# The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI)
# & Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago

A Theory of Change for Residential
Interventions: Enhancing and Evaluating Quality
Association of Children's Residential & Community services
*67th Annual Conference – May 17, 2023- Minneapolis, MN*

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# Introductions

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## Today's Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Context- The Building Bridges Initiative and Outcomes Workgroup
3. Theory of Change/ Logic Models Overview
4. The BBI Theory of Change for Residential Interventions and Logic Models; Users Guide
5. Applications Workshop
6. Next Steps

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## Better Late than Never!

How might we assess the outcomes and impacts of residential intervention, design and measure transformational practice improvements in residential programs, and develop shared understanding of change with partners and stakeholders?

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# Context

- The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) and its Outcomes Workgroup identified the need for a tool **to support measuring the impact** of residential interventions **that can also support programs in improving quality** within a system of care framework.
- It decided to use a theory of change and logic model design to help to achieve this objective and capitalize on the opportunity.
- BBI engaged ACRC conference participants to help validate and refine the theory of change at both the 2021 and 2022 conferences.

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# Overview of Theory of Change

✓ A method used to select an intervention

✓ A model of the expected causal relationships that lead to desired outcomes

✓ Helps us articulate our assumptions about how change will occur

✓ A visual representation of a change process

✓ Can be used at different stages depending on the purpose

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# WHY A THEORY OF CHANGE?

- **Achieve buy-in**: A theory of change helps partners and stakeholders get on the same page about what needs to happen to reach shared goals.

- **Select the right intervention(s)**: A theory of change articulates desired short- and long-term outcomes and sets the groundwork for finding the best approach for achieving them.

- **Guide strategic planning**: A theory of change can serve as a practical tool for focusing attention and decision-making throughout the change process.

- **Inform evaluation and continuous improvement**: A theory of change helps program staff and evaluators identify what indicators to measure to monitor progress, assess needed adjustments during implementation, and evaluate overall results.

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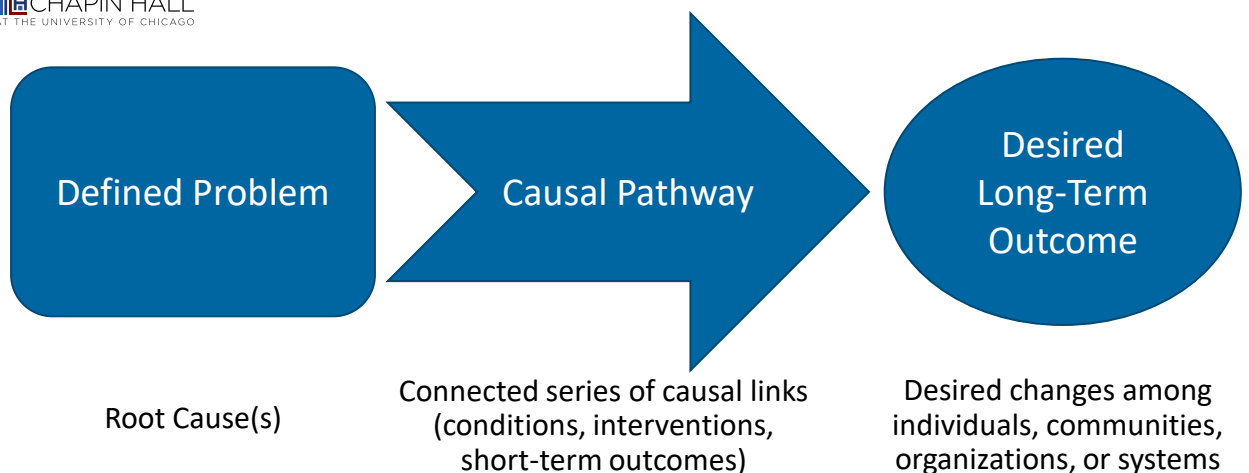
Capacity Building Center for States, 2018.

