

Using Logic Models to Guide Program Implementation and Ongoing Program Improvements

September 2020

OVERVIEW

Logic models are usually created during program planning and are often forgotten once the program is funded or implementation begins. This tip sheet offers several considerations for how PREP programs can use logic models as a living document to support communications, planning and implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement throughout the life of a program.

Revisiting Your Logic Model

Your logic model is your roadmap to success! Have you ever looked back at your logic model to review, update, or adjust it so that it reflects the changes or adaptations that you have made along the way? Ask yourself:

- Does my current logic model accurately reflect my program today?

There are many benefits to using and reflecting on your logic model throughout the life of your program. Logic models can be used through all phases of program implementation and evaluation. Your logic model can be used as a tool to:

- **Communicate** important points about your program and **engage and train** others.
- **Plan** efficiently and prioritize resources for implementation.
- Design and implement your **evaluation**.
- Guide changes as you **monitor** progress and fidelity.

What Is a Logic Model?

A logic model is a graphic illustration of the relationship between a program's *resources* or *inputs* required to implement a program, the *activities* and *outputs* of a program, and the desired *outcomes* (*short term, long term*) of a program. Logic models clearly and concisely show how interventions affect behavior and achieve a goal. Logic models are effective tools to assist in program planning, implementation, management, evaluation, and reporting. There is a strong connection between program success and using a logic model (WK Kellogg Foundation, 2006). Typically, logic models include four core components. Logic models can vary in level of detail and complexity considering who will use the logic model and how they will use it ([CDC Logic Model Components](#)).



For adolescent and teen pregnancy prevention programs, think of a visual roadmap that shows the planned links between the work programs do (e.g., communications campaign, school-based programs) and the outcomes programs want to achieve (e.g., increased awareness of STIs).

Plan to revisit your logic model at regular intervals with key stakeholders.

Using Logic Models as a Communication, Training, and Engagement Tool

As a communication tool, your logic model provides a common understanding to stakeholders, community partners and sub-awardees, your staff, and your local evaluator. The logic model provides a common framework and language for all stakeholders from which to work (McLaughlin & Jordan, 2010). It is often easier to communicate clearly and quickly using the logic model than describing the entire project verbally or sharing the entire written implementation plan. You might consider differing levels of detail in the version of the logic model you present to various stakeholders (e.g., community, staff, evaluator, educator). This allows each group to focus on the elements of the logic model that are most important to their individual mission or stake in the

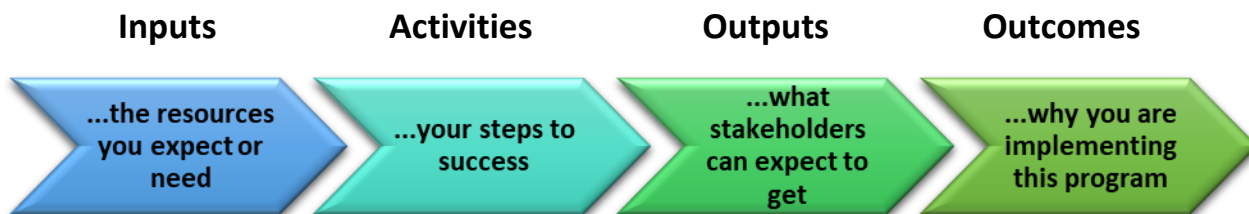
Your logic model can answer:

- How does a parent night support project retention and parent-child communication about information youth receive as part of the curriculum?
- How do activities outside of the curricula (such as Adult Preparation Subjects) fit into the project?

Use your logic model to train new staff or sub-awardees to help orient them more quickly by learning about the components of the project and how they work together to produce outcomes.

