Building Well-Being

A New Narrative for Human Services

One Voice Central Texas

Austin, TX

26 October 2016

National Human Services Assembly

- The Assembly, a Washington DC association, seeks to cultivate a society that provides the necessary foundation and supports for everyone to reach their full potential across generations and communities.

- Our 80 members, the largest national human service organizations in the U.S., reach and support nearly every household in America.

Creating a New Narrative

- Spark a new dialogue about Human Services
- Increase Public Support and Investment

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Um

I do not know

Job training

Human resources

Health

Human relations

Like Red Cross

Social skills

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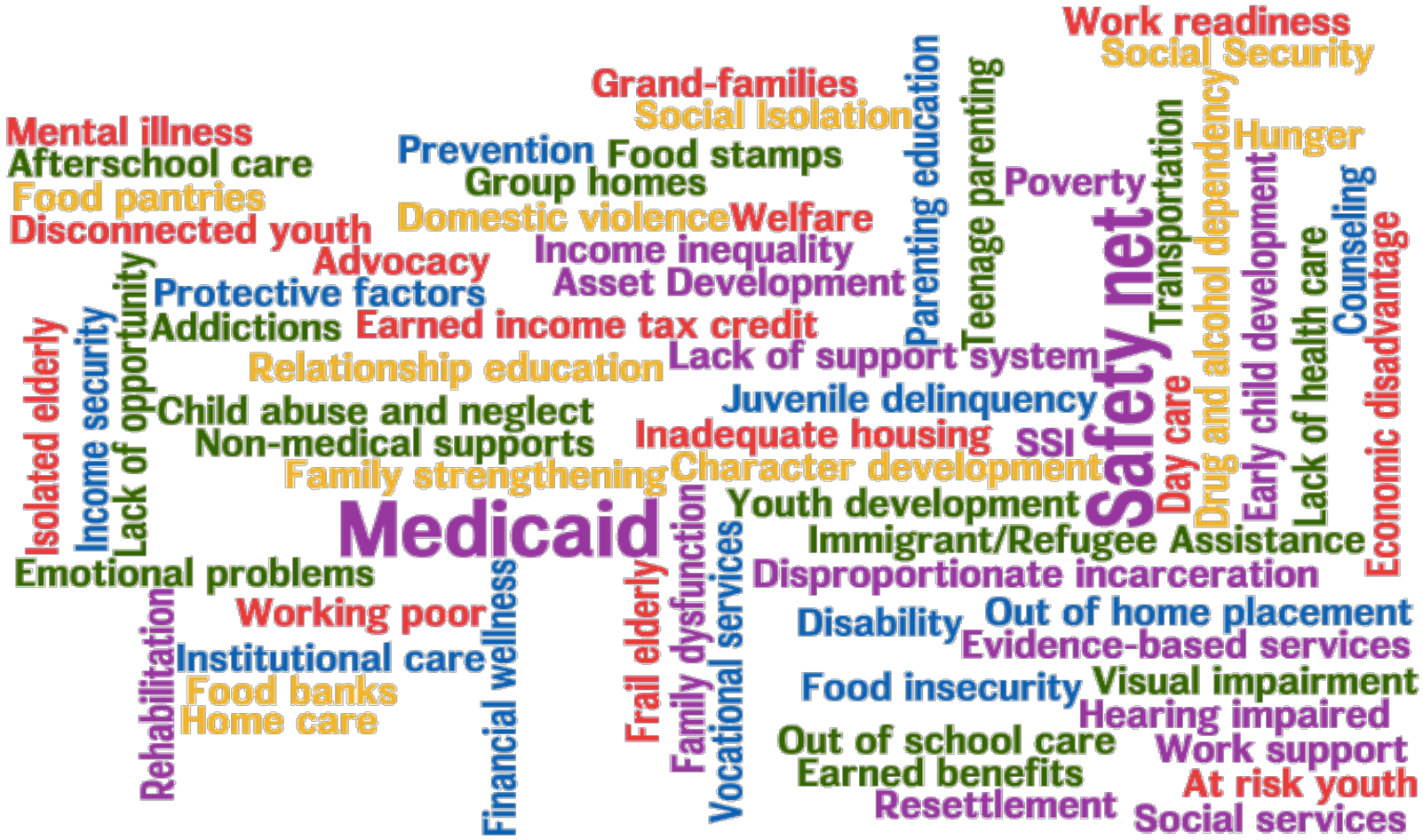

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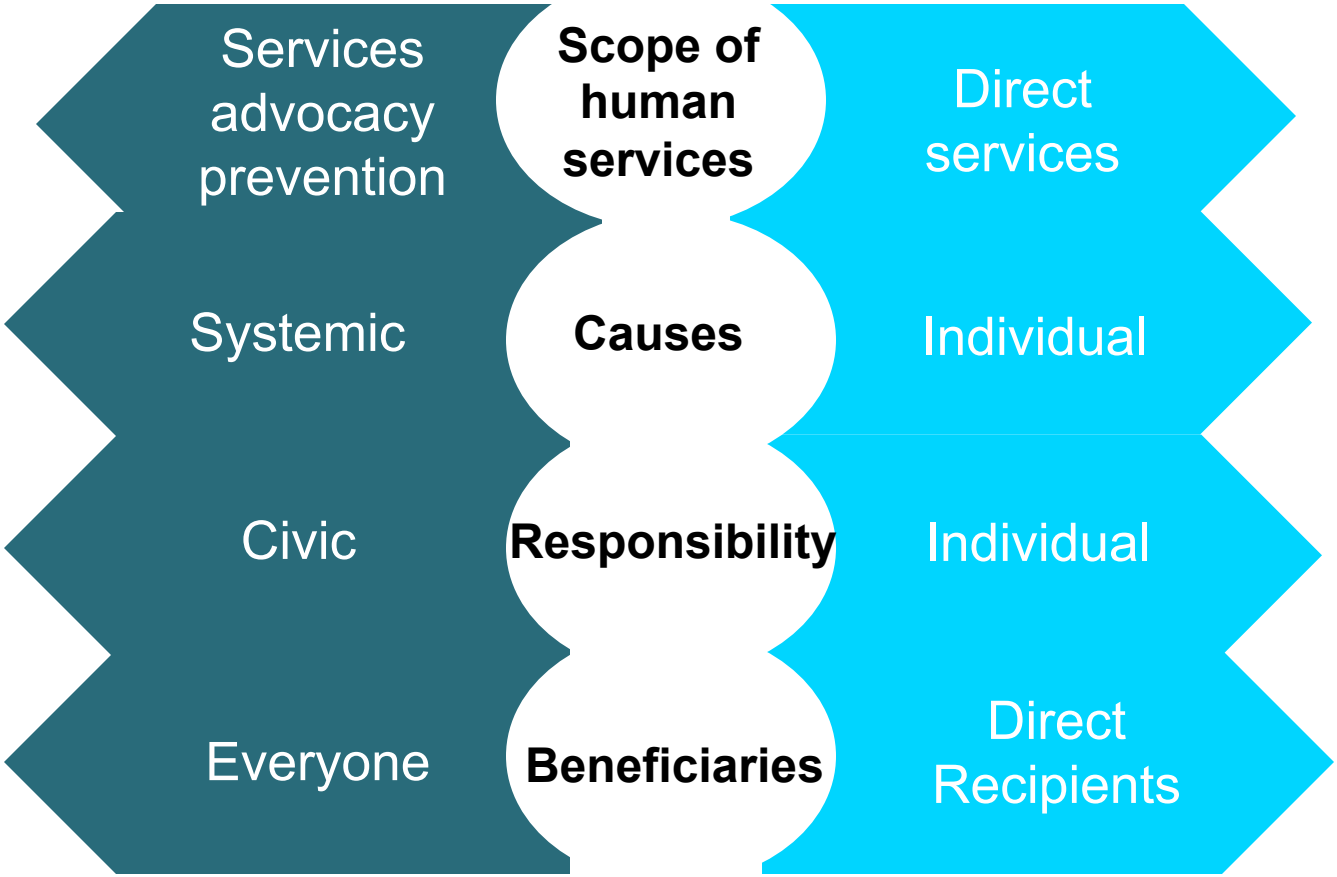
Mapping the Gaps

