ECCBC Advisory Council Framework Project Report

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Executive Summary

The AC Framework Project brought community stakeholders together in a process to develop standing strategies into logic models, culminating in ten logic models, recommendations for addressing four more, and a brief report about the project. This was a two-year project that was completed with the support of an evaluation consultant in the final months.

The quality of these logic models is acceptable, indeed better than many programs enjoy even after many years of operation. These are, however, logic models written without plans to implement them, and so should be judged as such; it would be important to revisit and fortify these plans if any of the logic models were to be implemented.

The process was, probably, every bit as important as the product. While these ten logic models are respectable, some of **the most important benefits of this project might be attributed to the community-capacity gain for undertaking strategic action.** So often, the soft skills of changing systems are equally important, if not more, than technical know-how, and whether the capacity of this community is attributable to this project, or not, the completion of this project is a good indicator of how ready this community is for bigger tasks.

An analysis of themes that emerged from the ten logic models **revealed overarching questions about the nature of challenges, overlapping strategies, and sub-topics of "existing strategies" and "technology interventions."** Perhaps this provokes a revisiting of the original vision of 14 strategies, in part or in whole, or reinforces what was already believed to be true. In either case, this report offers findings culled from a qualitative-like analysis of the logic models.

My recommendations for proceeding are discussed in the report but mostly celebrate the unique advantages that the two approaches used produced. If slow and tedious, the process of charging AC members to conduct this work was valuable. Their unique expertise could not easily be supplanted by an outside consultant. In reverse, using an evaluation consultant relieved the AC members of the burden of being experts in evaluation methodology and some of the tedium of writing the final product.

Background

In 2016, The Early Childhood Council of Boulder County (ECCBC) and its Advisory Council (AC) began the Framework Project to create logic models for the 14 strategies articulated in the ECCBC Vision (see Appendix A). This document features four overarching goals—Ready Community, Ready Early Care and Education (ECE), Ready Families, and Ready Children—and 14 strategies for addressing these goals. Nine of these strategies were assigned to small groups of Advisory Council members, while five did not get assigned to groups. The sole Ready Children strategy was addressed by creating a tenth logic model based on the existing Boulder County program, Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD) Partnership. Due to limited AC members available, one of the five Ready Family strategies was not assigned to a group ("Families have access to programs and services to support their children's development and can advocate effectively for their children"). The Ready Community goal with three strategies was not included for logic model development in this project.

In October of 2018, I engaged with the ECCBC executive director, Danielle Butler, to take responsibility for completing this project by finalizing the ten logic models and proposing recommendations for addressing the remaining strategies. My understanding of the project, based on conversation with Danielle, was that **these logic models were not necessarily intended to be implemented programs, and a principle goal of the project was concerned with the process of bringing diverse stakeholders together in an act of collaborative strategy making**. With this understanding in mind, I proceeded with an evaluation-like process of completing ten logic models, offering recommendations for the four remaining strategies, and sharing my findings with the Board of Directors and Advisory Council, which includes this report.

Methodology

Fall 2016-September 2018

Prior to launch of the Framework Project, ECCBC provided a comprehensive plan for directing this project called the AC Framework Project Methodology (see Appendix B). This plan featured four basic steps: form small groups of AC members and distribute responsibility for developing one strategy to each group; develop a strategy focus through collaborative brainstorming and research; solicit feedback from larger AC community; create a logic model based on a template. Each phase of the methodology yielded artifacts including a Strategy Focus Worksheet, Option & Opportunities Matrix, and the Logic Model for each strategy. The work of developing each strategy into a logic model proceeded in small groups who met quarterly to advance through each phase of the project, and by September of 2018, nine groups produced nine logic models.

October 2018-present

In October of 2018, I assumed responsibility for completing the Framework Project and followed the same Framework Methodology coupled with standard evaluation protocol (see

CDC Evaluation Framework: https://www.cdc.gov/eval/index.htm). I first aimed to understand the context and need of the project, define my role, interview group members, revise the ten logic models, and then share my findings with the primary audience. The Executive Director and I checked in via email every week to monitor progress.

The need and my role

Understanding this project as an exercise of process without expectations for implementing these strategies provided a foundation for conceiving my role. It appeared **most important to honor the work that was done before I arrived, adhere to the existing methodology, and complete the logic models for each group informed by an understanding of their intentions.** This led me to recalibrate my thinking to be less of a critic or idea-generator and more of a facilitator with evaluation skills. Embracing this role led me to value the preservation of small-group work and words in favor of my own.

