

EVALUATION 101:

Evaluative Inquiry – Framing & Focus

Getting Started

2/1/10



Evaluation philosophy

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- Grounded in intent
- Evolves with thinking and decision making
- Outcomes/objectives linked to strategies/activities
- Reality based—context, capacity, and resources
- Informed decisions and enhanced learning
- Integrated into organizational culture and practice

What is evaluation?

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Evaluation:

1. act of ascertaining or fixing the value or worth of;
2. an appraisal of the value of something.

(Source: *American Heritage Dictionary*)

Program Evaluation:

the use of social science research procedures to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs that is adapted to their political and organizational environments and designed to inform social action in ways that improve social conditions.

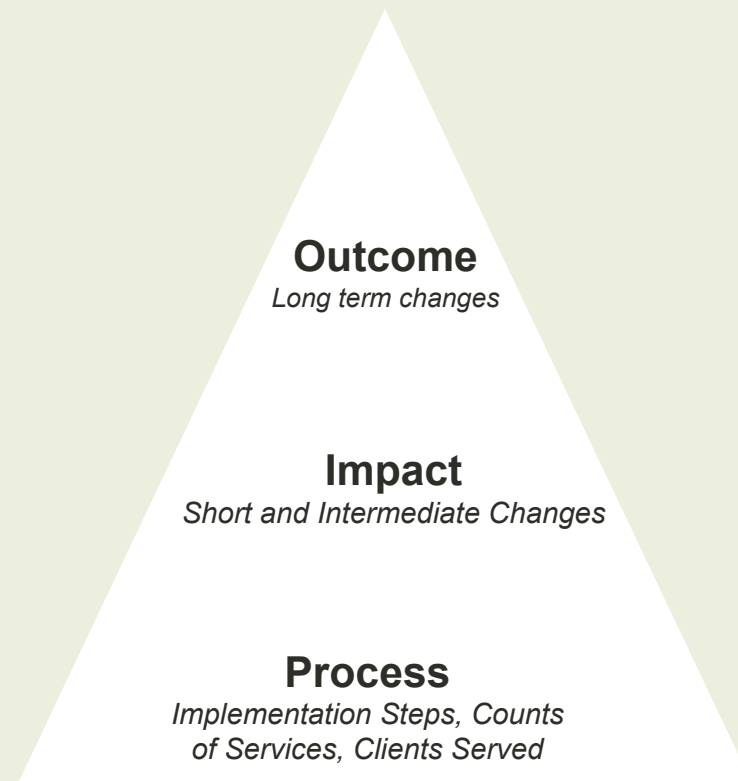
(source: Mark Lipsey, "The Basics of Program Evaluation.")

Evaluation types and levels

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- Outcome evaluation looks at *long term results, system and behavior change.*
- Impact evaluation looks at *short and interim skill, knowledge, system and behavior changes in clients served as well as the quality of services.*
- Process evaluation *looks at performance, implementation issues, counts “outputs” of services received and delivered, demographic data.*

Evaluation Levels



What is Evaluative Inquiry?

