Evaluative thinking and strategic learning - nice words, do they make any difference?

Children and Youth Area Partnerships (CYAPs)

2014-2018

CHILDREN AND YOUTH
AREA PARTNERSHIPS

VICTORIA
State Government

Evaluative thinking and strategic learning - nice words, do they make any difference?

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Three reflection questions:

1. **What does evaluative thinking and strategic learning mean and look like in a government-led Collective impact initiative? What are the tensions and 'easy fits'?**

2. **What difference has it made to our work? What are the implications on our resources, the intensity of the work, the impacts and ripples?**

3. **Yeah but, so what? Has any of this actually sparked the transformation we are after?**

Which made us consider:

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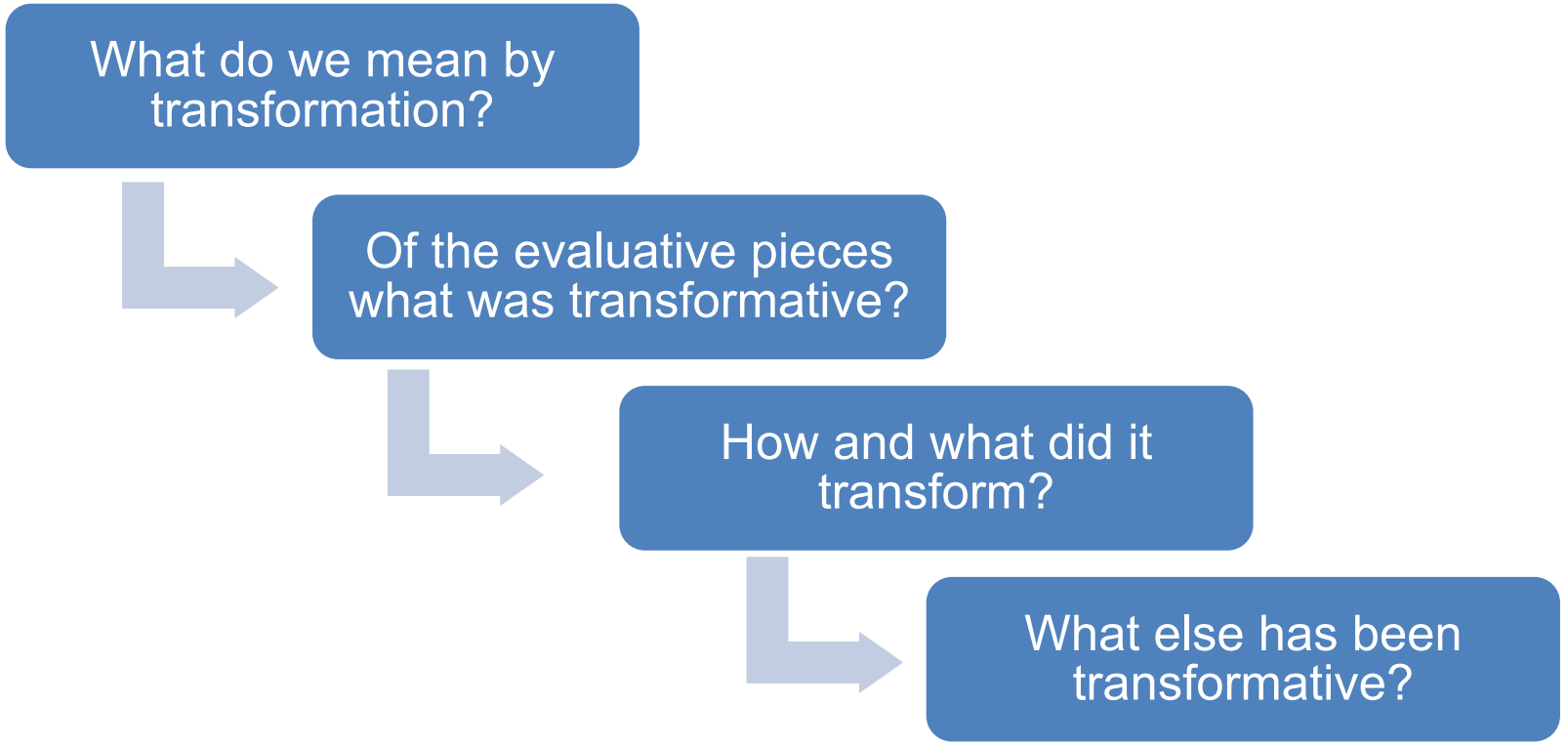

CYPAs Vision

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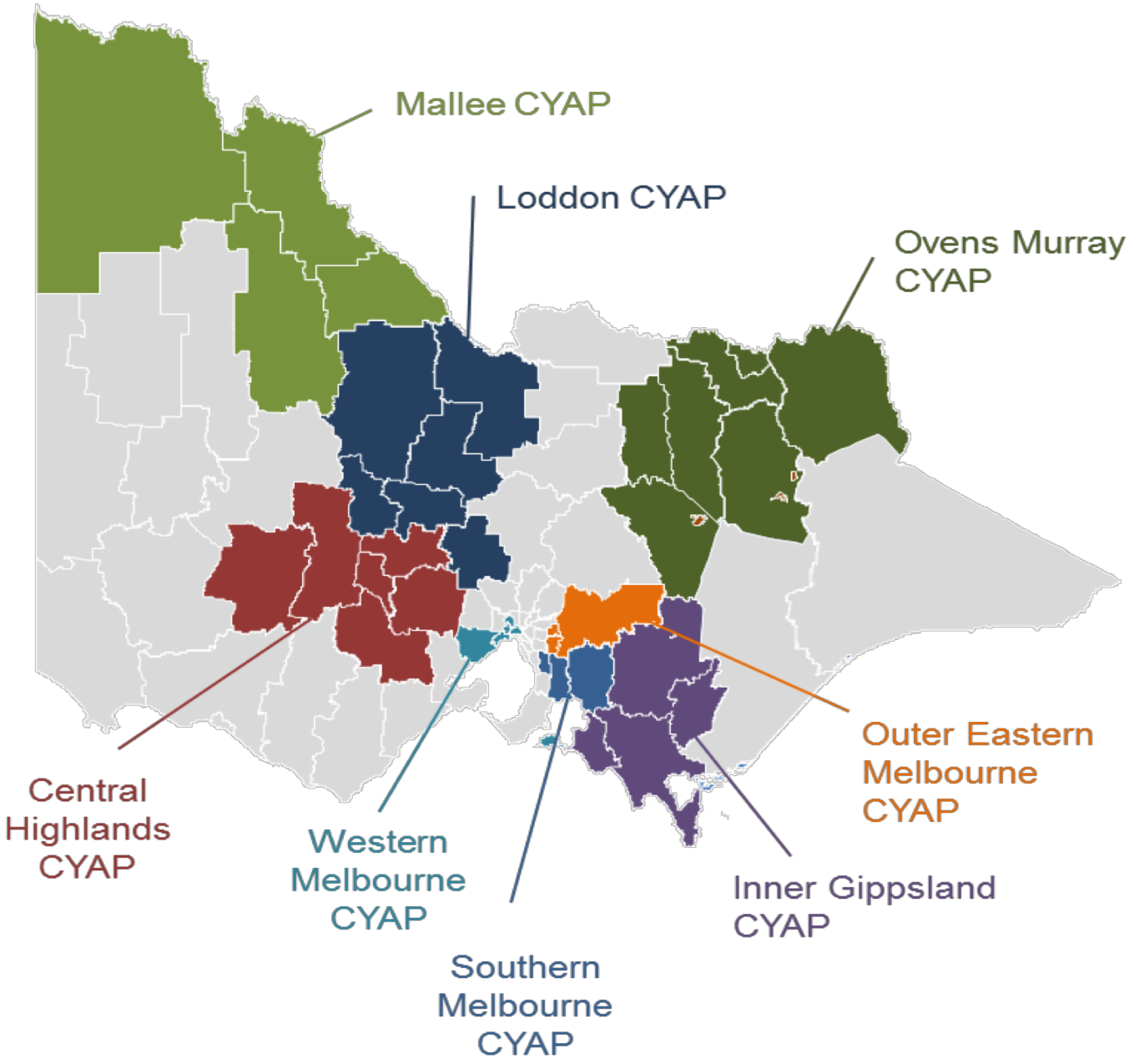
For all children and young people to grow-up happy, healthy, resilient, engaged and able to reach their potential.