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# Theories of Change



Defined Problem → Causal Pathway → Desired Long-Term Outcome

Root Cause(s)

Connected series of causal links (conditions, interventions, short-term outcomes)

Desired changes among individuals, communities, organizations, or systems

Capacity Building Center for States (2018)

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## Theory of Change

## Logic Model
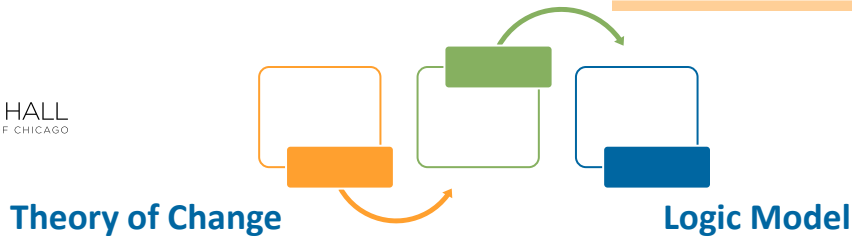
- Illustrates the pathway from the root cause(s) of the problem to the desired outcome
- Helps explain how and why change will occur
- Supports intervention selection

- Presents program inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes in a structured grid format
- Helps stakeholders understand expected results
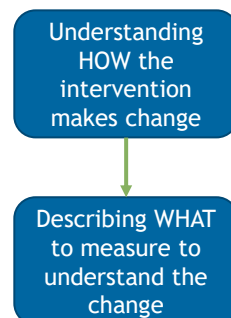- Supports monitoring and evaluation

Note. Adapted from Capacity Building Center for States. (2018b). Change and implementation in practice at a Glance: Theory of change. Washington, DC: Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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# How the Theory of Change and Logic Model Work Together

- A *theory of change* describes the expected causal relationship between the (residential) intervention and its impacts for youth and families.
- L*ogic models* clarify the mechanisms by which the (residential intervention) achieves the intended effects, thereby operationalizing the theory of change as an actionable evaluative framework.
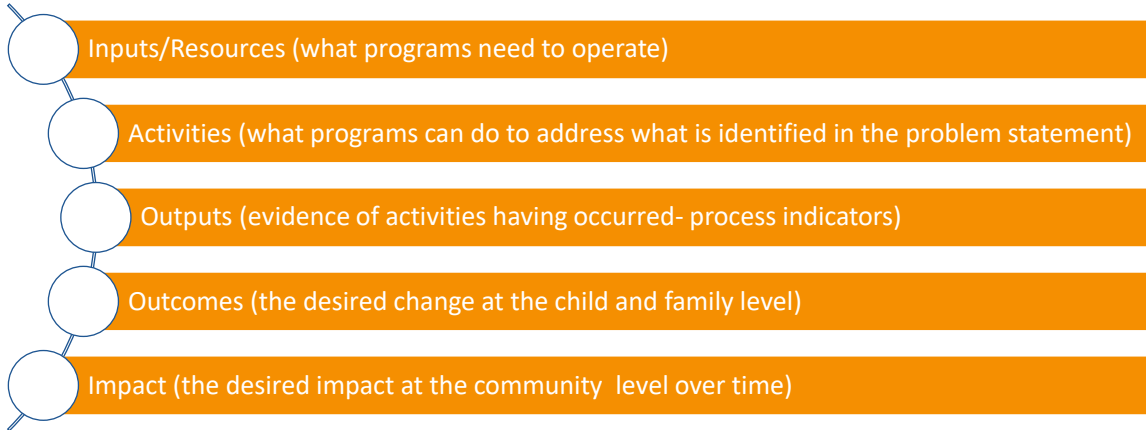
Understanding HOW the intervention makes change

