or jobs with unpredictable scheduling. They have some flexibility when confirmed for longer projects.

Adults have salaried jobs or are self-employed (tradespeople, artists, entrepreneurs) with a growing clientele. Time away from work is possible, but can cost them revenue or cuts into vacation allowance.

Adults work salaried or self-employed secure jobs where they manage their own calendars (daily/weekly). Time away from work does not cost them revenue. They have some flexibility to attend non-work events during the weekday.

Adults work, but due to generational wealth, do not necessarily have to. They have flexibility and secure resources for caregiving needs. They have a high degree of flexibility about their scheduling.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**

## Food Access

Relies on food donations, subsidies, and direct service programs for most meals.

Easy access to processed foods and limited access to whole foods. Family regularly prepares foods and may rely on food donations at times.

Easy access to processed foods and whole foods. Family regularly eats home-cooked meals. Family may use food delivery services and eats out at chains.

Family eats home-cooked meals and may grow their own spices, fruits/veggies (chickens!). Eats out at restaurants and public events.

Family restricts food selection to informed consumer ingredients. Regularly cooks and eats out at restaurants and public events that promote informed food choices.

Family routinely eats at fine dining restaurants and ranks/rates venues by food.

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## Adult Education Level

Did not complete high school

High school, equivalence or some college

Trade/certificate, some college

4-year degree

Advanced degree

Multiple advanced degrees

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**ABUNDANCE**

**Neighborhood Life**

Neighborhood housing is not secure and often presents physical or medical dangers. Residents primarily live in short-term units, shelters, and subsidized units. Neighbors congregate often in public (front porches, medians, formal & informal gatherings). Police presence criminalizes residents.

Neighborhood includes secure, affordable housing. Residents are a mix of tenants and homeowners. Empty, unoccupied housing is boarded up. Neighbors congregate often in public (front porches, cookouts, etc.) There is access to low-cost commerce (corner stores, clothing, fast foods, small local establishments). Police presence may criminalize residents. Most businesses have security measures/ presence.

Neighborhood has an active association with a mix of residents. Neighborhood has access to a mix of commerce price points (national chains, locally-owned establishments). Neighbors congregate for scheduled events. Police provide reactive and proactive services.

Neighborhood has access to a variety of commerce, markets, minimal rental units (short or long term). Neighbors invite neighbors to parties and events, but may not congregate publicly. Police provide proactive services.

Neighborhood has access to a variety of commerce, markets, minimal rental units (short or long term). Neighbors invite neighbors to parties and events, but may not congregate publicly. Police presence provides security to residents.

Neighborhood has private security detail and/or coded gate entrance. Neighborhood has no commerce, or only limited to luxury boutiques and services. Neighbors know each other and may socialize together.

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**ABUNDANCE**

## URBAN FAMILY EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM

### Access to Health/Mental Health Service Providers

Families only access health or mental health services via street outreach & mobile clinics.

The Emergency room is the family's primary access point for physical or mental health needs.

Families rely on subsidized physical and/or mental health options for routine check-ups.

Families rely on health insurance for in-network providers of physical and mental health needs.

Families primarily use health insurance for physical and mental health needs. They may subsidize with homeopathic and/or out-of-network service providers for preventative care.

Families choose when/whether to consult traditional or homeopathic health care providers. Families engage mental and physical health care providers for routine and preventative needs.

Family can consult multiple health/mental health providers, even if it's outside of their insurance plan. Family can travel extensively (including international) for specialized treatment if necessary.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**

Adults have limited use of spoken English for routine daily life.

Family's use of spoken English impedes adult access. Children serve as language intermediaries.

Family's use of spoken English slows down adult access. Adults advocate for and rely on translators, interpreters, navigators.

Family's use of spoken English provides consistent access to adult and youth needs. Adults may still need vocabulary scaffolding or adaptive technologies.

Family's use of English includes technical, professional vocabulary and near majority culture accents that garner them favorable treatment in majority culture spaces.

Family's use of English consistently garners them favorable treatment in majority culture spaces.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**



## English as Language of Power

Adults have limited use of spoken English for routine daily life.

Family's use of spoken English impedes adult access. Children may serve as literacy intermediaries and understand to code-switch

Family's use of spoken English slows down adult access. Adults may require translation tools or vocabulary scaffolding. Children code-switch as necessary.

Family's use of spoken English provides consistent access to adult and youth needs. Adults and youth code-switch as necessary.

Family's use of English includes technical, professional vocabulary and near majority culture accents that garner them favorable treatment in predominantly white or middle class spaces.

Adults and youth code-switch as necessary.

Family's use of English consistently garners them favorable treatment in predominantly white or middle class spaces.

Adults and youth code-switch as necessary.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**

# URBAN FAMILY EXPERIENCES CONTINUUM

## Education Outcomes and Aspirations<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Implied from parent/guardian self- reports

## Education Outcomes and Aspirations<sup>2 3</sup>

Active income\* in formal or informal settings, even if one job does not cover all household expenses. Flexibility to care for family needs without risking income.

Consistent revenue from formal or informal settings. Actively engaged in multiple jobs or entrepreneurship to cover all household expenses. Flexibility to care for family needs without risking income.

Career path that leverages education or certifications completed. A single job covers average household expenses. Considers passion-inspired entrepreneurship in addition to full-time employment.

Career path that requires additional education, training, and formal networks. Engages in formal business and career development activities within and outside of work.

Career path that reinforces expertise and/or formal networks. Explores passion-inspired entrepreneurship that may lead to full-time employment.

Career path that reinforces family lifestyle or expectations. Explores passion-inspired entrepreneurship or family legacy businesses.

**SCARCITY**

**ABUNDANCE**

<sup>2</sup>Eshelman, Alec, "Socioeconomic Status and Social Class as Predictors of Career Adaptability and Educational Aspirations in High School Students" (2013). Theses. Paper 1265.

Perry, Brea L.; Martinez, Elizabeth; Morris, Edward W.; Link, Tanja C.; and Leukefeld, Carl G., "Misalignment of Career and Educational Aspirations in Middle School: Differences Across Race, Ethnicity, and Socioeconomic Status" (2016). Sociology Faculty Publications. 6. [https://uknowledge.uky.edu/sociology\\_facpub/6](https://uknowledge.uky.edu/sociology_facpub/6)

Note: national study, not New Orleans-specific.

<sup>3</sup>Shearer, C., Liu, A., Holmes, N., Ng, J. "Opportunity Clusters: Identifying pathways to good jobs in metro New Orleans" (2015) Brookings Institute Metropolitan Policy Program