The Community Foundation of the New River Valley has been working on The NRV’s Early Childhood Education and Development Network study in partnership with Robin Lemaire, Asst. Professor at Virginia Tech's Center for Public Administration & Policy. The study provides many insights that will be useful to our collective work on early childhood education and development in the New River Valley and we hope this work will help us to think about ways we can enhance our efforts together overtime.

This study represents the first phase of CFNRV’s long term First Steps Initiative. Through this Initiative, we aim to develop a collective and comprehensive understanding of how our current efforts are impacting the development of our youngest community members and to work with others to target investments in expanding access to high-quality, affordable childcare and strengthening programs that serve disadvantaged children and families in the NRV.
Our ECED Network Study Team

Robin Lemaire, PhD
Principle Investigator
Assistant Professor, Center for Public Administration & Affairs (CPAP); Virginia Tech
rlemaire@vt.edu

Donna Sedgwick, PhD
Instructor, Department of Sociology, Virginia Tech
sedgwick@vt.edu

Jessica Wirgau, PhD
Executive Director
Community Foundation of the New River Valley
jessicawirgau@cfnrv.org

Kim Thurlow
Director of Community Programs
Community Foundation of the New River Valley
kimthurlow@cfnrv.org

David Moore
Program Coordinator
Smart Beginnings New River Valley
Institute for Policy & Governance, Virginia Tech
dmoore@vt.edu
Overview of Session

• Why a network study?
  – Fund for the NRV: First Steps Initiative
• Introducing the Network Approach
• A Network Example & Audience Sharing
• Project & Findings
  – Overview of Project Design
  – Overview of Findings
• Discussing Next Steps

WHY A NETWORK STUDY?
Expanding the Impact of CFNRV Giving

The **Fund for the NRV** will invest in community collaboration to develop common solutions to our most pressing needs.

- **First Steps: Investing in Early Childhood Education & Development**
- **Aging in Place: Encouraging Lifespan Friendly Communities**
- **Thrive: Supporting Nutrition & Health**
- **NLI: Nonprofit Leadership Institute**

**So why is CFNRV involved in this Network Study?**

Improving child education and development in the NRV was a need highlighted by a report stemming from regional planning efforts. The report, *Livability in the New River Valley* concluded a three year planning process that was funded with a $1 million grant from the Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities known as the NRV Livability Initiative. The Livability report includes 18 overarching goals with accompanying strategies to address the region’s needs in areas such as housing, community health, economic development, and the arts as well as child education and development. The Community Foundation of the NRV (CFNRV), a key partner in the planning process, committed itself to a partnership with the NRV Regional Commission to oversee the implementation phase of the work.

CFNRV has been working to better align its grant making with the goals and strategies in the Livability report. Staff members began in 2014 with an analysis of all grants awarded through its competitive grants processes over the last 5 years and found an increasing proportion of funds each year were being awarded to emergency needs such as weekend feeding programs, food pantries, and homeless shelters rather than programs with long-term, measurable goals. Moreover, the CFNRV was receiving dozens of applications from organizations working in similar areas of interest, such as early childhood education and hunger relief, yet it was unclear the extent to which these organizations knew of one another or collaborated in service delivery, resource acquisition, or information sharing. Finally, through a series of focus groups and informal conversations, staff learned that nonprofits seeking funding for long-term, sustainable programs often did not apply to the CFNRV, believing the maximum grant award of $4,000 was insufficient to support projects that could have a long-term, positive impact. To address these trends and comments, the CFNRV created in 2015 The Fund for the NRV, an unrestricted funding source intended to make a more meaningful, long-term impact on critical community needs through larger-scale grants and enhanced technical support services. The Fund for the NRV focuses on four specific issue areas, one of which is First Steps, focused on investing in Early Childhood Education and Development.
The Fund for the NRV First Steps Initiative will support early childhood education and development by:

- Developing a comprehensive understanding of how childcare centers, weekend feeding programs, early literacy activities and more impact a child’s development
- Making targeted investments that expand access to high quality, affordable childcare
- Strengthening programs that serve disadvantaged children and families

Each specific issue area of The Fund for the NRV will follow a development process that includes:

1) Gathering data on the landscape within each issue area with specific focus on the extent to which organizations within that area collaborate;
2) Offering collaborative planning funds to support an issue-area leadership team to identify common challenges and develop shared solutions;
3) Providing technical support to help the leadership team plan and carry-out one or more regional listening sessions to explore the complexities of each issue area and to develop an action plan from those sessions, and;
4) Awarding implementation funding to support specific action items within the plan.