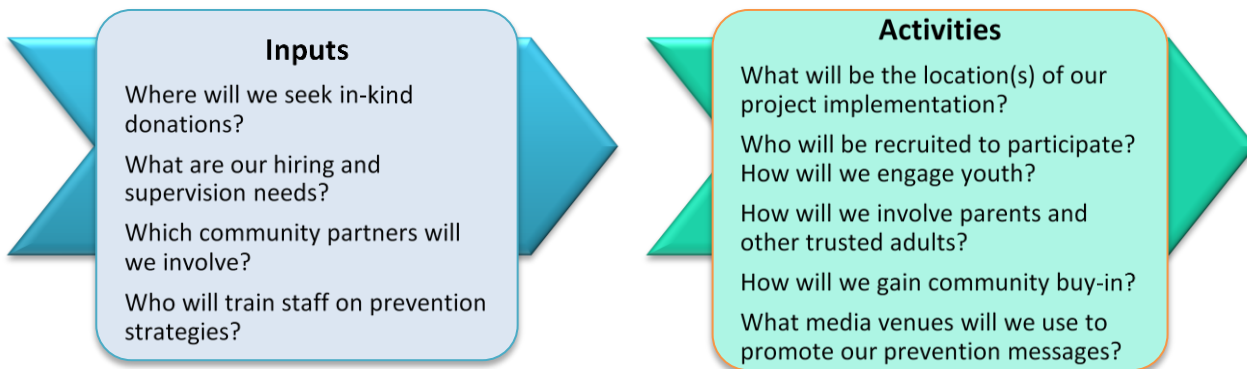
project, while not losing sight of the big picture. This can be particularly important when training new staff members or new community partners. Your logic model is an important tool to help program delivery staff understand how your program elements are expected to lead to desired outcomes. This increases their ability to work flexibly with different youth, while maintaining adherence to the underlying program theory.

Use your logic model to engage your stakeholders, staff, and community partners to communicate inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes.