CYPAs Geography



Collective Impact

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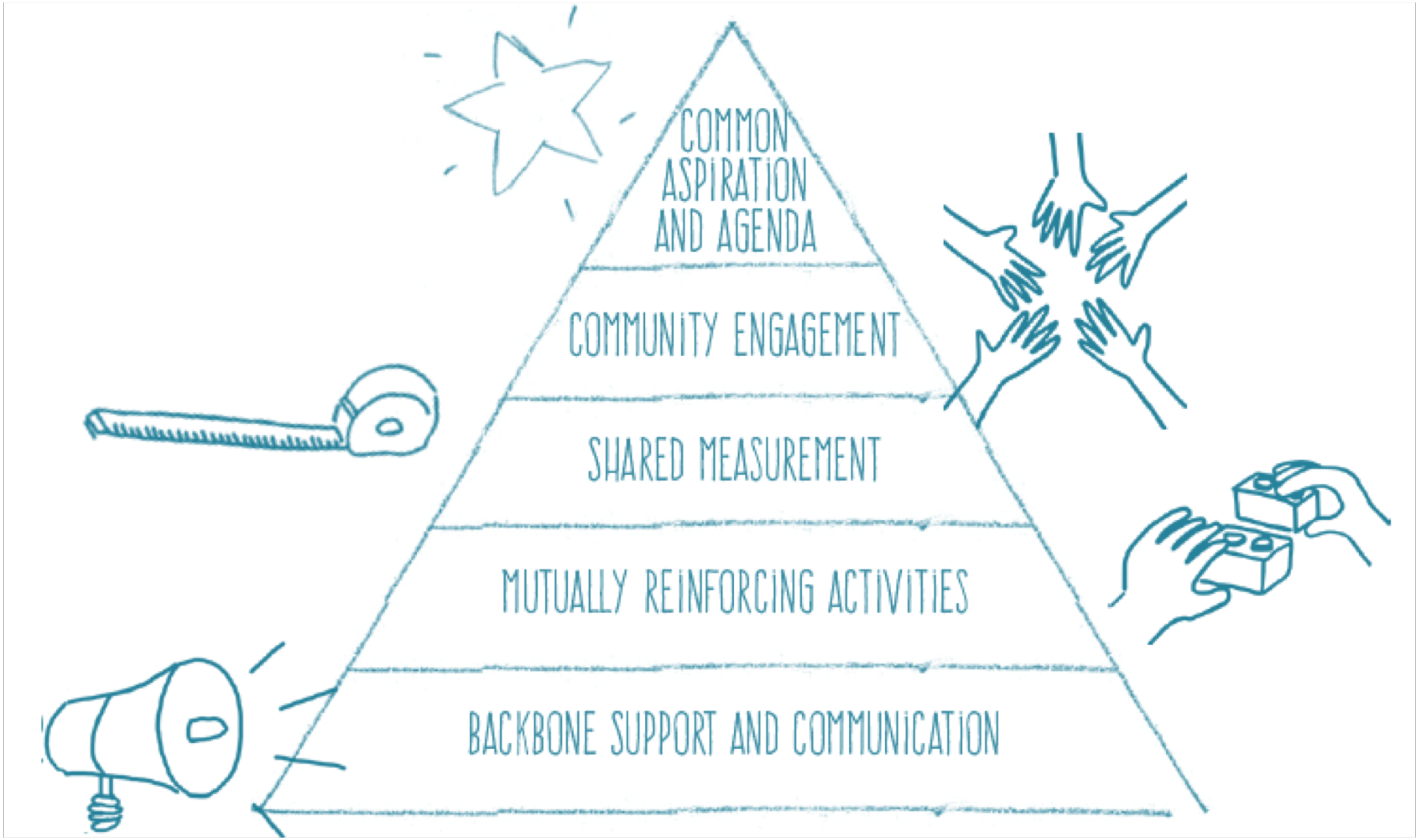

