



Family

TO

Family

TOOLS FOR
Rebuilding Foster Care

Self-Evaluation, or Using Data to Guide Policy & Practice

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**Presentation Originally Created by:
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The Current Placement System* (Highly Simplified)

Child In



**A bunch of
stuff happens**



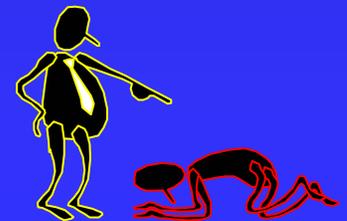
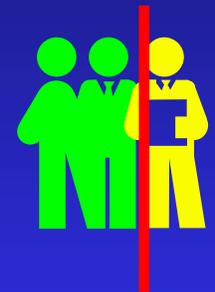
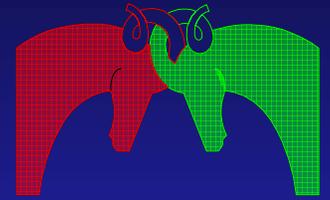
Child Out

*adapted from Lyle, G. L., & Barker, M.A. (1998) Patterns & Spells: New approaches to conceptualizing children's out of home placement experiences. Chicago: American Evaluation Association Annual Conference



Features of a Conventional Evaluation

- An adversarial relationship between program staff and evaluators with roots in auditing and objective “scientific” methods
- Detached researchers seek to isolate the effects of very narrowly defined interventions on changes in the behavior of individuals (vs. outcomes for them or their families and communities)
- Product is an after-the-fact report telling you where you went wrong . . . two years ago!
- Something done to you rather than with you or by you



Self-Evaluation in Family to Family

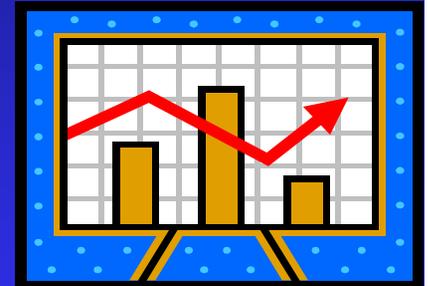
- Seeks to create a flow of information to support mid-course corrections and continuous improvements in outcomes
 - **Evaluation is a process, not an event or a report**
- Assumes evaluation is most effective when it includes diverse perspectives
 - **Frontline staff**
 - **Community partners**
 - **Managers and supervisors**
 - **IT staff**
 - **Consumers**
 - **Analysts**
- Provides technical expertise



