National Technical
Assistance Center for
Children's Mental Health

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR
CHILD AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

PROMOTING EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH THROUGH POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Project LAUNCH Meeting

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Major Areas To Be Addressed

- Definitions and types of policies

- Role of public policy

- Conceptual frameworks for developing and implementing policies

- Sustainability: Public policy and political partnerships

- Policy Academy format--one strategy for creating partnerships and policy

Question For The Group

- What do you think of when you hear the word "policy"?

Definitions of Policy

Authoritative decisions that are made in the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of government that are intended to direct or influence the actions, behaviors or decisions of others (Longest, 1998)

A plan or course of action, as a government, political party or business, intended to influence and determine decisions, actions and other matters (thefreedictionary)

A principle or rule to guide decisions and achieve rational **outcomes**. It can be considered a "statement of intent" (Wikipedia)

An action plan to meet a *desired end*. Related to health policy, this course of action strives to obtain desired **health outcomes**, whether for an individual, family group, community or the greater good of society (Stanhope and Lancaster, 2008)

Types of Policy Strategies or Mechanisms

- Legislation

- Rules and regulations

- Program standards

- Licensing requirements

- Interagency agreements (MOUs and MOAs)

- Contracts

- Budget proposals and funding mechanisms

- Executive orders

- Judicial decisions/court orders

Question For The Group

- Why are policies important?

Role Of Policy

- Mission, values, and principles in system building efforts drive policy

- Use of policy to achieve *desired outcomes*

- Existence of formal policies can be supportive of system building efforts

- Sustaining the work over time is partly dependent on having policies in place

Results-based Public Policy—What is it?

- Use of a *desired outcome* to drive the actions of the government to address a particular issue

- Process begins with the following:

  - Clearly stated result or outcome to be achieved

  - Assessment of the current situation..data, data, data

  - Use of policy strategies or options that have demonstrated ability to achieve the outcome or result

  - Evaluation of progress through data and performance measures

Friedman, Mark. Trying Hard is Not Good Enough www.resultsaccountability.com

www.policyforresults.org and Results-Based Public Policy Strategies for promoting Children's Social, Emotional and Behavioral Health. March 2012. Center for Study of Social Policy

Different Levels of Authority

- Legislatures—local, state, and national

- Councils—various levels

- Judiciaries--interpret laws

- Boards—oversight bodies

- Commissions—various types and levels

- Departments/Division

- Task Forces or Committees

- Work plans

Influence of One Level on Another

- **Vertical relationship**—one level of authority influencing the another level of government
  - Example: Federal policies that require compliance at state and local levels; i.e. IDEA
  - MA requiring EPSDT behavioral health screening at pediatrician visits
- **Cooperative policy development** has equivalent results as coercive
- **Horizontal relationship**—among various child-serving agencies
  - Example—cross agency development based on common values and outcomes
  - Means to articulate a consensus and encourage partnerships

Elements of Sustainability: Public Policy and Political Partnerships

- National study on sustainability based on system of care sites in which grant funding ended:
  - explore factors that either + or - impacted sustainability and strategies to maintain services and supports over time
  - Looked at sites after 4 years of federal funds and those that were about to graduate
  - Respondents were: former project director, reps. from MH and other child serving systems, & family member.
  - Web survey and follow-up interviews
  - Importance of the study---looks across sites at what components really help or hinder sustaining the work of a grant program
- Stroul, Beth A. "The Sustainability of Systems of Care: Lessons Learned." June 2006

Sustainability Results:
Public Policy And Political Partnerships – What Helps

- Existence of formal policies supportive of the system building work

- Engagement of political and policy leaders

- Interagency partnerships

- Existence of constituency to advocate (may be a family organization

- Existence of ongoing leadership

- State commitment and involvement

- Minimal change in elected or appointed officials

- Presence of a "champion" with the power to focus

Partnership Policy Strategy: Interagency Agreements (MOUs or MOAs)

- One type of public policy that is useful at many levels and across different child-serving agencies and organizations

- Can be adapted to meet unique community needs

- Is a policy strategy itself that requires partnership and consensus

- Requires explicit understandings if written well

- Useful tool in the type of system building work being required today

- Is "doable" and may not require a long time to design or to implement

Conceptual Framework for Policy Development & Implementation

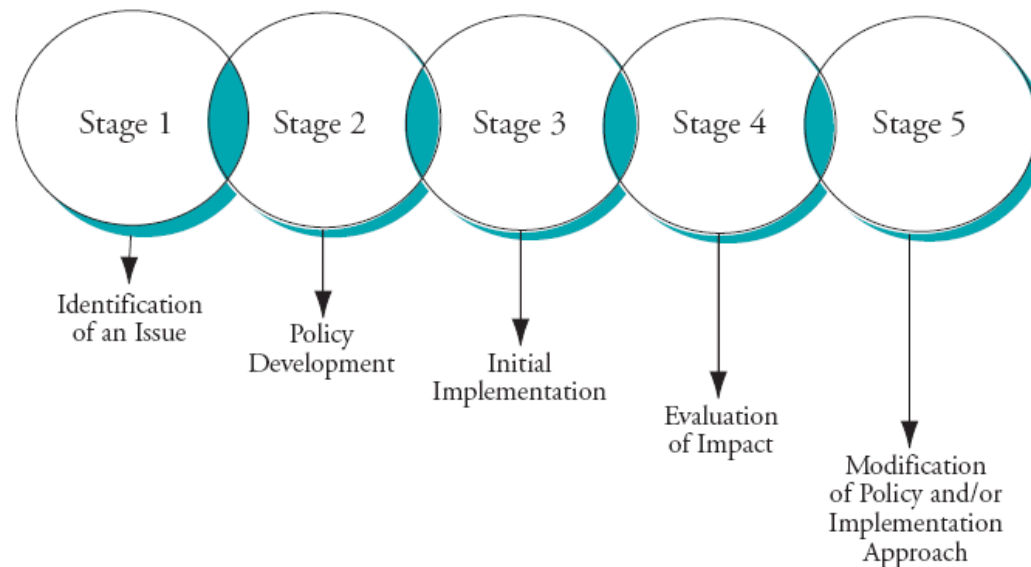*Policy starts with vision, mission, and shared outcomes*

