GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK
A National Technical Assistance Center

WELCOME

Building Evidence of Success for Kinship Programs: Tips and Strategies

July 17, 2023

We will begin at the top of the hour

Please type in the **chat** - your name, state, tribe (if applicable), and role

We'll pause for questions throughout – please type your questions in the **chat** box at any time

All participants will receive a link to the slides and the recording by the end of the week

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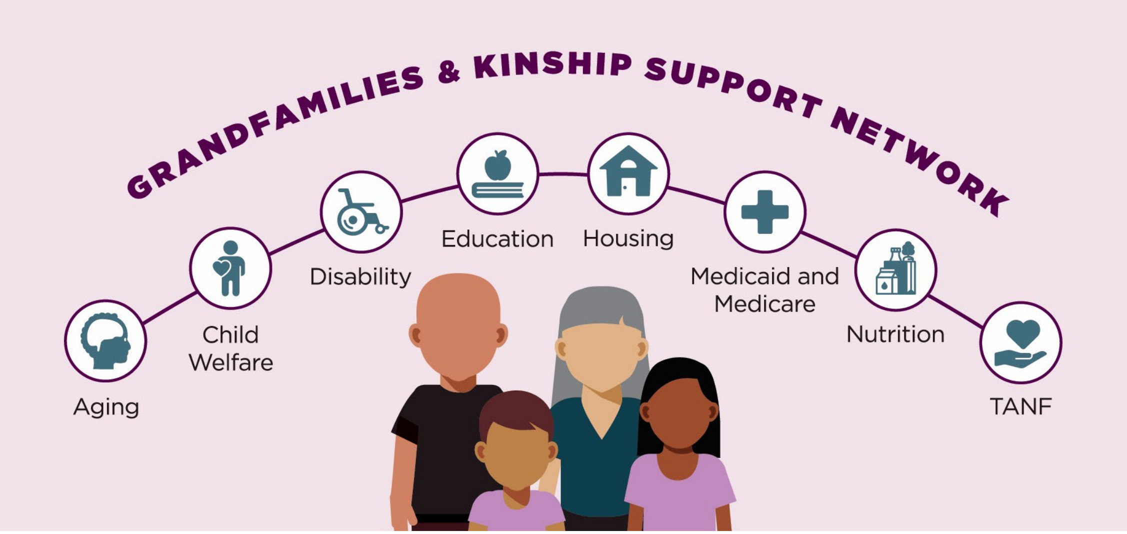
- 5-year (2021-2026), $10-million cooperative agreement with the Administration for Community Living
- Generations United has worked on behalf of and with kinship/grandfamilies since 1997
- Purpose is to provide technical assistance to the array of government agencies and organizations that serve kinship families
- Not designed to help the families directly – working to improve systems for families



How We Help

Learning Collaboratives and Information Dissemination

The Network hosts webinars and facilitates learning collaboratives.

Individual Assistance

We respond to individual requests for help from government agencies and nonprofit organizations.

Targeted, Specialized Support

For jurisdictions that want and are ready for a larger investment of effort, the Network will help optimize their collaborative approaches and improve their services. Solutions will be replicable for others.

A Centralized Hub

The Network is elevating exemplary kinship/grandfamily practices and programs from around the country on its accessible website, www.GKSNetwork.org.

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www.GKSNetwork.org

ESPAÑOL

Request Assistance

WHO WE SERVE | RESOURCE LIBRARY | EVENTS | ABOUT US

The First-Ever National Technical Assistance Center for those who Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

We help government agencies and nonprofits in states, tribes, and territories work across jurisdictional and systemic boundaries to improve supports and services for families in which grandparents, other relatives, or close family friends are raising children.

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Child Trends

Stay Connected & Access Support

Sign up for our monthly newsletter, which will provide you with updates on new Network resources.

Agenda

- **Key Considerations for Demonstrating Success**
- **Ways to Demonstrate Success:**
  - Developing your Theory of Change and Logic Model
  - Partnering for data collection - data sharing agreements
  - Navigating state and or private agency IRBs (quality assurance applications)
  - Sharing data with funders to demonstrate program success
- **Strategies for Embarking on a Formal Evaluation**
- **Tips for Preparing a Submission to a Clearinghouse:**
  - Common challenges
  - Resource guides and website links
- **Q&A**

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Key Considerations for Demonstrating Success

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Key Considerations for Demonstrating Success: Target Population

- **Who is your target population?**
  - Understanding your target population matters for which data sets may be relevant/available
  - Different types of administrative data can be used to assess outcomes of your target population
  - Are you serving kin in the formal child welfare system or outside that system?