Describing WHAT to measure to understand the change

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# LOGIC MODEL COMPONENTS

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- Inputs/Resources (what programs need to operate)
- Activities (what programs can do to address what is identified in the problem statement)
- Outputs (evidence of activities having occurred- process indicators)
- Outcomes (the desired change at the child and family level)
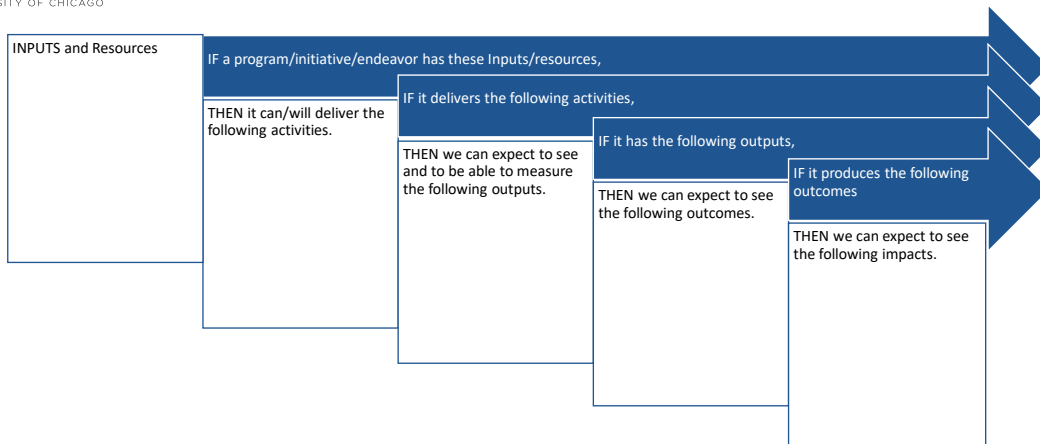- Impact (the desired impact at the community level over time)

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# A SERIES OF IF-THEN STATEMENTS

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INPUTS and Resources

IF a program/initiative/endeavor has these Inputs/resources,

THEN it can/will deliver the following activities.

IF it delivers the following activities,

THEN we can expect to see and to be able to measure the following outputs.

IF it has the following outputs,

THEN we can expect to see the following outcomes.

IF it produces the following outcomes

THEN we can expect to see the following impacts.
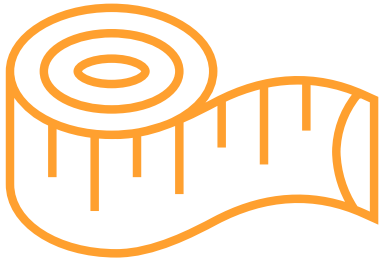
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## Measuring Change

- **Process measures:** A measure of whether an activity has occurred
- **Functional outcomes measures:** A measure of the effect of an intervention
- **Experience measures:** A measure of the value of the experience from the family's perspective

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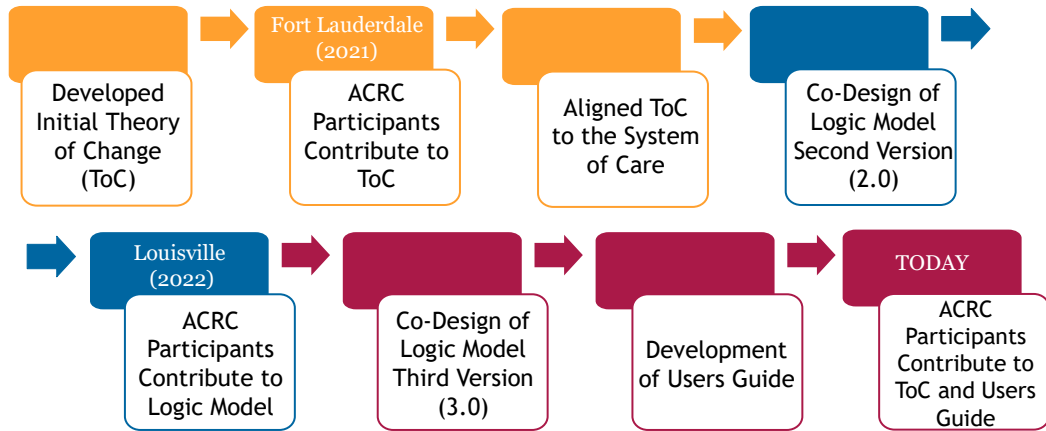
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# BBI Theory of Change for Residential Interventions

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# Our Development Process

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Developed Initial Theory of Change (ToC) → **Fort Lauderdale (2021)** ACRC Participants Contribute to ToC → Aligned ToC to the System of Care → Co-Design of Logic Model Second Version (2.0) →

→ **Louisville (2022)** ACRC Participants Contribute to Logic Model → Co-Design of Logic Model Third Version (3.0) → Development of Users Guide → **TODAY** ACRC Participants Contribute to ToC and Users Guide

