Meaningful Partnerships and Collaboration: Supporting Successful Program Implementation and Sustainability

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HRSA/ACF Webinar
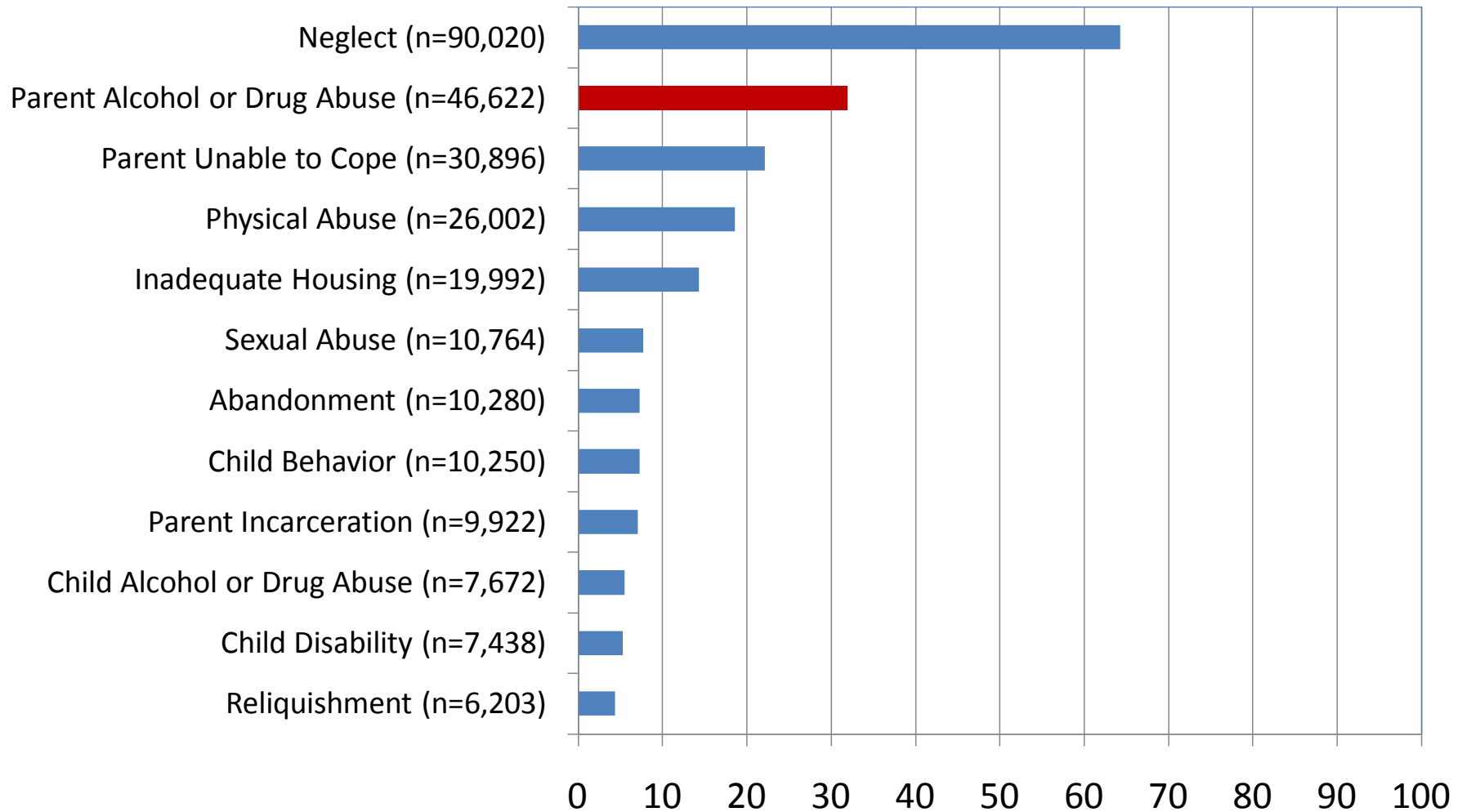
National Center on Substance Abuse and Child Welfare

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Why Collaborate?

