

# The Essentials of Collective Impact

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- This power point slide set covers-
  - some history of ‘interagency collaborations’
  - Brief outline of Collective Impact components
  - and a brief discussion of successful interagency community efforts referenced as using Collective Impact strategies

# Let's start by Looking Back....

- Interagency initiatives have been part of California's health, social service, justice and educational programs for decades
- They have featured “state start up funds”, shared populations across key county / school district populations, legislation guiding the program parameters and varying degrees of community involvements

# History – Cont'd

- These earlier initiatives often times shared the same fundamental blue prints –
  - Expectations for unified program planning and resource sharing, outlined in an application
  - Expressed desires for data collection across systems
  - Higher levels of government administrative members on decision making bodies
  - Defined government outcomes (i.e. cost savings, improved community functioning)

# Least, but Not Last there were other elements....

Local Champions that combined expertise and knowledge with some .....

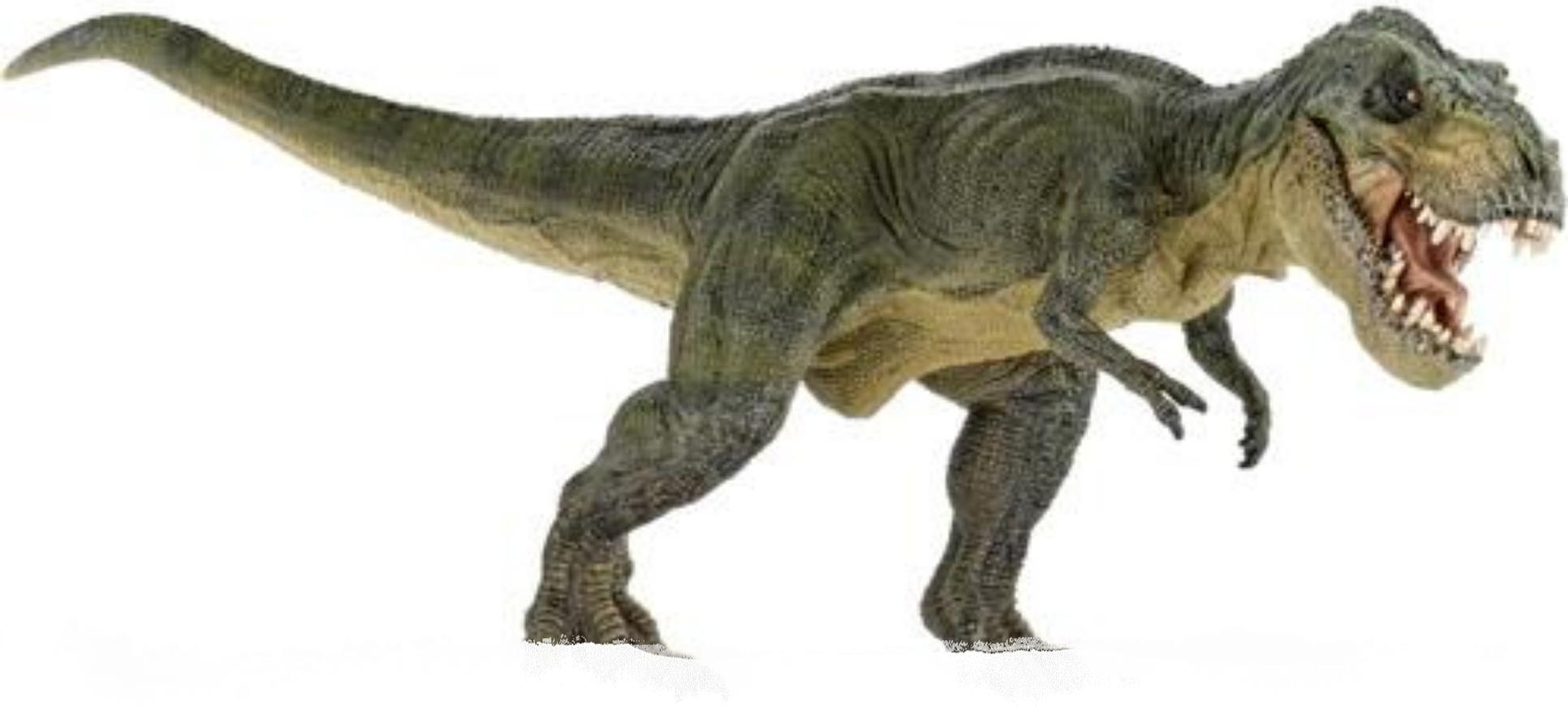
Flair, Charisma, Charm, OCD,  
(we all know, or have known these people)

A receptive larger environment to launch within (philosophical, geographical, demographics, political.....)



So, after  
millions of  
dollars  
and many  
decades

- What were are our take aways from those interagency initiatives and projects?
  - There were planning models, logic models, rubrics, phases and swim lanes...
  - There were dashboard, report cards, outcomes, results, and stories of success...
  - There were evidence based practices, and practiced based programs...braided and blended funds
  - There are rich histories of working together...



Yet, most collaboratives didn't survive the asteroids...Why?

# What are the Questions?

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What does it take for an interagency collaborative to make a difference, **and** sustain their efforts over time?

Can these elements be described?



It was a few years ago,  
maybe more...