Data collection

I had two important sources of data: the artifacts generated by each group and notes collected from interviews I conducted with group members. The artifacts were given to me in hardcopy by the Executive Director. In some cases, I received supplementary documents from group members that contributed to the group's logic model.

I conducted telephone conversations with at least one member of each strategy group, and in several cases, I spoke with two members. In no case did I talk with every group member, which remains a weakness in my methods, if acceptable for this purpose. I asked a few fixed questions of every person (including asking permission to edit and revise their group's work), but mostly we discussed questions I had about their logic models. Often the conversation would veer off-script and I'd record insights about the nature of the barriers that AC projects face in the real world, and other glimpses to work behind the scenes.

Logic model completion

After completing the interviews, I integrated the interview notes, supplemental documents, and logic models of each group and began writing logic models for ten strategies. I relied on the Logic Model Template provided in the Framework Project Methodology for guidelines; my intention was to preserve the work of each group while attending to a general uniformity language across strategies.

Analysis

Once the ten logic models were completed, I analyzed the entire set for salient themes, not unlike a qualitative analysis of data (for a discussion of qualitative data analysis techniques across qualitative disciplines, see Creswell, 2007, pgs. 147-174). It was an iterative process of reading and re-reading, coding and clustering of codes until themes emerged in the analyst's eye. This process involved going close and revisiting interview notes, but also zooming back to see bigger patterns for part or all of the ten logic models.

Key Findings

These findings are based mostly on my analysis of the ten logic models for salient themes. While the analysis of product is an important part of these findings, I offer some thoughts about this project's process, too. The value of a logic model is always more than the words on the page, and **while essential for any program that seeks to measure impact empirically, part of the power of a logic model is that it represents the shared beliefs and experiences of its stakeholders.**

Challenges

The greatest value of the interviews, for me, was understanding the finer-grained details about the landscape of challenge each strategy faced. Many strategies face challenges of promoting or recruiting participants, some face a fundraising challenge while others hope to initiate a change in behavior among parents, providers, or systems administrators and decision makers. **One thing I observed to be generally true of the ten strategies is that this work is mostly about eliminating barriers to connect needs with existing services and supports.** In most cases, the solutions exist but connecting the need to the solution is a principle obstacle. One AC member described their problem as a siloing of separate resources that don't combine efforts in any systematic way. I suspect that understanding this underlying principle is important to effective action.

Collaboration as innovation

The ingenuity of these ten logic models is often visible in the creative designs for collaboration. In most cases, the proposed interventions are existing programs, yet the implementation is new and requires multiple stakeholders in the system to work together in new capacities. **Collaboration *is* the innovation in most of these logic model plans.**

Existing programs

Existing programs comprised a large part of all logic models. Existing programs tended to be associated with logic models that were more immediately ready for implementation than ones developed from scratch, although sometimes existing interventions did not provide measurement instruments (e.g., Vroom). **The prevalence of existing programs suggests a positive attitude for learning from others' experience rather than reinventing the wheel, and perhaps underscores where the real innovation is: collaboration.**

Measurement

Measurement of change or impact with social service programs is always difficult and it will continue to challenge any ECCBC plans to implement interventions. In the case of these ten logic models, almost every indicator named will require at least some additional instrument development before program deployment, and some will require substantial development and coordination with those people charged with collecting the data (e.g., serviced providers). I viewed these logic models as theoretical plans; if these plans were to actually be implemented,

the measurement plans would need to be revisited and scrutinized for purpose, audience, and level of rigor required to answer core questions with empirical integrity.

Overlap

I noticed areas of overlapping focus or strategy across many of the ten strategies. In the case of the five ECE strategies, I observed that four could be collapsed into one overarching strategic model (see Appendix C). Ready Family strategies, too, shared common threads of strategy (service providers aiming to improve parent efficacy). While **the unique differences among the 14 AC Framework strategies should not be quickly overlooked for fear of losing essential insights, it might be prudent to consider consolidating some strategies for the sake of not duplicating efforts.**

Ready ECE logic models

This group showed the greatest overlap in strategies and proposed interventions, **clearly pivoting around the need for more *qualified* ECE staff in the county.** This body of logic models most strongly advocated for a collaborative-system intervention, for which the ECCBC might be well positioned to initiate.

Ready Family logic models

For this group, parents are the primary audience indicating education/training efforts are a necessity for this set of strategies. **Technology was a preferred solution in many of these logic models**; the hardcopy book-resource was a notable discrepant case that could provide for an interesting test of questions about the efficacy of technology solutions. **Does the prevalence of technology solutions imply favorability towards broad-reaching strategies with easy use-ability?**

Ready Children logic model

The Ready Children logic model was written based on the existing ABCD Partnership program, and perhaps not surprisingly, yielded one of the strongest logic models. Perhaps **the importance of this program among the body of ten logic models is that it serves as a model for what works and what can be done with other programs.** If summative data is not yet abundant, formative data collected by ABCD reflects a strong program culture of monitoring activities for outcomes and tweaking program activities to improve efficacy, something that cannot be ensured by only a strong logic model.

