

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

SOCIAL IMPACT AND THEORY OF CHANGE

Debi Armstrong, M.S., LCPC
Vice President of Quality and Information Systems
Lara Raper, M.S.
Quality Coordinator
The Baby Fold

Learning Objectives

- Understand concept of social impact
- Understand concept of “Theory of Change”
- Understand differences between traditional Logic Models and Theory of Change Models
- Understand components needed to build a Theory of Change Model

What is social impact?

- Changes to social conditions that are meaningful and measurable
- Societal changes
 - Poverty
 - Social Justice
 - Equality
 - Health
 - Safety and Security – reduce child abuse/neglect
- Environmental changes
 - Conservation
 - Energy
 - Environmental health
 - Climate change

Types of Impact

- Impact on Individuals
- Influence
- Leverage



Types of Impact: Individuals

- Meaningful and measureable changes in people's lives:
 - Awareness, knowledge, skills, behavior
 - Health/behavioral health
 - Family stability
 - Financial/educational status
 - Safety, permanency, well-being
 - Individual impact collectively affects community impact
- Strategies to achieve impacts include direct services, therapy, education, support groups



Types of Impact: Influence

- Influence includes:
 - Visibility of issue/solution
 - Change in community norms
 - Change in public will
 - Changes in partnerships
 - Changes in policy or practice
 - Legislative/political influence
- Strategies include research, technical assistance, advocacy, dissemination of information



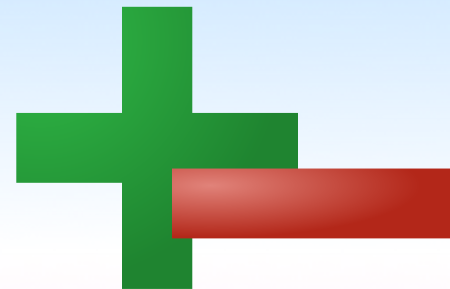
Types of Impact: Leverage

- Leverage includes:
 - Availability of public funds
 - New physical resources
 - Private investment resources
 - Changes in philanthropy, e.g. new foundations,
- Strategies include co-investment, capital investment, funding and resource allocation