Developmental Evaluation + Collective Impact + Timing

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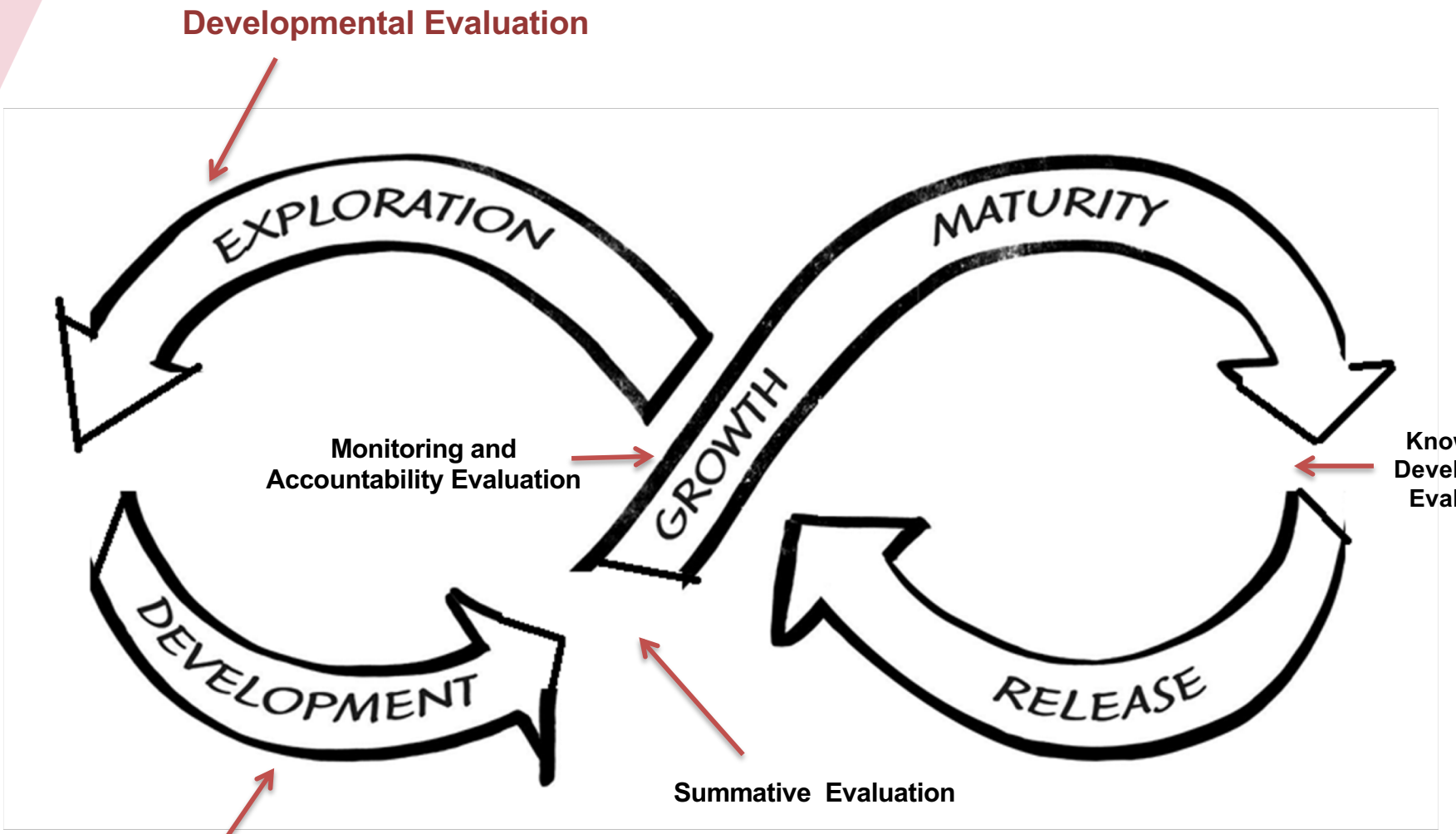

Source: Mark Cabaj, Here 2 There Consulting

BRIGHTER FUTURES
FOR OUTER EAST KIDS

Collective impact

Outer Eastern Melbourne
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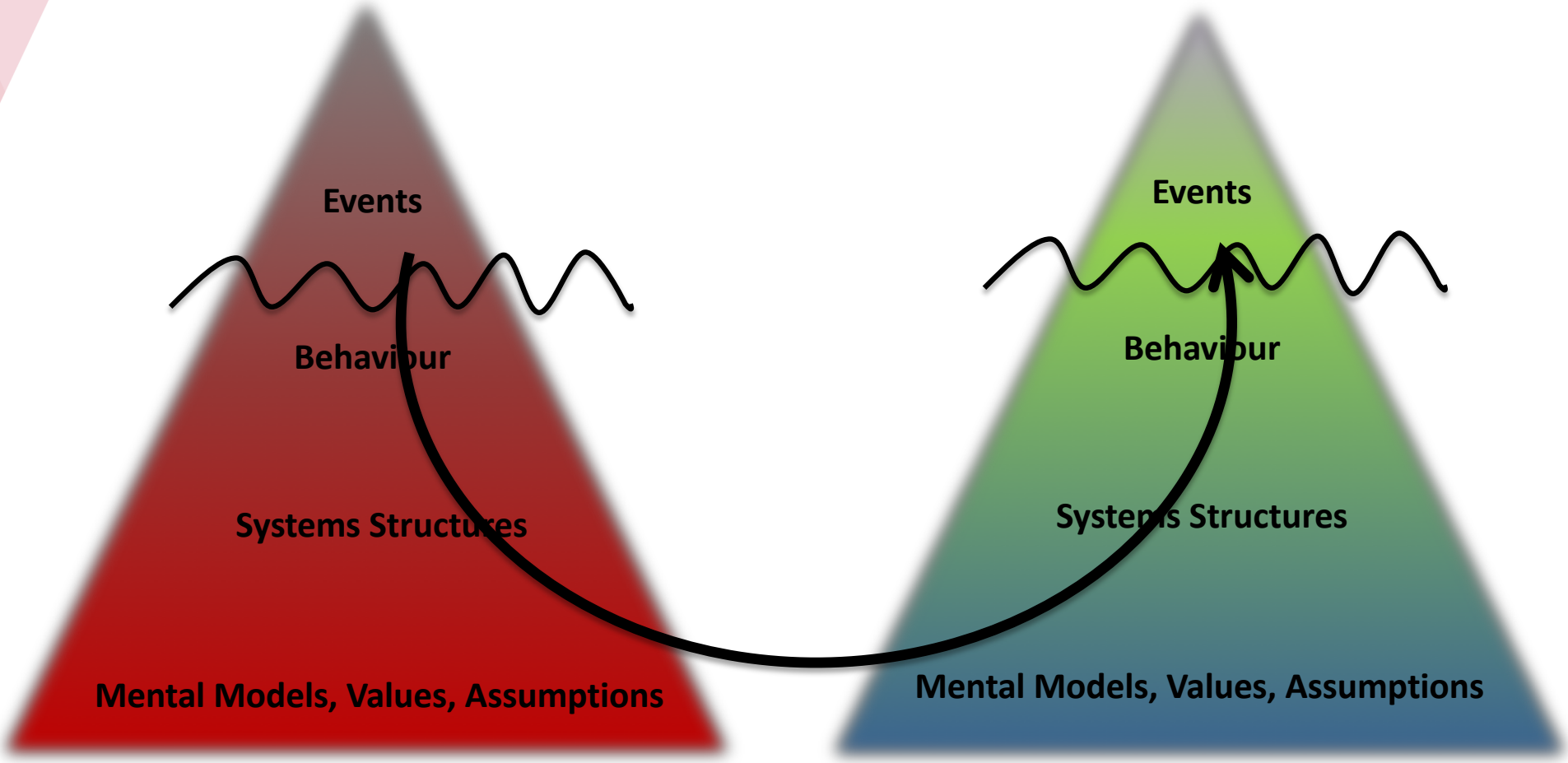

Adapted from Scharmer O, *The Essentials of Theory U: Core Principles and Applications*, 2018