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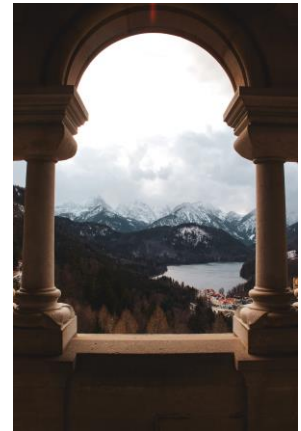
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# BBI SYSTEM OF CARE PILLARS

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- Family-Driven and Youth-Guided
- Culturally Humble and Linguistically Competent
- Equitable
- Home- and Community-Based
- Trauma Informed
- Strengths Based and Individualized
- Data Driven and Outcome Oriented

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## Our "Final" Draft Logic Model

- The result is a set of logic models that includes an overarching model for residential interventions and "practice pillar" models in seven domains aligned with system of care principles as applied to residential interventions. That is the focus of our workshop today.

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# Workshop

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# USER'S GUIDE

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- Provides:
  - Overview of the design of the Theory of Change and Logic Models
  - General guidelines for using the framework
  - Recommended steps to get started
  - Applications for specific organizational and jurisdictional initiatives and endeavors

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# BREAKOUT

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- Build a logic model for one of the programs at your table, or a hypothetical program, based on the instructions in the User's Guide.
- Use the template on the table to record the problem and design the logic model, completing all columns.
- Share observations of the process with each other.
- Appoint someone to report out to the large group.

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# Discussion

What did you notice about the logic models? Any insights to share?

What recommendations do you have regarding the User's Guide?

What ideas do you have about dissemination, overall value, research, other questions?

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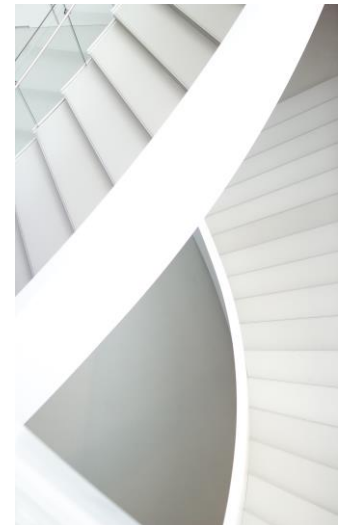
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# Our Next Steps

1. Disseminate the logic model to residential providers to support improved practice and impact
2. Offer technical assistance to interested providers to operationalize the framework
3. Undertake a longitudinal study of the impact of residential interventions using this framework

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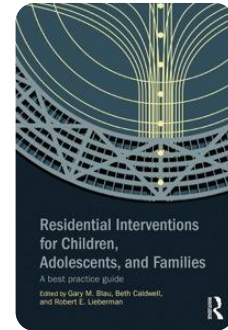
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**2014 Book:** *Residential Interventions for Children, Adolescents and Families: A Best Practice Guide*

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There are several options for ordering:
- toll free phone: at 1-800-634-7064
- fax: 1-800-248-4724
- email: orders@taylorandfrancis.com
- website: www.routledgementalhealth.com
- (20% discount w/ web orders using code IRK71;
- free global shipping on any orders over $35)

Orders must include either: the Title: *Residential Interventions for Children, Adolescents and Families: A Best Practice Guide* **OR** the ISBN: 978-0-415-85456-6

**Note:** As a federal employee, Gary Blau receives no royalties or any other remuneration for this book. Any royalties received by Beth Caldwell and Bob Lieberman will be used to support youth and family empowerment consistent with BBI.

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*2020 Book: Transforming Residential Interventions: Practical Strategies and Future Directions*

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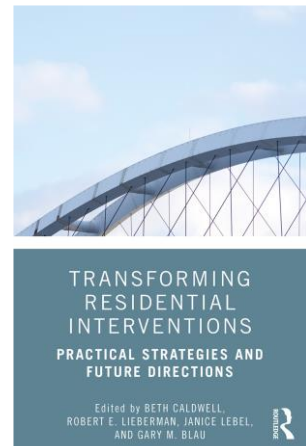
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# BBI Contact Information
# www.buildingbridges4youth.org

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