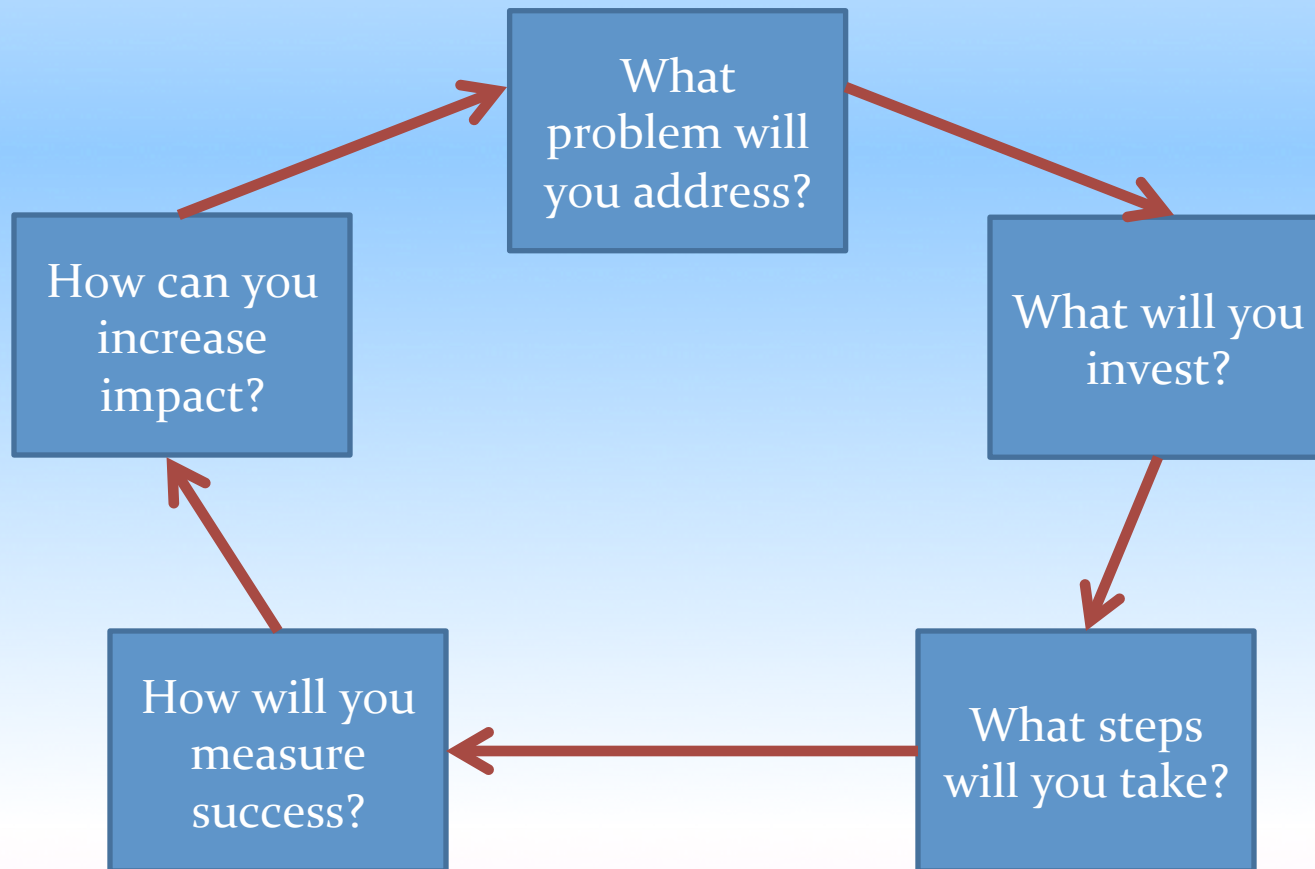


How is social impact created?

- Created by activities and investments
 - Time
 - Expertise
 - Material assets
 - Network connections
 - Reputation
 - Human resources
- Social impacts can be
 - Positive or negative
 - Intentional or unintentional



Social Impact Creation Cycle



What problem will you address?

- Mission driven – needs to align with your purpose for being
- Related to organizational culture
- What societal and environmental causes are most important to your agency?
- Need to prioritize issues – can't boil the ocean



What will you invest?

- Need to determine organizational capacity to invest in a Theory of Change model to increase social impact:
 - Time
 - Monetary commitment
 - Resources
 - Technology
 - Expertise
 - Physical space
 - Employees

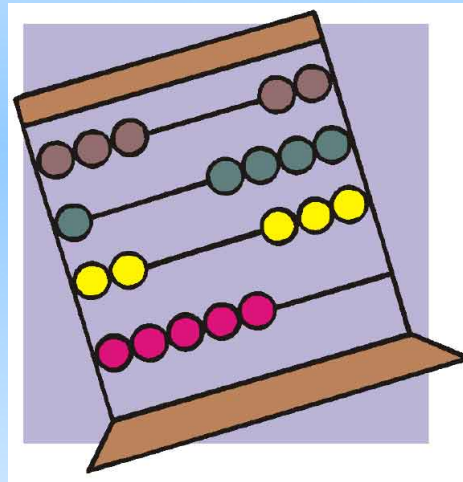


What steps will you take?

- Develop theory about what actions create desired change
- Look at research and best practice
- Think outside the box - innovation
- Generate model about how strategies and actions effect change



Measurement



**“Not everything that counts can be counted,
and not everything that can be counted,
counts.”**

- **Albert Einstein**

How will you measure success?

- What is the purpose of the measurement?
- Are we measuring the right indicators?
- Which measures are most critical?
- What kinds of measurement approaches are needed?
- Develop measurement plan



How can you increase impact?

- Goal is to improve strategy and interventions in order to improve impact
- Evaluate data collected and relationship to strategy
- Strategize enlarging impact
 - Innovation – improvements in models or operations
 - Successful scaling – increasing size or reach of services
 - Collaboration - sharing expertise and resources to help other organizations increase impact

Mapping the course to impact

- Two Major Models used
 - Traditional Logic Model
 - Theory of Change Model
- Often used interchangeably
- Each have unique purposes

Logic Models and Theory of Change Models - Differences

- Logic Model
 - United Way format is most familiar
 - Has a 30 year history
 - Clear identification of goals/outcomes
 - First widespread attempt to depict a program
 - Components attempt to match activities with outcomes