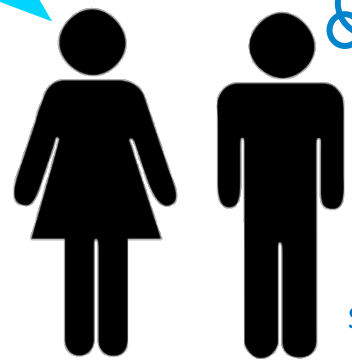


Source: FrameWorks Institute, Handed to them on a Plate: Map the Gaps Report, 2013.

You Say…They Think

In these tough times people need more support, not less! This is no time to cut funding to human service issues.

In tough economic times, people who get those programs have a better quality of life than the rest of us! Must be nice to have someone else pick up the tab...



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Source: FrameWorks Institute, You Say They Think, 2014.

Mental Shortcuts

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Cultural Models

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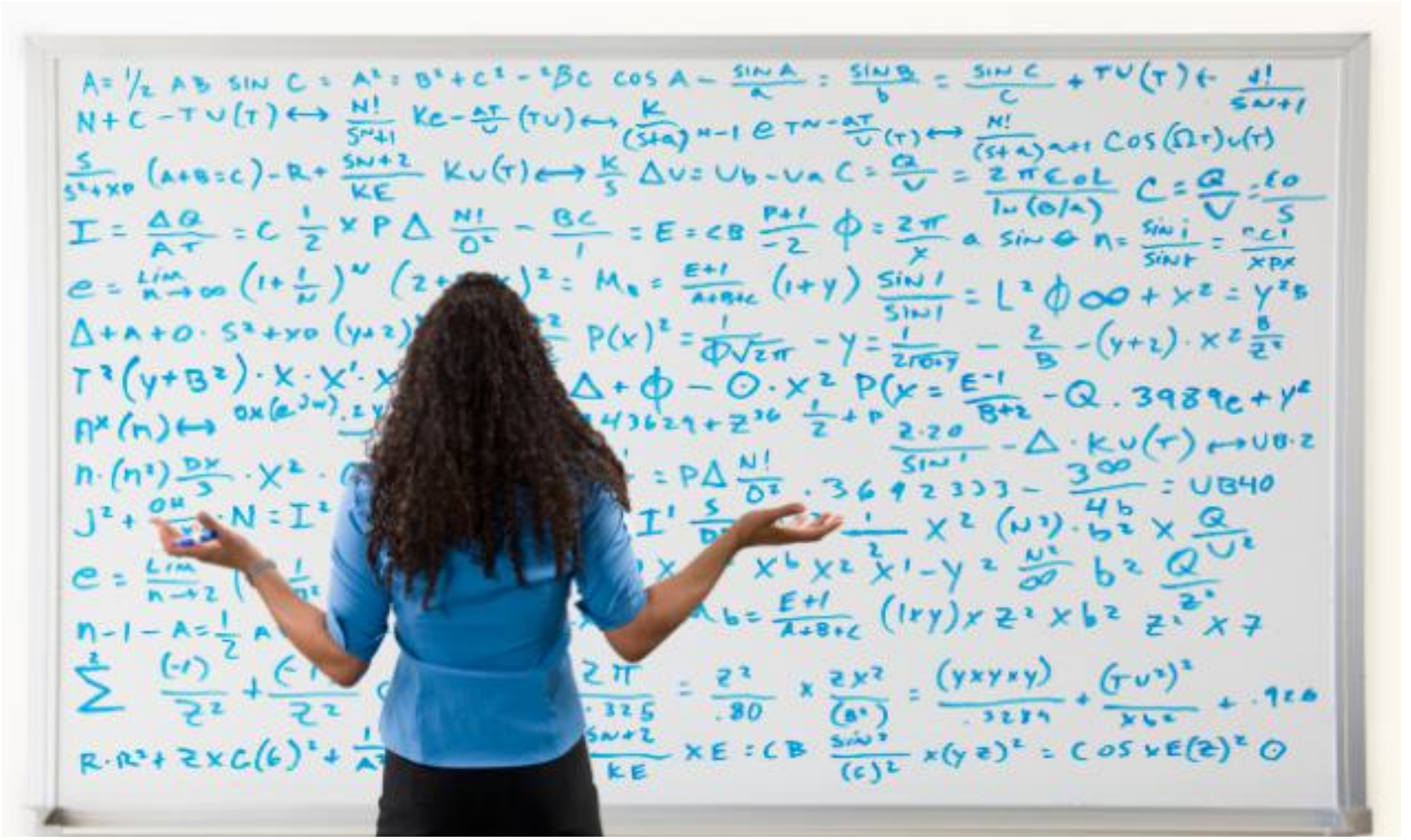
Cultural Models



Human Services SWAMP

What is well-being?