Using Logic Models for Program Planning and Implementation

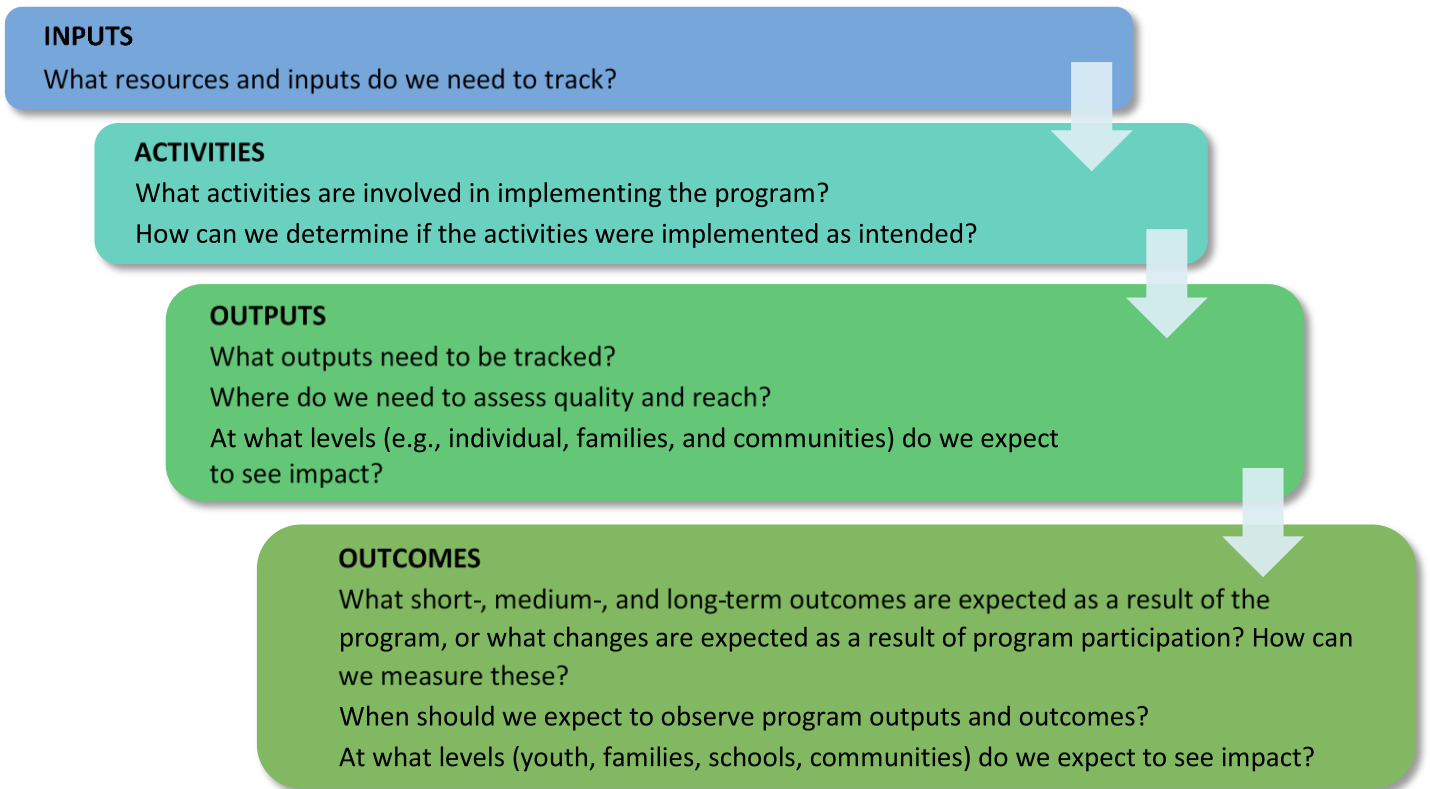
Your logic model provides a visual presentation that concisely describes not only the community resources, inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes of the project, but how each piece will work together and influence the others. It can show how the curriculum or program you have selected, and other project activities, fit together and complement each other to produce desired outcomes. A good logic model clearly defines implementation activities and objectives. It should clearly lay out what the project is expected to accomplish—both in how the project is implemented and what impact it is expected to have on participants and the community. Planning is more efficient when stakeholders know the specifics about the project (e.g., How many sessions? Who are the participants?) The logic model shows what *should* happen during project implementation. You might want to start by translating the inputs and activities into a workplan specifying timelines and responsible parties. Sometimes, you may need to answer additional questions, such as those listed in the graphic below:



If you expand your program to new settings, serve new populations, or engage new sub-awardees, you should revisit and update your logic model to make sure it stays current, relevant, and reflective of your current program.

Using Logic Models for Evaluation

A clear and comprehensive logic model can (and should) provide the roadmap for your evaluation and facilitate communication between project staff and your evaluator. Your logic model helps to define what is going to be evaluated, including the important elements of your program to measure as part of your process evaluation and the critical outcomes to measure as part of your outcome evaluation. Your logic model helps to focus your evaluation **and must be updated as changes occur.**



You and your stakeholders will want information about whether and how your program worked. Use your logic model to inform evaluation questions based on linkages between activities, outputs, and outcomes. Your logic model helps to interpret evaluation results and may assist in answering the following questions:

- Why did we observe the outcomes that we did?
- What specific resources were associated with successful program activities?

- How did program activities achieve outputs and outcomes?
- Were the outcomes uniform across all participants, or did some show better outcomes than others?
- Are all of the project inputs and community resources necessary to support project activities and achieve observed outcomes?

Using Logic Models for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)

Logic models are great blueprints for guiding Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). CQI is a systematic approach that uses information obtained through program monitoring and evaluation to make improvements throughout the lifecycle of a project. You can use CQI processes to reflect on what you did, whether it worked, and how you can improve it. These processes can happen as soon as problems are identified during project implementation (mid-course CQI) or as part of a systematic assessment of project functioning (strategic CQI). Regardless of the type of CQI you use, when the need for quality improvements is identified, it is critical to consult your logic model and review each of the components and linkages between components to ensure you are progressing as intended or to identify whether your logic model needs to be revised if you are not.