Logic Model

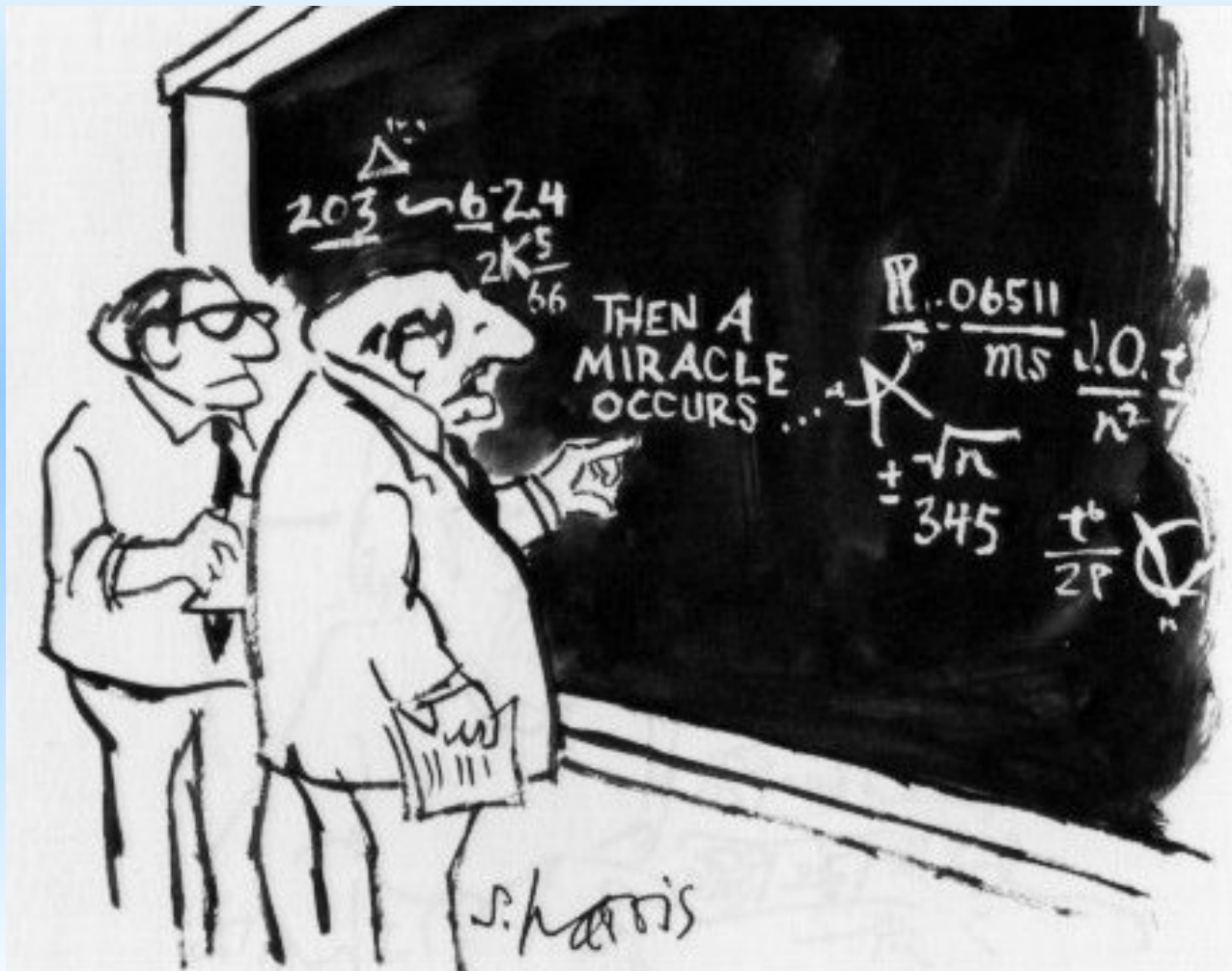
| INPUTS | ACTIVITIES | OUTPUTS | OUTCOMES | | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|--------------|-----------|--|---|---|
| | | | SHORT TERM | INTERMEDIATE | LONG TERM | | | |
| <p>INPUTS are resources dedicated to or consumed by the program; constraints on the program.</p> <p>Examples of INPUTS or resources include (but are not limited to):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Money ✓ Staff ✓ Volunteers ✓ Equipment ✓ Supplies <p>Examples of constraints include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Laws ✓ Regulations <p>Whenever possible, quantify INPUTS (for example, 2.5 FTE social workers or 270 volunteer hours.)</p> | <p>ACTIVITIES are what the program does with the INPUTS and resources to fulfill its mission or to achieve its outcomes.</p> <p>Examples of ACTIVITIES or services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Training ✓ Education ✓ Counseling ✓ Mentoring ✓ Internships <p>Whenever possible, quantify ACTIVITIES to show information about frequency, duration, participation, etc.</p> | <p>OUTPUTS are the direct products of program ACTIVITIES</p> <p>Examples of OUTPUTS or products include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Classes taught ✓ Counseling sessions conducted ✓ Educational material distributed ✓ Hours of Service delivered ✓ Participants served | <p>OUTCOMES are the benefits for people, for participants during and after program activities; effects on knowledge, attitudes, skills, behavior, condition or status during the program. Whether stated or implied, OUTCOMES are presented in terms of the benefit to the participant.</p> | | | <p>[Participants benefit from...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ New knowledge ✓ Increased skills ✓ Changed attitudes or values | <p>[The knowledge/skills /attitudes lead to...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Modified behavior | <p>[The modified behavior leads to...]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Improved Condition ✓ Altered status |

Traditional pipeline logic model

- Starts with target population
- Program resources
- Interventions and activities (inputs)
- Measurement of activities (outputs)
- Outcomes
 - Short term
 - Intermediate
 - Long term

Limits of pipeline logic model

- Linear - limits multiple causal strands between activities and outcomes
- Lacks clarity in showing multiple causal strands between activities, target population variables and outcomes
- Lacks differentiation of timelines for activities to maximize successful change
- No clear feedback loops for what repeating processes might build success

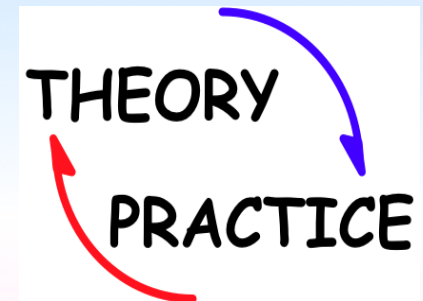


“I think you should be more explicit here in step two.”

from *What's so Funny about Science?* by Sidney Harris (1977)

What is Theory of Change?