- **To achieve outcomes no agency can achieve with its own resources**

- **To respond to client and community needs that go beyond categorical boundaries**

- **To fix accountability for shared resources and shared results**

- **To build trust relationships across agencies and with clients**

Percent and Number of Children with Terminated Parental Rights by Reason for Removal -- 2007

Reason	Percent
Neglect (n=90,020)	~64
Parent Alcohol or Drug Abuse (n=46,622)	~32
Parent Unable to Cope (n=30,896)	~22
Physical Abuse (n=26,002)	~18
Inadequate Housing (n=19,992)	~14
Sexual Abuse (n=10,764)	~8
Abandonment (n=10,280)	~7
Child Behavior (n=10,250)	~7
Parent Incarceration (n=9,922)	~7
Child Alcohol or Drug Abuse (n=7,672)	~5
Child Disability (n=7,438)	~5
Reliquishment (n=6,203)	~4

(x-axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100)

Why Does Home Visiting Require Collaboration?

- **Because at-risk families have multiple, co-occurring needs**

- **Because sustaining funding requires an interagency effort**

- **Because an agency that is trying to do it all will overlook or ignore resources that could multiply its effectiveness**

Home Visiting Programs Require Data from Many Sources

Examples of Data Elements Collected for EBHV Needs Assessments

• **Electronic birth record data**
• **Rates of low birth weight**
• **Preterm births**
• **Rates of infant mortality**
• **Births to teen mothers**
• **Births to first-time mothers**
• **Births to single-parent mothers**
• **Births to mothers on Medicaid**
• **Births to mothers without a high school diploma**
• **Rates of child abuse and neglect**
• **Child deaths and deaths of children enrolled in home visiting programs**
• **Investigations of child abuse and neglect**
• **Children witnessing domestic violence**
• **Children with incarcerated parents**
• **Crime statistics**
• **Population by county**
• **Educational attainment**
• **School dropout rates**
• **WIC enrollment by age of parents and for use by first-time mothers**
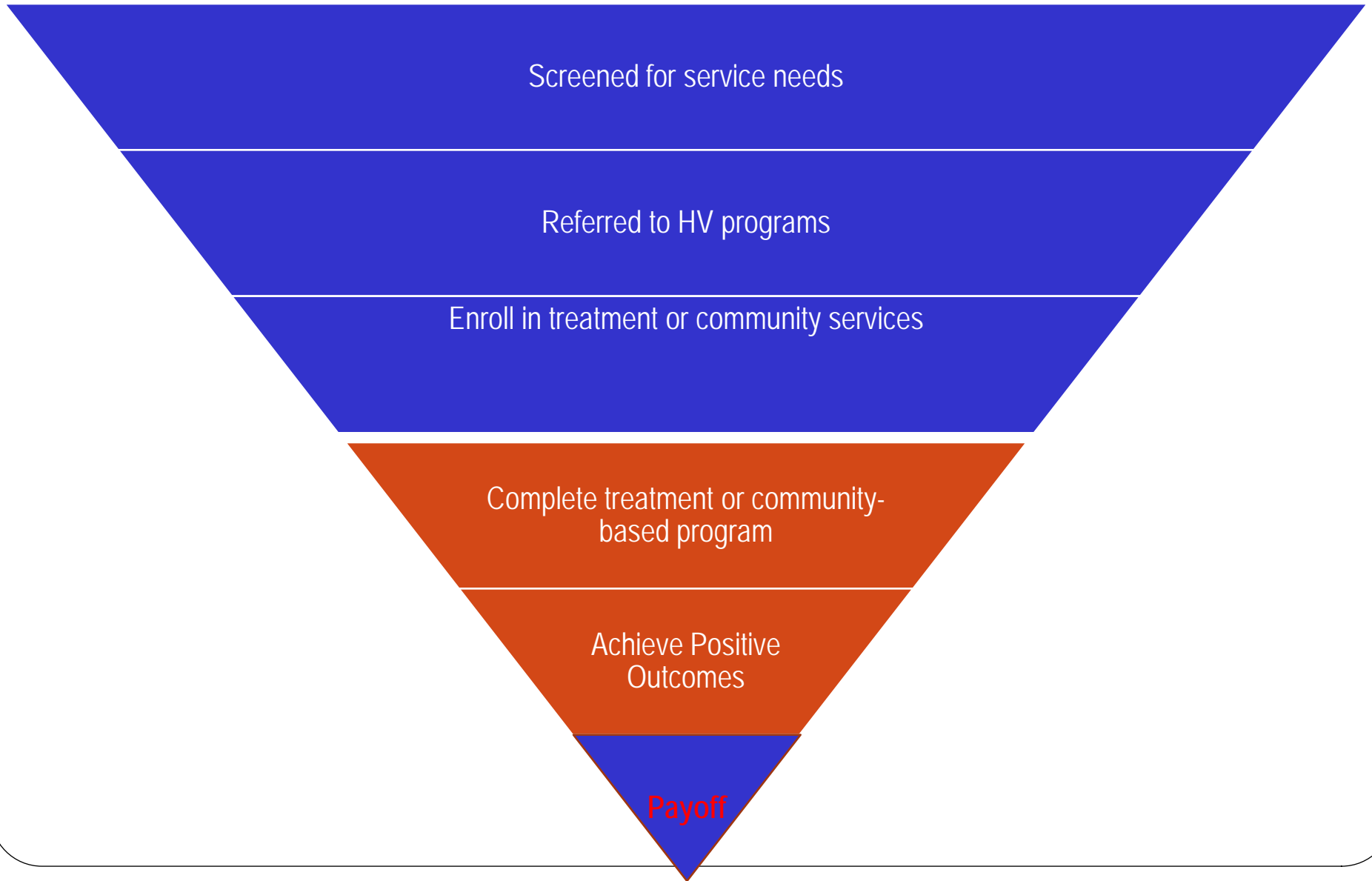
An example of collaboration challenges in serving at-risk families with younger children