- Financial Self-Sufficiency
- Physical Health

What threatens well-being?

- Lack of Willpower
- Bad Parents
- Dangerous Communities

How do we improve well-being?

- Individuals are Responsible
- Government is Inept and Corrupt
- Informal Networks

What are human services and how do they work?

- Cognitive Hole
- Direct Services
- Kindness and Charity
- Only the Basics and Temporary

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First: Do No Harm

- When we focus on the characters, we see less of the setting
- Making the problem too big to solve
- ~~Vulnerable, Empower Safety Net, Charity~~

What cultural models might "eat" this message?

Growing up in poverty increases the chances that an American will continue to live in poverty as an adult. That's of course bad for the people directly affected and also bad for the economy. Furthermore, it casts a long shadow on The American Dream.

The real tragedy here is that we know what programs work to combat intergenerational poverty. We simply fail to support them.

A common response to intergenerational poverty is to scale back forms of direct aid to families — welfare, food stamps, etc. — that are frequently labeled as creating dependency. This position flies in opposition to the facts. Research shows that giving aid to a family increases the chances that a child will not continue to live in poverty as an adult. If we want to end intergenerational poverty in America, we should be giving families more aid — not less.

To state the obvious, money is a big deal. Having more money makes all sorts of things possible — a healthier diet, higher quality child care, a move to a safer environment, a trip to a museum or other experiences that expand a child's world. Kids with access to any of these things are more likely to thrive.

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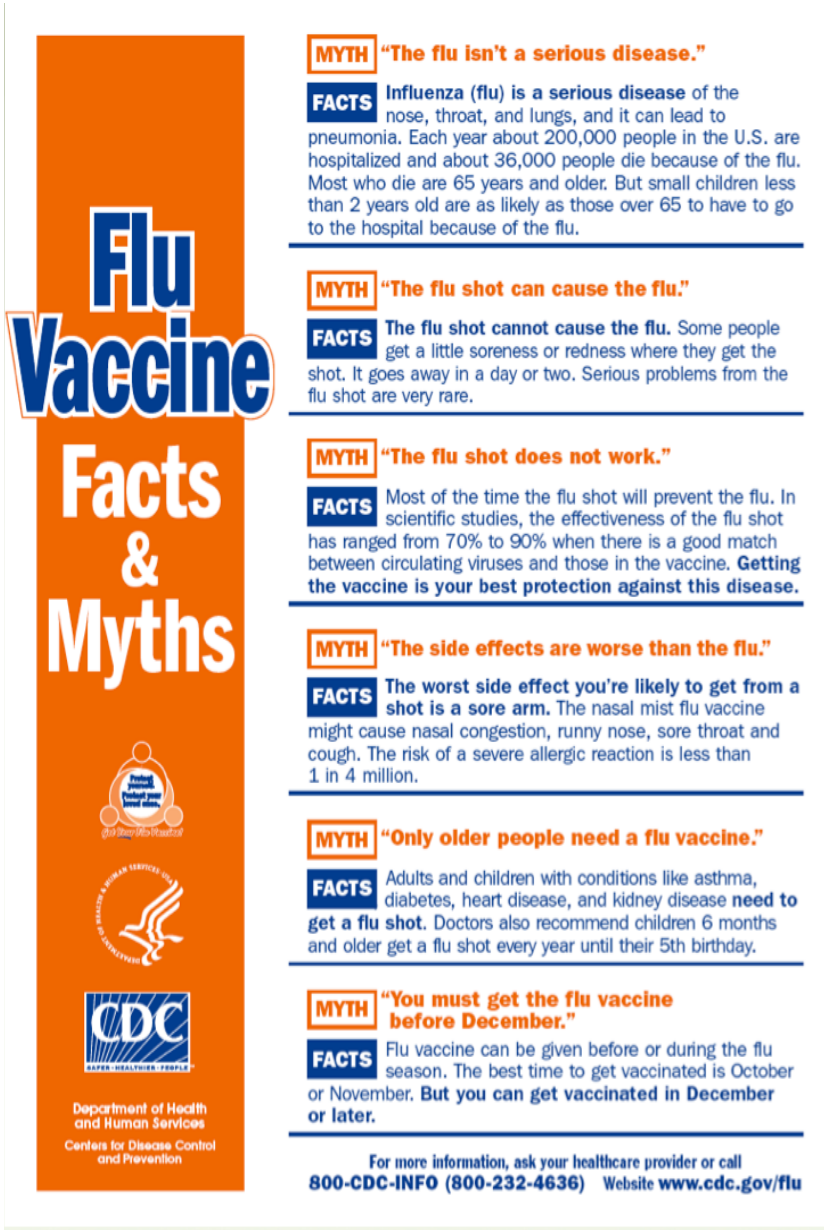
Avoid Correcting Mistakes



Flu Vaccine Facts & Myths

Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

MYTH "The flu isn't a serious disease."

FACTS **Influenza (flu) is a serious disease** of the nose, throat, and lungs, and it can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 36,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are 65 years and older. But small children less than 2 years old are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

MYTH "The flu shot can cause the flu."

FACTS **The flu shot cannot cause the flu.** Some people get a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. It goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.

MYTH "The flu shot does not work."

FACTS Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies, the effectiveness of the flu shot has ranged from 70% to 90% when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. **Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.**

MYTH "The side effects are worse than the flu."

FACTS **The worst side effect you're likely to get from a shot is a sore arm.** The nasal mist flu vaccine might cause nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The risk of a severe allergic reaction is less than 1 in 4 million.

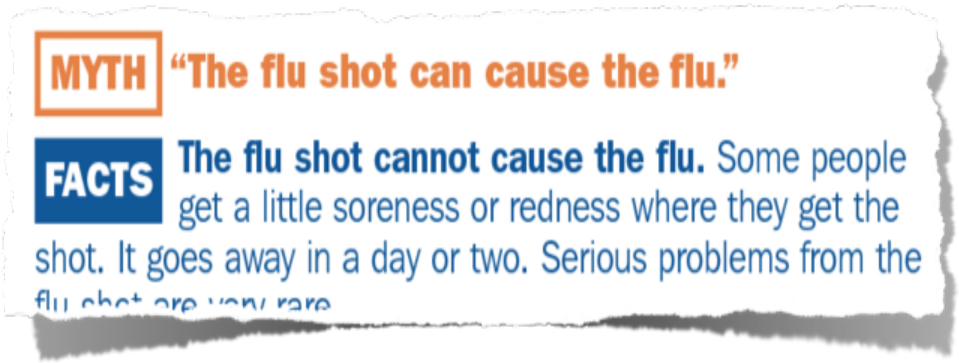
MYTH "Only older people need a flu vaccine."