Process

Without ever asking the question, almost every AC member I interviewed expressed some fatigue with the long process of this project. Certainly, this work could have been completed faster, especially if it was handed over to an evaluator to complete independently. There are at least, however, **two valuable outcomes of the choice to invite AC members to do this work: community capacity building, and unique expertise.**

It is not entirely clear to me how much relationship or capacity building resulted from this project. Did these working relationships already exist before the project? Did AC members grow certain skills and knowledge as a result of this project? This project was never designed to evaluate the process, and yet I feel it is important enough to say a couple of words. No work like this can proceed without positive relationships. **It is a notable accomplishment that this group of people stuck to the process for two years, and every single person I spoke with expressed enthusiastic optimism for continuing to engage in this work**. I may be new to this community, but I am not new to organization and systems cultural-dynamics, and **this community has a vitality that is not found everywhere.** Whatever capacity for intervention design and evaluation that was gained or practiced in this project should be considered a positive outcome that will invariably be useful for any subsequent tasks.

Perhaps the greatest value in the group process was the exceptional expertise that was brought to the table. As a program evaluator with merely technical expertise, I could never supplant the breadth and depth of domain knowledge these group members offered the project. They provided invaluable resources in areas of known interventions, relevant stakeholders and resources, and especially deep knowledge about the landscape of challenges faced. Logic models developed by outside consultants, alone, would struggle to approach this same level of insight afforded by the AC members' participation.

Conclusions

At a basic level, evaluation is an appraisal, and so it seems fair to ask, "Was this project successful?" If these ten logic models were all that was accomplished, indeed, there is reason for satisfaction. All ten logic models are viable plans with potential to be implemented as real programs, and while some are more ready for implementation than others, even the furthest away reflects an important synthesis of insight and experience that is not without value. I see **two general types of success achieved by this project: the development of functional plans to address goals, and the building of community capacity for implementing such plans.**

Relationships

In this context of challenges that are essentially about reducing barriers to connect existing services with needs, the power and importance of relationships is vital. That so many logic-model activities amounted to innovations of collaboration reinforces this principle. Fortunately, collaboration seems something that this stakeholder community of Boulder County understands well.

Recommendations for remaining strategies

Four strategies remain without logic models: three Ready Community strategies and one Ready Family strategy. If ECCBC and its Board of Directors and AC wish to complete these logic models, I **recommend a blended methodology of taking the best of this project's two approaches and combing the deep expertise of stakeholders embedded in the field with the technical and facilitator's skill of a program evaluator** (see Appendix E). The

participation of stakeholders is valuable for understanding the context and content of the intervention while a contract evaluator would relieve them of the burden of being experts in evaluation methodology. Joining the two could accelerate the entire process to a matter of months versus years.

Future challenges

This Framework Project serves as a good test-piece for any future work the ECCBC may choose to explore and is a good stepping off point for actually implementing and evaluating programs like those described in these logic models. **Many of the skills practiced in this project will serve your community again. Similarly, some of the same challenges will return, and likely with higher stakes. Measurement is probably the single biggest challenge that programs seeking empirical outcomes face;** it's very much where the rubber hits the road. The natural tension is between what one would ideally like to measure (informed by the best science can offer) and practical constraints presented by real-world circumstances. It's a question of rigor and how rigorous the standards must be for estimating program efficacy. **The level of rigor required is mostly a function of being clear about (a) the purpose of the evaluation and (b) the audience for these findings.** Being clear about the purpose presumes a deep understanding of the problem and is the starting point for backward-planning the other elements of a logic model. **Purposes for evaluation tend to vary between internal monitoring activities and outward-facing summative impact evaluation, and it's useful to appreciate the difference.** Inward-facing evaluation generally has a lower-bar of rigor, but often indicates an organization with a stronger culture of evidence-based decision making and stronger use of findings. Outward-facing evaluation usually has a higher standard of rigor for indicators with statistical analyses designed to generalize to a larger population, but often this kind of evaluation is not embraced by organizations or useful for program-level decision making.

Appendix A: ECCBC Vision

ECCBC Vision: All Boulder County children are valued, healthy and thriving.

Ready Community

GOALS

The community recognizes the importance of early childhood as integral to the quality of life in Boulder County and as a crucial part of the continuum of social equity.