This strategy is based on the belief that high quality projects with the potential for region-wide impact only emerge when leaders have the space and ability to talk with one another and build relationships of trust. To begin the implementation of this strategy for the area of child education and development, the CFNRV staffed sought out a baseline network study to guide efforts to strengthen the extent of collaboration in the area with the aim of also encouraging and supporting the innovative ideas arising from the greater collaboration.
Often times the issues or needs a community must address are complex or “wicked” problems. One reason these issues or needs are complex is because the resources, knowledge, and services necessary to address the issue are spread across many different organizations, necessitating a coordinated response from a multitude of organizations in order to adequately serve client needs. The network approach is about eliminating the silos that often exist by building and sustaining coordination across organizations. Rather than focusing on the collaboration between pairs of organizations, though, its aim is the overall coordination among organizations to create more of a seamless system.
The potential advantages of working as a network are leveraging resources, greater access to services, improved quality of services, enhancing community capacity and learning and innovation.
“Collaboration, if we do it right, has the possibility of us doing our work in new and different ways, maximizing our resources and it’s not even the resources, one of the resources we don’t talk about is the talent at the table. You learn from each other too….”

The advantages discussed with the last slide often times occur because of the unintended benefits as well as the intended benefits, as the quote in this slide describes.

Robin provided an example of a successful regional Child and Youth Network in Southern Alberta and what it was able to accomplish using a network approach. The details on this slide provide background on the network.
SACYHN Initiatives

Work of the network:
“at the edge”, “creative and innovative, “always pushing the envelope and trying something new”

Initiatives:
Healthy Minds, Healthy Children
Mental Health
Family Centred Care
Obesity

Additional background on the network and the initiatives stemming from it.

Slide 14

Benefits of Relationships

– Improving Communication Across Service Sectors
  • “We [education sector] know how to talk to child services, we know how to talk to health; that didn’t happen 10 years ago.”

– More Efficient, Personal Communication:
  • “To be able to pick up the phone and call someone because you now have their name and number. You can always find it, you would find a number and start there and then be funneled through 14 people before you actually reached whoever you wanted. Whereas now, with the network, its one call to one person who finds the person you need or provides you with a current list of people to contact.”

The quotes are from interviews with different members of the example network and describe the benefits they found from working as a network. These two quotes are two of the many benefits of the relationships that were facilitated, specifically around how communication improved.
Outcomes of Working Together

– Increasing Capacity for Smaller Organizations:
  • “When you’re a pretty small minnow in a very big pond to link yourself with others you still might be a small minnow in a big ocean, but you feel bigger. For all of us to attach ourselves, you feel less isolated and alone in the work you are trying to do.”

– Better Serving Children:
  • “Children now have a voice because of SACYHN. Children are a very small population. We actually have a system to move our programs forward; we are actually providing an all-inclusive care for our children.”

Quotes to highlight the outcomes of working together and how that benefited individual organizations and the client population overall.

Leveraging Resources

– Greater Access to Available Resources:
  • “What has come out of SACYHN has been extremely helpful to our complex kids and has given us [Justice] access to resources that we may not have otherwise been able to tap into.”

– Greater Opportunities for Professional Development:
  • “We don’t have the education people here to support our staff, we don’t have the ability to do the research we need to do for best practices, and so the network has allowed us to move forward and stay up to speed on best practices”

Quotes highlighting how the network created more opportunities for accessing and leverage resources.
Network Project Plan

• Phase I
  – What does the NRV’s early childhood education and development landscape look like now?
    • Which relationships exist? Which do not but could be important?
    • What client resources and services currently exist? Which do not?
    • What are the greatest needs?

• Phase II
  – Building the network using your ideas with CFNRV and partner support

The purpose of this network study is to document the relationships between and among organizations across the NRV that are committed to serving children, and to learn about the challenges and the opportunities for developing shared solutions to the problems that exist for children across the NRV. The study examines the current state of collaboration and integration of services and activities to benefit childhood education and development.

Phase I of the network survey took place from January – August 2015. First, nonprofit & public organizations with missions primarily targeting children were asked to complete the survey and then schools, libraries and other nonprofit or public organizations that offer services to children as part of their work were asked to complete a shorter survey. Both surveys asked questions related to network relationships as well as organizational & community needs. This information was then used to develop a comprehensive network map of organizations involved across the spectrum of childhood education and development.
The study sought to understand these key questions, examining both the nature of existing relationships, barriers, and community needs.
Notes:
- This graphic illustrates the response rate by type of survey respondent.
- In the survey, Schools and Libraries were only asked to indicate ties (relationships) to nonprofit organizations and not to one another.
- The study does not, at this time, include for-profit childcare centers. In order to bound the study, CFNRV decided to focus initially on organizations to which it can award funding (nonprofits and public entities).
- Other Organizations refers to those organizations that did not complete the surveys themselves, but were listed as possible partner organizations with whom survey respondents could indicate they work. These organizations are included in the study, but the information is incomplete because they did not complete the survey themselves.
IS THERE THE DESIRE FOR GREATER COLLABORATION?

Is there the need for a network approach at all?

Needs Identified by Respondents

- Funding for Existing Services
- Funding for New Services
- Increased Coordination
- Increased Communication
- Public Awareness
- Opportunities for Family Engagement
- Access to Programs/Services
- Quality of Programs/Services
- Availability of Qualified Personnel
- Professional Development
- Adaptive Capacity
- Technology

* The numbers are based on the # of respondents selecting each need and how these needs were then ranked by their importance.