CYAPs Reporting and Evaluation Journey 2014-2018

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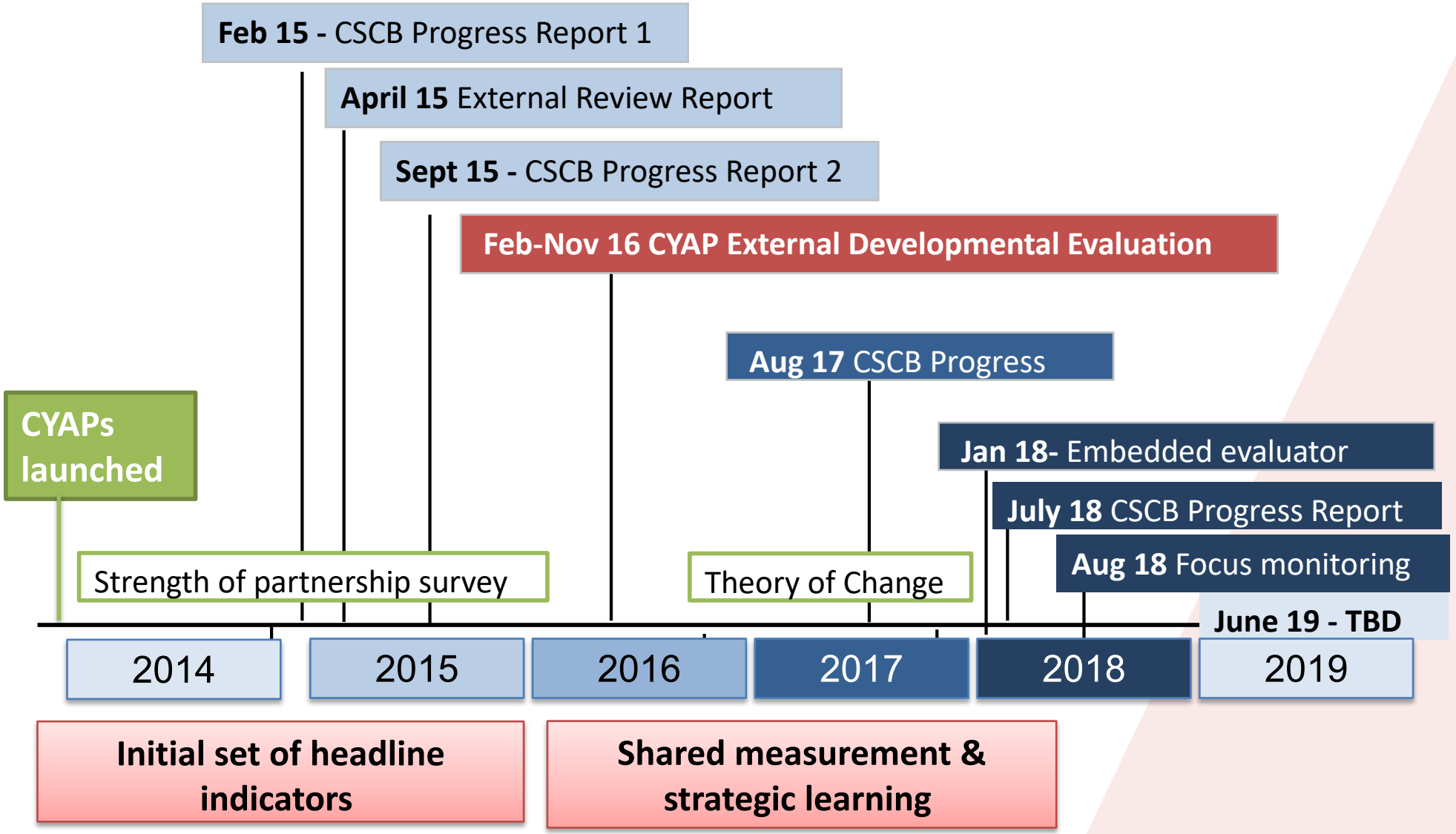
