ACTION FORUM CHRONOLOGY

Fall 2013

Children's Summit Chooses Focus

The Central California Children's Agenda 2010 led to the formation of three workgroups that covered six goals in the Agenda. Participants came together from non-profit, government, business, and law enforcement sectors. After six meetings reviewing research and local resources, each workgroup developed a major goal and one indicator of success to present. Each group presented their rationale, hoping to be voted top choice at the summit by the 338 participants for initial focus.

Work Group 1 Children's Agenda Goals for Early Childhood:

- Communities and Families Ready for Children
- Nurturing Parents and Caregivers
- Children Ready for School

SUMMIT GOAL AND INDICATOR:
Goal: Child grows up in a stable home and community
Indicator: Infant mortality rates

Work Group 2 Children's Agenda Goals for Early to Late Adolescence:

- Healthy, Safe, and Secure Youth
- Engaged and Connected Youth

TOP VOTE

SUMMIT GOAL AND INDICATOR:
Goal: A solid foundation in early education
Indicator: Third grade reading levels

Work Group 3 Children's Agenda Goals for Late Adolescence to Early Adulthood

- Youth prepared for life

SUMMIT GOAL AND INDICATOR:
Goal: Youth are college and career ready
Indicator: High school graduation rates

More information and the research used by the workgroups can be found at www.tcmfresno.org.

2014

Action Forums - Grade Level Reading

Building on the momentum of the summit, nearly 100 ready-to-work participants agreed to meet periodically with the primary goal being to connect and focus a large variety of stakeholders around the central issue of Grade-Level Reading. Reading proficiency by third grade is the most important

The Goal:
All Children Read on Grade-Level by 3rd Grade

Prepare Children for School Readiness

Clusters

Improve School Attendance

Mitigate Summer Learning Loss

predictor of high school graduation and career success.

Following the framework laid out in the national Grade-Level Reading Campaign, three cluster networks formed. Workgroups emerged through the early conversations within the cluster networks. The framework provides sample

indicators to measure success in the cluster areas, once strategies are developed.

SCHOOL READINESS Clusters:
- Parent Intersection with Systems
- Health
- Quality
- Literacy

ATTENDANCE Clusters:
- Parent Intersection with the System
- Volunteer Engagement
- SARB Reform

SUMMER LEARNING Clusters:
- Access to summer learning
- Parent Education
- Quality of Opportunities

Each cluster sought cross sector participation to better inform the process of identifying the issues and designing a small prototype to test a solution.

It was important to have those working directly with families at the grassroots level involved and access to institutional leadership at the "treetops" level. The connections in the network allowed us to reach across levels, but not always consistently or with enough information. "Grassroots to treetops" supports and sustains systems change, but we had yet to identify the means to navigate this bi-directional need consistently.

There are many different viewpoints, organizations and schools that are clearly already involved in some components of the work. We found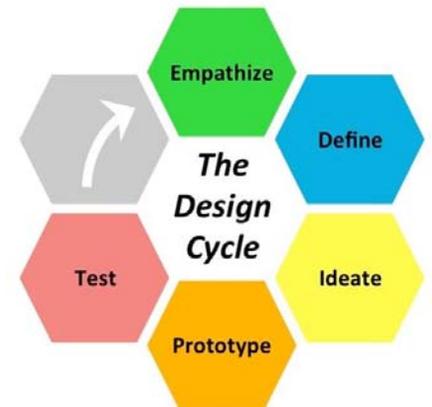 that gaps of knowledge exist across sectors and getting practical prototypes or projects developed to progress toward our goals proved to be a challenge.

June 2014

Enter the introduction of the Design Cycle and "Contextual Intelligence." David M. Kelley's business model of Human Centered Design was presented by Keith Bergthold of Metro Ministries. A smaller group of 30 attended more in depth training to use this model to design system solutions while keeping the child at the center. During that session, there was a general consensus we didn't have enough information to fulfill the requirement of the empathy phase.

Without empathy, we couldn't properly define the problem. Without defining the problem well, it was not possible to develop a solution or likely to improve outcomes. We didn't have enough context from the child and family viewpoint. Instead, we were making assumptions. We were trying to develop strategies without fully understanding the realities of our children and families – according to them, not our perceptions of them. This "Ah ha" illumination resonated widely among work-group participants as the hurdle we rarely get over. We needed to spend far more time listening.