- Educate the public about social-emotional needs and potential of young children

- Provide subsidy payments that are at least 100% of the average market rate

- Develop a cost-benefit model to support at-home option for the first year of life

Ready Early Care And Education

GOALS

Early childhood professionals have the knowledge, skills and support to work effectively with and on behalf of families and children.

- Educate early childhood professionals to promote health for their staff and families

- Support the ongoing development and practice of new skills and knowledge such as on-site coaching and mentoring

- Promote increased quality of early childhood professional staff education, program quality and environment quality

- Explore incentives for early childhood professionals to serve infants and toddlers and children with special needs

- Make the continuum of support available to early childhood professionals (spanning brief consultation, on-site consultation, mentoring and coaching) focused on promotion, prevention and intervention within the social-emotional domain

Ready Families

GOALS

Families are empowered to nurture their children's healthy growth and development as their children's first and best teachers.

- Families have access to programs and services to support their children's development and can advocate effectively for their children

- Improve and expand health education to all parents

- Expand family support and parenting programs to include services in the social-emotional and mental health domain

- Expand outreach to parents of newborns; home visitation to include all four domains

- Provide information to families to facilitate connection to services and support

Ready Children

GOALS

Children arrive ready for school: healthy, well-adjusted and having been exposed to the fundamentals of learning.

- Ensure that all Boulder County children receive 3 developmental screenings, to include a social-emotional assessment, by age 3

Spring 2017

Appendix B: ECCBC Framework Project Methodology

ECCBC Advisory Council 2016-2017

Framework Project: Activities Recommendations for Prioritized Strategies

Updated (for Ready ECE Providers Large Group) October 10, 2017

METHODOLOGY OVERVIEW

Phase 1: Group Assignments & Issue Exploration

Time	Oct 11, Nov 30, Jan 10 AC Meetings
Tasks	• Introduce Framework Project • Process reviewed and agreement confirmed • Two large group leads identified: Cynthia D. and Danielle B. • Break into two (2) large groups: Ready Families Goal and Ready ECE Providers Goal • Break into strategy groups by self-selection (3-4 AC members per group) • Explore issues - think, gather thoughts, share in small groups o Use Strategy Focus Worksheets
Outcome	• Small groups have brainstormed, researched and explored options and opportunities – potential programs, services, or activities – to address their strategy • Small groups ready to discuss their findings with larger group

Phase 2: Create Lists of Options & Opportunities

Time	Feb 14, Mar 14, AC Meetings – For **Health** & **S/E** small groups: Jun 13, last AC for O&O prep; Sep 12 AC for O&O presenting
Tasks	• Small groups assign key roles: choose 1-2 members willing to lead presentations to larger group(s) & 1 scribe • Small groups categorize their list of programs, services or activities by three (3) categories – Current, Past, New/National Best Practices o Use Options & Opportunities Matrix • Cynthia D. and Danielle B. schedule small group presentations to larger group • Small groups present their O&O Matrix to large group, making cases for their ideas and inviting further discussion • Large group provides feedback and votes Hot, Warm or Cold on each item
Outcome	• Small groups have finalized and prioritized a list of options & opportunities – potential programs, services or activities – to address their strategy

	• **Small groups have completed 1ˢᵗ deliverable – shortlist list of programs/services/activities to put forward**

Phase 3: Logic Model Development

Time	~~May 9,~~ Jun 13, Sep 12, Oct 10, Nov 14 AC Meetings For **Coaching** & **Quality** small groups: Jun 13, Sep 12, Oct 10 for LM prep For **Health** & **S/E** small groups: Sep 12 AC meeting start LM prep; Oct 10 AC for final LM prep For all groups: Nov AC for LM presentations
Tasks	• Small groups re-affirm key roles: choose 1-2 members willing to lead final presentation to AC & 1 scribe • Small groups choose one (1) program, service or activity to recommend • Small groups undertake further research and development of that recommendation o Use Logic Model Template • Small groups ready to present their recommendation to the AC
Outcome	• Small groups have finalized their recommended program, service or activity that addresses their strategy • **Small groups have completed 2ⁿᵈ deliverable – prepared their final recommendation**

Phase 4: Final Recommendations

Time	~~Sep, Oct, Nov~~ Mar 2018 AC Meeting
Tasks	• Bobbie W., Cynthia D. and Danielle B. schedule small group presentations to AC • Small groups present their recommended strategy – including review of shortlist of nominations, reason for final choice and associated logic model - to AC and invites further discussion • Summary document written and distributed to AC
Outcome	• **Small groups have completed 3rdᵈ and final deliverable – final recommendations presented to AC** • AC has completed Framework Project – recommendations for Ready Families and Ready ECE Providers developed and documented

