

# Theories of Change and Logic Models

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MAPPING YOUR VISION TO REAL-WORLD  
OUTCOMES

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Vision, Mission, and Strategy

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# Vision, Mission, and Strategy

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THE BASIS FOR NONPROFIT WORK

# Vision, Mission, Strategy

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Your **vision** is an articulation of the future state you want to see.

*All Black, Indigenous, and youth of color thrive (YDEKC vision)*

Your **mission** is a statement about what your organization is doing to achieve the vision

*YDEKC connects, strengthens, and amplifies the leaders of youth serving organizations (YDEKC mission)*

Your **strategy** is the *how*

*Advocacy, cross-sector collaboration, and leadership and organizational development (YDEKC strategy areas)*

# What is a Theory of Change? What is a Logic Model?

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SOME BASIC DEFINITIONS

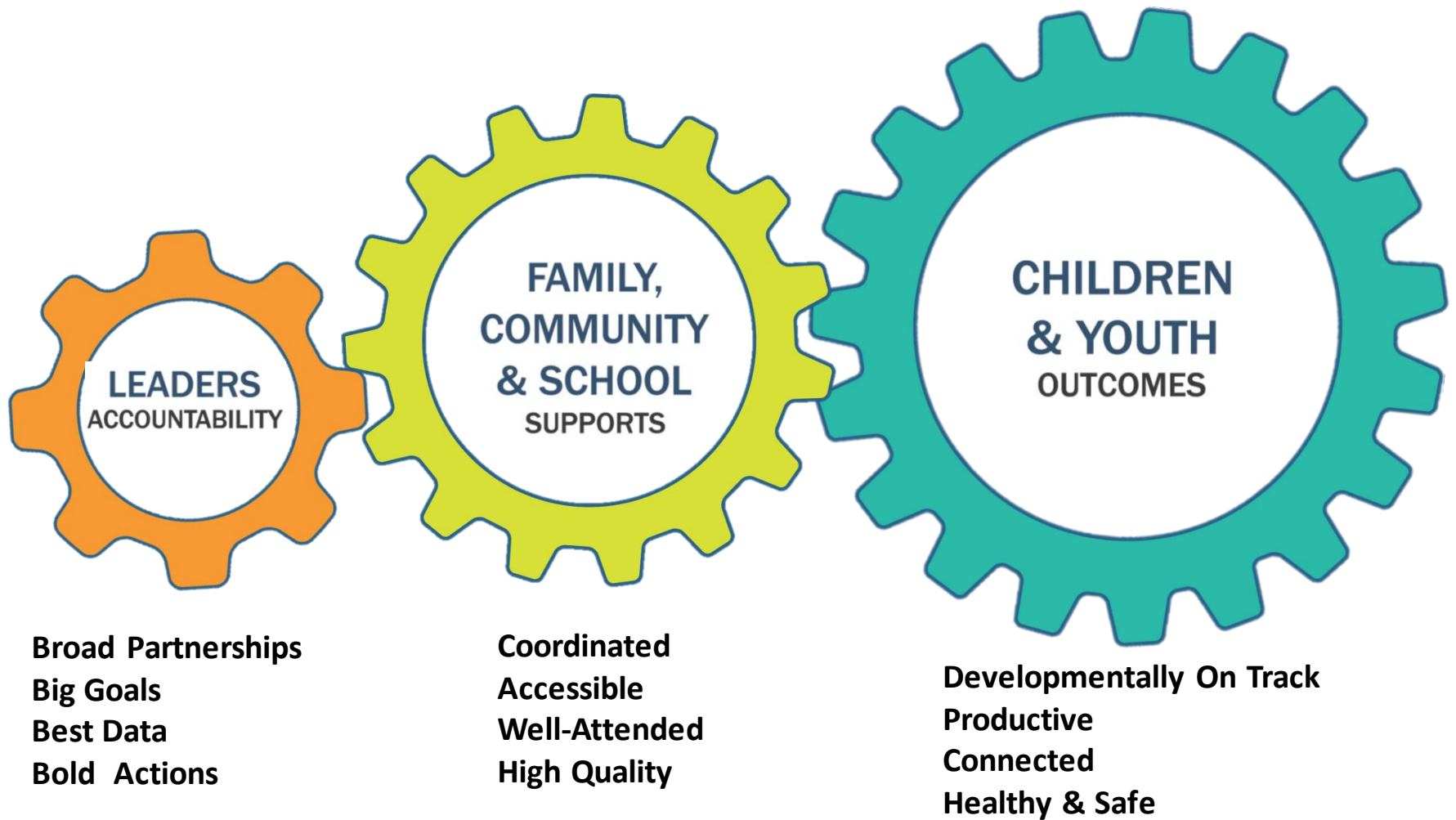
# What is a Theory of Change?