- Theory of Change
 - Carol Weiss popularized theory of change approach in 1995*
 - Method to capture components of complex initiatives
 - Impact versus outcomes-based
 - Causal model
 - Articulates underlying assumptions



Theory of Change

- Strategy level work
- Theory about which actions or interventions will create desired change to solve an identified problem



Theory of Change Model

- A representation of how and why a complex change process will succeed under specific circumstances
- Both a process and a product
- “Results Chain”
 - context, explanations & hypotheses added
- Takes into account research and historical perspectives

**“If you don’t know where
you are going, any road
will take you there.”**



-Alice in Wonderland

Need For a Good Roadmap

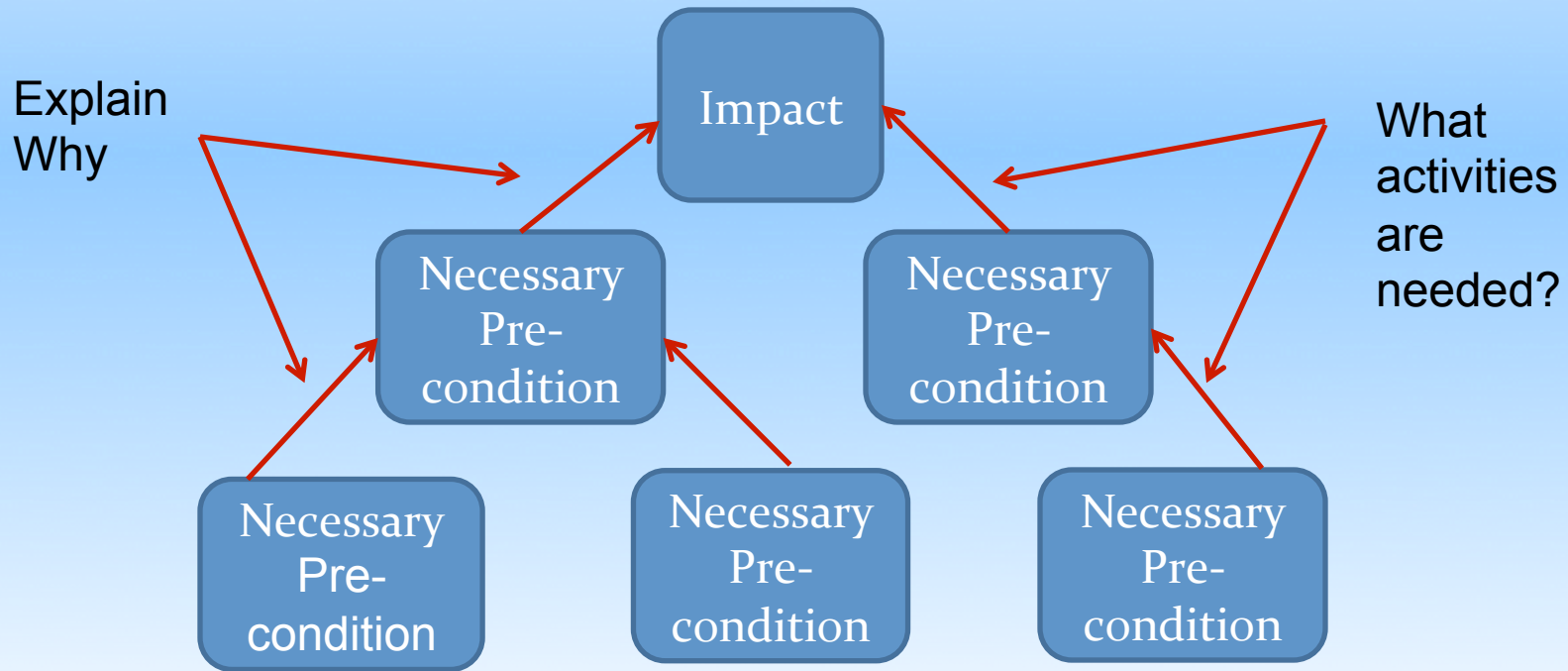
- Theory of Change identifies:
 - Where you want to go
 - The route you will take to get there
 - Why certain milestones are necessary steps in reaching your destination
 - What is my strategy to ensure the milestones are met, e.g. buying gas
 - What assumptions are you making about the trip you are taking, e.g. own a car
 - Helps avoid going somewhere (even if it's nice) if it doesn't take you where you want to go



Components of Theory of Change

- Problem definition
- Impact
 - Includes pre-conditions or intermediate change leading to impact
- Strategy
- Rationale
- Assumptions
- Indicators and measurement system