Attachments:

Strategy Focus Worksheet Template

Options & Opportunities Matrix Template

Logic Model Template

Strategy Focus Worksheet Template

ECCBC Advisory Council 2016-2017								Name:

Framework Project: Activities (may be Programs or Services) Recommendations for Prioritized Strategies

[Type Ready Goal here] – Strategy Focus Worksheet

Strategy: [type prioritized strategy here]

Step one – good conceptualization

1. **Think**

   - Spend time really thinking about your strategy
   - What do you know about the issue?
   - Why is it an issue? Why is it an important? Why do we care?
   - Thinking about the issue, what are your assumptions?
   - Thinking about the issue, what are you curious about?

2. **Gather Your Thoughts**

   - Google the issue, read, research
   - Talk to a friend, colleague, to your small group
   - What do others think about the issue? Do you agree with them?
   - What do you think Boulder County wishes regarding the issue?
   - Are you aware of something we've tried to address the issue? What have other communities tried?
   - What do you conclude, why?
   - What are the pros and cons of your conclusions?

3. **Next meeting – prepared to share** – in your small groups

   - What compelling story did you uncover?
   - What are your fears?
   - What are your wishes?

Options & Opportunities Matrix

Goal: [choose: Ready Families or Ready ECE Providers]

Strategy: [type strategy here]

Program/Service/Activity	Vote		
	Hot	Warm	Cold
Current *in Boulder County*			
1.			
2.			
3.			
Past *in Boulder County*			
1.			
2.			
3.			
New *or National Best Practice*			
1.			
2.			
3.			

Notes:
- Complete Goal and Strategy information above table.
- Aim for a minimum of one (1) suggestion per category.
- Can add rows to include more than four (4) suggestions per category (place cursor in row, choose Layout, choose Insert Above/Below from rows and columns options).

Logic Model Template

Goal: [choose: Ready Families or Ready ECE Providers]

Strategy: [type strategy here]

Recommended Program/Service/Activity: name of program/service/activity

Outcome Statement: Something will increase or decrease, something will improve or change

Target Audience(s): Who or which group benefits from the activity? Directly? Indirectly?

Key Activities: Tasks, steps - action words/verbs

Short term objective: What do you want to achieve right away or within one – two years?

Long term objective: What do you want to achieve in five years plus?

Success indicators: Measurements; generally expressed in two ways:

Formative: numeration and evaluation of key activities; did the groundwork get done and done well so as to impact the outcome statement?
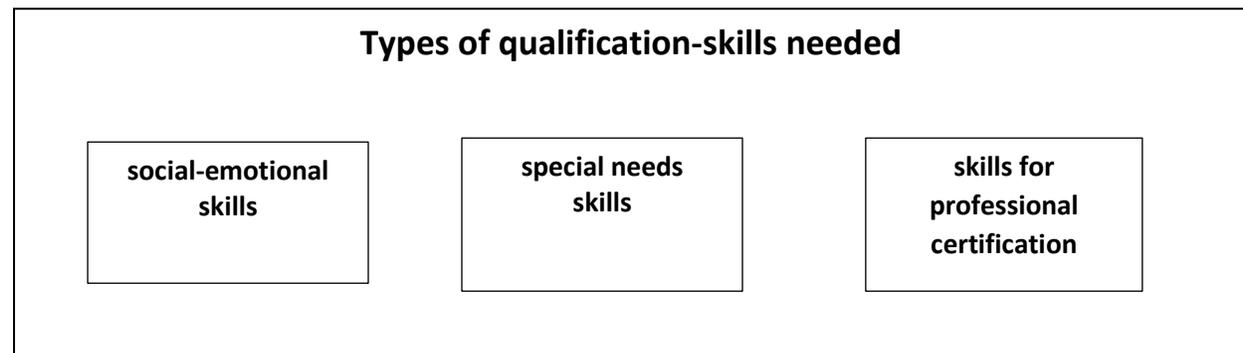
Summative: how measure the outcome statement and how much of the increase, decrease, improvement or change in the outcome statement means success?