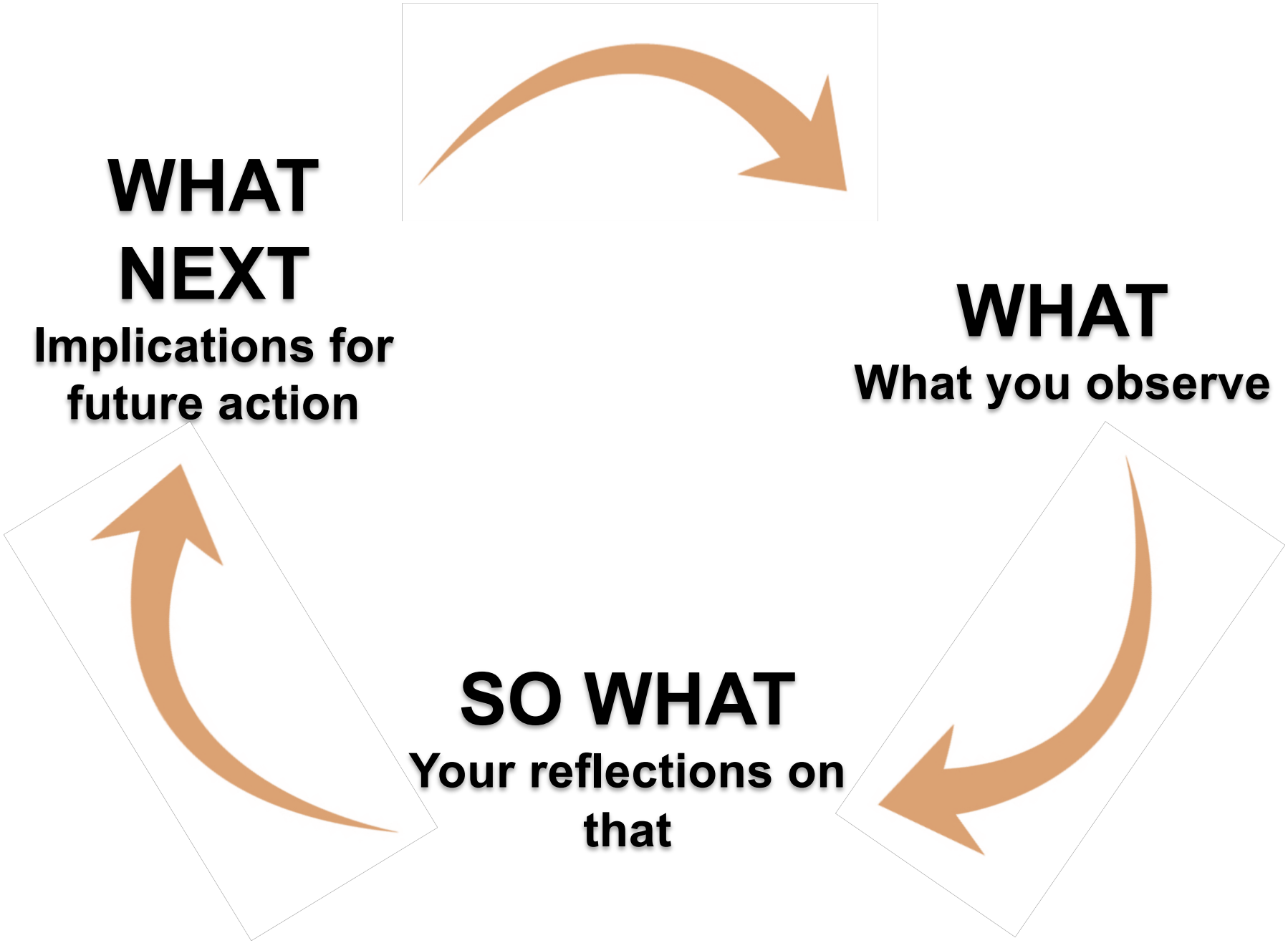
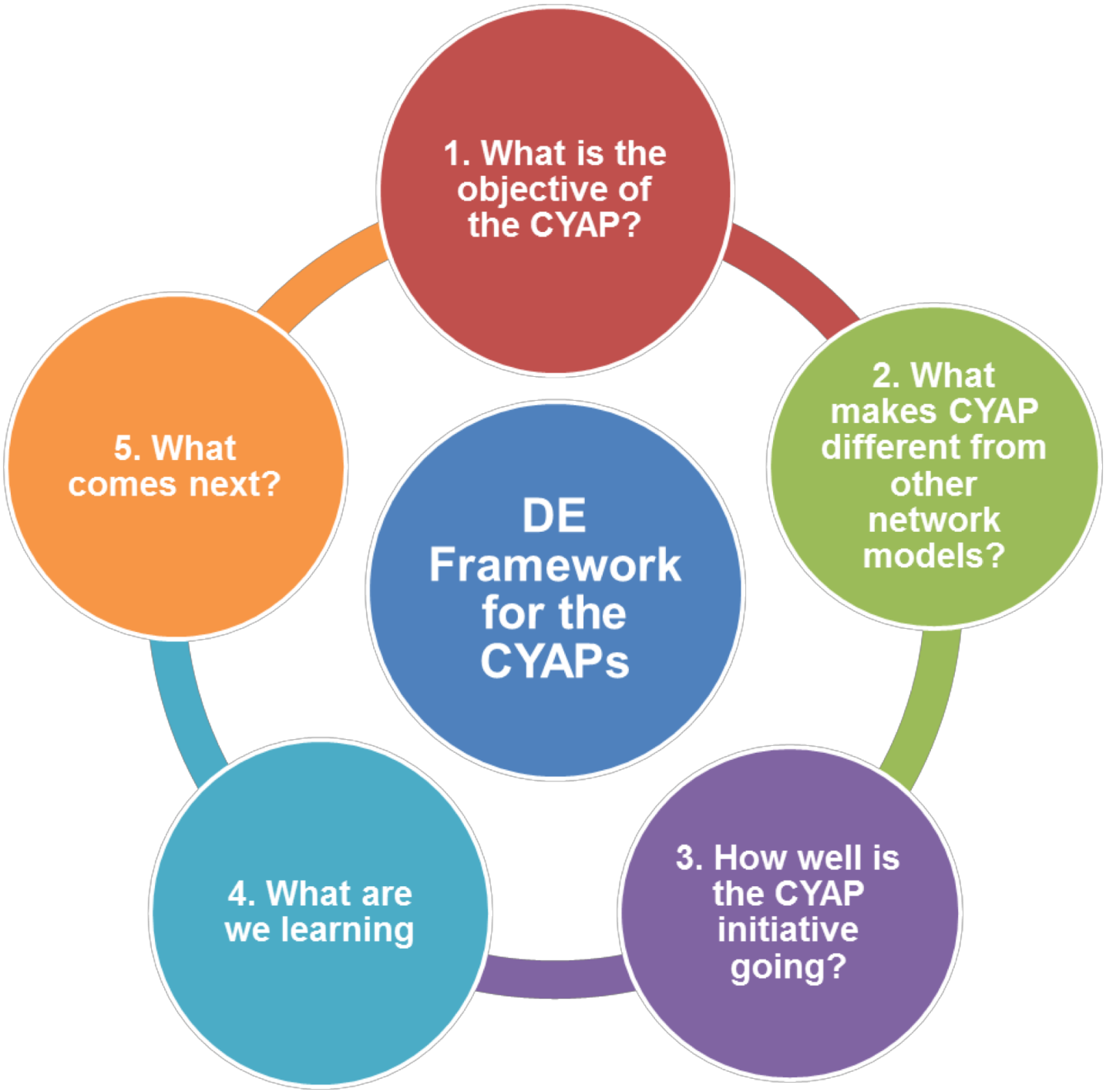
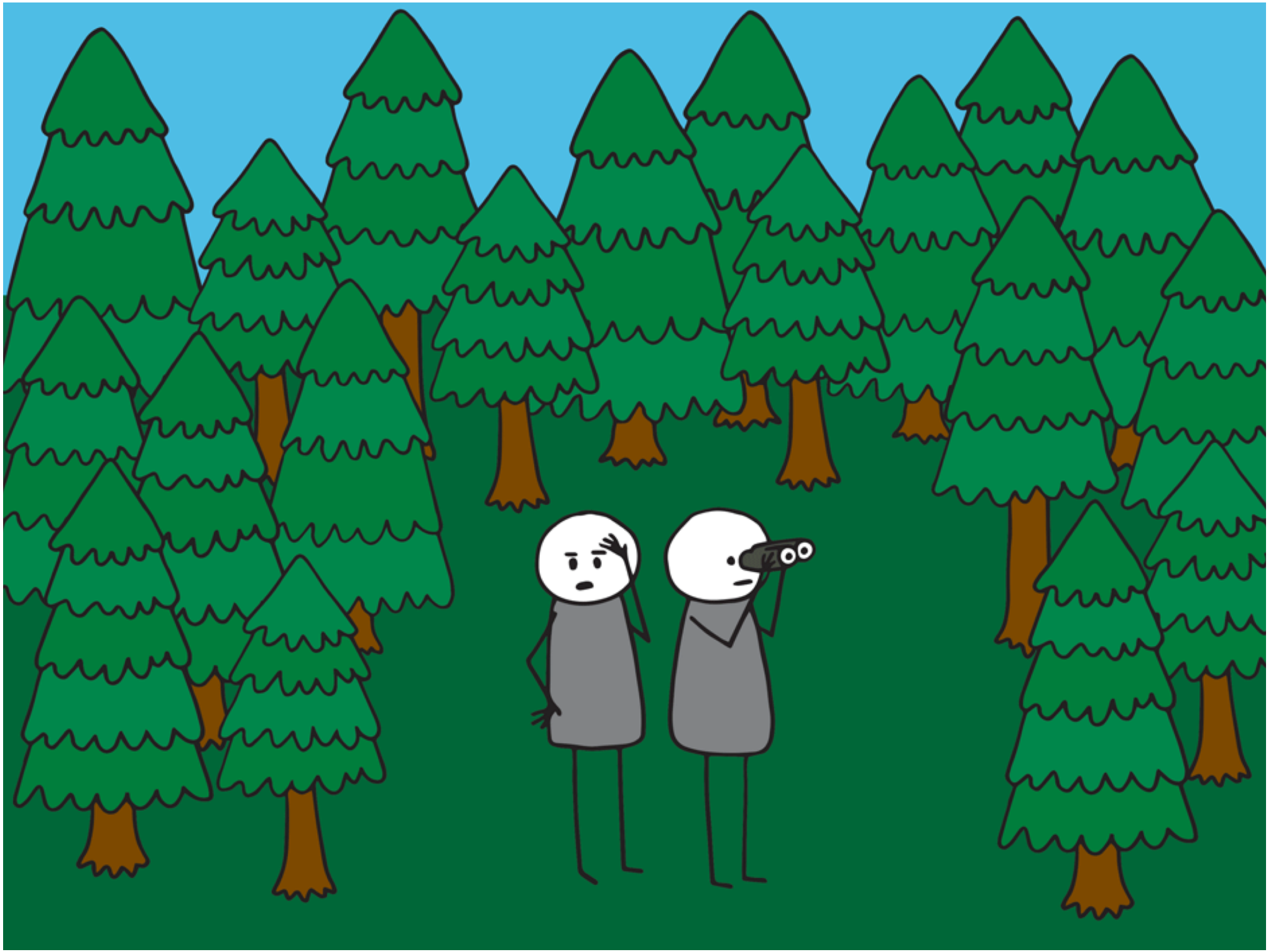