- Stage 1--Identification of an issue and its goal or a desired outcome

- Stage 2--Policy development consistent with values

- Stage 3—Initial Implementation

- Stage 4—Evaluation of impact

- Stage 5—Modification of policy and/or implementation approach

Friedman, Robert M. "A Conceptual Framework for Developing and Implementing Effective Policy in Children's Mental Health," June 2001

Stages of Policy Development and Implementation

Figure 2

Stages of Policy Development and Implementation

Stage 1 — Identification of an Issue

Stage 2 — Policy Development

Stage 3 — Initial Implementation

Stage 4 — Evaluation of Impact

Stage 5 — Modification of Policy and/or Implementation Approach

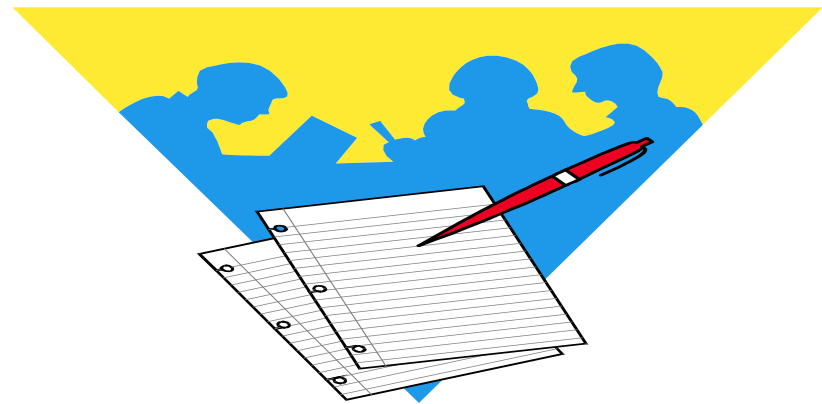# Policy Implementation: Variables That Foster System Change

- Consistency of the policy with articulated values and concepts
- Support for values and concepts in policies across key child-serving sectors
- Clarity of the policy to the population served and goals
- Inclusion of a clear causal theory
- General approach to developing and implementation plan
- Election of particular instruments in implementation
- Adequacy of the resources and capacity to implement
- Accountability and monitoring to implement
- Nature of the relationships between the organizations involved in the implementation

Policy Academy: A Strategy for Cross System Policy Development

- Identification of a major child initiative based on System of Care (SOC) values and principles

- Formation of critical partnerships within the state and across child-serving agencies to develop and implement policy

- Definition of concrete outcomes and goals

- Selection of a specific policy strategy or mechanism

- Development of an Action Plan with specific action steps, timelines

- Follow-up support and work to implement the policy

Policy Academy Format

- Plenary Sessions

- Seminars ----topical issues identified by states in Pre-work

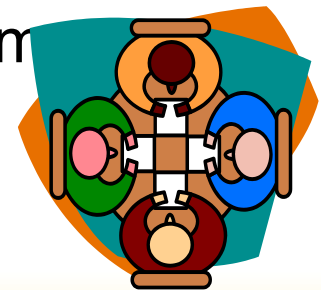- Delegation sessions-- individualized with resource persons

- Materials

Examples of States' Policy Initiatives and Cross Agency Outcomes

- **NJ**—Policy for budget re-structuring of public funds supported by the Governor's office to develop a statewide children's systems of care

- **IL**—Legislation that supports children's mental health screening and services with cooperation among three state agencies for screening and referral

- **LA**—MOA between state agencies and supported by funding from the legislature around identification of young children at-risk

- **MO**-Legislation around custody relinquishment issue to develop a unified, children's mental health system

Some Lessons Learned from Implementing a Policy Academy

- Way to create new exciting partnerships

- Encourages mutual planning across different agencies, organizations, and individuals based on common vision and outcomes or goals

- Outcome of an Academy is good strategic planning process as a <u>first step</u> in policy making

- Public policy takes a long time to create & implement

- Policy is only one component in building system

- Leadership is vital to success

- Work requires much planning and follow-up

Additional Questions To Think about on Policy

- What would be a public policy that could help sustain your current work?

- Who would be your partners in addressing this area?

- How could you get started in creating and implementing a policy?

- Who could you enlist as stakeholders?

- What may be your biggest challenge to creating a public policy?