



thriving

TOGETHER

When we support development in early years we pave the way for health and wellbeing now and throughout life.

But not all communities and families have what they need to support children's development in this way. This is one reason we see such major differences in the health of Australians across the country.

We need to make sure every family and community has what kids need to thrive and be healthy. This means things like high quality childcare, chances for children to develop relationships with supportive adults, and safe places to play and learn.

Supporting every child means supporting each child according to their needs. This is how we create a healthier Australia for all children.

What problem are we trying to solve?

Childhood development vulnerability

1 in 5 children experience a development vulnerability.

This rate is doubled for Indigenous children.

Why focus on childhood development?

Childhood development vulnerability is linked to
poor lifelong health, social and economic
outcomes

How will we tackle childhood development
vulnerability ?

By tackling a significant root cause of
childhood development vulnerability

...and a significant root cause is?

Trauma

Childhood trauma is caused by...

Neglect
Abuse

Household challenges

Natural crises including pandemics,
droughts and bush fires

What does the evidence say?

N.E.A.R Science

Neuroscience, Epigenetics, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Resilience

Neuroscience:

The nervous system, the spine, and the brain.

Epigenetics:

Refers to "in addition to" the traditional genetic basis for inheritance. It shows how the body is always adapting. Our ability to heal generation to generation is present in our epigenome.

Adverse Childhood Experiences:

The Adverse Childhood Experience Study helped us study and quantify the impacts of toxic stress across the health and life trajectory.

Resilience:

Our bodies are resilient, our families are resilient, our communities are resilient, nature is resilient. Resilience is a capacity that can be developed or exercised.

When we are in an environment where we feel safe and connected, more parts of our brain are available for learning and life.

This includes:

- the pre-frontal cortex which is responsible for planning, organizing, decision making and problem solving;
- the temporal lobes which are responsible for facial recognition, language processing, and recognition of social cues;
- the parietal lobe which is responsible for orientation in time and space, math, and seeing new pathways
- the occipital lobe which is responsible for processing visual information and works differently in a stress response with more directed focus verses broad focus.

When we are in a fight, flight, or freeze response, it is difficult to do many tasks, such as respond appropriately to social cues, process language, make a schedule or plan, or do math.

So what's the solution?

"Self Healing Communities"

A Transformational Process Model for Improving Intergenerational Health

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

The theory of change has shifted from solely adding or enhancing direct service programs to incorporating layers of strategy that supports parents as agents of culture change.

Properties of Self Healing Communities Model

Process:

Partners:

Meta-Leaders - National
Local Partners - Community centred
External Partners - Funders, Universities

Leadership expansion | Expanding involvement
Focus | Shared understanding
Iterative cycles of learning | Continuous transformation
Results | local participation in outcome results

Principles:

Inclusive leadership with downward accountability | Accountable to community
Learning communities | Iterative cycles of change
Emergent capabilities | Augments new infrastructure and communities of practice
NEAR informed engagement | Choice, safety and collaboration
Right-fit solutions given available resources | Ingenious and complex solutions
Hope and Efficacy | Celebrating hope and transforming community

The Self-Healing Community Model, Washington, developed strong networks that promoted much greater collaboration across sectors.

They empowered local leadership and nurtured sector leaders to think about whole systems, not just their part of a system.

They also used data to decide how and where to focus efforts and to learn from what was working.

They made visible changes that helped to instill a real sense of hope in communities that had given up on the prospect of a better world for their children.