I was sitting in a conference on work force development, and up to the podium strode a person, and she began discussing “Collective Impact” and her community....

It resonated with the 25 years of my professional life, and I listened closely to this new spin on articulating the challenges of “collaboration” and necessary elements...



# Brief Summary of **Collective Impact**

- A Definition-
  - **Collective Impact** is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration.
  - (wow, Wikipedia can make things boring)

# The Collective Impact Framework

- Are there “Pre-Conditions” for success? **YES!**
  - ❖ Finding and Engaging the Influential Leaders.
  - ❖ Framing the Urgency of the Issue that is Clear.
  - ❖ Accessing Sufficient Resources.

# Pre-Conditions

Influential Leaders, problem solvers who solicit and encourage participation, dynamic and passionate, authentic and designated...

Urgency for Change, Ensuring that the case been made

Adequate Resources, for the initial planning efforts, and launching the initiative, as other resources are identified and secured

These preconditions **create the opportunity and motivation** necessary to bring people who have never before worked together into a collective impact initiative and **hold them in place** until the **initiative's own momentum takes over**

# Anything else?

- Of course, isn't there always?

Success is linked to Implementation Phases that recognize the existence of these pre-conditions, and maximize existing resources and interest!

- ❖ Initiate Action
- ❖ Organize for Impact
- ❖ Sustain Action and Impact

# The Collective Impact Framework

- The Five Conditions linked to Successful Efforts
  1. Common Agenda
  2. Shared Measurement
  3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities
  4. Continuous Communication
  5. Backbone Support

# The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

- **Common Agenda**

Needs sufficient clarity to support a shared measurement system and shape mutually reinforcing activities:

1. Creating the boundaries of the system/issue(s)
2. Developing a strategic action framework to guide the activities of the initiative

# The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

- **Shared Measurement** -The use of a common set of measures to monitor performance, track progress towards goals, and learn what is or isn't working
  1. A small comprehensive set of indicators establishes a common language supporting the action framework
  2. Measures progress, points to problem solving opportunities [quality improvement]
  3. Enables greater alignment among the goals of participating agencies
  4. Becomes platform for a learning community that increases overall effectiveness

# The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

- **Mutually Reinforcing Activities**
  - the collective undertaking of specific sets of activities that support each other, and are coordinated with the actions of others
  - Each partners effort's must fit into an overarching plan, or “common agenda”
  - Building a continuum of efforts, not competing or fragmented projects

# The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

- **Continuous Communication** between partners, in a siloed, specialty, fragmented, sequential, turf ridden world is a “huge” challenge, but doable and essential-
  - ✓ Developing a shared – common vocabulary
  - ✓ Establishing and maintaining regular meetings
  - ✓ Adherence to Structured Agendas
  - ✓ Utilizing effective web based tools to ease the burden of staying connected

# The Five Conditions of Collective Impact

- **Backbone Support** (Without this, you are toast.....)  
Complex, multi-agency, multi-specialty initiatives cannot exist without an effective infrastructure, it is the graveyard of failed collaborations.....

What do they do? ***EVERYTHING !***

Plan, Manage, Support, Coordinate, Facilitate, Steer the Course, **Maintain the Course**, through sufficient administrative and technologically equipped staff.

(Again, to repeat - **Without this, you are toast.....**)

# Has the Government been able to help with “collective impact”?

Let's be honest – It is not a typical behavior of government agencies. More likely to:

- Impede rather than enhance
- Prohibit rather than encourage
- Narrow focus rather than broaden views
- Support the Silos rather than Integration
- Accountability efforts drive compliance not Innovations (in systems)
- Status Quo is just easier to manage....

# Ok, are there improved results?

- Have the academic analysis/review of collaborative initiatives, and the findings contained within the Collective Impact strategies yielded any positive outcomes?
- Have Collective Impact strategies made a difference for children and families?
- Where?

# Collective Impact is Working

Just One Example – Alignment Nashville

## **Their Mission:**

- The mission of Alignment Nashville is to bring community organizations and resources into alignment so that their coordinated support of Nashville's youth has a positive impact on public school success, children's health, and the success of our community as a whole.

# Alignment Nashville

So, now you're wondering, 'is it possible to sustain a community based collaborative serving our children and families? They all seem to come and go....

You are not alone. The good news, the answer is YES. For evidence and encouragement, please visit:

- <http://portal.alignmentnashville.org/annual-reports>

# So, why are we settling for Silos?

Are there conditions, concerns, needs in our communities today requiring collective approaches?

Are there challenges, opportunities and circumstances that make the consideration of undertaking a Collective Impact strategy **the logical choice** and imperative after our long history of individualized attempts?

Is it just  
California  
Dreaming?

What are our  
opportunities?



Realignment of Funding  
locals now hold greater decision  
making powers



ACA Implementation  
Universal Access to Care



Shifting Demographics  
Shrinking Child Populations



Accumulated Intelligence  
Practices and Practiced Persons



Inspired Dreamers- We aspire for  
better



For More  
on  
Collective  
Impact

Stanford Social Innovation Review  
*Informing and Inspiring Leaders  
of Social Change*

[http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective\\_impact](http://ssir.org/articles/entry/collective_impact)

Collective Impact Forum

<https://collectiveimpactforum.org/resources>