Data Requirements in Self-Evaluation

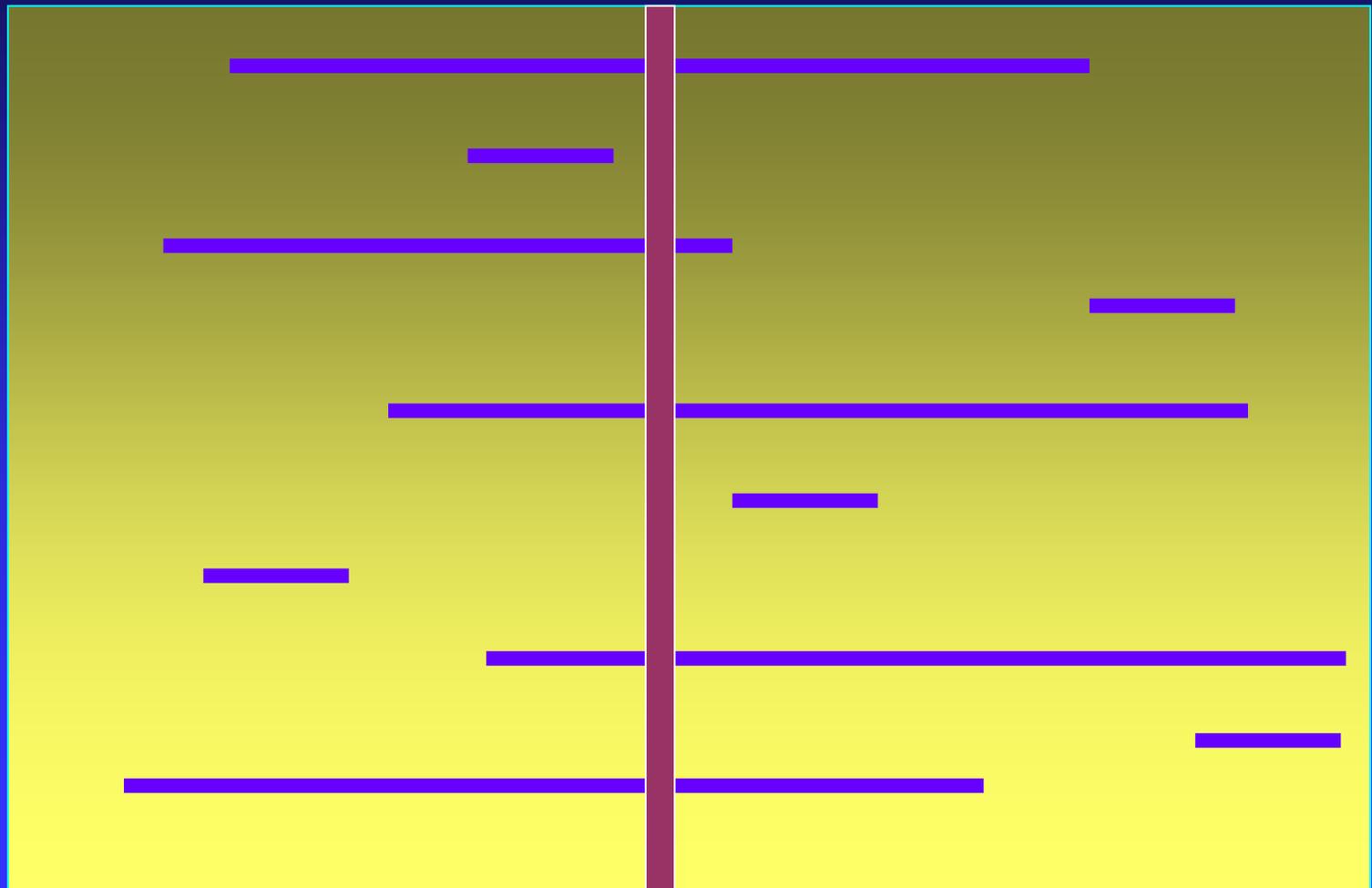


- Use longitudinal data to track every child's experience—entries, exits, point in time.
- Present data in ways that highlight changes in performance
- Analyze abuse and neglect reports as well as placement data
- Use GIS technology to monitor neighborhood impact