FACTS Adults and children with conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease **need to get a flu shot.** Doctors also recommend children 6 months and older get a flu shot every year until their 5th birthday.

MYTH "You must get the flu vaccine before December."

FACTS Flu vaccine can be given before or during the flu season. The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. **But you can get vaccinated in December or later.**

For more information, ask your healthcare provider or call
800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636) Website **www.cdc.gov/flu**



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Avoid Correcting Mistakes

- People misremembered the myths as true.
- Got worse over time.
- Attributed false information to the CDC.

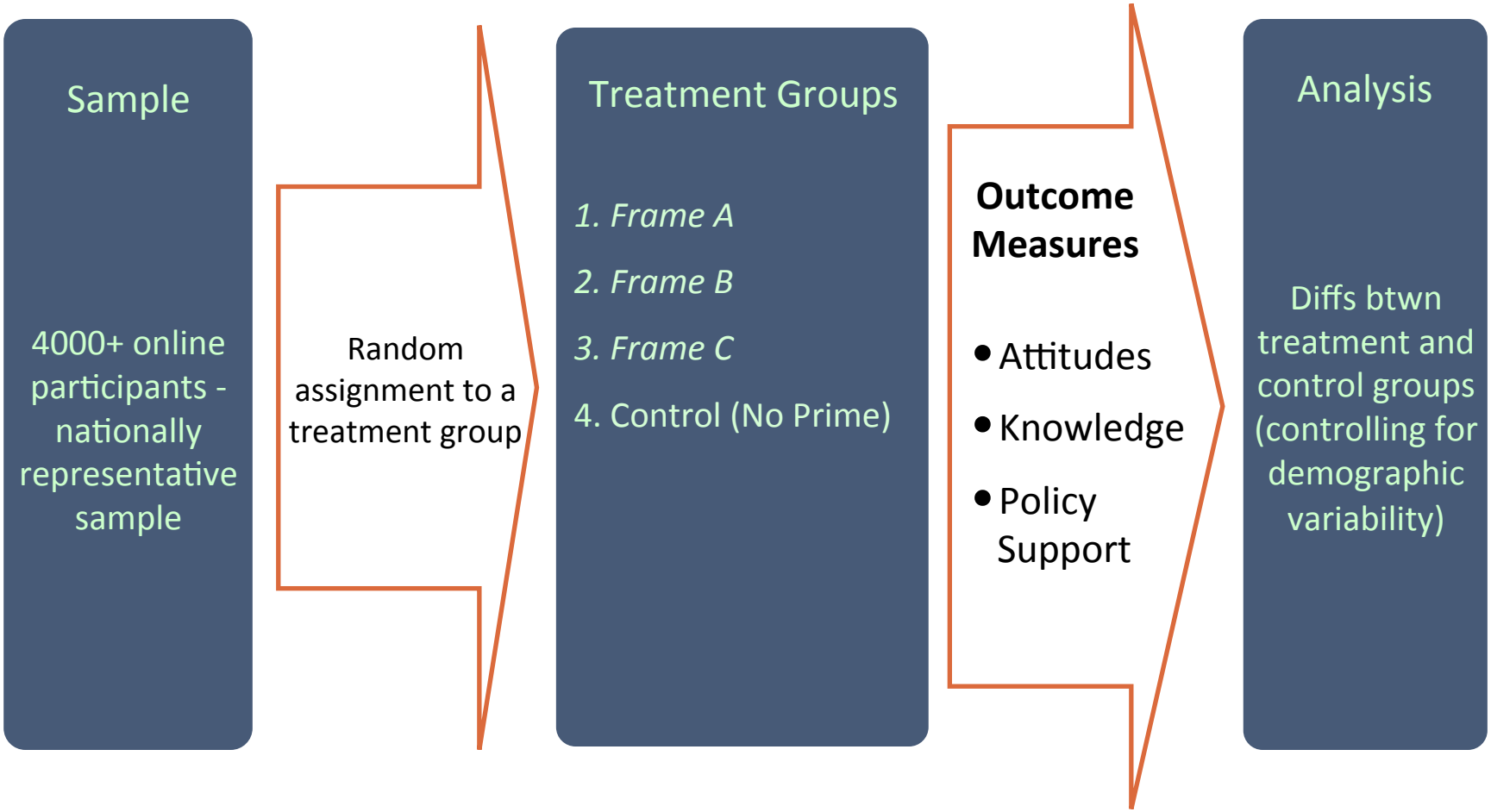
Source: Skurnik et al 2005, Journal of American Medical Association

The Solution: Framing

FULL & FAIR EMPLOYMENT
END THE RECESSION FUND JOBS
WE ARE WORKING TO FEED

OCCUPY WALL STREET

Research-based Communications



A New Storytelling Structure

Why does this matter to society?

Tap into a collective benefit -
using Values and Context

What kind of support do people need?

Invite the public into expert modeling - using Explanatory Frame Elements
Like Metaphors and Examples

What impedes well-being?

Make conditions the bad guy - Explanatory Metaphors help

What do we do to ensure well-being?

Close with a Policy Solution or other Call to Action.

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First plot point: What's at stake?

Why does this matter to society?

Everyone should be able to reach their full potential

How does this work?

What impedes it?

Fill in this Narrative slot with a Value, not "Issue Names" or "Crisis."

Values are stable, enduring ideals. They orient decision-making.