WHAT
NEXT
Implications for future action
WHAT
What you observe
SO WHAT
Your reflections on that


1. What is the objective of the CYAP?
2. What makes CYAP different from other network models?
3. How well is the CYAP initiative going?
4. What are we learning
5. What comes next?
DE Framework for the CYAPs



Outer East Children and Youth Area Partnership Key Directions 2016

Intent of CYAP

1. Support the learning and development of all children and young people, particularly those who are at risk of disengaging or who have disengaged; and
2. The creation of safe and supportive communities and environments in which children live free of abuse and neglect.

Outcome

1. We want families and communities that are cohesive, strong and safe for women and children

2. We want children and young people who are healthy, meeting educational milestones and equipped with the skills to successfully transition to adulthood

Focus Areas

1. i. Primary Prevention activity led by OECYAP Members (internally as workplaces/ externally as service providers)*
2. ii. Primary Prevention through sport*
3. iii) Primary Prevention activity in local businesses*
4. iv) Prevention Matters
5. v) Out of Home Care Regional Implementation Group
6. vi) Inspiring Independence: Educational and Employment Outcomes for Care Leavers

Objectives/ Strategies

Objectives and Strategies TBC

Objectives and Strategies TBC

Indicators

Indicators TBC (to be informed by TFER Evaluation Framework, EMSIC data work and State-wide FV Index)

Indicators TBC (to be developed by each working group)