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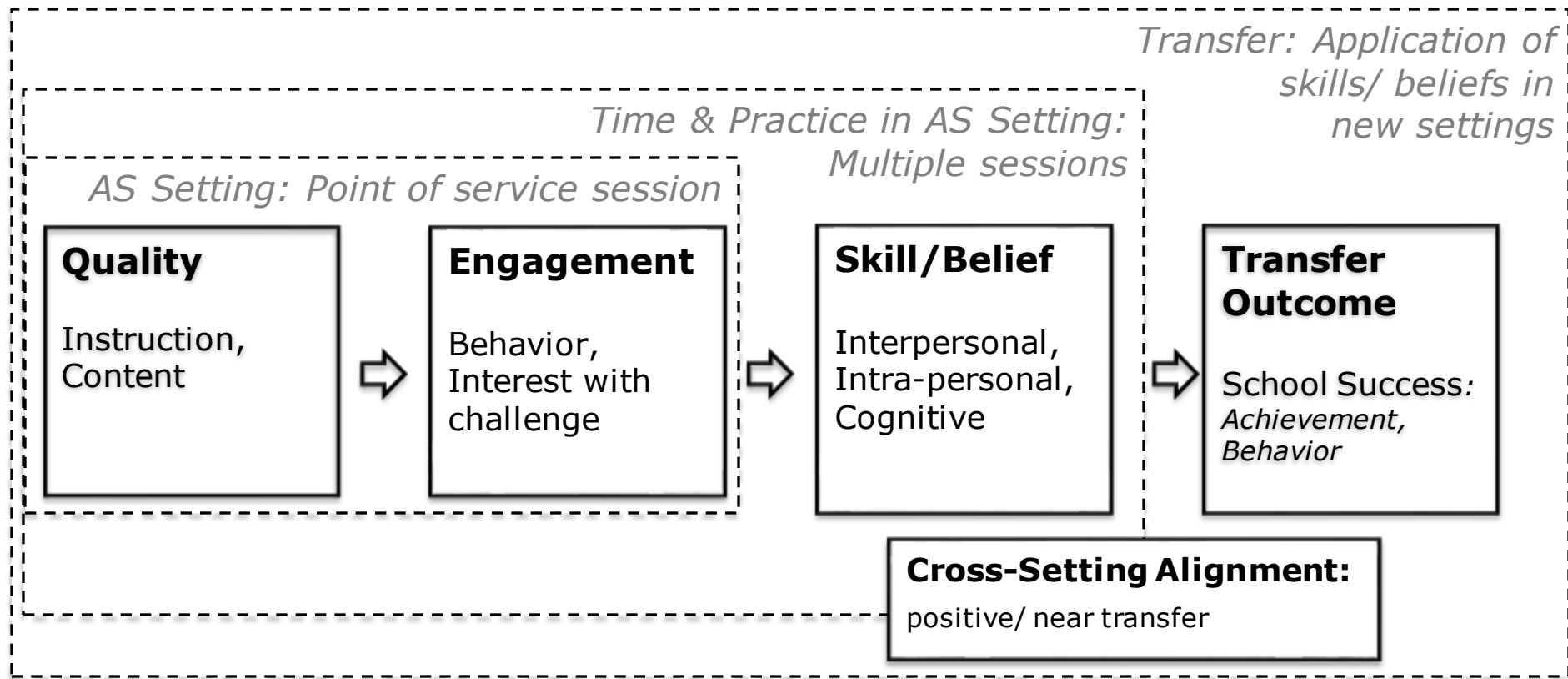
“An articulation of the results an organization must achieve in order to be successful, and how it, working alone or with others, will achieve them.”

Matthew Forti (2012, May 23). “Six Theory of Change Pitfalls to Avoid,” *Stanford Social Innovation Review*,  
[http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/six\\_theory\\_of\\_change\\_pitfalls\\_to\\_avoid](http://www.ssireview.org/blog/entry/six_theory_of_change_pitfalls_to_avoid)

# One Example: The Forum for Youth Investment *System Level*) Theory of Change



# Another Example: Quality-to-Outcomes (*Program Level*) Theory of Change



Smith C., Hallman, S., Hillaker, B., Sugar, S., McGovern, G., & Devaney, E. (2012). *Development and early validation evidence for an observational measure of high quality instructional practice for science, technology, engineering and mathematics in out-of-school time settings: The STEM supplement to the Youth Program Quality Assessment*. Forum for Youth Investment. Washington DC.

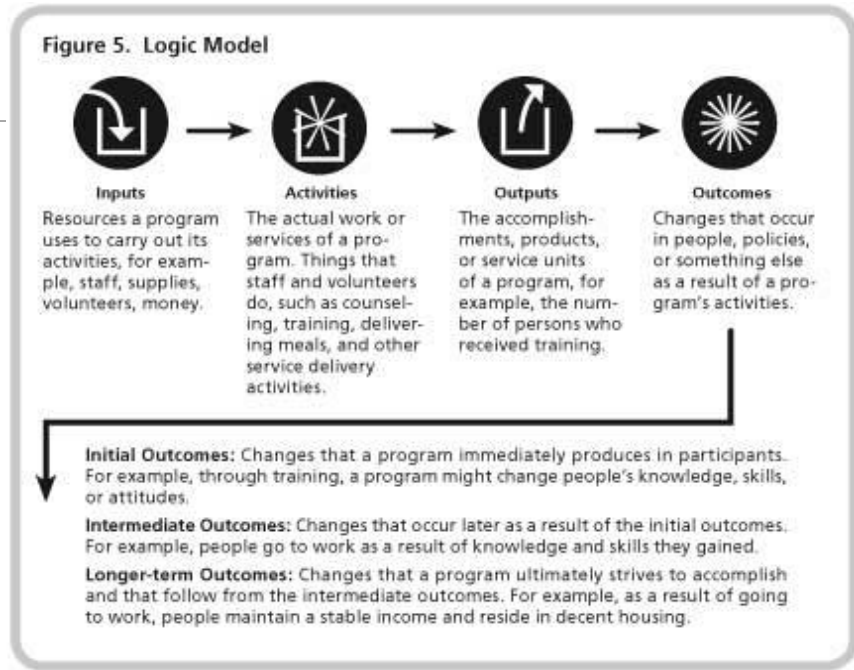


# What is a Logic Model?

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“A visual description of the elements of a program or initiative (i.e., the resources, activities, outputs, outcomes and goals) that articulate the underlying *logic* of how a program works.”

ORS Impact, “Orientation to Theory of Change” <http://www.orsimpact.org>



Paul Mattessich, (2003). *The Manager's Guide to Program Evaluation*. Minneapolis: Fieldstone Alliance.

# Why bother with either of these?

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Strengthen internal and external communication

Connect stakeholders to mission and vision

Streamline activities and/or reporting

Ensure organizational sustainability

# Uncovering your Theory of Change

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A BACK-TO-BASICS APPROACH

# Your theory of change...

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Should culminate in the fulfillment of your vision

Should be grounded in:

- Beliefs
- Logic
- Research
- Experience

May be implicit/unstated

# Example: YDEKC's Theory of Change



# Getting started

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First, ask...

*What is our vision for the future, and for the young people that we work with? What is their vision for themselves?*



# Next steps

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Then, consider...

*What are our main program strategies or activities?*

*How do they contribute to the achievement of our vision?*

*What are the steps along the way?*




# Tool Suggestion

Use our Theory of Change to Logic Model Worksheet to work through a “So That” chain to connect activities to outcomes



Youth Development Executives of King County  
Working together to advance the youth development field



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## WORKSHEET: THEORY OF CHANGE TO LOGIC MODEL

I. “SO THAT” CHAIN TEMPLATE

Complete the template below to see how your Theory of Change elements connect. Work from the bottom up!


STRATEGY:

SO THAT

SO THAT

SO THAT

GOAL OR OUTCOME STATEMENT:



Adapted from: Organizational Research Services (2004). *Theory of Change: A Practical Tool for Action, Results, and Learning*. Prepared for the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-theoryofchange-2004.pdf>

Measurement Toolkit 1.3 <http://ydekc.org/research/toc-logic-model-worksheet/>

# Example

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**STRATEGY:**

*Youth-led teams do service learning projects in their school community*

**SO THAT**

*Youth develop strong leadership and collaboration skills AND deepen connections to school community through team service projects*

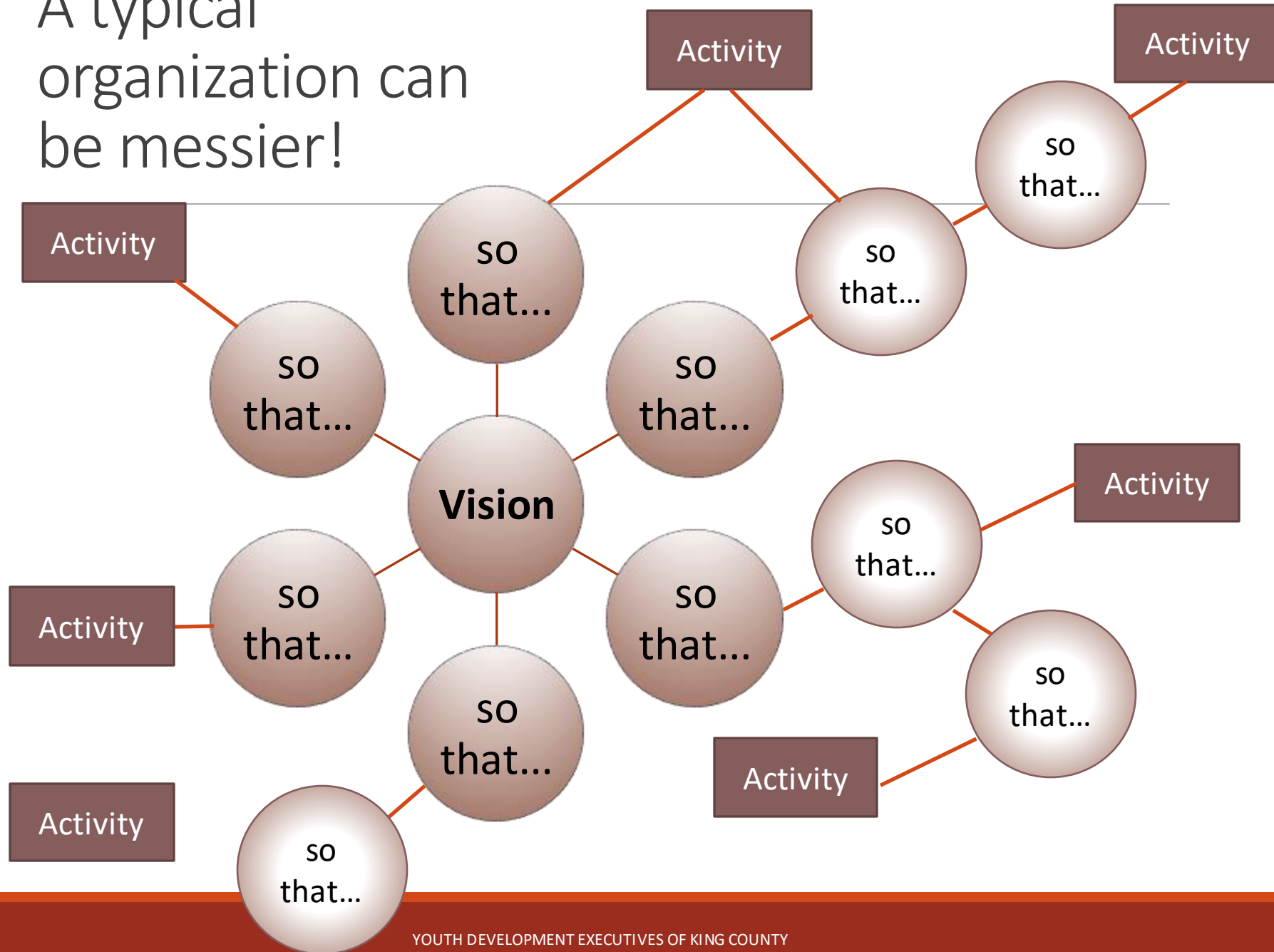
**SO THAT**

*Leadership and collaboration skills AND strong school connections contribute to persistence and success in school*

**GOAL OR OUTCOME STATEMENT:**

*Young people who participate in team service learning projects persist and succeed in school*

A typical organization can be messier!



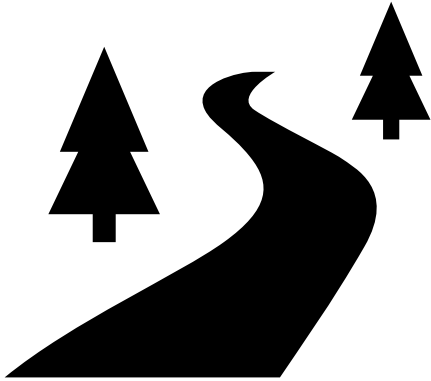
# Creating a logic model

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BASING PROGRAM DESIGN AND EVALUATION ON  
YOUR THEORY OF CHANGE

# Now what?

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A **logic model** can help you to apply your overall theory of change to the design and evaluation of particular programs or strategies

By helping to establish measures along the path toward outcomes, you can identify gaps and make needed changes

# Tool suggestion

## Logic Model Template from YDEKC's Measurement Toolkit:

**LOGIC MODEL FOR (INSERT YOUTH PROGRAM NAME HERE)**

*Program Outcome Statement: A brief statement of ultimate purpose*

INPUTS	OUTPUTS		YOUTH OUTCOMES - IMPACT		
	Program Activities	Youth Participation	SHORT (LEARNING)	MEDIUM (ACTION)	LONG (CONDITIONS)
<p><i>The resources you will bring to the program. One approach is to focus on things that are quantifiable so that you can calculate return on investment later.</i></p>	<p><i>What you are actually doing...</i></p>	<p><i>Who are your target participants, and what is the nature of their participation?</i></p>	<p><i>What changes in student knowledge or skills do you expect to see at the end of your program?</i></p>	<p><i>What changes in student behavior (i.e. outcomes) do you expect to see as a result of these changes in knowledge?</i></p>	<p><i>What are the aspirational, long-term changes to which your work contributes?</i></p>
<p><b>Assumptions</b></p> <p><i>What are you assuming to be true in order for your model to be true?</i></p>			<p><b>External Factors</b></p> <p><i>What are the known factors that can influence your success, over which you have little or no control?</i></p>		

Logic Model Template Courtesy of the Program Development and Evaluation Unit at the University of Wisconsin – Extension, <http://www.uwex.edu/oes/pdande/index.html>

Partnership Toolkit <http://ydekc.org/resource-center/partnership-toolkit/>

# Some definitions

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**Inputs** are all the things that go into your program (staff, stuff, space, and systems)

**Activities** are the things you do

**Outputs** are what is produced as a result of your activities

**Outcomes** are changes that you expect to occur as a result of what you do or produce; these can be short-, medium-, or long-term

**Indicators** *represent* all of the above; they provide evidence that something has been done, produced, or achieved (or not)

# What *assets* will you bring to this work?

**INPUTS**

*The resources you will bring to the program. One approach is to focus on things that are quantifiable so that you can calculate return on investment later.*

Think about your strengths as an organization AND the 4 S's:

- Space
- Staff
- Stuff
- Systems (Do you use technology? What about YPQA or a similar quality improvement system?)

You can quantify inputs as needed...

33					
34	<b>Budget Categories</b>	<b>Project Year 1</b>	<b>Project Year 2</b>	<b>Project Year 3</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
35	Other Project Funding/Revenue	-	-	-	-
36	Salary, Wages, & Benefits	-	-	-	-
37	Project Supplies and Equipment	-	-	-	-
38	Travel & Transportation	-	-	-	-
39	Professional Development & Training	-	-	-	-
40	Contractors & Consultants	-	-	-	-
41	Other	-	-	-	-
42	In-Kind Expenses	-	-	-	-
43	Overhead	-	-	-	-
44	<b>TOTAL FUNDING REQUEST</b>	-	-	-	-



# ***What*** do you propose to offer, ***for whom***, and ***how much***?

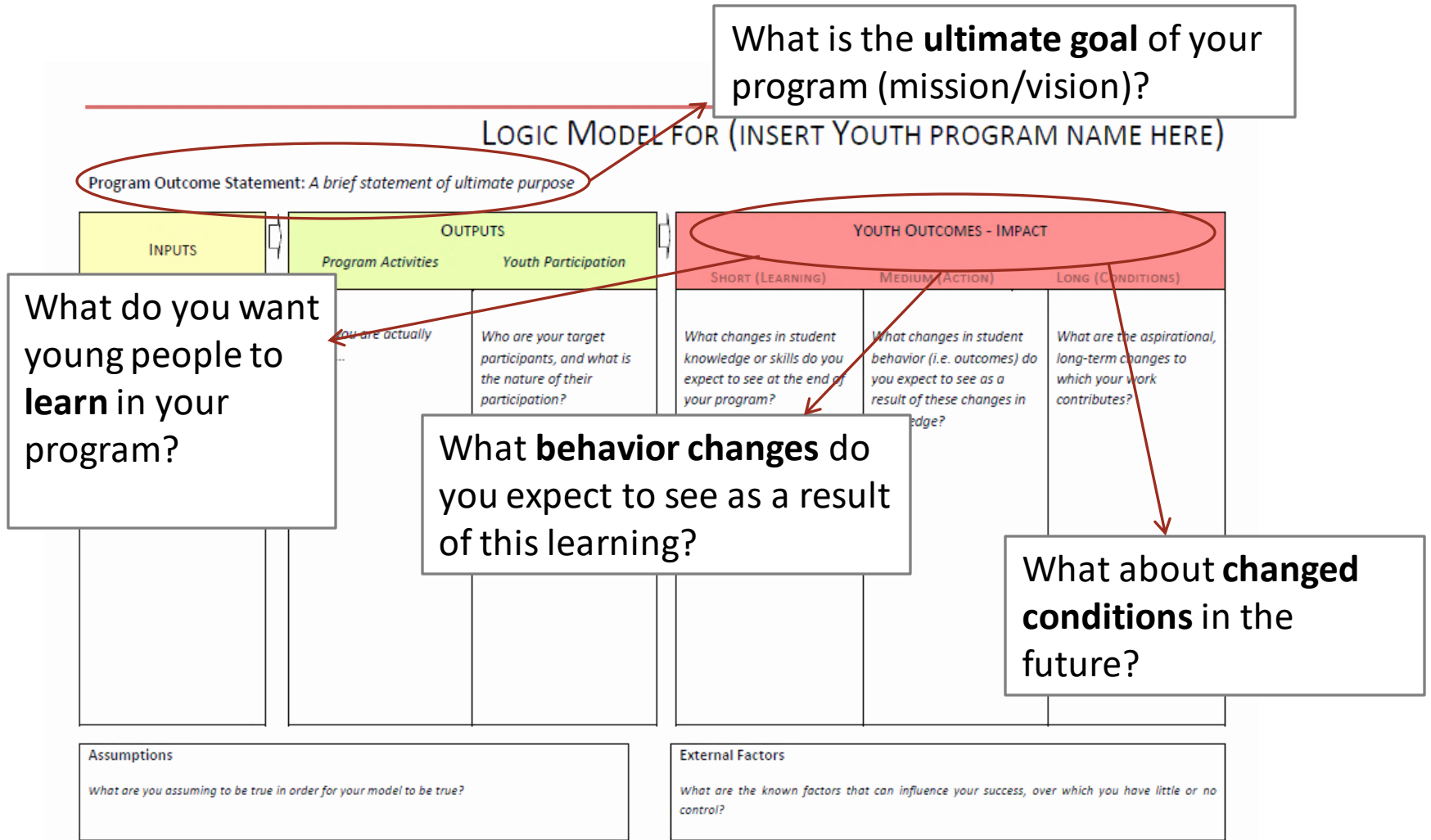
Be as specific as is helpful about the **activities** that will be available to participants