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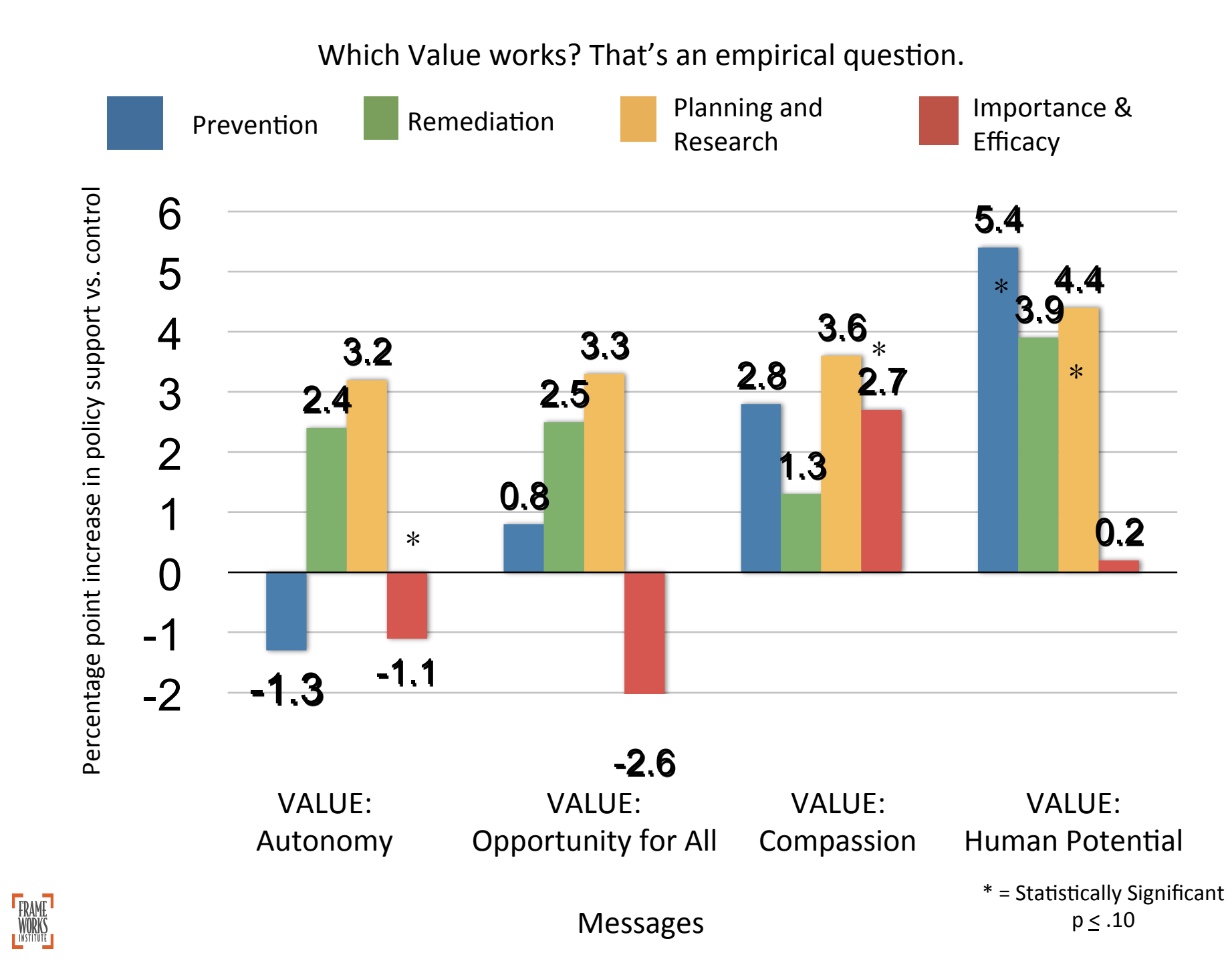
Which Value works? That's an empirical question.
Prevention
Remediation
Planning and Research
Importance & Efficacy
Percentage point increase in policy support vs. control
6
5
4
3
2
1
0
-1
-2
-1.3
2.4
3.2
-1.1
*
0.8
2.5
3.3
-2.6
2.8
1.3
3.6
*
2.7
5.4
*
3.9
4.4
*
0.2
VALUE: Autonomy
VALUE: Opportunity for All
VALUE: Compassion
VALUE: Human Potential
Messages
* = Statistically Significant
p ≤ .10
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Human Potential

Your issue matters because...

"When we support well-being, we make sure that everyone can reach their potential and fully contribute to our communities."

Redirect public perceptions from:

- Individuals are Responsible
- Well-Being = Financial Self-Sufficiency
- Well-Being = Physical Health

Conveys human services as:

- *Applicable to everyone*
- When people reach their full potential, everyone benefits

Framed with *Crisis* and *Costly Cuts*

As lawmakers wrestle with the budget, funding for vital services are at risk of being gutted. The cuts proposed would shut the door to critical services for hundreds of thousands of individuals and families across the state. But then what? Families in need are not going away. For each proposed cut, some basic questions need to be answered. What is the impact on the family denied access to services and how much will that impact end up costing the state in the long run? How many people losing elder or disability care, for example, would require institutionalization, which is far more expensive? How much more will taxpayers end up having to support in costs associated with increased ER visits and escalated healthcare cases? We need a budget that is prudent, reasonable and doesn't end up costing more than it saves. Cutting in the dark is never a good idea.

Reframed with *Human Potential*

As our policymakers use our most important civic tool for peering into the future - our public budget - we must make it a priority to attend to our nation's most important asset - our human potential. When we support well-being, we ensure that everyone can contribute to our communities. To do that, we must maintain and protect the initiatives that foster people's potential. For example, nurse visits for people with disabilities keeps them home and out of institutions, which keeps our communities vibrant. Health and nutrition efforts targeted at families today make sure that children's talents and gifts will be available to our workforce tomorrow. A good budget meets our needs today *and* plans for the future - so let's keep in mind that we need everyone's potential for the civic, social, and economic well-being of our communities.

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Framing Activity

"What do you do?"
We often answer this question with our title or our organization.
What if we responded with the WHY of what we do?

Imagine that you're introducing yourself at a party or networking event.

Set up your work with Human Potential, using the Value before mentioning particulars.

Example: *I'm Nancy, and my work makes sure that the gifts and talents of older Americans remain available to our communities after they retire. I run a program that taps their skills for volunteer-run organizations.*

Write your introduction on an index card. Then we will share them with the group.

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Second Plot Point: How Do We Support Human Potential?