Theory of Change Model

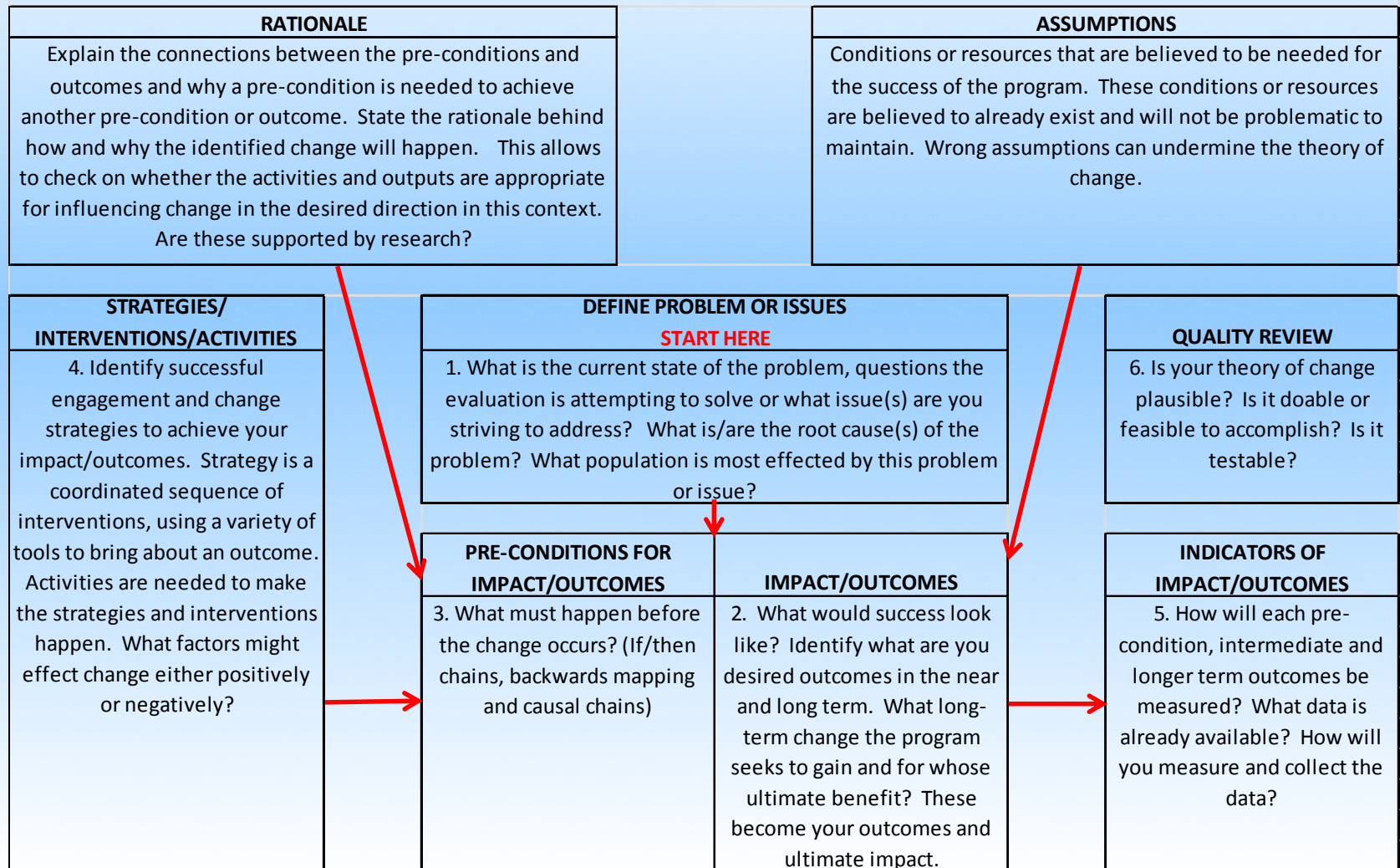


All pre-conditions must be achieved before impact is achieved
Pre-conditions can be seen as intermediate outcomes
Document assumptions about how and why change occurs

Building a Theory of Change Model

- Starts with the end result – what is the problem and what change is needed to resolve it?
- What are the pre-conditions for change to occur?
- Determine strategy and interventions which will create the change
- Need to include rationale for the strategy
- Need to identify the assumptions being made for change to occur?
- How will you measure your impact? What indicators will be used to determine if pre-conditions are met?
- Is your Theory of Change plausible, feasible and testable?

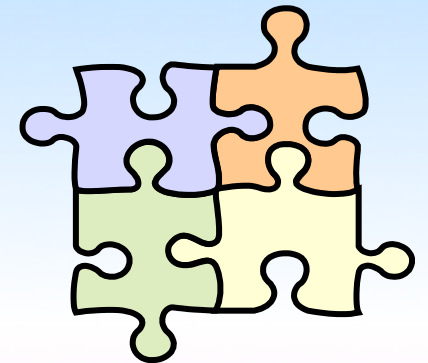
THEORY OF CHANGE MODEL



7. **NARRATIVE** - Summarizes theory and explains the pathways of change, highlight some of your major assumptions, rationales and interventions, and present a compelling case as to how and why your program makes a difference.