7. vii) Out of Home Care Youth Advisory Group Steering Committee

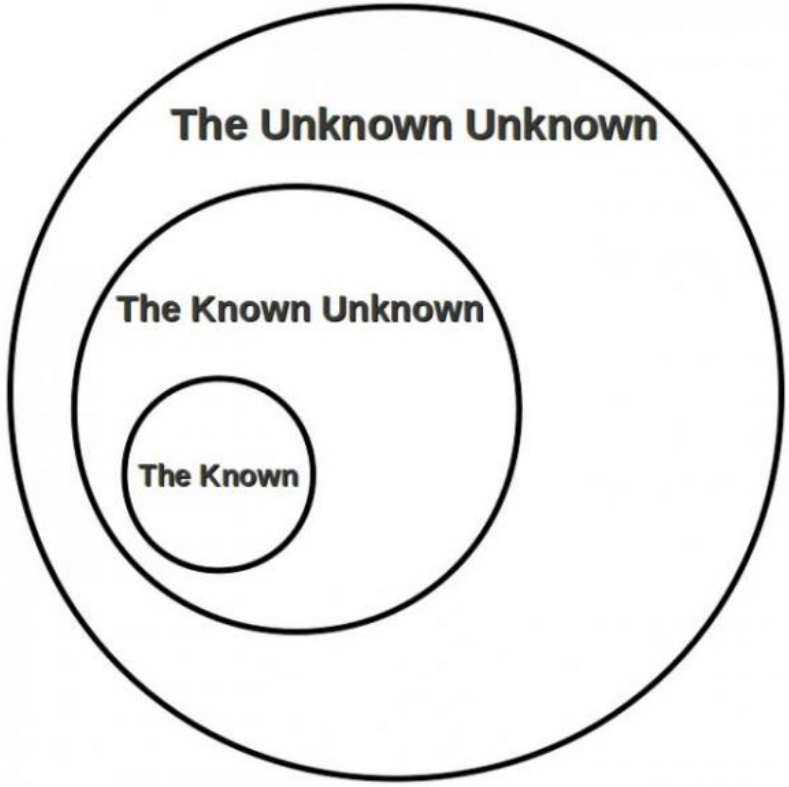
Principles

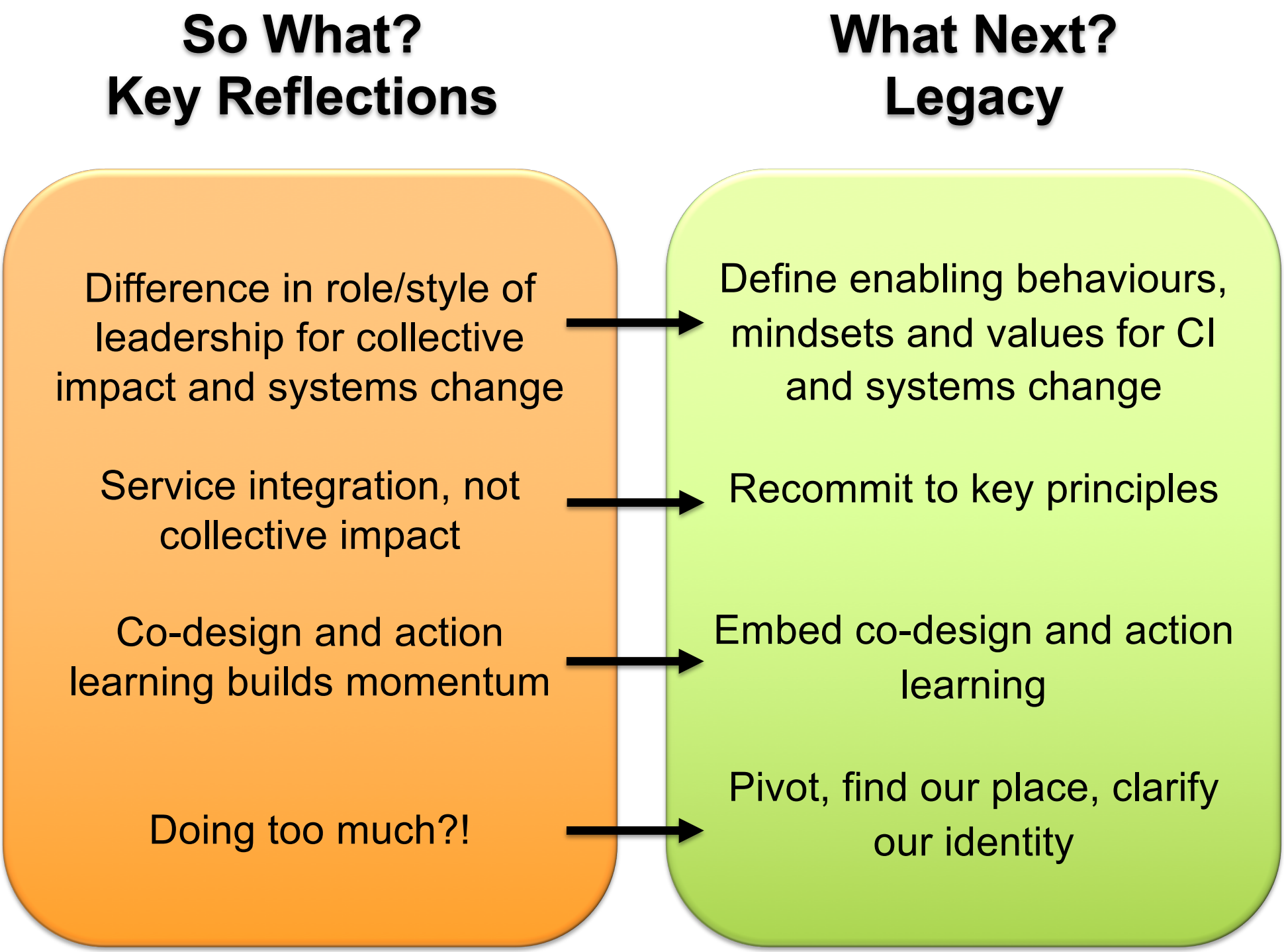
Co-design, Collective Impact

*Agreement that any activity undertaken will link to and support *Together for Equality and Respect: A Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women in Melbourne's East 2013–2017.*

Scenario A

Scenario B




So What?
Key Reflections
What Next?
Legacy
Difference in role/style of leadership for collective impact and systems change
Service integration, not collective impact
Co-design and action learning builds momentum
Doing too much?!
Define enabling behaviours, mindsets and values for CI and systems change
Recommit to key principles
Embed co-design and action learning
Pivot, find our place, clarify our identity

What made it work?

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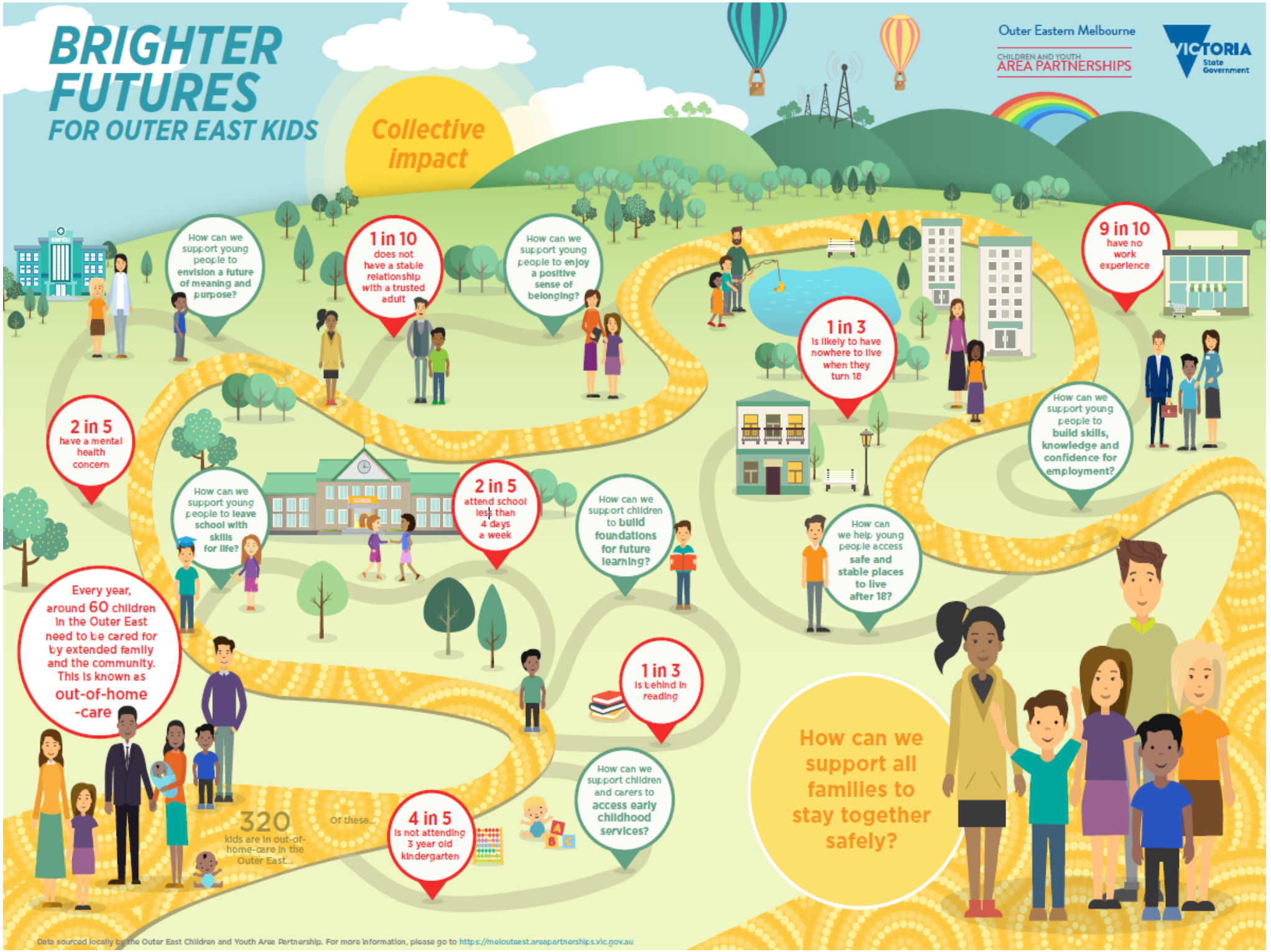
- Focus on deep learning
- Coaching and capability building – ‘peeking behind the curtain’
- Fertile Soil and Supportive Context
- ‘Outside Looking In’