Why does this matter to society?	How does this work?
The Value of Human Potential	Construction: Well-Being Is Built, By a Team, Over Time
What impedes it?	**What promotes it?**

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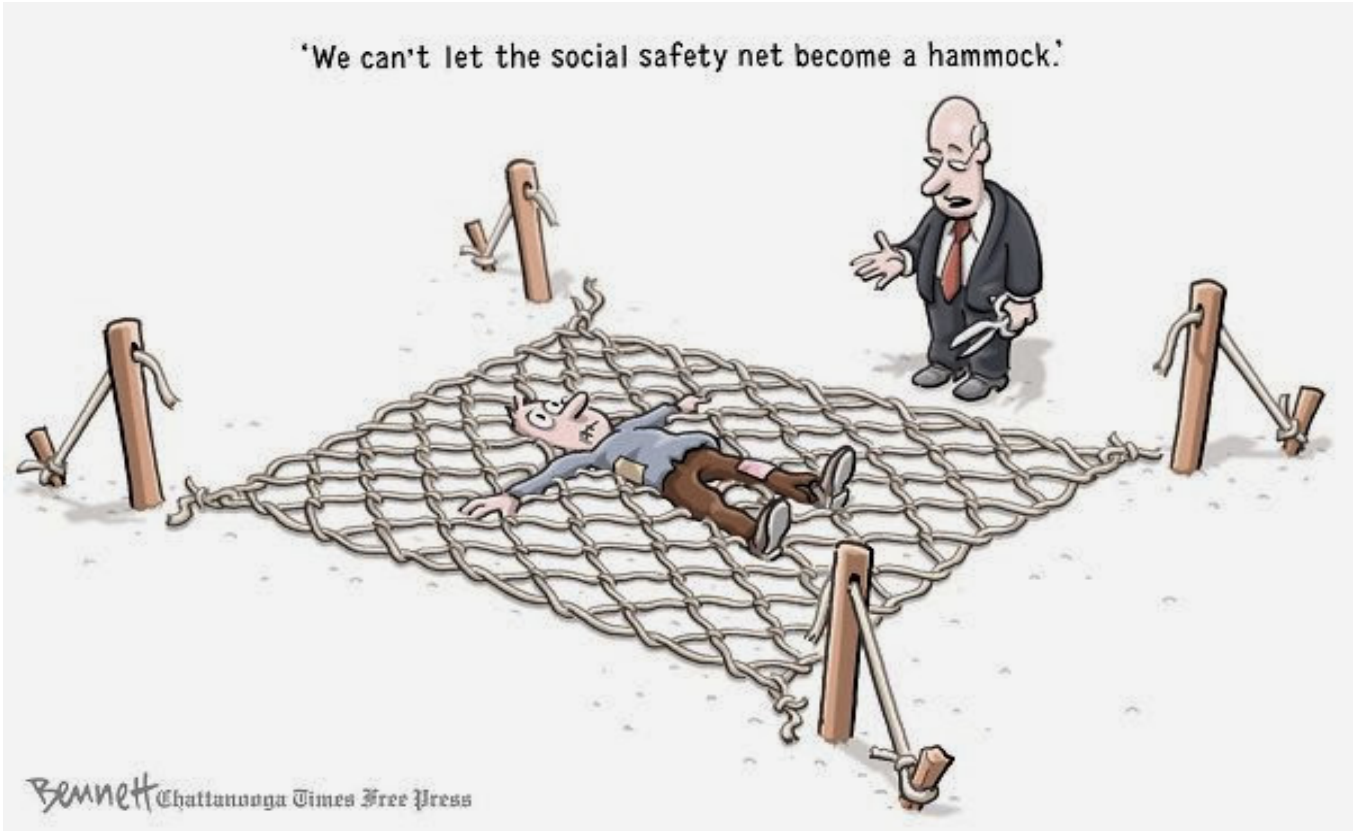
Metaphors Help You Navigate the Swamp

Uses the power of analogy to channel attention to certain features of an issue - and redirect attention away from others



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Building Well-Being

Emphasizes ***the need for support and reinforcement*** throughout a lifetime

Describes well-being as something much ***more than meeting basic needs***

Implies a sense of ***communal responsibility*** (can't build a house by yourself!)

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Source: FrameWorks Institute, Talking Human Services MessageMemo, 2015

Just as building a strong house requires certain materials, building well-being requires community resources, social relationships, and opportunities to thrive. When these materials are not available, people and communities may have difficulty weathering life's storms.

There are organizations in our country that are set up to help everyone build support in life. They are called "human services." Human services construct a strong foundation to maintain well-being over time and also to repair well-being if it starts to break down.

Framed with *Worthy Recipients* and *Up From Poverty*

The whole community benefits when working people can turn their financial tightrope into a stable pathway to success. A key component of success in building financial stability is ensuring that hardworking families can have access to two proven tax credits that have been immensely successful in moving Americans from welfare to work while reducing poverty: the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC). Together, the EITC and CTC help low and moderate-income working families make ends meet lifting more than 9 million people – more than half of them children – out of poverty in 2013. The EITC is the nation's most effective anti-poverty program. Studies show that the EITC encourages work, reduces poverty, helps families meet basic needs and improves children's academic achievement.

Reframed with *Human Potential + Construction*

To ensure that everyone can fulfill their potential and contribute fully to our economy and our communities, we need policies that bolster people's physical, social, and financial well-being. Two policies that have long been successful tools for building well-being are the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Child Tax Credit (CTC). Together, these credits increase financial stability in low and moderate-income families, stabilizing families and shoring up children's foundations, establishing a sturdy structure for the long term. In fact, studies show that these tax credits have led to multiple benefits that make our communities stronger including improving children's academic progress and generating significant local economic activity. By reauthorizing them, and updating them to include more Americans, Congress can extend and expand their role in creating vibrant communities across the country.

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Framing Activity

Your table will be assigned a broad area of human services work.

Work together to "map" different examples of that work to the Construction metaphor. Try to come up with about 5 examples and how you might describe them using this tested Explanatory Metaphor.

Early childhood programs = establishing a strong foundation
Basic needs assistance = essential materials for building a sturdy structure

Bonus points for creativity! Double bonus points for using the Reframe Card!

Work for ten minutes, then we'll share out.

Tension in the plot: If things go wrong, why?

Why does this matter to society?	How does this work?
The Value of Human Potential	Construction: Well-Being Is Built, By a Team, Over Time

What impedes it?	What promotes it?
Construction: Shaky Foundations, Missing Materials, Life's Storms	

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Framed with *Vulnerable Populations*

Our nonprofit organization is dedicated to helping those in need live healthy, productive lives. Since 1899, we have supported and empowered America's most vulnerable groups, including veterans, seniors, people with disabilities, the homeless, those recovering from addictions, and other at-risk individuals. In collaboration with other nonprofits, we are able to advocate for the most vulnerable among us.