Define the Problem

- What are the root causes of the problem?
- Are there opportunities available as a result of the problem?
- What are the consequences of the problem?
- Who is affected by the problem?
- Are there community needs or assets related to the problem?



Expected Impact

- Referred to as results/outcomes/impact
- What does it look like if success is achieved?
- What is the benefit to the target population?
- What has to change (pre-conditions needed) if the impact is going to be achieved?
- Helps avoid doing good things that don't get you to where you want to go

Assumptions

- Beliefs about necessary conditions or resources you think already exist
- Are typically not problematic
- Conditions that underlie the solutions
- Are critical in the validity of the theory

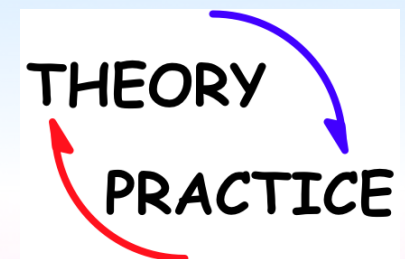
Strategy

- Solutions that work to solve the problem
- Coordinated sequence of interventions
- Based on research or historical experience
- Interventions include a variety of activities and tools
- Innovative methods and “Out of the box” thinking
- Interventions follow outcomes



Rationale

- Why that intervention?
 - Which interventions done in certain ways are most likely to bring about change desired?
- Why that pre-condition?
 - Need to explain every step of why pre-conditions are needed
 - Why they would lead to future outcomes and impact
- Connects interventions in causal relationship to outcomes



Measurement Plan

- Need to identify indicators to measure pre-conditions and ultimate impact
- Every indicator should answer:
 - What?
 - For Whom?
 - How Many?
 - How Good?
 - By When?



Why indicators for pre-conditions?

- Need to know how well a precondition needs to be met in order to reach the next or ultimate goal
- Example
 - Logic Model would tell you that the after school program is an activity and improved reading scores is an outcome. Attendance might be an intermediate outcome.
 - TOC model would tell you that students need to attend after school programs at least 3 days a week for at least 60 days with specific curriculum focus for reading scores to improve.

Measurement Matrix Example

MEASUREMENT PLAN

| Pre-Condition | Indicators | Benchmark or Target | Data Source/Data Collection Method | Reporting Method |
|---------------|------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|------------------|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

Organizational Measurement Maturity

- The more mature an organization's measurement system is, the more likely it will produce greater and more meaningful impacts.
- Dimensions of Impact Measurement Maturity
 - Purpose of measurement system: capacity to use as continuous performance improvement
 - Types of metrics gathered: range and meaningfulness of impact measured
 - Strategy: relationship between the impact measurement system and the organization's strategies and business models

Model for Level of Measurement Maturity

- **Emergent** – tracking funds raised and expenses
- **Established** – monitor the quantity and quality of services
- **Goal driven** – functioning logic models
- **Integrated** – embedded performance metrics into managerial processes; measures drive decisions
- **Evolutionary** – support learning, drive resource allocations, used to revise strategy for continuous improvement in social impact

Logic Models and Theory of Change Models - Differences

● Logic Model

- Graphic illustration of program components
- Clearly id outcomes, inputs, and activities
- Start with program and articulates components
- Don't always identify indicators-how an outcome is to be measured
- Short or intermediate outcomes instead of pre-conditions
- Assumptions and strategy are not articulated

● Theory of Change

- Link program components to HOW and WHY change occurs
- Identify assumptions about desired change
- Start with impact desired and identify approaches needed
- Require identification of indicators – necessary to determine if precondition met
- Need to know how well pre-condition is met to determine impact
- Requires justifications – articulate strategy as cause and effect

Application of Theory of Change

- Start with the problem
 - Unemployment
- Determine the impact
 - Increase job preparedness
- How will change occur?
 - Better preparation for employment through education
- What are your assumptions?

Application of Theory of Change

- Determine the desired immediate and long term pre-conditions that contribute to the desired impact
 - Increase desire to read
 - Increase opportunities to read
 - Increase reading ability
 - Increase overall academic performance
- What are your indicators for each pre-condition?
- What are the indicators of successful impact?
 - Better reading scores
 - Better GPA

Application of Theory of Change

- Determine who will most benefit from the impact
 - School aged children
- Determine the strategies needed for your theory to produce change:
 - After school reading program
 - Specific research based curriculum
 - Three days a week for 90 minute sessions
- What is the rationale for these interventions?
- What factors might effect change?