Target Population cont'd

- **Assessing your population from aging and long-term care services**
  - More likely to be serving families outside the child welfare system
  - May not serve or track data on kin caregivers who don't qualify for services under the Older Americans Act (those under age 55)

- **Assessing your population through state Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) offices**
  - More likely to be serving kinship families outside the child welfare system
  - Child-only TANF grants are NOT a poverty/socioeconomic status indicator (suggest using child eligibility free/reduced lunch or family eligibility for SNAP benefits)

- **Does your target population include collecting data from minors (children in kinship care)?**
  - Who can consent on their behalf?

Key Considerations for Demonstrating Success: Goals & Objectives

- What are the goals and objectives you hope to achieve through program development and assessment?
- How you show success needs to align with your goals and objectives
- If possible and considering formal evaluation, bring an evaluator in at the beginning of program development

Goals & Objectives Cont'd

- **Is your goal to establish what's considered an evidence-based program?**
  - Requires much more rigorous evaluation methodology
  - Fidelity monitoring
  - Intervention & control/comparison groups

- **Is your goal to conduct a less rigorous evaluation to satisfy federal/other grant reporting requirements?**
  - May not require the inclusion of a control/comparison group

- **Is your goal to demonstrate success to funders through data and storytelling?**

- **Are you open to considering consumer driven models of program development, assessment, and evaluation?**
  - Consumers are included in decisions about what, when, and why to evaluate
  - Gives voice to persons who are often ignored
  - Equalizes opportunities for those underserved

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Ways to Demonstrate Success

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Theories of Change and Logic Models: What are they good for?

- Program improvement
- Evaluation
- Obtain funding

Description of the intervention

- Target population, **theory of change, logic model**

Research questions

- Process/implementation, outcome

Evaluation design

- How will we answer the questions

Data collection and analysis plans

- Identify sources of data, how to collect the data, what types of analysis

Reporting, using, and disseminating findings

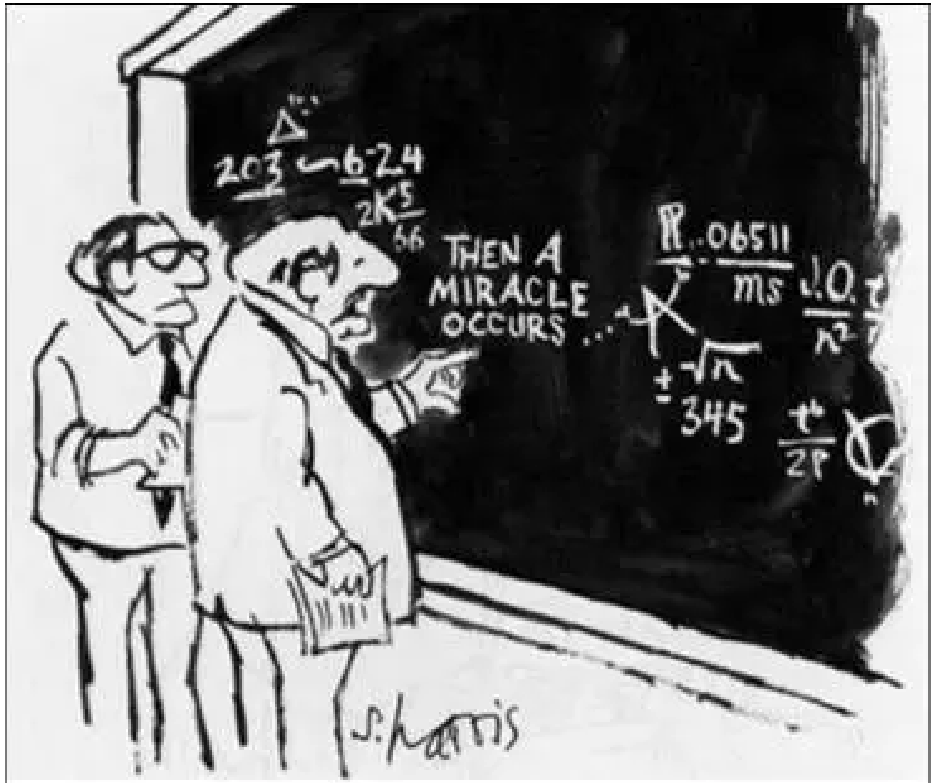
- Identify key audiences, how to disseminate what we learn

What is a Theory of Change?

- Explains how a program works and why it is expected to lead to the desired change

- Maps out the conditions needed to get to the looked-for outcomes

- Identifies the root cause(s) of a problem, the theory behind why they occur, and how to effect positive change



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

Four Steps to Developing a Theory of Change

Step 1 — I observe (some challenge I want to improve)…many caregivers could benefit from services and supports, but few are accessing services.