Reframed with *Construction/Life's Storms*

Our nonprofit organization provides the bricks and mortar of sturdy well-being: social relationships, opportunities to maintain physical fitness, access to counseling or other supports for mental health. When these materials aren't available, people may have difficulty weathering the life storms that can affect all of us - a layoff, the loss of a loved one, a lingering health concern. Since 1899, we have helped to shore up the foundations of well-being, through advocacy, research, and direct services.

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Satisfying conclusion: What can we do to improve the situation?

Why does this matter to society?	How does this work?
The Value of Human Potential	Construction: Well-Being Is Built, By a Team, Over Time

What impedes it?	What promotes it?
Construction: Shaky Foundations, Missing Materials, Life's Storms	Life Cycle Examples: Human Services Supports Across the Life Span

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Examples Help You Navigate the Swamp

Illustrate particular facets of an issue, focusing on those that deepen understanding, motivate engagement, and drive policy support

Life Cycle Examples

Human services provide supports for well-being throughout life.

In childhood, human services support people by doing things like looking at how childcare affects children later in life, pushing for high-quality education for all children, and offering programs that support adolescent development programs.

In adulthood, human services support people by doing things like studying what affects people's mental health, working to make housing safe, and providing literacy programs for adults who cannot read.

Human services support older adults by doing things like exploring how social isolation affects people's well-being, setting up tutoring or mentoring programs so older people can remain engaged in their communities, and providing meals to older people who can't leave their home.

Which of these *Life Cycle* Examples is framed most strategically?

a) Violence threatens Americans in every stage of life: infant neglect, childhood sexual trauma, and elder abuse are all occurring at epidemic proportions in our society.

b) When we establish a strong foundation for well-being through early learning, build on it through youth development, and shore it up through opportunities to stay engaged throughout adulthood and later life, we make sure that our communities remain healthy and vibrant.

c) Children who participate in early learning have benefits throughout their lifespan, from academic gains in elementary school, to decreased absences from school as adolescents, to reduced involvement in crime as adults.

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c) Children who participate in early learning have benefits throughout their lifespan, from academic gains in elementary school, to decreased absences from school as adolescents, to reduced involvement in crime as adults.

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Framing Practice

Each table is assigned a human services issue: Housing, Mental Health, Recreation, Nutrition & Food Security and Employment Services. Move to one, dividing the group evenly among tables.

Work with your group to come up with examples of how that sector supports people in EACH of the following stages of life: early childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and older age.

One example should be something other than direct services.

Frame up a short, sentence-length explanation of each, taking care to “mind the swamp.” Then wait for instructions from the facilitators.

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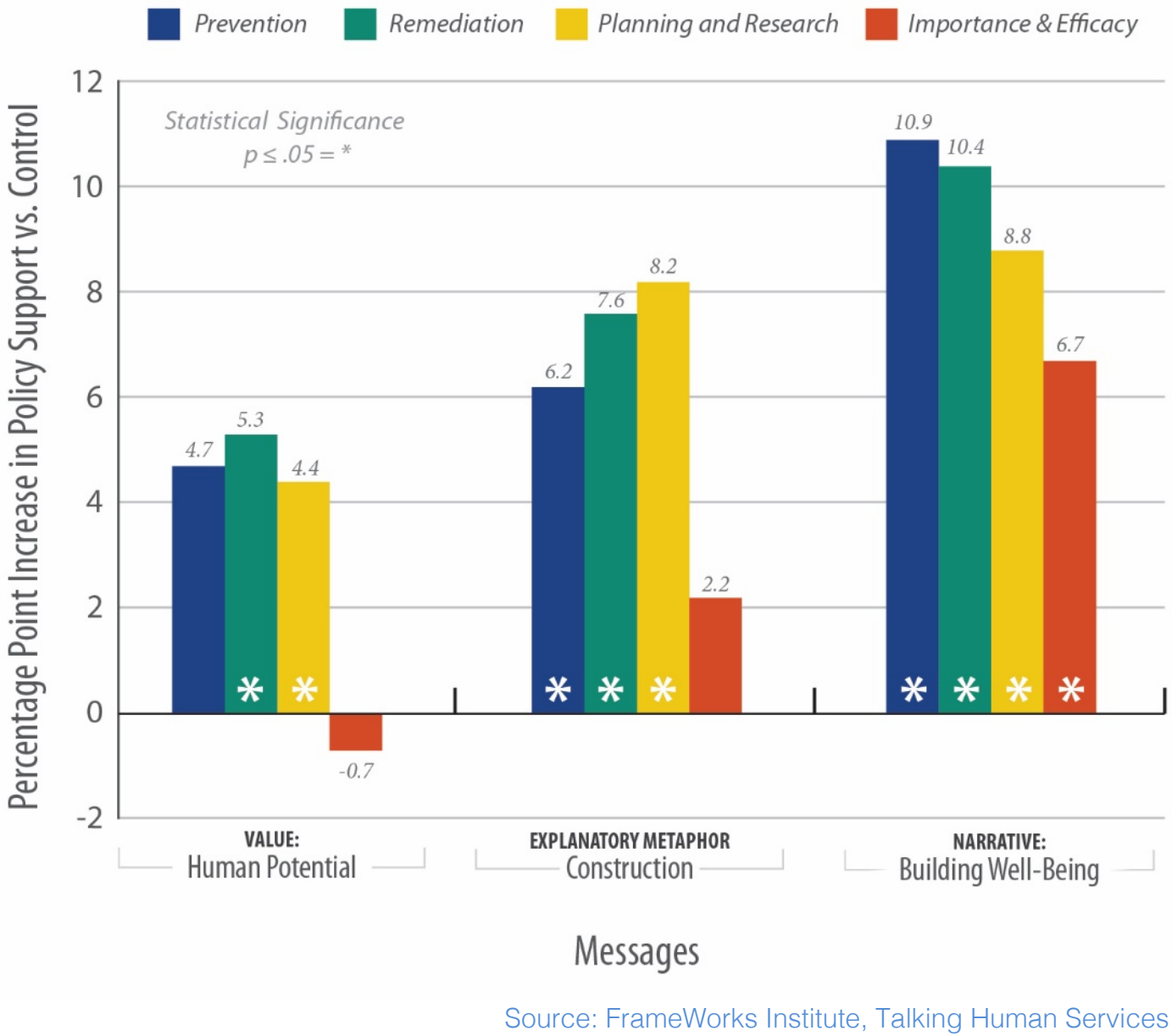
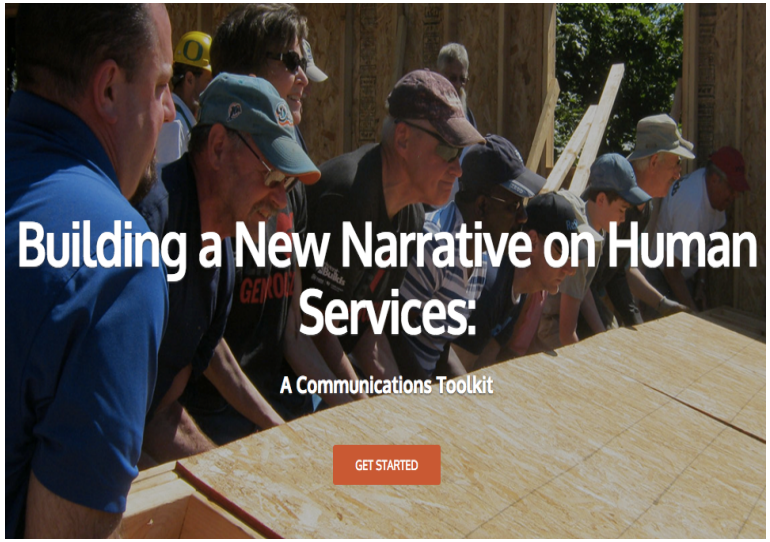
Reframing is Most Effective with a Complete Narrative