SUMMARY

Your logic model is your roadmap to success! You should:

- Revisit the logic model throughout project implementation and evaluation.
- Explain the benefits of doing this to your team.
- Use your logic model in project planning, implementation start-up, and mid-course corrections.
- Refer to the logic model to communicate with your local evaluator and to inform evaluation planning.
- Seek technical assistance through your Project Officer, if needed, about your project's logic model, implementation, or evaluation.

Use this *Logic Model Reflection Worksheet* to review, update or adjust to ensure that your logic model accurately reflects your current program.

Inputs →	Activities →	Outputs →	Short Term →	Med Term →	Long Term
<i>Did we get the inputs we expected?</i>	<i>Were the activities implemented as intended?</i>	<i>Did we get all our outputs? Were outputs the expected quality?</i>	<i>Which outcomes were obtained and to what extent?</i>		
<i>Did we have enough resources?</i>	<i>Was the selected setting feasible for implementation?</i>	<i>Are we reaching our intended population?</i>	<i>Is the project capturing our critical elements?</i>		
<i>Are we fully staffed?</i>	<i>Do we need to make adaptations to our activities?</i>	<i>Are we serving parents and other adults?</i>	<i>Does our data suggest benefits from our project so far?</i>		
<i>Are we missing critical partners?</i>	<i>Does our curricula fit our population?</i>	<i>Is the dosage of our intervention enough?</i>			
	<i>Are sub-awardees supporting our prevention activities?</i> <i>CQI Considerations: Do we have documentation of planned/unplanned adaptations? How has the program been adapted for cultural/community fit? How has the program been adapted in response to external factors (e.g., virtual implementation)?</i>				

REFERENCES AND RESOURCES

McLaughlin, J. A. & Jordan, G. B. (2010). Using logic models. In J. S. Wholey, H. P. Hatry, K. E. Newcomer (Eds.), *Handbook of practical program evaluation*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, pp. 55–80.

W. K. Kellogg Foundation. (2004). *Logic model development guide*. Retrieved August 28, 2020, from <https://www.wkkf.org/resource-directory/resources/2004/01/logic-model-development-guide>

Logic Model Resources

Family & Youth Services Bureau. [Implementation and Evaluation: Using Your Logic Model to Guide Your Project](#)

Center for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas. [Community Toolbox: Section 1. Developing a Logic Model or Theory of Change](#)

Innovation Network. (2010). *Logic model workbook*. Retrieved August 28, 2020, from http://www.innonet.org/client_docs/File/logic_model_workbook.pdf

University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension. [Program Development and Evaluation: Logic Models](#)

Logic Model Online Course: <https://lmcourse.ces.uwex.edu/>

PDF: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/programdevelopment/files/2016/03/lmcourseall.pdf>

Logic Model Training Guide:

<https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/programdevelopment/files/2016/03/lmguidecomplete.pdf>

Logic Model Resources: <https://fyi.extension.wisc.edu/programdevelopment/logic-models/bibliography/>

Additional Resources

Ashley, O. S., Stahl, M. H., Banks, D., Vance, M. M., & Palen, L. (2013). *Implementation and evaluation: Using your logic model to guide your project*. Webinar presented to Family and Youth Services Bureau Competitive Personal Responsibility Education Program grantees and Competitive Abstinence Education grantees.

Ashley, O. S., Herman-Stahl, M. A., Banks, D., Vance, M. M., Kan, M. L., Gremminger, M. M. & Palen, L. (2013, March). Using your logic model to guide your project. Washington, DC: Administration on Children, Youth and Families and Youth Services Bureau.

Drake, P. & Laris, B. A. (2011) *Logic model training webinar*. Presented to Family and Youth Services Bureau State Personal Responsibility Education Program grantees.

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