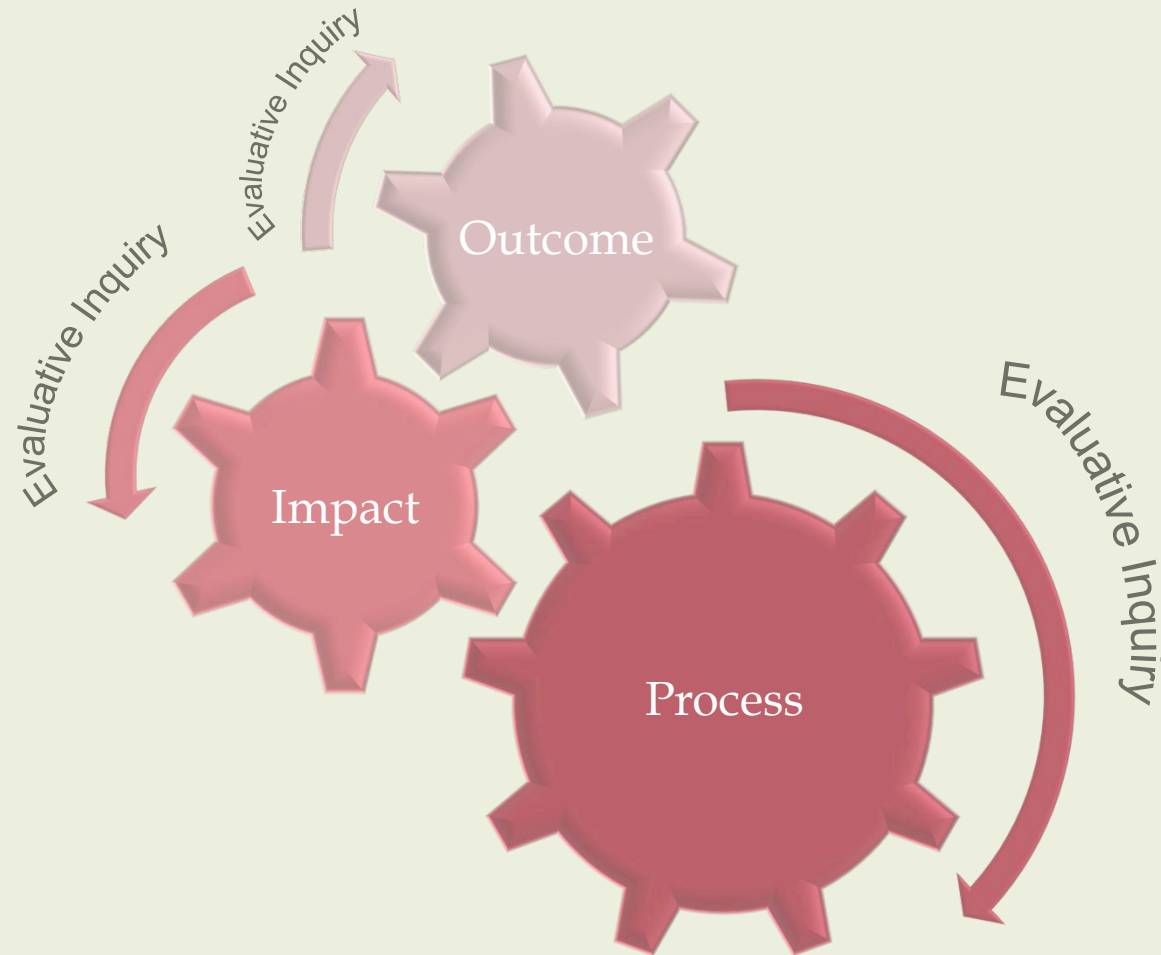
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- Integrated into an organization's processes.
- Iterative and self-renewing. Continuous individual, team, and organizational learning.
- Explores values, beliefs, assumptions and knowledge through dialogue and reflection.
- Contributes to a culture of inquiry. Promotes infrastructure for continued learning and improvement.

(Source: Preskill & Torres, "Evaluative Inquiry for Learning in Organizations")

Evaluative Inquiry informs our approach at all levels

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Evaluation Planning: Frame & Focus

Evaluation Frame & Evaluation Focus

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Evaluation Frame

- Framework to guide the measurement of all aspects – frameworks can operate at organizational and/or programmatic levels and be used across multiple evaluation efforts.

Evaluation Focus

- What needs to be measured in this evaluation?

Evaluative Inquiry Cycle: Phases 1 & 2

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- Phase 1: Framing the Work
 - Clarify expectations
 - Draft TOC and LM
- Phase 2: Focusing the Inquiry
 - Make explicit the questions to be addressed
 - Determine data collection methods including tools



Evaluation Inquiry: Framing & Focusing

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*Theories of Change and/or Logic Models
serve as frameworks for focusing evaluation efforts to
best meet an organization's information needs.*

What is a Theory of Change?