Step 2 — I think it's because (this reason)…they feel overwhelmed and alone and are not aware of available resources

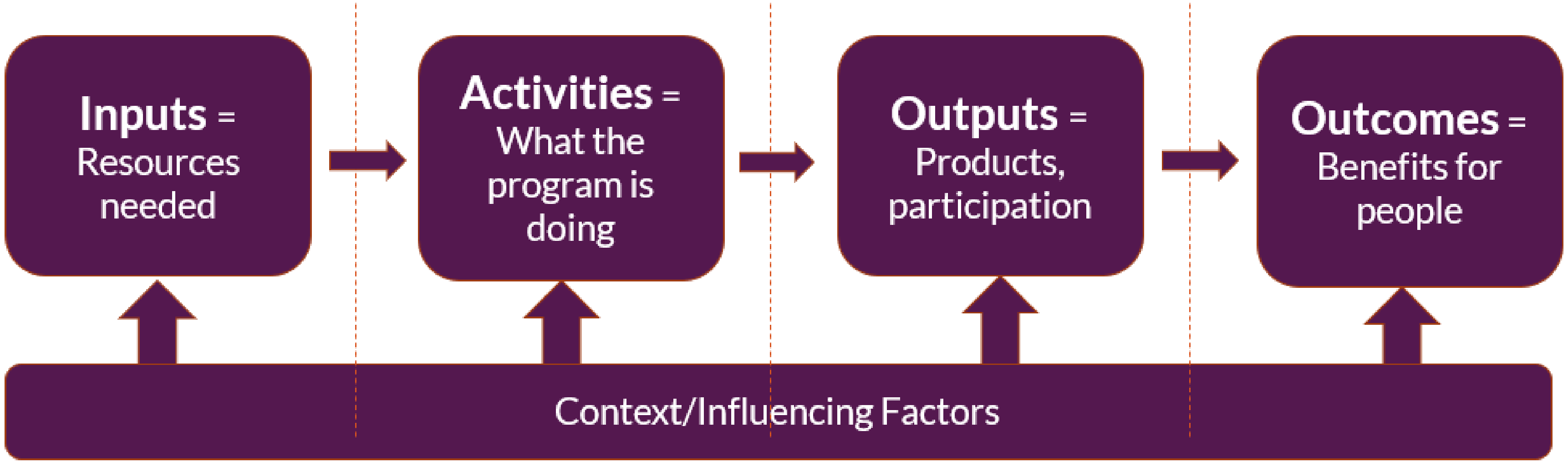
Step 3 — So I plan to (carry out this intervention)… develop a range of services that will enhance the capacity of caregivers to address challenges

Step 4 — Which I think will result in (an improved outcome)…increased connections with peers and increased access to needed resources.

Source: L. A. Alpert and F. H. Wulczyn, "EDGE: A Framework for Organizing Service Improvement" (Chicago: University of Chicago, Chapin Hall, n.d.).

What is a Logic Model?

- A roadmap to the program based on the theory of change
- Used to measure and track changes of the program
- Illustrates the links between the program activities, outputs, and outcomes



Theory of Change and Logic Model:

How do they fit together?

Theory of Change. . .   . . . to Logic Model

Step 3

We plan to…develop a range of services that will enhance the capacity of caregivers to address challenges.

Step 4

We think this will lead to… increased connections with peers and increased access to needed resources.

Activities = **What the program is doing**

- Outreach
- Staff training
- Caregiver parenting workshops
- Case management
- Support groups
- Respite

Outputs = **Products and Participation**

Increased participation

Outcomes = Benefits for people

- Increased knowledge, awareness
- Decreased loneliness/increased sense of connection
- Decreased stress
- Increased family bonding

Indicators: what are they good for?

Step 4

We think this will lead to… <u>increased connections with peers and increased access to needed resources</u>.

Outcomes = Benefits for people
- Increased knowledge, awareness
- Decreased loneliness/increased sense of connection
- Decreased stress
- Increased family bonding

Indicators help you measure progress and performance, so you know if you are meeting your goals

A good set of indicators is:
- Adaptable to circumstances
- Doesn't need to measure every indicator to understand the "big picture"
- Can show where adjustments are needed

Cautions when developing indicators:
- Too many indicators can cloud the picture
- Measuring progress takes time.
- Poorly selected indicators will not yield useful information and can be detrimental to progress

Taylor, P. Liden, R. Ndirangu, W. Jin, L. (2008): Integrated Water Resources Management for River Basin Organisations – Training Manual. Pretoria: International Network for Capacity Building in Integrated Water Resources Management (Cap-Net) URL [Accessed: 19.06.2019]

Involve a Broad Range of People in Developing Indicators

Include all participants

Seek input from the start and throughout the project

Review indicators with all participants regularly

Incorporate feedback and suggestions

Data collection:

What is it good for?