The Bias of Caseload Snapshots: The Long and Short of It

Jan. 1, 2004



Jan. 1, 2003

Jan. 1, 2005

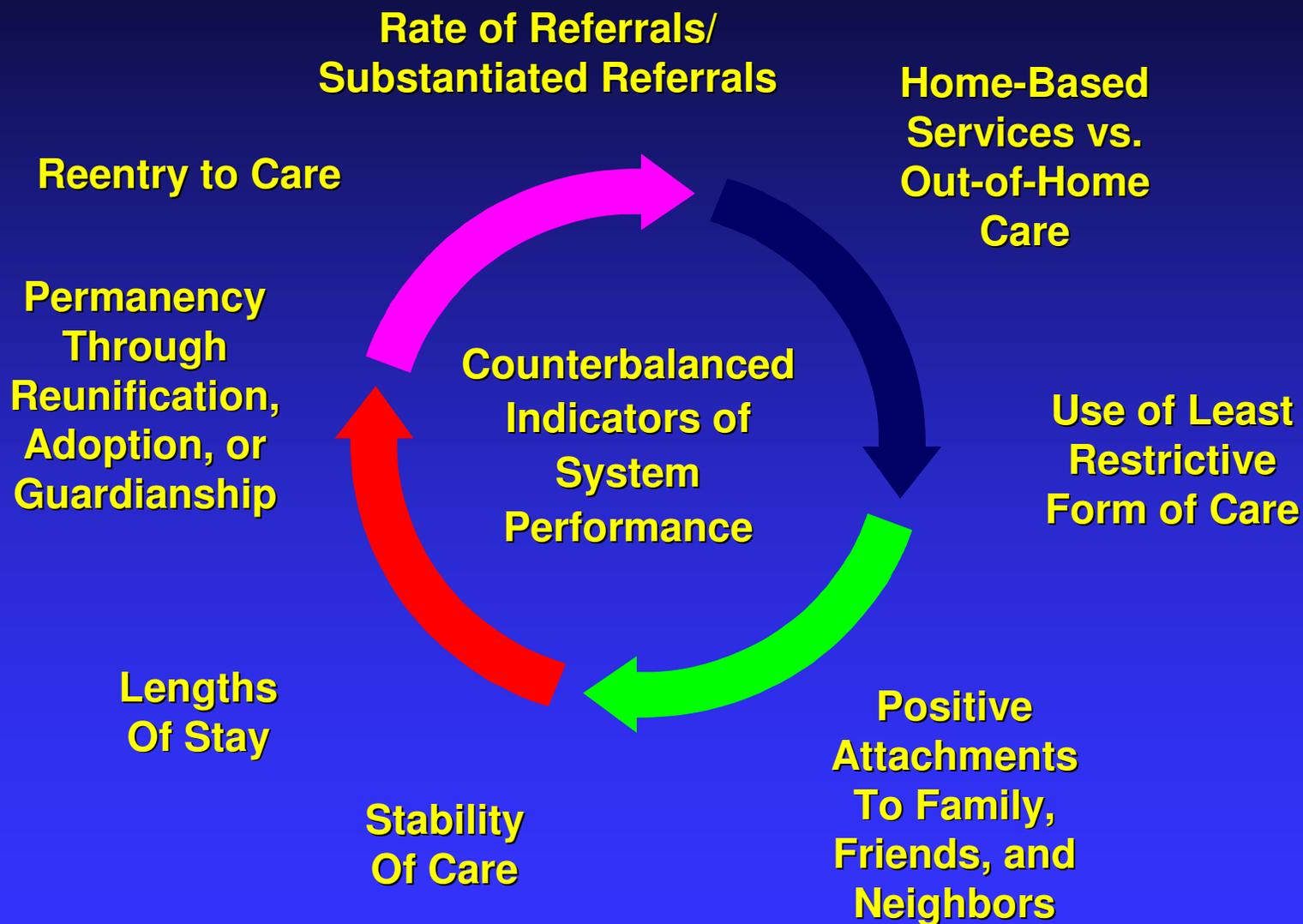


Data to Support Key Strategies

- Community and Neighborhood Partnerships
 - What are the particular needs and resources related to child welfare in each neighborhood?
 - What is the impact of child welfare policy on each neighborhood?
- Team Decision-making
 - How will team decision-making affect staff assignments and workload?
 - What are the outcomes of team decisions?
- Recruitment and Support for Resource Families
 - When and where does attrition occur during recruitment?
 - What are the career patterns of foster parents?



The Cycle of Experiences in the Child Welfare System



Source: Usher, C.L., Wildfire, J.B., Gogan, H.C. & Brown, E.L. (2002). Measuring Outcomes in Child Welfare. Chapel Hill: Jordan Institute for Families,



Maintaining and Expanding Program Staff Involvement

- Incorporate the use of outcome data into established child welfare processes and review requirements
 - AB 636=F2F!!!!
- Expand and modify existing structures to incorporate principles of self-evaluation
 - Expand management team meetings monthly to include regular updates on outcomes



Maintaining and Expanding Program Staff Involvement (cont'd)

- Self-evaluation team members should reflect current program directions and priorities
 - Rotate staff members onto and off of the self-evaluation team to reflect changing needs of the agency
- Everyone owns the outcomes
 - Prominently display outcomes throughout the agency
 - Regularly update all staff on progress towards achieving outcomes



Maintaining and Expanding Program Staff Involvement (cont'd)