Appendix C: ECE group strategies consolidated

ECE Group Strategies: a consolidation of four strategies

Having observed overlap in the ECE strategies, I explored the possibilities of consolidating them. Taken, perhaps, to extreme, four strategies can conceivably be reduced to one single strategy that encompasses the essential elements of each logic model except the staff health strategy

SHARED PROBLEM	Shortage of qualified ECE teachers and caregivers (thus shortages of placement opportunities for children)

Types of qualification-skills needed

social-emotional skills	special needs skills	skills for professional certification

Best Practices

content (inclusion), **pedagogy** (embedded coaching), **hiring systems** (supply and demand-side)

County-wide Collaborative

achieves economy of scale; provides regular calendar of training opportunities

Appendix D: 10 logic models

ECCBC Logic Model: ECE1

Goal: Ready Early Care and Education

Strategy: Educate early childhood professionals to promote health for their staff

Recommended Program/Activity: Worksite wellness programs for child care staff that are comprehensive, engaging, holistic, effective and sustainable; subsidized well care, acute care and behavioral health care for child care staff

Outcome Statement: The overall health, including mental health, of child care staff who participate in the program will improve

Target Audience: Child care staff in Boulder County child care programs (directly), children and families (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Provide time every day for child care staff to engage in physical activity, eat and attend to personal needs
- Provide a safe and accessible place for staff to be physically active either on site or through partnerships with local recreation centers
- Offer instruction on healthy eating, fitness, stress management and other healthy activities
- Offer health screenings such as blood pressure and BMI monitoring
- Investigate the ability to provide staff with subsidized well care, acute care, and behavioral health care

Short-term Objective: Staff will report eating more fruits and vegetables and less sugary drinks and foods, increased physical activity, and increased utilization of stress management techniques.

Long-term Objective: Staff will have lower BMI, lower blood pressure and decreased stress.

Success Indicators:

Formative: staff diet, exercise, and stress data from self-report surveys

Summative: staff health data (BMI, blood pressure); staff retention

ECCBC Logic Model: ECE2

Goal: Ready Early Care and Education

Strategy: Support the ongoing development and practice of new skills and knowledge such as on-site coaching and mentoring

Recommended Program/Activity: Agency or multi-age collaborative that coordinates funding streams and embedded coaching/mentoring services for the community

Outcome Statement: Early childhood teachers receiving coaching and mentoring will advance professional teaching competencies through continuous improvement

Target Audience: Providers and administrators (directly), children and families (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Identify a coordinating organization for the coaching system
- Convene an inclusive planning team to develop the new structure
    - Identify all of the different or existing coaching structures in Boulder County
    - Identify the coaching system gaps
    - Establish a title, vision, and mission for the cadre/collaborative/alliance
- Establish procedures for connecting coaching with programs
- Establish the funding mechanism for a coaching system
- Determine number of coaches needed and hire coaches
- Collect, analyze, and report on baseline and ongoing data

Short-term Objective: Establishment of the coaching collaborative

Long-term Objective: Ubiquitous increase in program quality over the next five years

Success Indicators:

Formative: meeting minutes during planning period, numbers of coached providers

Summative: Colorado Shines ratings, levels of credentialed professionals, workforce turnover statistics

ECCBC Logic Model: ECE3

Goal: Ready Early Care and Education

Strategy: Promote increased quality of early childhood professional staff education, program quality and environment

Recommended Program/Activity: Collaborative trainings for teachers

Outcome Statement: The number of qualified Early Childhood Education staff in Boulder County will increase

Target Audience: Newly hired and perspective staff for child care programs (directly), program providers and staff (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Develop a systematic program (collaborative and coordinated) of international trainings designed to prepare staff towards becoming qualified (ECT) in best practices
- Use established trainings (EQUIT, Pyramid plus, PDIS courses) for collaborative use in Boulder County
- Incentives for participants – agreement to complete training program and stay with a Boulder County Early Childhood program for 2 years after completion
- Create a shared hiring pool for primary staff and substitutes

Short-term Objective:

- Establish understanding of current need (capacity of staff and substitute pool)
- Produce quality trainings with credentialed trainers, with a predictable calendar of opportunities for the county, every year

Long-term Objective:

- Expand the training system to include on-going training programs, including Quality Director Skills
- Establish best practices in hiring process
- Create a wide enough pool of qualified ECE applicants to support the need

Success Indicators:

Formative: establishment of a collaborative, county-wide ECT training program for all licensed child-care providers; establishment of a blended/community funded program to support up to 500 people a year

Summative: program-access to qualified staff and substitutes for maintaining student-teacher ratios; quality of Boulder County EC professionals (those with credential 2.0 Level 3-6 rated staff registered in PDIS by a minimum of 25%)

ECCBC Logic Model: ECE4

Goal: Ready Early Care and Education

Strategy: Explore incentives for early childhood professionals to serve infants and toddlers and children with special needs

Recommended Program/Activity: Create a task force for implementing informed response-initiatives

Outcome Statement: Early childhood professionals will increase their capacity for providing high quality care and education for children with special needs and supports for families, and thereafter offer more special needs placements for the community