- **Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) requires two handoffs**
  - **from hospitals to child welfare (without presuming maltreatment) for drug or alcohol-affected births**
  - **from child welfare to Part C early intervention agencies for 0-2 year olds in substantiated cases**
- **Who does this handoff belong to?**
  - **Child welfare? Maternal and child health? Treatment agencies? Early intervention agencies? Early care and education agencies? Hospitals?**
- **Yes!**
  - **And so collaboration in making good handoffs is essential to early identification and early intervention for these children and their parents**

Collaboration as Handoff Assessment

- **Where are we losing families?**
- **Agencies map their handoffs and conduct an interagency dropoff analysis**
- **Agencies assess which kinds of families are not being retained**
- **Agencies revise their handoffs to improve engagement and retention of families**
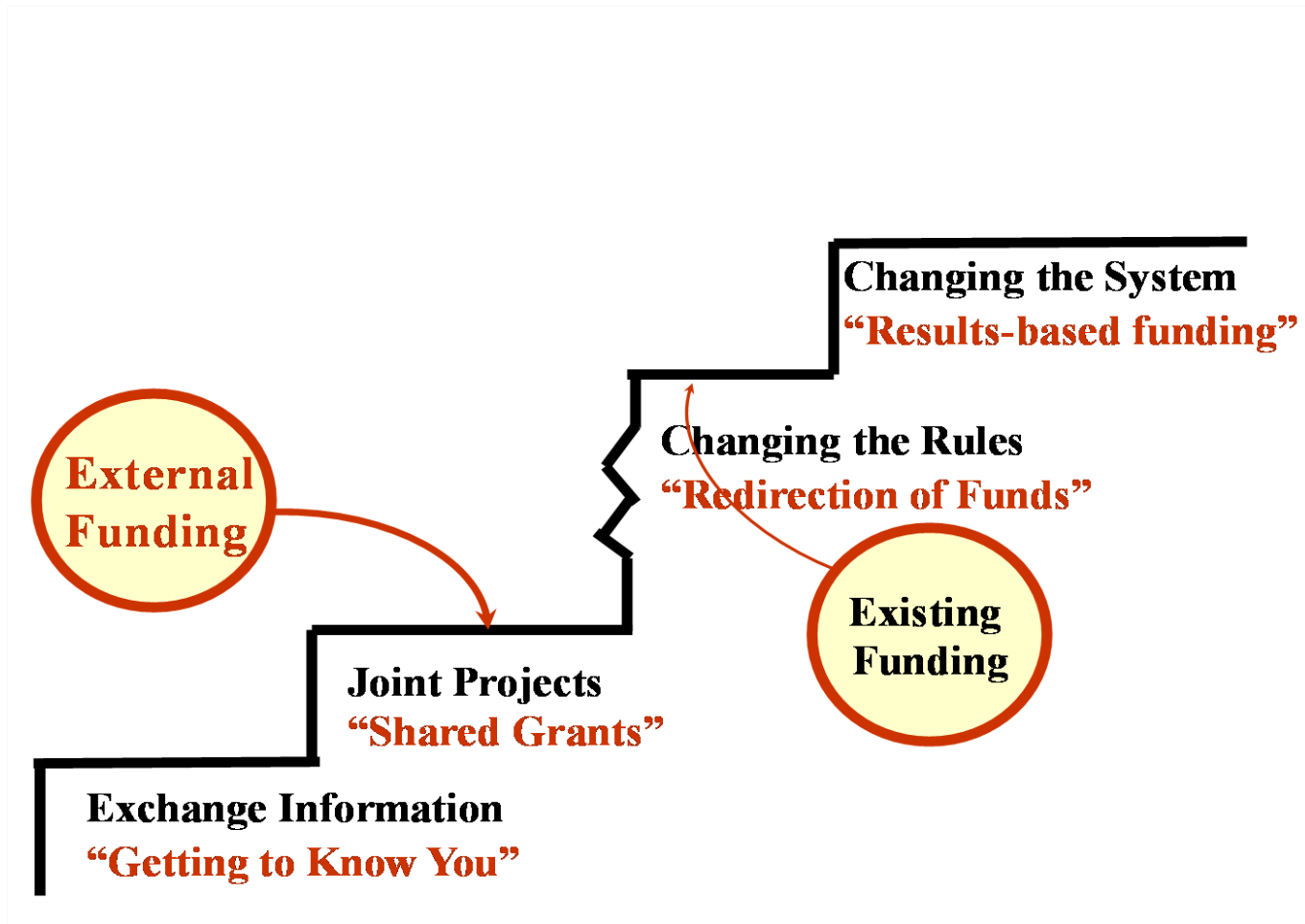- **All of this has to be a collaborative process**

Dropoff Points

Screened for service needs

Referred to HV programs

Enroll in treatment or community services

Complete treatment or community-based program

Achieve Positive Outcomes

Payoff

The Continuum from Communication to Shared Outcomes

Communication	Information Exchange	Shared Information on Client Needs	Referrals	Referrals and followup	Resources	Dedicated resources	Targeted Resources	Accountability
We sent them a memo	We meet a lot and brief each other	We have useful data on statewide service needs of clients we share	We can communicate about shared clients; we have a formal protocol for referrals	We know how we treat each other's referrals and whether they get services	We jointly fund some programs and out-station staff	We set aside slots for their clients; we negotiated specific resources for our clients	We agreed on which clients should be the highest priority and which risk factors are critical	We share responsibility for results and monitor outcomes annually

Four Levels of Collaboration

External Funding

Exchange Information
"Getting to Know You"

Joint Projects
"Shared Grants"

Changing the Rules
"Redirection of Funds"

Existing Funding

Changing the System
"Results-based funding"

10-Element Framework of Systems Linkages

- **Method to organize collaborative activities in specific practice and policy areas**
  - Defines key elements of collaboration
  - Describes components of an initiative
- **Provides systematic way to assess effectiveness of collaborative work**
  - Assists in measuring their implementation
  - Helps assess progress in building stronger cross-systems linkages and where those linkages are most effective

Elements of System Linkages
The Ten Key Bridges

Mission

1. **Underlying Values and Priorities**

Children, Family, Tribal, and Community Services

2. **Screening and Assessment**	3. **Engagement and Retention**	4. **Services for Children**	5. **Community and Family Support**