Notes and Reflections:
- Survey respondents were provided with an existing list of common community needs, which also included a section to add missing needs to the list. Respondents were asked to select their top 5 perceived greatest needs and then rank them in order of priority. The above provides the results from this question.
- Please note that Adaptive Capacity = the ability to respond to immediate problems and opportunities.
- Next to increased funding, the desire for increased coordination and communication was the next highest priority, which is an indication of the need for a network.
A QUICK INTRODUCTION TO NETWORK TERMINOLOGY

**Confirmation of Ties & Density**

**Tie**
A relationship between two survey respondents

**Confirmed Tie**

**Unconfirmed Tie**

**Confirmation of Ties**
Both organizations have to report a tie to each other for the tie to be confirmed

**Density**
The proportion of all possible ties that are actually present
(Total reported ties / Total possible ties = Density)

*Confirmation reduces density*

**Notes:**
- This slide includes some basic ‘network’ terminology that will be useful in understanding the rest of the presentation.
- The results shared in this presentation only include confirmed ties. Confirmed ties are those ties for which respondents from organizations both indicated a relationship with each other. Unconfirmed ties are when only one organization recognizes a relationship with another organization. We used only confirmed ties for this presentation because they are more reliable, indicating they very likely do exist if both organizations reported a tie. This does not mean that unconfirmed ties are not important, but we wanted to underestimate rather than overestimate where ties currently exist.
- Density refers to the ratio of the number of ties reported overall compared to the total number of ties possible (i.e. how many ties between organizations exists compared to if every organization was connected to every other organization).
- Confirmation reduces density typically by around 50%. This means that by using only confirmed ties, density drops about 50% lower than with unconfirmed ties. However, in examining the network of unconfirmed ties, the same general shape was found as with the confirmed network, meaning that relying on only confirmed ties does not change the take-aways from examining the network overall.
Introducing a Network Plot
How dense is the network?

Notes:
• This is the full NRV Early Childhood Education and Development network with only confirmed ties (relationships) and labels removed. This slide is shown to provide a basic look at a network illustration and considering the concepts presented on the previous slide before discussing what this illustrations says about the NRV landscape.

• Each color represents a different county.
  - Red = Floyd
  - Green = Giles
  - Light blue = Montgomery
  - Dark Blue = Pulaski
  - Grey = NRV
  - Yellow = organizations in multiple (but not all) counties

• Shapes represent different types of organizations. The coding for some of these has not been finalized. As you know, many organizations provide multiple services/roles, so the distinctions can be confusing!
  - Down Triangle = School
  - Circle in Box = Library
  - Circle = Not for profit Early Childhood Education Provider
  - Square = Community Coalition
  - Up Triangle, Diamond, and Intersecting Triangles = Organizations that provide Extracurricular opportunities, Wrap around services or services to at-risk youth.
Centralization

How reliant the network is on central nodes (organizations)

100 % Centralization

Less Centralized

Centralization, like Density, is another important concept for understanding network structure.

Notes about Network Centralization:

• Less centralized networks will allow organizations to reach out to others without being dependent on one organization.
• More centralized networks can be more efficient, as central organizations have more capacity to plan and coordinate, but they can also create bottle necks that prevent the flow of information.
Introducing a Network Plot
How centralized is the network?

Density = 24%
Centralization = 40%

This picture is the same as slide 26, but this time the centralization value has been added (40%) and the size of the shapes vary now.

- The size of each shape indicates how many ties (relationships) an organization has with other organizations.
- Those shapes that are located in the middle and that have bigger shapes have more ties and are considered central to the network.

Slide 29

WHAT DOES THE CURRENT NETWORK LOOK LIKE IN THE NRV?
This picture is the same as the one in slide 28, but this time with the abbreviations for organizations added.

Notes:
- The network shown here is based on survey data that we were able to collect. It is limited by who completed the survey we sent both in terms of the organizations that completed it and the role of the individuals who completed it within each organization. For example, an individual within a larger organization may not know of all the relationships that organization has with others in the region, thereby limiting the ability to confirm relationships. This illustration provides a snapshot of the network at one point in time based on the data we were able to collect, which is informative for understanding the general landscape.
- The shapes with thick rims are those for which we have full information, whereas the shapes with thin rims are those for which we only have partial information.

Reminder:
- Red = Floyd
- Green = Giles
- Light blue = Montgomery
- Dark Blue = Pulaski
- Grey = NRV
- Yellow = organizations in multiple (but not all) counties
Reflections:
• Our network has relatively low density, meaning that most organizations are not connected to more than a couple other organizations.
• Our network has high centralization around regional organizations. There are a lot of ties at the center around regional organizations, and not a lot of ties among organizations at the periphery. The current network is dependent on central or regional organizations for connecting the region as a whole.
• There is clustering by region (color).
• There are a number of isolates, organizations without any confirmed connections with any of the other organizations in the network. These organizations are represented by the shapes at the top left of the picture and are not labeled on this slide for sensitivity reasons.

Participant Questions:

If an organization didn’t complete the survey how come they are listed on here?
Organizations that did complete the survey indicated a relationship with that organization. Therefore, the network includes these organizations with unconfirmed ties because we did not have survey information to confirm the relationship. These organizations are the ones with a thin rim.

What was the criteria for getting on to the list in the first place?
We included organizations on the list that CFNRV has funded in the past or knew about. The plan was to start with these organizations and then request participation in Phase II with those additional organizations identified during the first phase of this study.

Why do I see a startling lack of circles on the map?
The circles indicate childcare centers. We only included non-profit childcare centers on the list to start with the survey. We would like to include others centers that are interested in later phases of this work.
IN WHAT WAYS ARE NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WORKING TOGETHER?

FOUR WAYS OF WORKING TOGETHER

**Information Sharing**
Organizations share information regarding programs, upcoming events, organizational changes, best practices, administration, etc...

**Service Delivery**
Organizations do client referrals, and engage in shared outreach, service coordination, or case management

**Joint Planning**
Organizations engage in joint strategic planning, planning of services and activities, or planning of programming and events

**Shared Resources** – Organizations share funding, co-sponsor events, share materials, staff, volunteers, space, or technology, etc...

Notes:
- The survey asked nonprofit organizations about the different ways in which they work with each other, including: information sharing, service delivery, joint planning, and shared resources.
- Only the nonprofit group (not libraries and schools) were asked these questions. So please note that libraries and schools will not be included in the analyses presented in this section of the presentation.
Notes:
Tie (relationship) intensity is indicated by line thickness. Respondents were asked to indicate the intensity of a relationship based on a scale of 1-3 (3 being the most intense). The thickest lines indicate a 3 whereas the thinnest indicates a 1.

Reflections:
• Information sharing is not a costly tie – doesn’t require a lot of capacity– and is still not very strong in the NRV.
• Information tends to flow through central organizations.
• The caveat is that these are all confirmed ties and information sharing could be useful to understand via unconfirmed ties. However, this network is still highly centralized even when we examined unconfirmed ties.
• Information is typically the highest density network and 14% is very low. It is also important that information sharing is not highly centralized, since in a network you want a number of different paths for sharing information more directly with each other. (Think about the consequences of the game ‘telephone’ when you were a kid).
• A lot of this network is dependent on central organizations. NRCA Head Start and Smart Beginnings NRV are serving as anchor institutions for information sharing. The network is very dependent on these two organizations for relaying information. There also does not seem to be a lot of crossover between the
networks of these two central organizations. If NRCA or Smart Beginnings were removed, there could be a dramatic reduction in information sharing across the region.

- There are a number of isolated organizations in the network that don’t have a strong tie to the information sharing network (See all those organizations listed at the upper left).
- Note the triangles where information is being shared within a locality – green (Giles) and red (Floyd) – these demonstrate strong relationships within their county.
- Based on the info we have – there is an isolated relationship between 2 Radford organizations – RU Language Lab and Radford Youth/Adult Partnership, which is consistent across the activity types. They don’t appear to be connected, based on confirmed ties, with the rest of the network in any of the following slides.
Reflections:
• The service delivery network at 11% is lower density than our information sharing network. This is not surprising as service delivery requires a little more work and coordination.
• The service delivery network is also highly dependent on NRCA, followed by Smart Beginnings NRV.
• The network has many isolated organizations that are not well connected to the network. (See organizations listed on the left hand side)
• There are a couple interesting relationships at the periphery of the network that cross geographical boundaries and service sectors. They are also not dependent on the central network. The best example is SEEDS/LocoArts/Mayapple School/ YMCA/VCE. It would be interesting to learn from these kinds of relationships, as they appear to be effectively building the network and leveraging resources without depending on the central organizations.

Participant Question:
I can imagine people working within these organizations see their relationships differently. How did you deal with this?
We had multiple people from larger organizations respond to the survey. We also specifically chose respondents that we thought would be the most knowledgeable about their own work and the related work of other staff members. We specifically asked respondents to share information about relationships that coworkers have in addition to their own.
Joint Planning

There is evidence of joint planning within counties, but also opportunity to bring more organizations into the planning network

Reflections:
- Joint planning networks are often the least dense given the “cost” of this kind of tie, in terms of time, money and trust.
- SEEDS plays an interesting role of linking organizations within the network.
- NRCA Head Start and Smart Beginnings NRV (SBNRV) are serving as central actors/facilitators of joint planning and appear to be working with different organizations. SBNRV plays a coordinating role for Giles, while NRCA Head Start appears to play a similar role for Floyd – with not much crossover between those sub-networks
- The circles highlight triangles of joint planning relationships within counties.

Example 1: LA (LocoArts)/GYAP(Giles Youth-Adult Partnership)/GEEP (Giles Early Education Project)
- This cluster of Giles County organizations is consistently clustered, meaning that they work together in multiple ways and are also connected to regional partners

Example 2: HCME (Heart of the Child Music Education)/JBC (JuneBugCenter)/JC (Jacksonville Center)
- There is also a consistent set of relationships between these Floyd County organizations, all of which use the arts as an avenue for education

These kinds of relationships, particularly those that span boundaries of geography or service area can be dependent on personal relationships. What does the role of personal relationships play? How does that help limit or grow a network?
Shared Resources

There is opportunity for organizations to leverage resources for mutual benefit

Reflections:
• A reminder that shared resources does not just include money! It also includes sharing space, staff, materials, etc.
• There is again low density and a high degree of centralization in our network. The network is centralized around key regional players, particularly NRCA Head Start and NRVCARES.
• Smart Beginnings NRV is not as prominent here as it was in the information sharing, joint planning, and service delivery networks.
• County based resource sharing is again strong.
• Interestingly, there doesn’t seem to be a trend where only large organizations or small organizations are playing the role of linking the network.
• Circles point out clustering by county again as well as an interesting relationship between SEEDS and other organizations.

Example 1: Reiterates the clusters in Floyd and Giles from the previous slide
Example 2: SEEDS/RFF (Reading in Floyd is Fun)/WCOR (Women’s Club of Radford)
• This cluster spans different counties and organization types
• What are these organizations doing to overcome those geographic and service type barriers?

Questions to Consider:
• What does it mean for our community when our anchor institutions are dependent on federal funding to support the network?
• Is it sustainable to only rely on a couple organizations to share resources, info, etc.?
Multiplexity
The number of ways organizations are working together

- Organizations that work together in multiple ways (shared information, joint planning) have stronger, more robust ties

Notes:
- Multiplexity is an indicator of strength, depth or robustness in the network. If a relationship is based on more than one activity (sharing information, resources, planning, etc.), if resources go away those with multiple ties are more likely to still work together.
- Refer to the color key on the right hand side of the slide. The key identifies the number of ties identified between organizations in the network. The greater the number of ties, the more robust the relationship. Red indicates the strongest tie (relationships).
- Non-respondents have been removed for the purposes of showing multiplexity.
Notes:
- This network plot shows those organizations with the most robust ties, in other words those organizations with 3-4 activities shared. For these, if they cease one kind of activity (like joint planning) they are still connected by other types of activities that can sustain the relationship.

Reflections:
- Regional organizations tend to have multiple ties with the exception of the Giles group which also does. How can we replicate what is happening in Giles County?
- A lot of organizations drop out here.
- There is an interesting mix of large and small organizations here – some with staff, others all volunteer, suggesting that organization size doesn’t necessarily translate to more robust relationships.
- Again personal relationships may lead to more kinds of collaborations –
  - From what you know of the organizations, does it make sense that personal ties create organization relationships?
  - How do you foster that?
  - How do you sustain or institutionalize relationships that start through personal connections?
- What spurs the development of multiple kinds of shared activities – past successes, personal relationships, trust building
Participant Questions and Comments:

A lot of these are based on personal relationships. How do we help to foster these kinds of relationships?

• NRCA Head Start has long term relationships and staff have been in their positions for a long time so they know everybody. Longevity and consistency of staff is important.
• New River Community Action offers multiple services and programs and staff partner with each other to provide multiple services to shared clients.
• Floyd and Giles have low populations and better opportunity for others to know what each other are doing.
• Getting out of silos as to who we are and what we do. Pass along information or contacts to others that can help even if we can’t. How can we build this ‘philosophy’ not just within organizations but between organizations/ more holistically across the community?
• Some organizations have a more focused mission and smaller network, whereas NRCA Head Start has a more comprehensive mission (mental, physical health and nutrition in addition to education) so they have more fingers out in the community.

This reminds me of social support networks and there was an assumption that a bigger network is better and there were two things that drastically transformed my thinking. Asking how satisfied they were with the relationships? Is it meeting your needs or not? More contact doesn’t always equal better. Are there missing components in our network?

• Answers to these questions come later. The survey did ask about quality of relationships but is not reflected in this slide. We don’t necessarily want a highly dense network but we want enough connections so organizations have enough information and resources to effectively support their clients.
NRV ECED Network Structure Summary

- The network has a strong core dependent on a few regional organizations

- We have a nascent network: A network does exist, though it is not yet a strong, robust regional network overall

- As central nodes, the regional organizations are integrating the network

WHO ARE THE CENTRAL ORGANIZATIONS?
### Organizations Most Central to the Network

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ALL – Including schools &amp; libraries</th>
<th>Nonprofit Group Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NRCA Head Start (NRCA_HS)</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_CHIP</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRV Community Services (NRVCS)</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Beginnings NRV (SBNRV)</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS)</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRVCARES</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulaski County Public Schools (PCPS)</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles Early Education Project (GEEP)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE)</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksburg Children’s Museum (BCM)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New River Robotics Association (NRRA)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA Head Start (NRCA_HS)</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smart Beginnings NRV (SBNRV)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_CHIP</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRV Community Services (NRVCS)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles Early Education Project (GEEP)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRV Community Services (NRVCS)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LocoArts (LA)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacksburg Children’s Museum (BCM)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Giles Youth/Adult Partnership (GYAP)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Health Center o the NRV (CHCNRV)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New River Robotics Association (NRRA)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jacksonville Center (JC)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:**
- This chart identifies the organizations that are playing a central role in the network. The numbers indicate the number of ties that have been confirmed.

**Reflections:**
- NRCA Head Start and Smart Beginnings NRV are central
- When expanding the network to include schools and libraries, schools become central – particularly Montgomery County Public Schools
- There are a series of unexpected central players including GEEP, NRRA, BCM, LA.
  - These organizations are working within their counties but also across geographic boundaries which raises their number
  - Interestingly, these players have few or no staff
  - These organizations are innovative/nimble and serving as hubs – likely due to creative leadership and actively engaged constituencies.

**Questions:**
- Many of these central organizations are spanning boundaries, they have strong stakeholders and/or really creative leadership. How can we work to build these attributes across the larger network and how can CFNRV support this collaboration with resources?
### Organizational Reputation

Which organizations are admired and/or considered most critical and influential?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Admire</th>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NRVCS</td>
<td>10.55</td>
<td>K-12 Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_HS</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>NRCA_HS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRVCARES</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>NRVCS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBNRV</td>
<td>6.85</td>
<td>SBNRV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFNRV</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>NRCA_CHIP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>GEEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>VTE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_CHIP</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>CFNRV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K-12 Schools</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>VDSS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEEP</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Notes:
- This chart identifies the organizations that are perceived as most admired, critical, and influential in the network.

### Reflections:
- Schools are lower on the admiration scale, but seen as the most critical and influential players.
- Influential players have consistent sources of money and resources
  - GEEP is an outlier in this case and is critical – it’s a volunteer initiative but is passionate, active, and collaborative
- There are organizations – VT and VDSS – that play a broad and critical role but are not necessarily organizations with which you easily collaborate.

### Group Reactions:
- The difference between the influence and admired charts speak to how challenging it is to build a network and get all the right people involved.
- Surprised to see that the other universities weren’t on the list. VT, Radford and NRCC should be part of the network. Why aren’t they a hub? How do we build relationships with these players that are hard to reach? What is their role? There are both real and perceived boundaries to collaborating with universities that we need to discuss and overcome.
What does the network look like by county?

What is the role of the county school district?

Notes:
- The following slides show what the ECED network looks like by county.
- The thickness of the rim (border) around the shape indicates the level of information we have from that organization:
  - Thick rim - This organization completed the survey and we have full information on its relationships
  - Thin rim - This organization did not complete the survey, but was mentioned by other organizations that did complete it. Our information for these is incomplete because we cannot confirm ties.

Reflections/ Floyd Takeaways:
- There appears to be a lot of coordination through the school system and central, regional organizations.
- There appears to be a limited variety of programs offered.
- We only had partial information for JBC and HCME.
- There appears to be strong working relationships within Floyd and some strong coordination via small nonprofits, which indicates a healthy start for building a county based network.
- The Floyd school system is playing an important role connecting/coordinating.
**Giles Reflections/Takeaways**

- There appears to be strong collaboration among small nonprofits that is not dependent on the school system.
- Giles has a more robust network
- Giles County Public Schools is not leading the charge in coordinating the network although they do appear to be involved.
Montgomery Reflections/ Takeaways:
• Montgomery County has a more diffused network.
• Most of the coordination in Montgomery County is indirect, through the school district or by regional organizations.
• There appears to be less direct conversations occurring between Montgomery County based nonprofits.

Participant Question:

Were the pre-school programs at the schools factored into the survey?
• It was difficult to get responses from schools and the ones that responded were likely the ones who had more resources. So some responses factored in pre-school programs, but this was not consistent.
Pulaski Reflections/ Takeaways:

- It appears that coordination is occurring via the school system and regional organizations.
- There does not appear to be as much direct communication among local organizations.
Radford Reflections/ Takeaways:
- Radford has fewer connections overall
- There does not appear to be a central entity coordinating organizations.
- The school system is not helping to integrate the network.
This slide illustrates the difference between networks when a school plays an integrating role versus not. Notice how much larger the blue school district is in comparison to the green. Both school districts are connected to the local organizations, but the local organizations in Giles (green) are also directly connected whereas that is not so much the case in Montgomery County (blue). The organizations in Montgomery county are more reliant on the school district and the regional organizations for coordinating with each other, whereas in Giles, the organizations are working directly with one another.
WHAT ARE THE BARRIERS TO GREATER COLLABORATION?