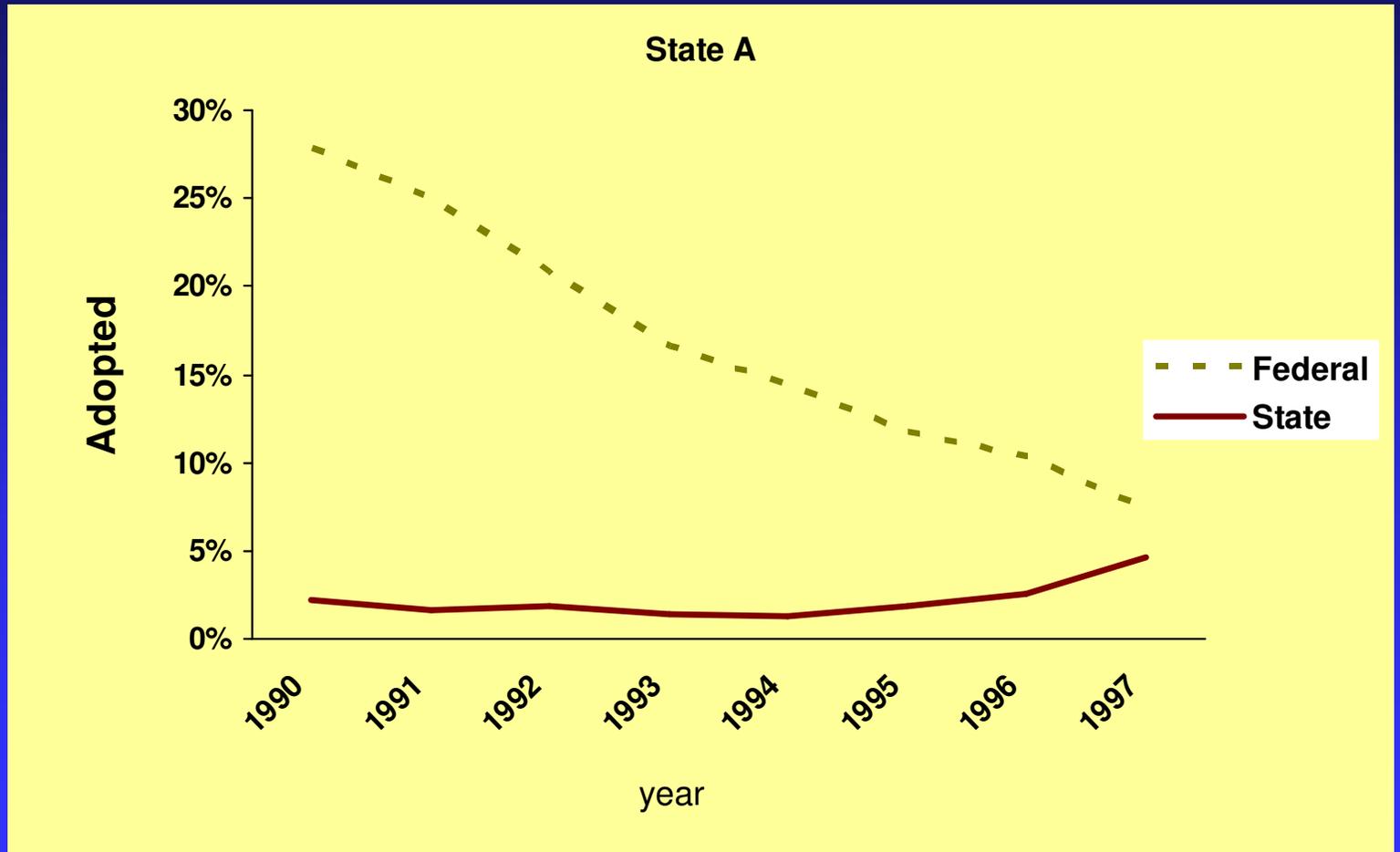
- Use entry cohort data for decision-making
 - Use AB636 State measures to fully understand program improvement, Federal measures used alone can be misleading



Are you getting better or worse?

Data from the Multi State Data Archive

Adoption within 24 Months

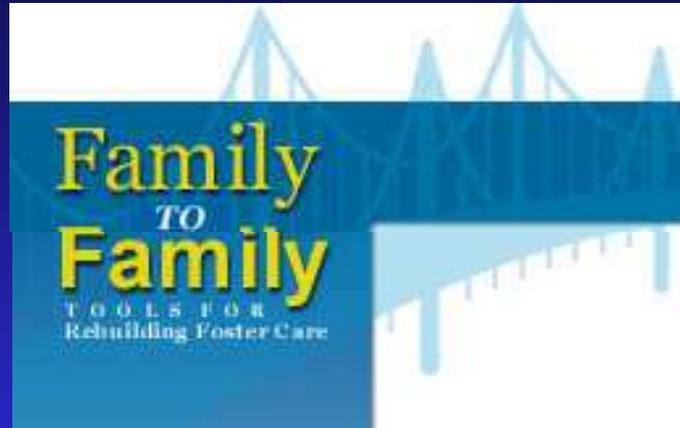


Source: Chapin Hall Center for Children



Building Ongoing Analytic Support

- Identify, train, and/or re-orient existing staff involved in information services, quality assurance, or planning and evaluation
- Develop partnerships with other agencies and outside organizations that have unique data resources or analytical capabilities
 - Universities ☺
 - Schools
 - Chamber of Commerce
 - Mayor's office
 - Health, Mental Health, etc.



<http://www.aecf.org/familytofamily/>
<http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSReports>