What is Theory of Change?

Theory of Change is a planning process created specifically for community change efforts.

Theory of Change is *not* a general theory of how change happens; rather, the theory is specific to your effort.

Theory of Change is useful for setting goals, strategic planning, and program evaluation.
TOC is a “Process” and a “Product”

A structured thinking **PROCESS** that allows groups to turn their theories about what needs to change and why into a “causal pathway”

A **PRODUCT** that illustrates the results of the TOC process
What is a “Causal Pathway”? 

A step-by-step, backwards mapping process through which a group determines all the preconditions necessary to reach an ultimate vision.
Mapping a Causal Pathway

In order to be healthy, by 2020 Transylvania County residents will commit to a healthy lifestyle and access appropriate health care

Patients access APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE

TC residents commit to a HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

December 17, 2009

Formal structure for community advocacy

Health care is convenient

Adequate interpretive services are available

Medical homes concept utilized by patients and providers

Transportation is available

Patients have confidence in health care system

Cost is not a factor

Information/education on appropriate health care is widely available

Adequate # of necessary & sustainable health care options available locally

Individuals assume responsibility for accessing appropriate health care as needed

Cultural shift by providers to patient-centered care structure

An educated & unbiased primary care structure

Structure to coordinate health care

Change in pay structure for providers

A health care information network in place

A health access network in place

Cultural differences recognized

Identification/mitigation of health care gaps

Adequate # of Medicaid dentists

Accessible schedule of all providers practicing locally
1. Determine the Vision
2. Build the outcomes map
3. Identify which of the outcomes your group will choose to address.
Visual Logic

Ultimate Outcome

Vision (Long-term Outcome)

Accountability ceiling

Precondition

Precondition

Precondition
How will you know if you have succeeded?

Identify INDICATORS for each outcome you want to address.

Outcome: Students will graduate from grade school academically ready for middle school.

*Indicator*: 6th grade reading scores
What must be determined for each indicator?

- **Who** will be impacted? (sixth graders in Transylvania County)

- **How many** will change? (the lowest quartile)

- **How much** will it change? (improve reading scores by 20%)

- **When** will it change by? (by December 2012)
Determine:

- What measurement tool to use
- When to measure
- Who will do the measuring
The “Chicken & Egg” Question

Which should be determined first, the *indicator* or the *measurement*?
Choose indicators first.

Choosing an indicator because the measurement is readily available is not always the best solution.

Often more than one indicator will be needed to fully understand whether an outcome has been fulfilled.
Design Interventions

Determine the *interventions* (action, strategy, etc.) to be used to achieve identified outcomes. *What* will be done, by *who*, *how*, and *when*.

Test your assumptions. (Will these actions really work?)
Communicate TOC to all stakeholders

Communication should include:

- A brief explanation of mapping process
- Summarize results (focusing on selected outcomes)
United Way of Transylvania County
“Presentation Triangle”

HEALTH

In order to be healthy, by 2020 Transylvania County residents will exhibit a HEALTHY LIFESTYLE and ACCESS APPROPRIATE HEALTH CARE

1 – 3 Year Focus

Needed Improvements for a Healthy Lifestyle:

* Programs and incentives will be in place to encourage individuals to take responsibility for their own health.
* Information/education related to a healthy lifestyle will be widely available and easily accessible.

Needed Improvements for patients to Access Appropriate Health Care:

* Cost cannot be a factor for individuals to seek appropriate health care.
* Current health care gaps will be identified and filled with sustainable health care options.
* An information network will be in place to allow patients and providers to effectively coordinate health care.
* A structure will be in place to facilitate the provision of coordinated health care by providers.
First Year Initiatives

Transylvania United

Here’s where we start...

Health
  - Reduce Obesity

Financial Stability
  - Create Health Human Services Access Network

Education
  - Link People with Jobs
  - Prepare Preschool Age Children for Kindergarten
Theory of Change Implementation

Implementation:

- Monitor progress & make adjustments as appropriate
- Measure and communicate progress to stakeholders regularly (at least semi-annually)
- Use and update TOC map
Contact Information

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