Using a “So That” Chain

Strategy: Provide an after school reading program

So That

Children can be safe and supervised

So That

Children can be provided an opportunity to learn

So That

Children can be interested and engaged in reading activities

So That

Children can learn to read at a higher level

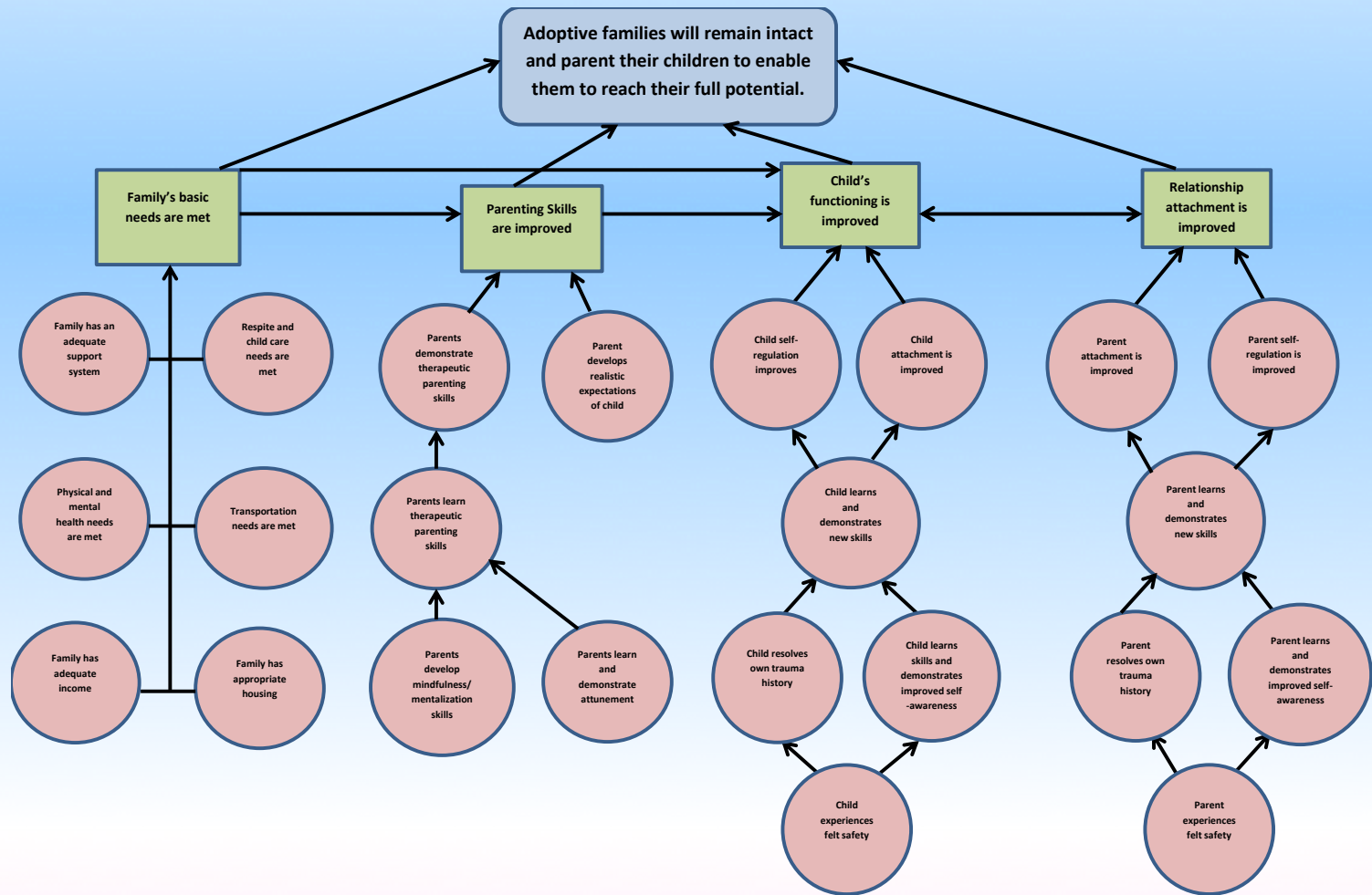
So That

Children are more likely to perform better in school

So That

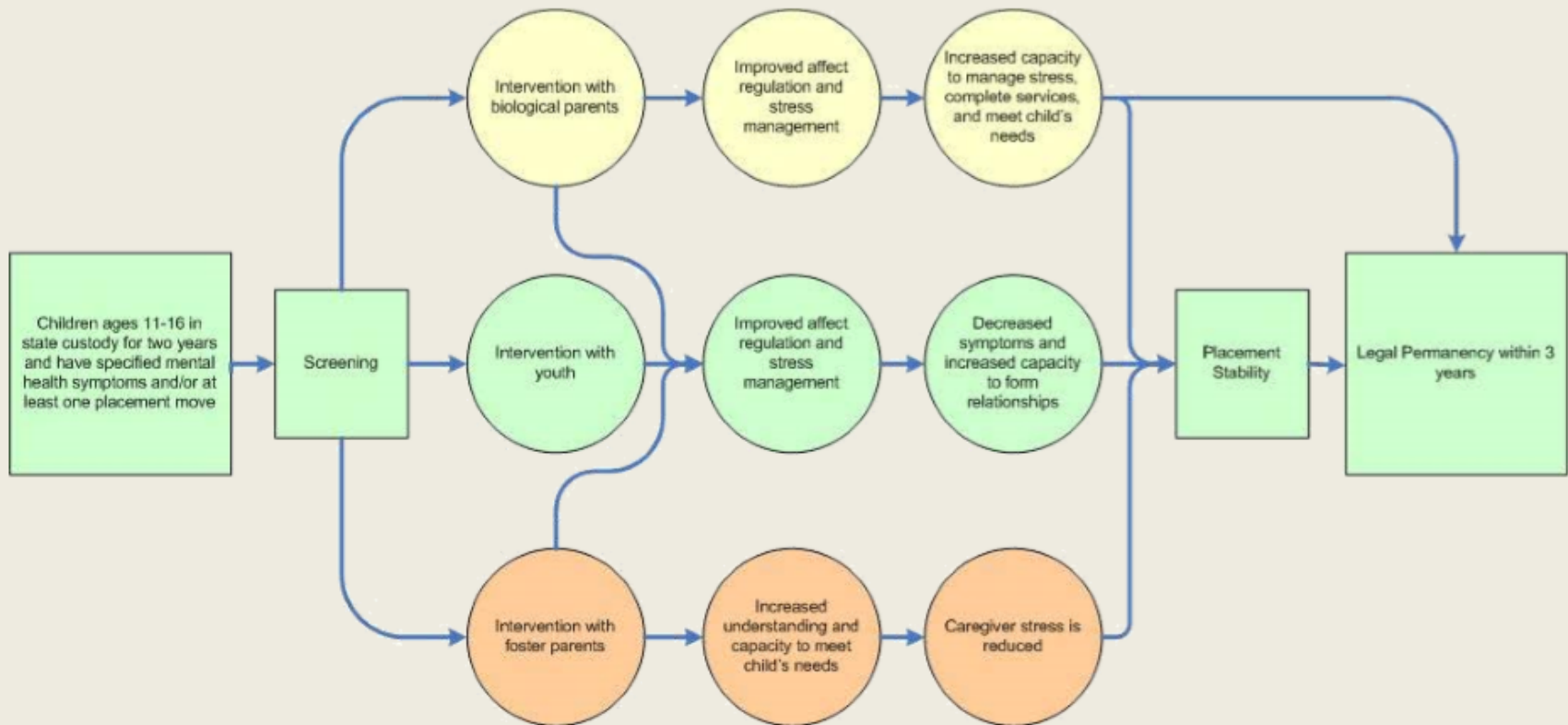
Children will have more opportunities to be employed as adults

Example – Adoption Preservation



Example – DCFS Initiative

Theory of Change: Summary Diagram



References and Resources

- Clark, Helene. *Theories of Change and Logic Models: Telling Them Apart*. 2004. Web Power Point presentation. 5 Nov. 2015. <www.theoryofchange.org>.
- Clark, H. *Intervention Logic and Theories of Change*. 2012. Web PowerPoint presentation. 5 Nov. 2015. <www.actknowledge.org>.
- *Connell, James P. and others. *New Approaches to Evaluating Community Initiative. Concepts, Methods, and Contexts*. Roundtable on Comprehensive Community Initiative for Children and Families. Queenstown: Aspen Institute Publications Office, 1995. Web full text version. 5 Nov. 2015. <<http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED383817>>.
- Connell, J. and Kubisch, A. *Applying a Theory of Change Approach to the Evaluation of Comprehensive Community Initiative: Progress, Prospects, and Problems*. Queenstown: Aspen Institute Publications Office, 1998. article. 5 Nov. 2015.