Collaborative Challenges
Identified by the Nonprofit Group

- Geographical Distances
- Insufficient Resources
- Diversion of Time/Resources
- Frustrations of Collaboration
- Insufficient Credit
- Loss of Autonomy
- Limited Flexibility
- Not Enough Support

Notes:
Here are the top challenges to collaboration identified by non-profit survey respondents.
Collaborative Challenges
Identified by the School & Library Group

Notes:
Here are the top challenges to collaboration identified by the school and library survey respondents.

Reflections:
Similarities-
• Geographic distance was a common challenge identified by nonprofits, schools and libraries.
• Insufficient credit was also a common challenge to collaboration mentioned by both groups.

Differences-
• S&L noted that bureaucracy limits collaboration, while less so for nonprofits
• Insufficient resources was a high barrier for nonprofits, while less so for schools
• Diversion of time and resources was a high barrier for nonprofits, while less so for schools
What makes for successful collaboration?

• **The essentials to begin:**
  – Partners approach collaborating seriously
  – Upper administration at each organization supports collaboration
  – Someone in each organization is willing to reach out to the others
  – Partners develop early objectives and clarify each member’s role.
  – Partners follow through with their collaborative tasks

• **Building momentum:**
  – Early successes pave the way
  – Partners have an agreed upon communication mechanism
  – Partners trust one another and each member is reliable

• **Making it sustainable:**
  – Consider creating a network of organizations with similar goals and
  – Identify someone that can coordinate the network
  – Develop working agreements between organizations to solidify expectations and processes.

Reflections:
• Top leadership needs to be willing to support collaboration for staff to feel comfortable dedicating staff time and resources.
• It is important to have superintendents/high level administrators in the room, especially at the beginning of building a network.

Participant Comments:
The piece that needs to be acknowledged when building the network is that there is often a competition often among care providers. This is something to keep in mind and something we need to put aside for the sake of building the network, especially for those from the for profit realm.
What makes for successful collaboration?

• **Overall Take-Aways:**
  
  – **It doesn’t have to be all or nothing**
    • There are a variety of ways to collaborate. Information exchange can be just as valuable as collaborative service delivery!
  
  – **Collaboration evolves**
    • Many of these steps are ongoing and may need “re-visited” as personnel changes occur at all levels of your organization.
  
  – **Be a collaborative champion!**
    • Make sure everyone in your organization from top administration to front-line employees know why collaboration is important to your organization

Next steps will be to think through how we can strengthen the ECED network in the NRV and the CFNRV wants to support this collaborative planning work. CFNRV recognizes that Funders too often demand collaboration without providing the resources to support it, and we do not want to do this.
Reflections:

- There is agreement around key needs of the network:
  - Funding
  - Communication
  - Coordination
  - Public Awareness
- These are appropriate needs to address for the overall health of the network
- There are other needs that will be appropriate for sub-sets to pursue as well though they may not be high priorities for the full network
- Not everyone has to focus on the issues that everyone agrees on, but addressing these central ones can help all other needs as well.
WHAT BROAD AREAS SHOULD FORM THE BASIS FOR OUR NEXT DISCUSSION?

Notes:
CFNRV is committed to continuing this conversation as part of the First Steps initiative, so we can dig into our findings more deeply. In order to plan the session, we need a sense of priority topic areas:
• Do these make sense?
• What priorities areas are missing?
Also,
• Who else needs to be a part of these discussions? We need you to identify the best people from each organization to get involved.
• What specifically do we need to talk about within these priorities?

Participant Comments/ Reflections:
• We are creatures of incentive. What are the pieces of collaboration that could benefit everyone and then can try and build incentive out of getting around silos.
• A given is that we are a community that cares about the young child. This community is being created by this conversation.
• Looking at how to better create redundancy. Remove the thinking that one connection is enough that more than one tie is not just a luxury.
• University leadership and for–profit childcare centers should be invited to future meetings.
Thank You!

**Next Steps:**
- This information will be sent out to all attendees and other invitees.
- A follow-up message will be sent to gather your feedback on today – is this something you want to be a part of, can you assist with planning future conversations?
- Other surveys can be done in the next phase to build on this work – if you were not included in the initial survey but would like to participate, we can include you in our list of future surveys along with those that were on the list but did not respond.
- Set the next time for a group gathering to identify the priority areas that we can focus on as an ECED community network.
- Determine how CFNRV and other partners can help to support these priorities.
# Early Childhood Education and Development Network Study Organizational Key