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*Conceptual linkage among an identified issue
/problem, desired change,
potential strategies,
and values that guide the work of an
organization*

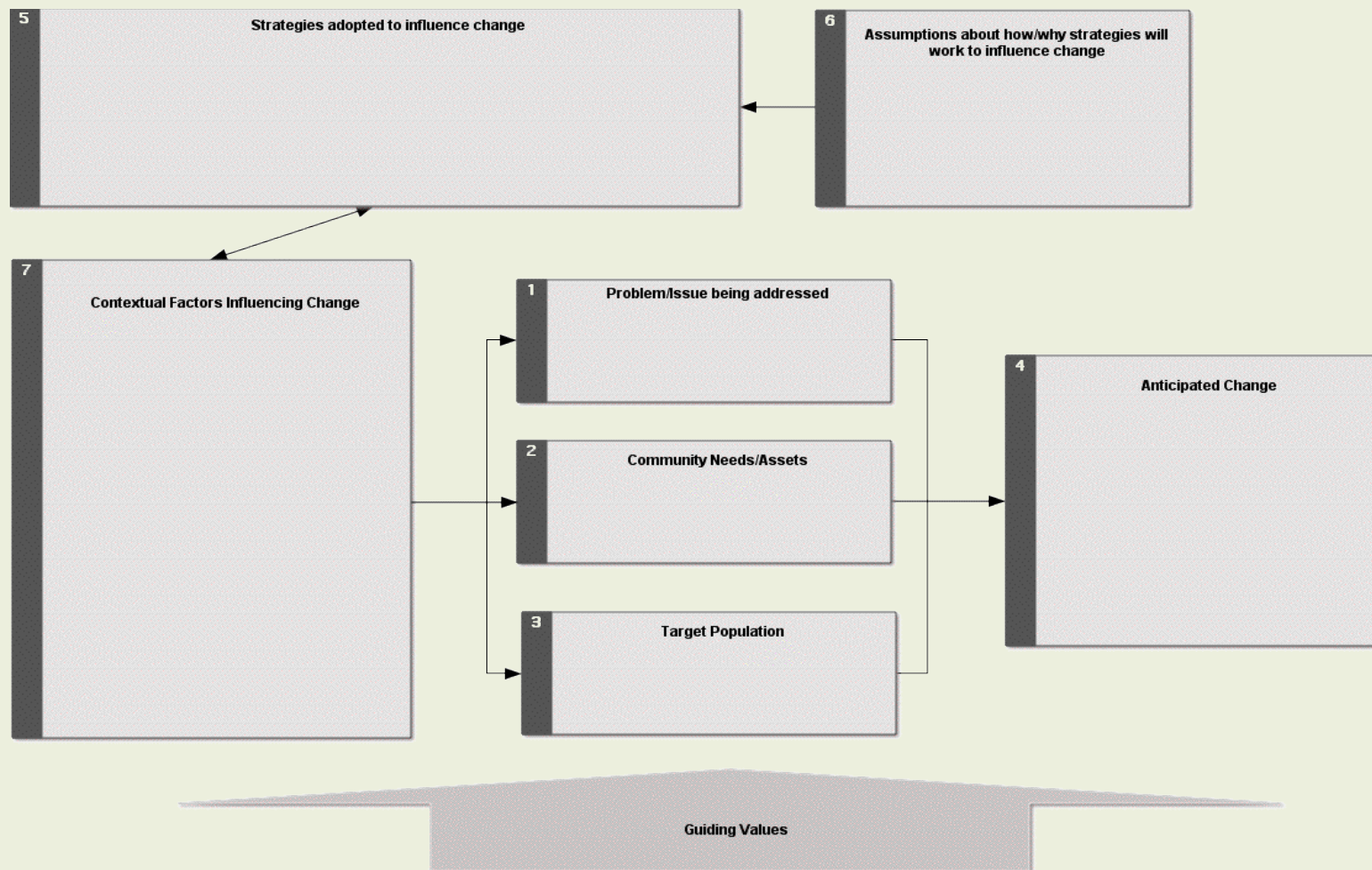
Theory of Change Common Elements

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- Issue/Problem Statement
- Guiding Values/ Assumptions
- Community Assets and Needs
- Context
- Strategies
- Expected Change

TOC: Visual representation linking common elements

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Benefits

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- A visual representation of the change
- An understanding of the context and the factors which affect intended change;
- An agreement among stakeholders about what defines success
- A clear and testable hypothesis
- A guide for cohesiveness among multiple programs
- A blueprint for evaluation
- A powerful communication tool

What is a Logic Model?

