

Developing Logic Models For Systems Of Care: A Theory Of Change Approach

Presented by
Mario Hernandez, Ph.D.
and Sharon Hodges, Ph.D.
19th Annual Research Conference
February 25, 2006
Tampa, Florida




The Challenge Of Complexity

- Human service systems are often asked to respond to multiple and changing needs
- Service delivery environments are complex and frequently changing
- Size
- Effective systems must find ways to respond and manage complexity



"From an early age, we are taught to break apart problems, to fragment the world. This apparently makes complex tasks and subjects more manageable, but we pay a hidden, enormous price. We can no longer see the consequences of our actions; we lose our intrinsic sense of connection to a larger whole" (p.3).

Peter Senge (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.




Goals Of Workshop For Grantees

- Develop local capacity for using theories of change to build a broad vision of local system of care.
- Develop local capacity for using logic models to translate the broad vision of the federal grant program into a theory of change that captures the complexities and textures that are inherent in their local communities.



So That Local Vision Grounded In:


- Clear understanding of mission and expectations of Federal Grant Program
- Clear understanding of ideas inherent in Systems of Care as they relate to grant program



Defacto System

- Diffused Child Mental Health Services
- Unclear Pathways to Care

} Other Sectors Growing



Reform: Systems Of Care

Improved Outcomes

f

Improved pathways to care

+ Improved availability of services

+ Improved implementation of effective practices across organization levels

Values and Principles of a System of Care



Basic Information About Theories Of Change



Linking Ideas To Action

Conceptualization and Operationalization


Implementation of Services

Assumption: the degree of overlap between the two functions contributes to improved planning and service delivery



What Is A Theory Of Change?

The underlying assumptions and strategies that guide local system of care development and are believed by local planners/builders to be critical to producing changes in available service/supports that are expected to lead to improvements for children and their families.




Theory Of Change

Beliefs that system, planners, builders, and implementers have about:

- What children with serious emotional/behavioral challenges and their families need from services/supports in order to thrive in their communities

and...


- What local strategies will enable these services/supports to become available and meet those needs

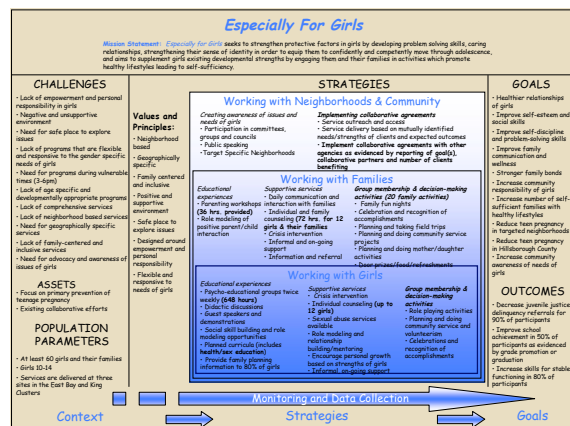
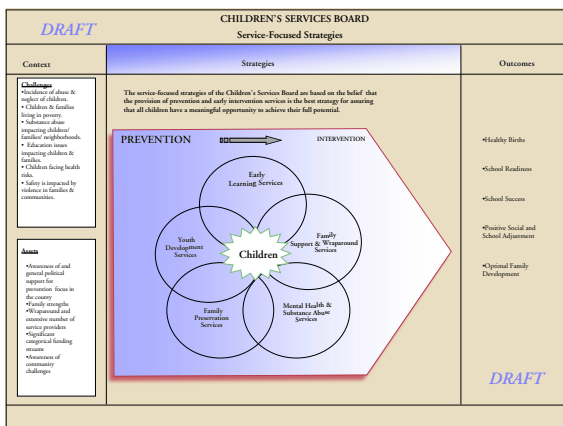
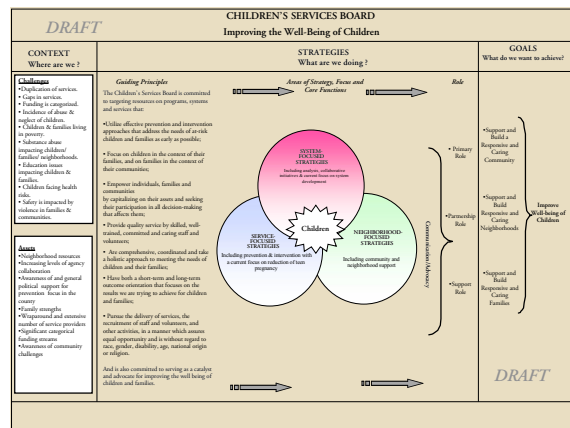
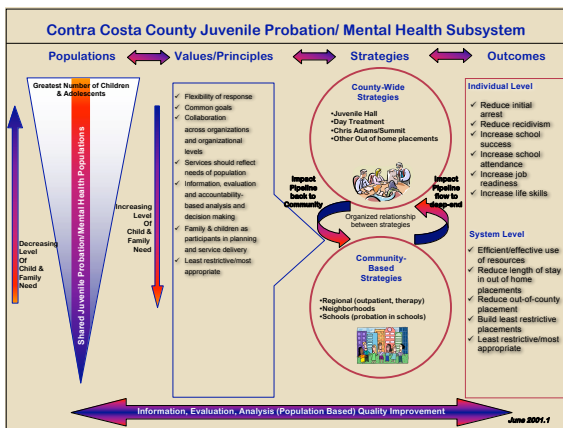
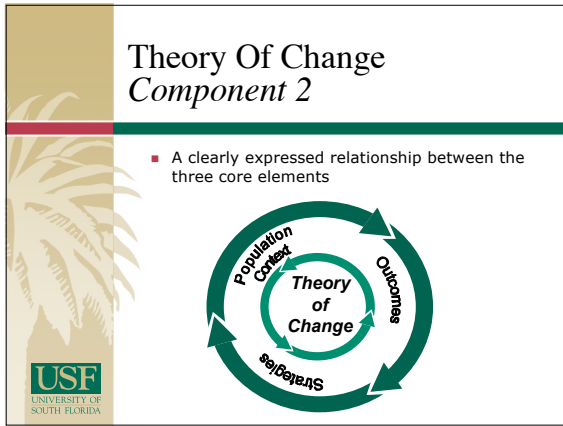


Theory Of Change *Component 1*

Three core elements of a Theory of Change:

- A clear description of the local population of concern
- A clear articulation of goals and outcomes
- A clear description of local strategies that includes services/supports and the associated infrastructure






Community-Based Theories Of Change Lessons Learned Using A Theory Of Change Approach

- **Benefits:**
 - ◆ Targets efforts of organization
 - ◆ Allows organization to link their ideas to action
 - ◆ Provides stability in times of crisis or change
- **Challenges:**
 - ◆ Must have an idea or theory
 - ◆ Must support the implementation of this idea
 - ◆ Must know if implementation is true to the idea
 - ◆ Must know whether theory produced anticipated change
 - ◆ Must maintain ability to adapt idea



Role Of Evaluator(s)



Maximize The Relationship




Develop Maximum Overlap Between the Implementation Partners and the Evaluation Staff




Role Of Evaluator(s)

- **Dual Role**
 - ◆ Collect national data
 - ◆ Be useful to local implementation
 - Includes using national data
 - Includes local efforts that support implementation




- **Effective evaluation is not an "event"** that occurs at the end of a project, but is an ongoing process which helps decision makers better understand the project; how it is impacting participants, partner agencies and the community; and how it is being influenced/impacted by both internal and external factors.


Weiss, C. (1995). Nothing as practical as good theory: Exploring theory-based evaluation for comprehensive community initiatives for children and families. In Connell, J. P., Kubisch, A. C., Schorr, L. B., & Weiss, C. H. (Eds.), *New approaches to evaluating community initiatives: concepts, methods, and contexts*. Queenstown, MD: Aspen Institute.



Why Are You Doing An Evaluation?

- Improving your program
- Evaluating the effectiveness of a program
- Generating new knowledge





The Evaluation Forum (1999).

- The theory of change approach helps to clarify each element of the initiative, it enables the community to respond to the question:
"To what do I want to be held accountable?"

Beyond Accountability

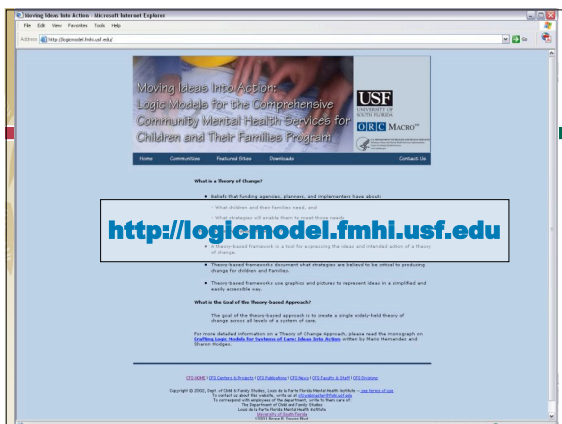
- Unlike approaches that rely only on the tracking of outcomes and indicators to build accountability, the theory of change approach:
 - ◆ focuses on more than outcome information
 - ◆ anchors measures in a context
 - ◆ increases the usefulness of collected information

Evaluation Questions

- An effective way to narrow the possible field of evaluation questions is through the development of a theory of change framework.
- Once you have built consensus on a theory of change framework, you will find that it provides you and your evaluation team with a focus for your evaluation by clarifying which variables are critical to achieving desired outcomes.

Developing Local Theory

| | |
|--|--|
| Phase I Pre-Planning | Stage 1: Form Workgroup |
| | Stage 2: Articulate Mission |
| | Stage 3: Identify Goals and Guiding Principles |
| Phase II Theory of Change Development | Stage 4: Develop the Population Context |
| | Stage 5: Map Resources and Assets |
| | Stage 6: Assess System Flow |
| | Stage 7: Identify Outcomes and Measurement Parameters |
| | Stage 8: Define Strategies |
| Phase III Implementation | Stage 9: Create and Fine-tune the Framework |
| | Stage 10: Elicit Feedback |
| | Stage 11: Use Framework to Inform Planning, Evaluation, and Technical Assistance Efforts |
| | Stage 12: Use Framework to Track Progress and Revise Theory of Change |



Moving Ideas into Actions
Logic Models for the Comprehensive
Community Mental Health Services for
Children and Their Families Program

<http://logicmodel.fmhi.usf.edu>

What is a Theory of Change?
 • Identify the leading causes, processes, and outcomes to be achieved
 • What activities will enable these "outcomes" to occur?
 • Identify the underlying assumptions, and
 • Identify the underlying assumptions, and
 • Theory-based Framework is a tool for organizing the ideas and identified actions of a theory of change.

What is the goal of the Theory-based Approach?
 The goal of the Theory-based approach is to create a single, unified theory of change across all levels of care.

For more detailed information on a Theory of Change approach, please read the monograph on [Creating Logic Models for Systems of Early-Childhood, Child, and Family Services](#) written by Marie Hernandez and Robert Hooper.

©2004 USF Center for Health Evaluation, USF Health, USF Health & Society, USF Health
 Copyright © 2004, Dept. of Child & Family Studies, Univ. of South Florida Health Services - [see below](#) [USF](#)
 To contact us about the Health, Child, and Family Studies Program
 the Department of Child and Family Studies,
 Univ. of South Florida Health Services,
 4072 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.,
 Tampa, FL 33620-5700