System Elements

6. **Information Systems**	7. **Training and System Tools**	8. **Budget and Sustainability**	9. **Working with Other Agencies**

Outcomes

10. **Shared Outcomes and Systems Reforms**

Tools for Self-assessing Collaboration

- **Collaborative Capacity Index**
- **Collaborative Values Inventory**
- **Dropoff Analysis**
- **Sustainability Plan:**
  - **a sustainability plan is a diagnostic for how clearly the group agrees on sharing <u>resources</u> to achieve <u>results</u>**

Two dimensions of partnership

Interagency collaborative capacity has an objective and a subjective component: formal agreements, budgets, personnel, accountability, but also *expectations, legitimacy, and trust*.

-Eugene Bardach, *Getting Agencies to Work Together*

"We can't do the policy thing until we do the relationships thing."

-Perinatal Social Worker, Los Angeles

"Collaboration too often degenerates into a bunch of people sitting around talking about what they did last month—all process and no results." Anonymous

Two Ways of Seeing the World

1. **Shared Outcomes= resources + results in a genuine partnership of <u>accountability</u>**

2. **Partnerships rest on trust and trust grows out of <u>relationships</u> built over time**

   - **Relationships, personalities, making it work with people; the blockers and the champions**

   - **Data-driven, results-based accountability; integrated services driven by facts and values, played out over time—developmental approaches to collaboration**

Outcomes are structures of data built on foundations of relationships

- *Shared outcomes* are the acid test of a collaboration's seriousness; collaboration without accountability for results is just more meetings
- But it takes relationships to get to shared outcomes, because relationships enable us to get past institutional mistrust;
  - e.g. data sharing in which my agency trusts you not to use our honest outcomes data to embarrass us
  - e.g. confidentiality barriers are best handled with trust built up over time in a front-line team

Collaboration as Missing Pieces

- **"Non-barking dogs"**
  - sometimes what isn't happening matters more than what is
- **Missing partners**
  - "Let's keep it small at first" "We'll invite them in later"
- **Partners who are only limited partners**
  - "Let's collaborate with *your* resources"
- **Values differences never discussed:**
  - what do you care enough to disagree about?
- **Missing data: "we don't collect that"**
  - Caring enough to count what hasn't mattered in the past
- **Confidentiality issues: rarely legal, often trust**
  - a diagnostic of the depth of trust relationships

A Frequent Concern in Collaboration: Dancing with Reluctant Partners

"We have missing partners" "Key players aren't really engaged, and we need them."

What are the tactics and strategy of dancing with reluctant partners?

- **First perspective—accountability: you make them accountable for results, and prove to them that they need the partnership with solid data**
  - Document how their clients need/benefit from HV linkages
- **Second perspective—relationships: you build relationships and read personalities**
  - Share spotlights and invite blockers to become actors

The problem of the do-it-all agency

- **Some agencies have a do-it-all mindset: get all the services from us—we know how to do it**
- **Other agencies think about wider networks of resources**
- **Fidelity issues can collide with collaboration demands: control of "the model" vs. other agencies' methods and resources**

Marginalizing Collaboration
(warning signs of powerless partnerships)

- **Monthly BOGSATs* reporting only on activities, not results**

- **Separate data flows: parallel play without linked data**

- **No buy-in at policy levels, only mid-level staff involved**

- **No buy-in at front-line levels: all supervisors without staff**

- **Missing players; too-dominant conveners; absent handoff agencies**

- **Collaboration that gets stuck in "projectitis" and never seeks to change the system**

- **Undue focus on one set of links—training, referrals, info systems—without looking at the whole system**

*Bunch of guys/gals sitting around a table

Summary

- **Sustaining effective projects demands sustained collaborative efforts**
- **One agency advocating to defend its own resources can be very lonely**
- **A network of agencies often commands more attention and credibility when hard decisions about budgets are being made**
- **Sustaining at scale vs project-only thinking**

Resources and Contacts

- **Eugene Bardach, (1998)** *Getting Agencies to Work Together*, **Brookings.**

- **Tools mentioned: www.cffutures.org**

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