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Nonprofit Group</th>
<th>ID</th>
<th>School &amp; Libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BAGC_C</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls of Southwest Virginia</td>
<td>FCPS</td>
<td>Floyd County Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAGC_S</td>
<td>Boys &amp; Girls Clubs of Southwest Virginia</td>
<td>FML</td>
<td>Charles and Ona B Free Memorial Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAR</td>
<td>Beans and Rice, Inc.</td>
<td>GCPS</td>
<td>Giles County Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BBBBS</td>
<td>Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Virginia</td>
<td>MCPS</td>
<td>Montgomery County Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BCM</td>
<td>Blacksburg Children's Museum</td>
<td>MFRL</td>
<td>Montgomery Floyd Regional Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BK</td>
<td>Bike Kitchen</td>
<td>NPL</td>
<td>Narrows Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHCNRV</td>
<td>Community Health Center of the New River Valley</td>
<td>PCPS</td>
<td>Pulaski County Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CHP</td>
<td>Community Housing Partners</td>
<td>PCPS</td>
<td>Pulaski County Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Cub Scout Pack 145</td>
<td>RCPS</td>
<td>Radford City Public Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CTR</td>
<td>Camp Timber Ridge</td>
<td>RLS2</td>
<td>Radford Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEEP</td>
<td>Giles Early Education Project</td>
<td>ID</td>
<td>Others Not Surveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GYAP</td>
<td>Giles Youth Adult Partnership</td>
<td>BPR</td>
<td>Town of Blacksburg Parks &amp; Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCME</td>
<td>Heart of the Child Music Education</td>
<td>CAC</td>
<td>Children’s Advocacy Center of the NRV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IDA</td>
<td>Intellectual Disabilities Agency</td>
<td>CFNRV</td>
<td>Community Foundation of the New River Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC</td>
<td>The Jacksonville Center for the Arts</td>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>Town of Christiansburg Parks &amp; Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>Local Community (LoCo) Arts</td>
<td>DFM</td>
<td>Holy Family Catholic Church Diapers and Formula Ministry Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LVNRV</td>
<td>Literacy Volunteers of the New River Valley</td>
<td>FASWV</td>
<td>Feeding America Southwest Virginia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MB</td>
<td>Micah's Backpack/Micah’s Garden</td>
<td>FS</td>
<td>NRV Family Shelter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_CHIP</td>
<td>New River Community Action, CHIP</td>
<td>GEA</td>
<td>NRCA Giles Emergency Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_ECF_S</td>
<td>Family Outreach Connections-NRCA</td>
<td>HH</td>
<td>Rich Creek United Methodist Church Helping Hands Narrows Backpack Food Ministry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRCA_HS</td>
<td>New River Community Action, Head Start</td>
<td>JDH</td>
<td>NRV Juvenile Detention Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRHD</td>
<td>New River Health District, VDH</td>
<td>LAS</td>
<td>Southwest Virginia Legal Aid Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRRA</td>
<td>New River Robotics Association</td>
<td>MCCS</td>
<td>Montgomery County Christmas Store</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRVCARES</td>
<td>NRV CARES</td>
<td>MCEA</td>
<td>NRCA Montgomery County Emergency Assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRVCS</td>
<td>New River Valley Community Services</td>
<td>MtOM</td>
<td>Mt. Olivet Methodist Newport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PH</td>
<td>New River Valley Paws of Hope</td>
<td>PCENTF</td>
<td>Emergency Needs Task Force Pulaski County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP</td>
<td>Planned Parenthood</td>
<td>RES</td>
<td>Radford Elf Shelf</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RORV</td>
<td>Reach Out and Read Virginia (New River Valley Pediatrics branch)</td>
<td>RFDB</td>
<td>Radford-Fairlawn Daily Bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RYAP</td>
<td>Radford Youth Adult Partnership</td>
<td>RULL</td>
<td>Radford University Language Lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBNRV</td>
<td>Smart Beginnings NRV</td>
<td>TOH</td>
<td>NRCA To Our House</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEEDS</td>
<td>SEEDS</td>
<td>VT</td>
<td>Virginia Tech</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VCE</td>
<td>Virginia Cooperative Extension</td>
<td>VTP</td>
<td>VT Helping P.A.W.S</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VICC</td>
<td>Valley Interfaith Childcare Center</td>
<td>VTE</td>
<td>Virginia Tech Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WCOR</td>
<td>Woman’s Club of Radford: Babies into Books program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>YMCAHE</td>
<td>Hensel Eckman YMCA Childcare Center</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Line Size</td>
<td>Relationship Intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thin</td>
<td>1 Intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>2 Intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thick</td>
<td>3 Intensity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Line Color</th>
<th>Multiplexity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>1 Tie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue</td>
<td>2 Ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>3 Ties</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>4 Ties</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape Color</th>
<th>County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Red</td>
<td>Floyd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green</td>
<td>Giles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light Blue</td>
<td>Montgomery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dark Blue</td>
<td>Pulaski</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>Radford</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow</td>
<td>Multiple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gray</td>
<td>NRV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape</th>
<th>Org Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Down Triangle</td>
<td>School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle in Box</td>
<td>Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circle</td>
<td>Early Childhood Education Provider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Square</td>
<td>Community Coalition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up Triangle</td>
<td>Extracurricular services, wrap around</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond</td>
<td>services, services to at-risk populations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intersecting Triangles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape Size</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Degree Centrality</td>
<td>The more ties= larger size</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shape Rim Size</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thin</td>
<td>Partial Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thick</td>
<td>Full Information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>