BRIGHTER FUTURES
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Collective impact
Outer Eastern Melbourne
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How can we support young people to envision a future of meaning and purpose?
1 in 10 does not have a stable relationship with a trusted adult
How can we support young people to enjoy a positive sense of belonging?
9 in 10 have no work experience
1 in 3 is likely to have nowhere to live when they turn 18
How can we support young people to build skills, knowledge and confidence for employment?
2 in 5 have a mental health concern
How can we support young people to leave school with skills for life?
2 in 5 attend school less than 4 days a week
How can we support children to build foundations for future learning?
How can we help young people access safe and stable places to live after 18?
Every year, around 60 children in the Outer East need to be cared for by extended family and the community. This is known as out-of-home -care
1 in 3 is behind in reading
How can we support children and carers to access early childhood services?
320 kids are in out-of-home-care in the Outer East...
Of these...
4 in 5 is not attending 3 year old kindergarten
How can we support all families to stay together safely?
Data sourced locally by the Outer East Children and Youth Area Partnership. For more information, please go to https://melouteast.areapartnerships.vic.gov.au

Challenges

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- Members understanding of Developmental Evaluation
- Timing
- Recognising failure as a learning/success
- Change in Steering Committee membership due to restructure of member organisations
- Members understanding of collective impact
- Language

WESTERN MELBOURNE

How we started

The trigger was the **Philip Cummins Report.**

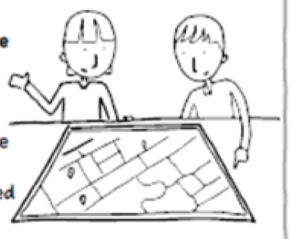
We invited senior managers from Vic State Government, Local Councils, community organisations and local business to join the steering group.

Reviewed existing collaborations and identified gaps, ensured the CYAP did not duplicate existing work in the West.

Looked at current project, data and local knowledge.

The Focus

The Steering Group ensured they **kept the focus on vulnerable children and cross-sector collaboration,** despite requests for the platform to be focused on specific projects.



To keep the engagement of LGAs the decision was made to focus on place rather than issue.

Set up 4 working groups

1. Laverton
2. North Melbourne / Flemington
3. Braybrook
4. Werribee

1. Laverton

A forum for **action**

Strength of the chair – Peter 'Cut to the chase'.
Was able to pull people in.
Things kept moving.
Focus on action not talk.
Local Principal played a critical role.
'Individual interests aligning with the area partnership interests'.

Road Block – data sharing & privacy, So Data Sharing Project escalated to VCRU and Children's board.

Spin offs – $200k for funding for crime prevention "Linking Laverton", Chatter Time, Co-location early years and school, 2nd hand bikes for the school.

2. North Melbourne/Flemington

Over the past 12 months the working group has faced some challenges including:

- Changes in leadership
- Resourcing for the backbone functions
- Agreement on a common agenda

The group is now firming up a focus and how to use a collective impact model.

3. Braybrook

Timeline 2005 to date.

Braybrook Partnership ⇨ Transition to Independence Project ⇨ CYAP.

Core group has expanded and contracted in response to a constantly changing external environment of funding and policy changes.

"External factors shifted us. Youth connections defunded. We struggled with this gap. Who is our community? Where are the gaps? We went back to the drawing board".

Work on the ground already being done by Council, LLEN, YouthNow, the schools, Chisholm, English Language School.

Range of community engagement, research papers, forums, discussion papers, frameworks, cycles of exploration, agreement, failed funding applications.

Needed revitalising.

Council funded a new worker who created the "Job Club" and facilitated business engagement leading to work experiences and jobs.

'We could be more structured'

'Lack of structure has enabled it to morph into what it has needed to be'.

Questions:

- What is success?
- Who left and why?
- What could have done better?
- Could we be more structured?

Next Step:
Get Braybrook Employment Pathways back together.

4. Werribee

- Have grappled with the needs of the area
- Focus on Youth and linkages with local school
- Working on Police Early Identification Tool
- Consideration of how Collective Impact is used.

What next for the Steering Group?

We need a reset:

- Purpose?
- Role?
- Commitment?
- Deliverables?
- Success?

- How do we measure performance?
- Do action groups need to be focused on cohorts?
- Is it about the projects or the system?

Developed on Behalf of DHHS by the Developmental Evaluation Consortium

Key learnings from the DE process

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- **Risk of falling into traditional contract manager/ provider relationship**
- **Dual role of evaluator/coach**
- **Importance of the immersion of evaluator in the team**
- **Time factor/resourcing**
- **The importance of readiness to undertake a DE**

What leads to transformation in the CYAPs

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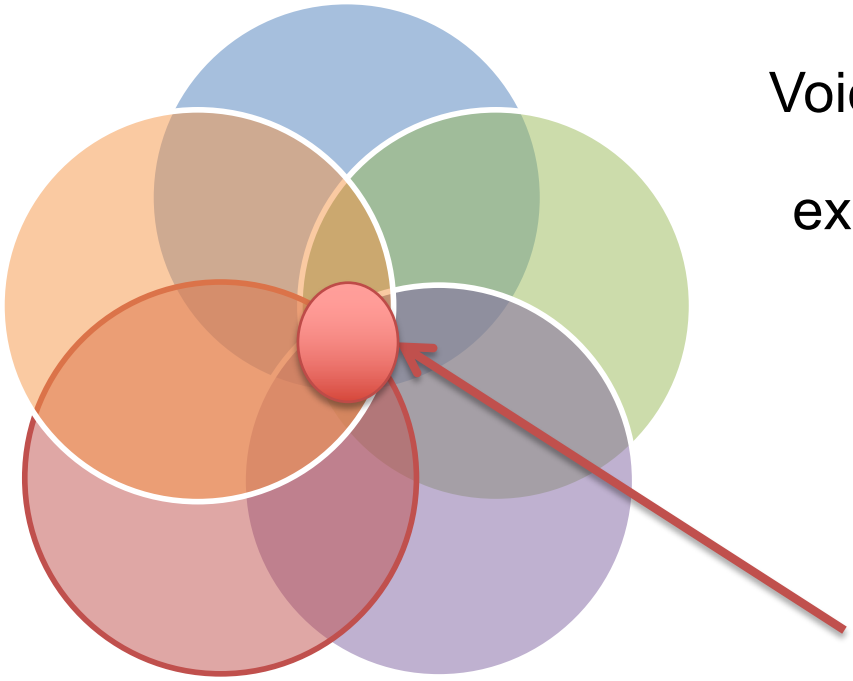
Adaptive cycle

System thinking

Voices of the lived experience



Strategic learning and Evaluation

Co-design

Transformation for the CYAPs

Think
BIG
Start
SMALL
Learn
FAST