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Graphic depictions of the relationship between a program's activities and its intended effects

Common elements of a Logic Model

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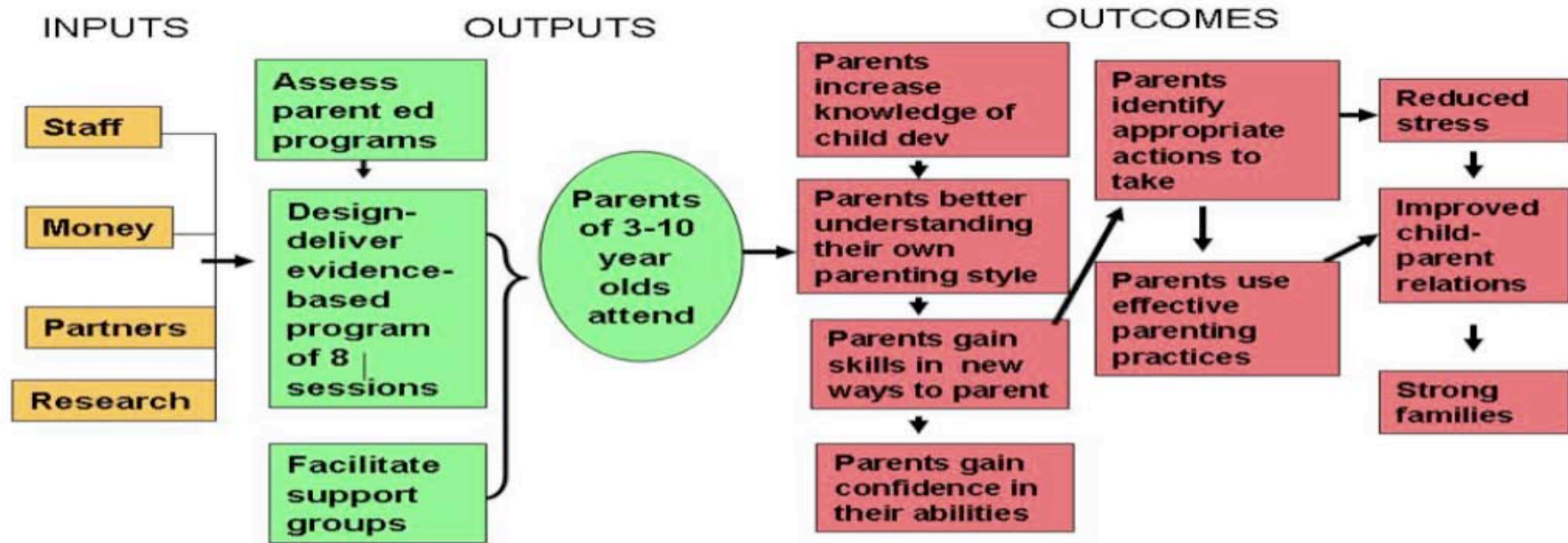


Example Logic Model

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Situation:

During a county needs assessment, a majority of parents reported they were having difficulty parenting and suffering stress as a result.