Target Audience: Early childhood care professionals (directly), parents and children (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Create task force
- Conduct needs assessment
- Implement intervention(s) recommended by needs assessment
- Collect and analyze data for monitoring and evaluation

Short-term Objective: Complete a needs assessment, and develop a plan for responding to the need with systematic intervention(s)

Mid-term Objectives: Increase skill, knowledge, and support for ECE professionals

Long-term Objective: Improve access and quality of early care and education opportunities for children with special needs and supports for their families

Success Indicators:

Formative: number of ECE professionals completing training relevant to special needs

Summative: number of available placements, and a measure of quality of care given

ECCBC Logic Model: ECE5

Goal: Ready Early Care and Education

Strategy: Make the continuum of support available to early childhood professionals (spanning brief consultation, on-site consultation, mentoring and coaching) focused on promotion, prevention, and intervention within the social-emotional domain

Recommended Program/Activity:

- Continue and expand support for Mental Health Partners and Kid Connects programs
- Conduct Flip-It training for ECE caregivers and parents

Outcome Statement: Early child caregivers and adults will have quality access to quality training for meeting the social-emotional needs of children

Target Audience: Early childhood care professionals and adults who care for children between 0 and 5 years old (directly), children (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Seek and secure funding to expand Mental Health Consultation and Flip-It trainings
- Create a dependable cycle of training opportunities to include coaching and reflective practice follow-up
- Invest and work to build local capacity for implementation of this work

Short-term Objective: Secure funding for Flip-It training and Metal Health Partners and Kid Connect programs

Long-term Objective: Flip-It training will be available to early child care professionals and families, and will become a regular component of hiring procedures

Success Indicators:

Formative

- number of trainings for FTE mental health consultants and administrative staff within Mental Health Partners and Kid Connect
- number of Flip-It trainers and trainings

Summative

- funding for Mental Health Partners and Kid Connect expands to hire FTE consultants and administrative staff
- 75% of licensed programs serving target families will utilize Flip-It training, and be required for new staff

ECCBC Logic Model: RF1

Goal: Ready Family

Strategy: Improve and expand health education to all parents

Recommended Program/Activity: A healthcare literacy program for parents. (Currently, Wild Plum Center is participating in a similar program that is under study at UCLA which can be a model for a Boulder County program.)

Outcome Statement: Parent efficacy in healthcare decision making will increase among participants in the healthcare literacy program

Target Audience: Parents (directly), children and childcare staff (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Identify a coordinating organization for an expanded county-wide training program
- Recruit participating agencies and provide training and information for successful implementation of healthcare literacy training to families
- Collect and analyze data for informed monitoring and evaluation of the program

Short-term Objective: Childcare staff will be trained for conducting parent training; parents will use the resource book as a decision-making tool prior to accessing a healthcare provider; parents will report increased skill and confidence in medical decision making.

Long-term Objective: Healthcare providers will see improved services-use by families; parents experience benefits of efficient healthcare decision making.

Success Indicators:

Formative: parent-use data

Summative: quality of service-use by participating parents, reported by providers, and parents' self-report measures of confidence in making healthcare decisions

ECCBC Logic Model: RF2

Goal: Ready Family

Strategy: Expand family support and parenting programs to include services in the social-emotional and mental health domain

Recommended Program/Activity: Community Infant Program (CIP)

Outcome Statement: Families served by CIP will have fewer negative symptoms of psychosocial distress

Target Audience: Families experiencing psychosocial risk who have children aged 0-3

Key Activities:

- Home visits by child-parent psychotherapists and public-health nurses
- Developmental guidance for parents with their children
- Referral of children to Early Intervention, if needed
- Improve collaboration over CAPTA referrals
- Coordination with multiple agencies including DHHS, Public Health, and other home-visiting programs like Parents as Teachers
- Expand training in infant-family mental health for professionals and staff in the community on early childhood, child welfare and other fields

Short-term Objective: CIP will maintain the current caseload of 280 families a year and obtain funding to add 50 more families a year for five years

Long-term Objective: CIP will attract social-impact funding from private investors and demonstrate savings in public budgets

Success Indicators:

Formative: number of families served by CIP (expanding to 530 families over five years)

Summative: families receiving CIP services will avoid child welfare services; mothers will report less parenting stress and lower psychopathology symptoms; children will have fewer externalizing symptoms and better language, and will need special education less frequently

ECCBC Logic Model: RF3

Goal: Ready Family

Strategy: Expand outreach to parents of newborns

Recommended Program/Activity: Expanded dissemination and support for parents to use the Vroom app