Source: FrameWorks Institute, Talking Human Services MessageMemo, 201

Get Started on Reframing



Talking Points

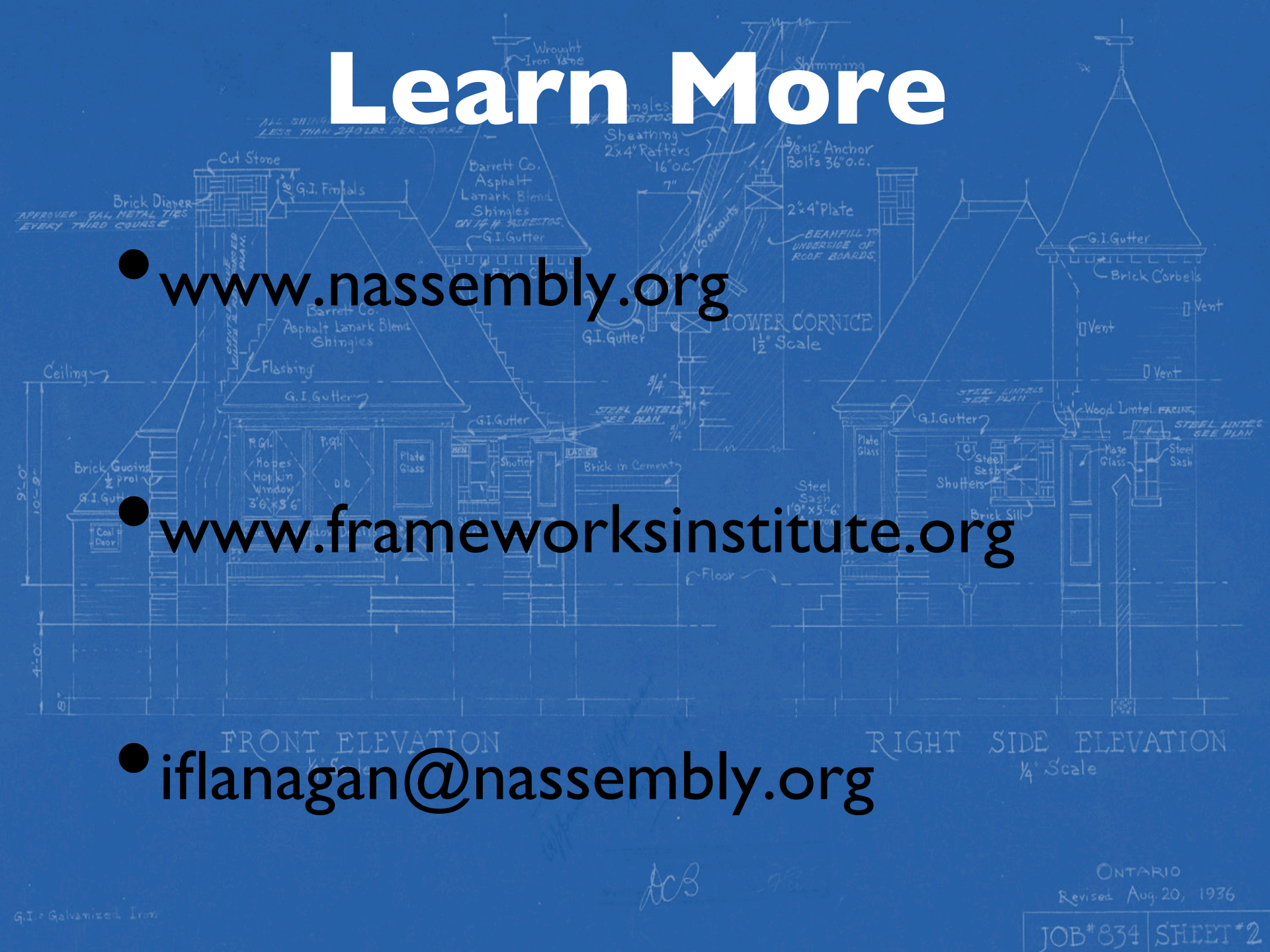
FAQs

Message Cards

http://frameworksinstitute.org/toolkits/humanservices/

Learn More

- www.nassembly.org
- www.frameworksinstitute.org
- iflanagan@nassembly.org



A New Frame for Human Services

Why does this matter to society?

Everyone should be able to reach their full potential

What kind of support do people need?

Well-Being Is Built, By a Team, Over Time

What impedes well-being?

Shaky Foundations, Missing Materials, Life's Storms

What do we ensure well-being?

Life Cycle Examples:
Human Services Supports Across the Life Span

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