We realized that families are part of a larger, fluid ecosystem. This eco-system of our children, their world and the systems they touch inform their

ECOLOGY MAP of Child/Family
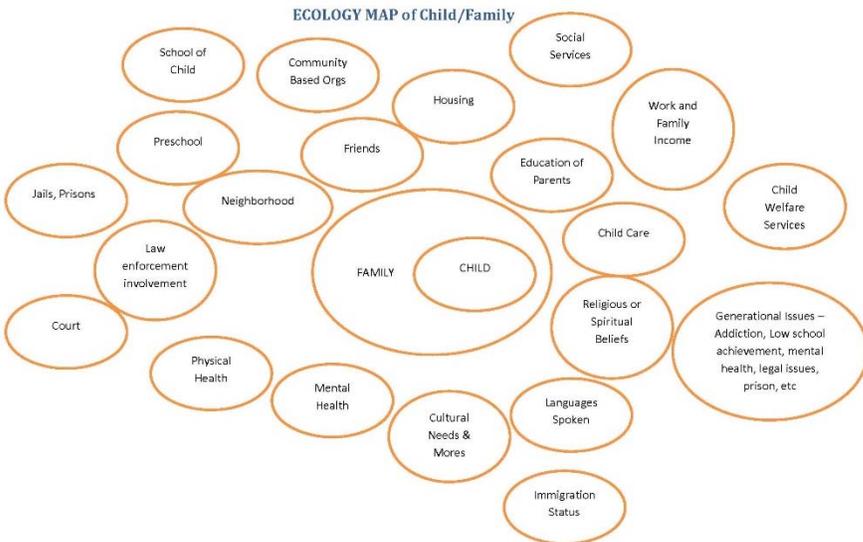
responses. Questions needed to be framed differently by asking open-ended questions around what, why, when, and how, directly to parents and children. We often neglect to discern how different parts of the ecosystem intersect with families and subsequently, how this affects their responses and attitudes to school readiness, school attendance, and summer learning.

What do they know that we don't?

At the last session before summer 2014, we developed questions based on components of the ecosystem as a tool for growing our contextual intelligence. While still considering a systematic process of discovery for the larger group, many are finding individual opportunities to use this approach, using the concepts learned for their own organizational needs. The Empathy phase and ground-level information that results may over time also prove to be a connector between "grassroots" and "treetops."

Initial Prototypes Emerging

Strategies have begun to emerge from workgroups, particularly those whose participants have extensive experience with data and context, for prototype development. Prototypes are the first try of a design or strategy, sometimes referred to as "small bets." The initial investment is low as well as the risk. These small bets are designed to be easily tested, refined with iterations focused on real success and ability to scale. Often these tests reveal more about the ecosystem of our children.

School Readiness – Health

- Increasing the number of developmental screenings being done throughout Fresno County
- Medical exams for all incoming kindergartners for vision, dental, and asthma

School Readiness – Literacy

- Addressing the 30 million word gap for children by age 4 by launching a "talk, read, sing" multi-media campaign

Summer Learning

- Increasing parent engagement in summer learning
- Increasing access to quality summer learning

School Attendance

- SARB Reform
- FUSD Chronic Absence Policy Project

ACTION FORUM CHRONOLOGY

Indicators to Measure Success

Consensus on Indicators that frame the entrepreneurial nature of emerging prototypes will be guided by those found in the Grade-Level Reading Campaign. By using one or more of these indicators per prototype, we tie into the national work and can compare strategy successes.

📖 School Readiness

1. Percentage of children who are in accredited child care settings, including publicly funded programs, Head Start and home-based programs.
2. Percentage of children who use a medical home that provides a regular source of health care for well-child, urgent child and family health care needs
3. Percentage of children ages 1-5 whose families read to them three days or more per week
4. Percentage of Preschool Attendance
5. Ratio of preschool need to preschool slots
6. Development Screening Outcome
7. Kindergarten Student Entrance Profile (KSEP)

📖 Summer Learning

1. Percent of children from low-income families Pre-K to third grade who participate in high quality summer learning opportunities that include a literacy or pre –literacy component.
2. Percent of children from low-income families who participate in a summer reading program.
3. Percent of children from low-income families who participate in summer meals program

📖 School Attendance

1. Attendance rate using chronic absence framework K-3

Coming in Fall 2014

The **Community Solution Action Plan (CSAP)** drafted in 2012 in response to the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and the All American City Award is being updated collaboratively using this work. The prototypes, indicators and growing network will inform the plan and become our road map.

Participants from the Action Forum are serving on the strategic implementation committee, writing team, data team or as content contributors. A draft will be completed in the fall of 2014 with a final document published in the late summer of 2015. The 2012 CSAP is available by emailing linda@tcmfresno.org.