- Department of Children and Family Services. *Illinois Trauma Focus Model for Reducing Long-term Foster Care*. 2015. Web Power Point presentation. 5 Nov. 2015. <<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/resource/pii-il-trauma>>.
- Epstein, M. and Yuthas, K. *Measuring Social Impacts*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2014. Print.
- Montague-Clouse, L. and Taplin, D. *The Basics of Theory of Change*. New York: ActKnowledge, 2012. Web Power Point presentation. 5 Nov. 2015. <www.actknowledge.org>.
- Taplin, D. and Rasic, M. *Facilitator's Source Book for Leading Theory of Change Development Session*. New York: ActKnowledge, 2012. Web article. 5 Nov. 2015. <www.actknowledge.org>.
- Taplin, D and Clark, H. *Theory of Change Basics: A Primer on Theory of Change*. New York: ActKnowledge, 2012. Web article. 5 Nov. 2015 <www.actknowledge.org>.
- The Annie Casey Foundation. *A Practical Tool For Action, Results and Learning*. Baltimore: Organizational Research Services, 2004. Web report. 5 Nov. 2015. <<http://www.aecf.org/upload/publicationfiles/cc2977k440.pdf>>.
- Multiple resources located at: <http://learningforsustainability.net/evaluation/theoryofchange.php>
- **Software Available**
 - Free TOCO (Theory of Change Online) Software at <http://www.theoryofchange.org>
 - Mind Mapper Software <http://mindmapper.com>

QUESTIONS?