OUTPUTS	
Program Activities	Youth Participation
<i>What you are actually doing....</i>	<i>Who are your target participants, and what is the nature of their participation?</i>

Think about how many youth you serve, and about their demographics. Do you have goals around recruitment?

Also, consider program dosage. How many days or hours do you want young people to participate?

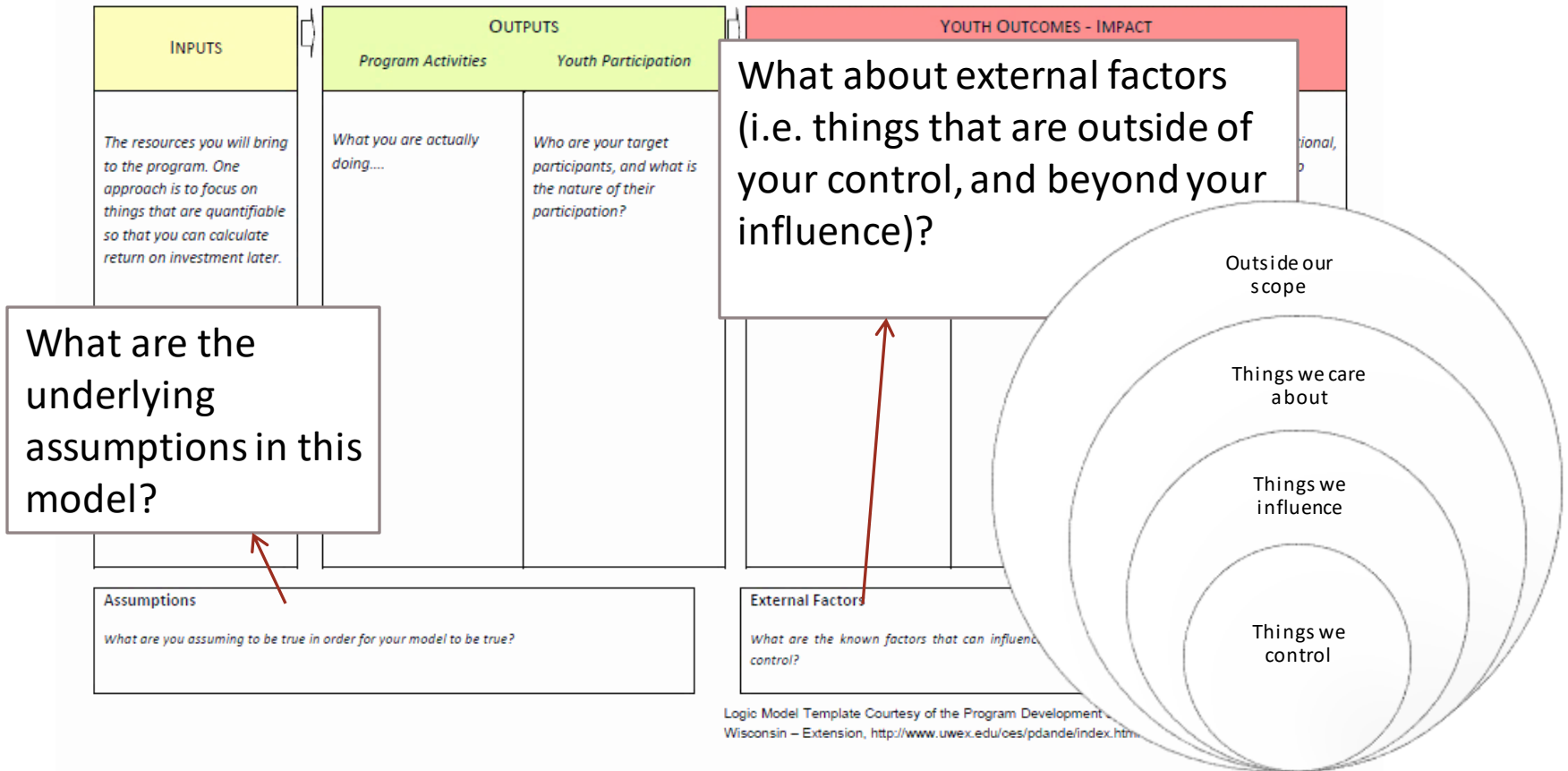
# What are the **outcomes** you are working toward?

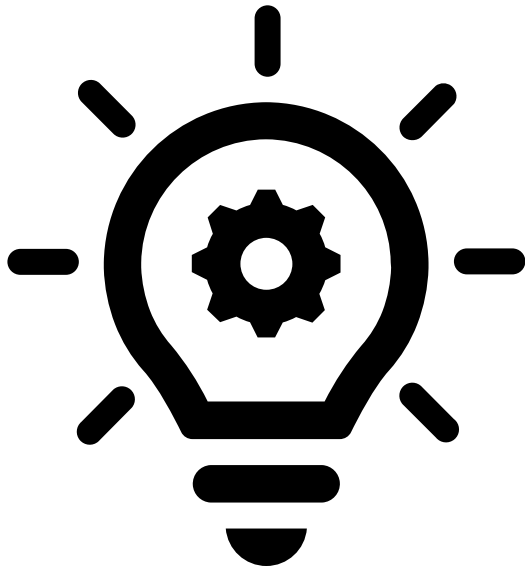


Logic Model Template Courtesy of the Program Development and Evaluation Unit at the University of Wisconsin - Extension, <http://www.uwex.edu/oes/pdande/index.html>

# LOGIC MODEL FOR (INSERT YOUTH PROGRAM NAME HERE)

Program Outcome Statement: *A brief statement of ultimate purpose*





# Final thoughts

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When developing a theory of change, involve as many stakeholders as you can (including youth!)

Theories of change and logic models are living documents – they should be revisited and revalidated by community stakeholders regularly