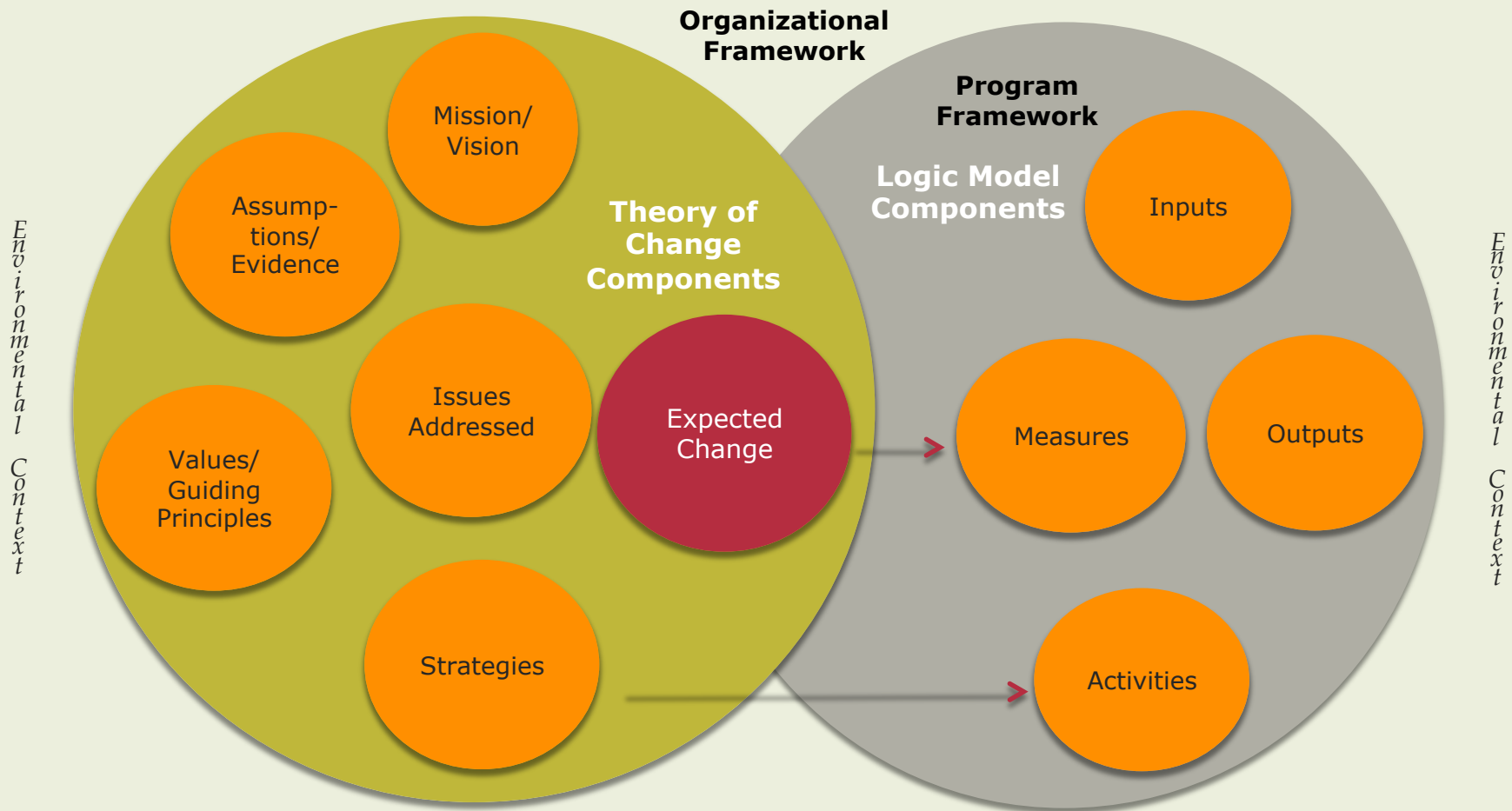
Benefits of a logic model for evaluation planning

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- Link project activities to objectives and focus populations
- Identify and select of indicators to monitor objectives
- Develop or refine data collection strategies and /or tools to support monitoring
- Determine how well your data collective activities support answering the key evaluation questions
- Establish time frames for monitoring progress

The Context for Programs

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Evaluative Inquiry is a continuous process

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