

# A User's Guide

## Alliance Overview

With organizational roots stretching back more than 100 years, the **Alliance for Strong Families and Communities** is a national organization dedicated to achieving its vision of a healthy society and strong communities for all children, adults, and families through the excellence and influence of a network of nonprofit human-serving organizations across America.

Served by a headquarters in Washington DC and a national operations center in Milwaukee, the Alliance network is made up of organizations that strengthen families and build communities through their program excellence, leadership, innovations, partnerships, influence and advocacy. These organizations look to the Alliance for trend-spotting, useful knowledge, vital networking, unique cohort experiences and tested solutions. The Alliance supports the excellence of its network with its signature **Commitments of High-Impact Nonprofit Organizations**, a comprehensive, evidence-based framework of values and practices that provide a pathway to organizational excellence and impact.

The Alliance's nearly 500 member organizations represent a significant force in the nonprofit human service sector. Collectively, they:

- Serve more than 4.6 million clients annually
- Operate with a combined \$6.3 billion budget
- Employ approximately 138,300 full-time employees
- Operate in 2,200 locations
- Are governed by more than 8,600 board members
- Benefit from the goodwill of roughly 200,000 volunteers
- Receive generous support from approximately 296,000 individual donors

## Engaging with the Alliance for Strong Families and Communities

The Alliance maintains a broad array of resources to help build the capacities and influence of its member organizations. To receive full advantage of these resources, each organization should ensure the completeness and accuracy of its key staff contacts in its Alliance member record, so that personnel in all

operational areas can access the resources of greatest value to them.

Key resources are provided through the following: units and programs:

**Alliance Peer Exchange Groups (APEXs)** – As a key element of its value proposition, the Alliance facilitates peer-to-peer networking among staff at member organizations through Alliance Peer Exchange groups. Organized around various professional disciplines, program orientations or other areas of common interest, groups interact regularly via listserve conversations, teleconferences and in-person gatherings, and some curate topical collections of resources available on our website. Membership in most APEXs is open to any Alliance network staff member. Visit [alliance1.org](http://alliance1.org) to express interest in any of the following APEXs:

- CEOs/Executive Directors [membership restricted]
- Child Welfare Policy
- Civic Engagement
- Complex Organizations
- Early Education Policy
- Evaluation & Research
- Executive/Administrative Support
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Financial Management / CFOs
- Philanthropic Resource Development
- Health & Wellness
- Health Policy
- Human Resources
- Human Trafficking Policy
- Marketing & Communications
- Performance Excellence
- Residential Services
- Senior & Executive Leadership
- Small Budget Organizations
- Strategy Leaders
- Technology/IT

**Policy and Mobilization** – As it works to accelerate the impact of its national network, the Alliance also pursues an agenda of systemic reform. From its Washington DC-based headquarters the Alliance advances policy recommendations at the national and state levels and strategically mobilizes our network to influence the systems and sectors that can together ensure that all people have the opportunity to live safe, healthy and prosperous lives. The Policy and Mobilization staff

facilitates APEX groups in the areas of child welfare, health policy, early education and human trafficking.

**The Center on Leadership** – A premier leadership development experience that builds the capacity of nonprofit human-serving leaders to unleash the power of change for self, team, organization and community. The Center fields a wide array of webinars and conferences featuring expert thought-leaders. See full resources and upcoming education opportunities at [alliance1.org](http://alliance1.org).

**The Center for Engagement and Neighborhood Building**  
A center of experience and knowledge that elevates and continually develops the proven values and approaches of the settlement house and family services movements. The Center unites a wide range of stakeholders to embrace these values and encourages the adoption of engagement practices and policies in our network and at the individual, family, community, state and federal levels. The Center partners with Aramark to offer the Aramark Building Community Academy, a forum to enhance the operational and program excellence of community centers in the areas of community health and wellness and employment.

**Severson National Information Center** – An authoritative, comprehensive and responsive knowledge resource providing our network with professional, customized and on-demand research services and 24/7 electronic access to more than 19,000 scholarly journals, books and member-contributed materials including policies, procedures, manuals, articles and more. As a strategic partner to our network organizations, Severson provides robust accreditation support as well as knowledge solutions in the form of emerging trends and best practices that equip human serving organizations to achieve high impact.

**Evaluation and Research Services** – Promotes a culture of genuine impact and performance excellence across the human-serving sector by building organizations' capacity to measure impact, by generating and translating knowledge to inform evidence-based practice and policy, and by exploring how emerging science can be most effectively applied to create change for families and communities.

**Families in Society** – Social work's most enduring professional journal, advancing translational research and critical analysis on issues that relate to the capabilities and well-being of individuals, families, and communities, with a commitment to inform and inspire collaboration between participants, service providers and other community stakeholders.

**FEI Behavioral Health** – A social enterprise wholly owned by the Alliance, with more than 35 years of experience in offering flexible solutions for the full spectrum of workforce resilience goals ranging from EAP, work-life, and wellness to crisis preparedness and management services.

**Alliance Community Development Financial Institution**  
Operates a uniquely impactful economic empowerment program called **Ways to Work**. The program is replicated by Alliance member organizations across the country and has helped more than 35,000 credit-stressed families to greater self-sufficiency via financial education and coaching and loans of nearly \$80 million since 1984.

## Other opportunities for engagement

**National Job Board** – provides a platform for nonprofit human service organizations to nationally publicize employment opportunities. Listings are complimentary for Alliance members.

**PurchasingPoint** – provides cost savings through group purchases on a wide array of products and services.

**Grant opportunities** – the Alliance distributes weekly alerts on available grants and maintains a grants directory on its website.

**Customized research services** – staff librarians in the Severson National Information Center can complete customized research projects submitted by members online or via phone.

*For help in accessing these resources, members should visit [alliance1.org](http://alliance1.org) or contact Tami Robinson, member relations specialist, at [trobinson@alliance1.org](mailto:trobinson@alliance1.org) or 414-359-6580.*

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[alliance1.org](http://alliance1.org)