Indicator	Questions	Data/Measures
Caregivers will experience decreased loneliness/increased sense of connection	• How will you know if caregivers are less lonely and feel more connected to others in their community?	• Changes in scores on the Protective Factors Survey • # of caregivers attending support groups
Caregivers will experience decreased stress	• How will you know if caregivers feel less stressed and are more able to cope with their family demands?	• Changes in scores on the Perceived Stress Scale • Information from interviews with caregivers about their perceived stress and coping mechanisms

Monitoring Progress

- Review scope of the project
- Evaluate project specifications
- Analyze project budget
- Review client satisfaction
- Review internal growth and team satisfaction

Eby, K. (2022). *How to Measure the Success of a Project.* Smartsheet Contributor https://www.smartsheet.com/content/measuring-project-success

Partnerships in Data Collection: Data Sharing Agreements (DSAs)

- **Key Concepts to Include in a DSA**:
  - Parties to the agreement
  - Overview of the project
  - Responsibilities of each party
  - Confidentiality and data protection
  - General provisions (breach, expiration date, clarifications on what data can be shared, with whom, and in what format)
  - Designated parties to agreement, contact information
  - Signatures (who is the designated person in your agency who can sign?)

Alternatives to Data Sharing Agreements

- MOUs and Terms of Reference can be helpful tools for partnerships
- Describe and agree on the evaluation responsibilities of organizations
  - Which organization will be responsible for participant recruitment?
  - Which organization will collect data on the participants as part of the evaluation?
- Outline the training of organization staff to conduct research activities (i.e., human subjects research training)

Do I Need Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval?

- IRB review and approval is required for projects that:
  - Meet the definition of research
  - Involve human subjects and
  - Include any interaction or intervention with human subjects or involve access to identifiable private information
- What is Research?
  - A systematic investigation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge

IRB: Indigenous Evaluation

- **Honoring Tribal Sovereignty**
  - May not be comfortable using a university or state IRB
    - Be open to exploring private IRBs if tribes don't have their own IRB
  - Follow Tribal IRB processes (usually involves clearance by Tribal Council)
  - Ensure tribal ownership & control over data
  - Conduct in a way that builds capacity in the community
  - Secure proper permission for current and future publishing
  - Collect and report data in ways that are meaningful to tribal audiences (not just funders)

What to Share with Funders

- **Theory of Change and Logic Model**
- **Indicators of success**
  - Data collected related to indicators
  - Plans to continue and/or start collecting new data
  - Changes in indicators/outcomes
  - Plans to address challenges to data collection
- **Ways data is used for program improvement**

Strategies for Embarking on a Formal Evaluation

Selecting the Right Evaluation Partner

- **Internal evaluators or independent evaluators?**
- **Before selecting an evaluator – interview them.**
- **Different evaluators bring different types of skills/expertise. They're not one size fits all!**
- **Ask:**
  - Do you have content knowledge of kinship/grandfamilies and the services you're assessing?
  - (If your goal is to develop an evidence-based program,) Do you know how to conduct quantitative analysis, including analysis of administrative data?
  - (If your goal is to pursue community-based methodology,) Consider whether they have people skills and could build trust and engage with community members in ways that don't unintentionally offend.
    - Do you have experience conducting focus groups, coding transcripts, and conducting thematic analysis?
    - Do you respond well to community member feedback?
    - Will you share power with community members, co-create data collection tools, and engage in shared data analysis & interpretation?

Tips for Preparing a Submission to a Clearinghouse

Common Challenges

- Defining the model
- Selecting a comparison group
- Determining sample size
- Selecting reliable and valid measures
- Collecting data

Tips to Overcome Challenges

- **Meet regularly and frequently** with the evaluator
- **Ensure your comparison and control groups contain families that are demographically similar**
  - For the control group, consider providing enhanced services, rather than denying key services to the comparison group
  - Bring the comparison site on early to build buy-in
  - Offer your comparison group partners the opportunity for early/preferred access to receiving the intervention once it's ready to be scaled

Tips to Overcome Challenges

- **Use a GPower Analysis to determine sample size**
- **Work with your evaluators to locate the best measures for your project that are in line with your budget** - many cost, but many are free
- **If you're a low-population jurisdiction, consider partnering and combining your data with another county, tribe, or state**
- **Allocate money in the budget for community level meetings** to build successful relationships between the target populations and evaluator - Trust is key to successful data collection!

Resources

- Strategies to build evidence for kinship navigator programs under the Family First Act: https://www.childtrends.org/publications/strategiesto-build-evidence-for-kinship-navigator-programs-under-the-family-first-act

- Family First Prevention Services Act: Implementing Provisions that support kinship families: https://familyfirstact.org/resources/family-first-prevention-services-act-implementing-provisions-support-kinship-families

- Title IV-E Clearinghouse Website: https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/

- Title IV-E Clearinghouse: Handbook of Standards & Procedures: www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/report/prevention-services-clearinghouse-handbook-standards-and-procedures

Questions?

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