Outcome Statement: Parent using the Vroom app will improve the quality of engagement with their newborns

Target Audience: Parents (directly), children and caregivers (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Identify and recruit key community partners like EFAA, SSCC, OUR Center, HBP, and IHAD
- Parents Possible will train key community partner staff in distribution and support for parents using Vroom
- Promote availability, understanding, and use of Vroom in the community
- Collect and analyze data for informed monitoring and evaluation of the program

Short-term Objective: Parents will sign up and use the Vroom app

Long-term Objective: Parents will practice higher quality engagement with their newborn children

Success Indicators:

Formative: number of parents enrolled and trained to use Vroom, tracked by Parents Possible

Summative: parent-use data of Vroom and self-report surveys for estimates of improved engagement with newborn children

ECCBC Logic Model: RF4

Goal: Ready Family

Strategy: Provide information to families to facilitate connection to services and support

Recommended Program/Activity: Create a "one-stop" website of resources regarding socio-emotional, physical, mental and developmental growth for parents of children 0-5 years old

Outcome Statement: Parents in Boulder County will have improved access to early childhood services and supports, and will be more effective users of services and supports

Target Audience: Parents of children ages 0-5 (directly), children and service providers (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Identify a coordinating entity and relevant stakeholders
- Conduct a needs assessment and technical assessment
- Develop and deploy intervention plan
- Collect and analyze data for monitoring and evaluation and improvement of the program

Short-term Objective: Launch a pilot website and evaluate for revision

Long-term Objective: Boulder County will have an effective website that connects families to services and supports, and improves service-use by families

Success Indicators:

Formative: website-user data, referral data

Summative: website-user data, measure of effective use of services by parents (reported by service providers), referral data

ECCBC Logic Model: RCh1

Goal: Ready Children

Strategy: Ensure all Boulder County children receive 3 developmental screenings, to include a social-emotional assessment, by age 3

Recommended Program/Activity: ABCD Partnership

Outcome Statement: The number and rate of children who complete a developmental screening will increase

Target Audience: Parents and service providers to children under 5 years old (directly), children (indirectly)

Key Activities:

- Provide Technical Assistance (TA)/outreach
- Support parents to have the tools, knowledge, and resources to fully support and advocate for their child's development
- Support whole child development including social emotional development
- Improve the quantity and quality of data about the early childhood developmental screening process

Short-term Objective: Continue improving the ABCD program through ongoing program monitoring and evaluation, and increase the number of partners by 12 entities

Long-term Objective: An improved county-wide referral process

Success Indicators:

Formative: numbers of TA and outreach to service providers, numbers of Toolkits and engagement contacts used by parents, satisfaction/impact surveys

Summative: number and rate of developmental screenings

Appendix E: Recommendations for Remaining Framework Strategies

Recommendations for Four Remaining AC Framework Strategies

Jeremy Hoffer

The AC Framework Project yielded logic models for 10 out of 14 total strategies, leaving four strategies without logic models and the decision for what to do with them. These are the four remaining strategies:

Ready Community
- educate the public about social-emotional needs and potential of young children
- provide subsidy payments that are at least 100% of the average market rate
- develop a cost-benefit model to support at-home option for the first year of life

Ready Family
- families have access to programs and services to support their children's development and can advocate effectively for their children

I see two kinds of decisions to make: the decision to create logic models for the remaining strategies, and which methodology to follow. Creating logic models for the remaining strategies honors the existing ECCBC Vision of four goals and 14 strategies by attending to each strategy with equal attention. On the other hand, one key finding of the Framework Project Report was that there exist spaces of overlap in the strategies that invite opportunities to combine strategies together and avoid duplicating efforts.

Blended Methodology

If the decision is made to create any logic models for the remaining four strategies, I recommend blending the best of both methods used in the Framework Project and include both community stakeholders and an evaluation consultant combined. The deep expertise of community program stakeholder cannot easily be supplanted by an evaluation consultant, though an evaluation consultant offers technical expertise useful for such a project. Blending both sets of skills will yield higher quality logic models faster. For the sake of consistency, the Methodology document used in the Framework Project is good guideline to use again and could be amended to serve a blended approach.

Overlap

Another possible response might look at the remaining strategies through a lens of overlapping strategies, a theme that emerged from the Framework Project Report's findings. At a glance, two of the Ready Community strategies appear related to costs, and one strategy "educate the public…" relates strongly to Ready Family strategies targeting parents' levels of knowledge about social-emotional needs of children. The remaining Ready Family strategy, similarly, resembles other Ready Family logic models. One or more of the remaining four strategies might conceivably be collapsed into other strategies instead of making new logic models.