Results

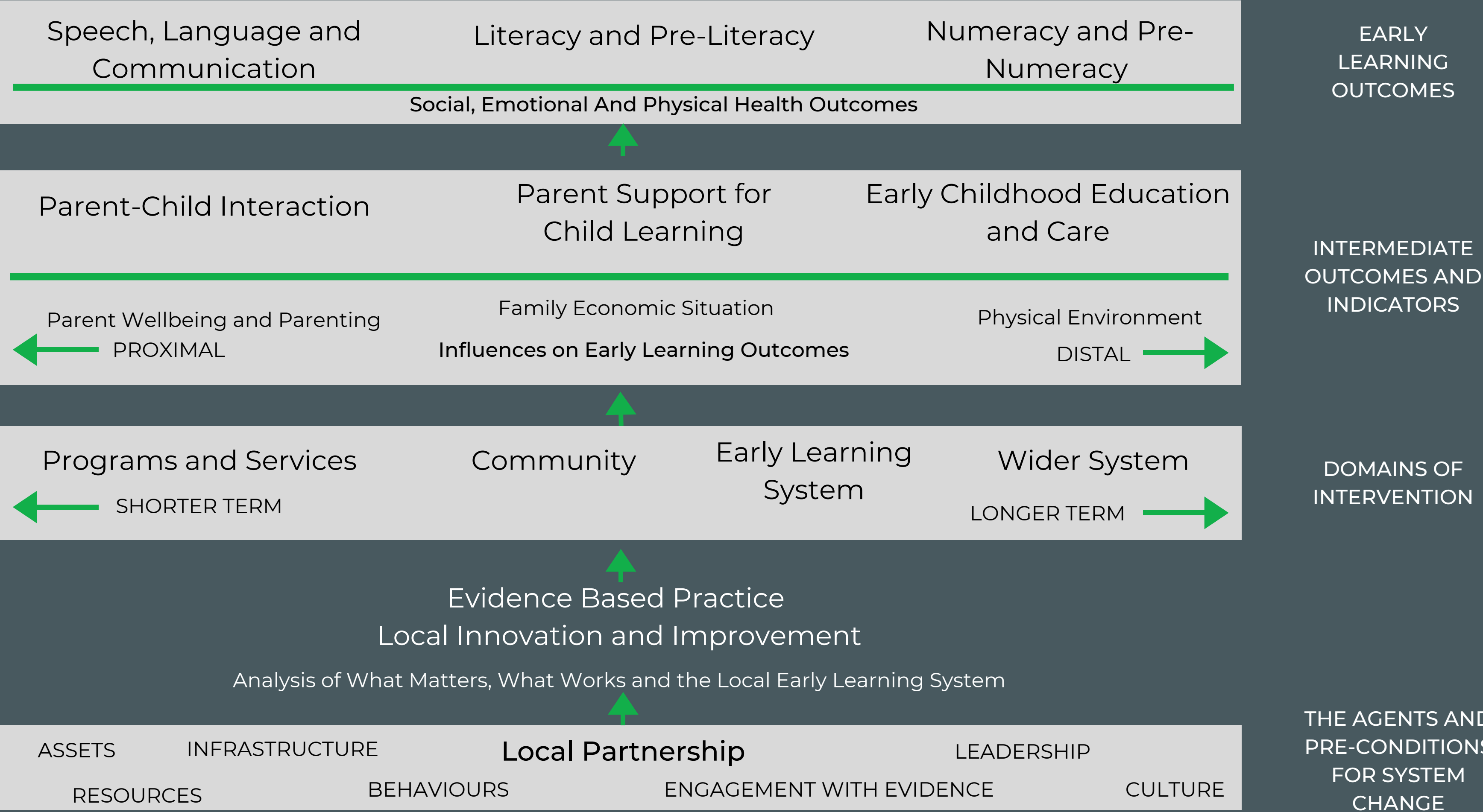
Over 10 to 15 years in Cowlitz County, Washington

- Births to teen mothers went down 62%;
- infant mortality went down 43%;
- Youth suicide and suicide attempts went down 98%;
- Youth arrests for violent crime dropped 53%;
- High school dropout rates decreased by 47%;

Similar results were seen in other counties.

"The cost/benefit ratio for this investment is impressive: for every dollar spent, 35 dollars were saved" (Scheuler et al., 2009).

THEORY OF CHANGE



The Prototype

South Grafton

Anchored by New School of Arts

Partners: Child Abuse Prevention Service,
Primary Care and Community Services,
Resilience Cafe, FAMS, HubHello and
Healthy Australia

Prototype Characteristics

Child protection awareness workshops for families

Free education and care for children at risk

Universal peer support through "Parents Cafe"

Referral route for Early Childhood Education and Care services to
access family support

Parent app to access Thriving Together programs

Prototype Output

An evidence based proposal for governments, commissioners and philanthropists to invest in a pilot to test the "Self Healing Community Model" known as Thriving Together

Pilot Timetable

December 2020 | Publish Proposal for Self Healing Community Model

March 2021 | Funding applications approved

April 2021 | Commence 6 month incubation period to co-create local model

- April to July 2021 | Orientation
- May to July 2021 | What matters and what works | Evidence and community context
- May to October 2021 | Forging local partnerships
- October to November 2021 | Determining local priorities
- May to November 2021 | Building local capacity and infrastructure

November 2021 | Crafting a strategy

March 2022 | Launch, implement, test and learn

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