



ISSUE BRIEF

TRANSFORMING CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS

Can you help us think about how to use **organizational change models in child welfare?**

If there is one constant in public child welfare, it's change.¹ Too often, however, the field has operated reactively (instituting a change in response to a crisis) instead of proactively (undertaking a thoughtful planning and assessment process before identifying and implementing a change, or being ahead of the curve in attending to emerging trends). Why? Because the change process is challenging: it is not always straightforward, it can be time-consuming, and it often makes people feel uncomfortable. A change process also requires sufficient structure, leadership attention, and organizational capacity to be effective.

The best illustration of this dynamic comes from the individual level: New Year's resolutions. According to *US News and World Report*, approximately 80% of resolutions fail by the second week of February.² In general, this is because most resolutions reflect outside-in, technical solutions that don't provide adequate scaffolding for success, e.g., by strengthening a person's ability to sustain their motivation for the change over time or to handle the stressors that will inevitably arise along the way. Change at the organizational level unfolds similarly: without the necessary leadership, scaffolding, or capacity to manage the discomfort and road blocks that undoubtedly arise during a time of institutional change, initiatives will likely stall or fail altogether.



Can you help us think about how to use organizational change models in child welfare?

The field of organizational change management (OCM) helps organizations move through a structured, multi-step process using the application of established methods and frameworks to make a desired change succeed in the near term and remain in the long term. OCM is designed to help organizations prepare, adopt, and implement foundational, operational, or even radical whole-sale changes in culture, policy, procedure, practice, office environment, leadership, and workforce.

Considerations for selecting an organizational change management model

Several organizational change management models are routinely employed across a variety of sectors. While the models may differ, at their core they describe and simplify a change process so that all stakeholders involved

understand their role in it, the various steps or stages involved, and when and how success will be achieved. Some models are very complex and provide considerable level of detail regarding every facet of the change process (e.g., Kotter's 8 step model), while others offer a more simplified model (e.g., Lewin's 3 stages of change).

The child welfare field is too diverse for a universally applicable model: multiple models exist to match the varying types and needs of organizations, their leaders, and their key stakeholders. The organization seeking change is likely in the best position to determine what model will work well given the nature of the desired change. Because change is unpredictable, the most effective change management model must be readily understood, may be adapted to fit the needs of the agency, and addresses the specific concerns of the stakeholders involved.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT APPROACH SELECTION CRITERIA

Adapted from LaMarsh Global. (2016). *A brief history of change management*. Chicago, IL: LAMARSH.COM.

http://www.lamarsh.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/A-Brief-History-of-Change-Management-by-Jeanenne-LaMarsh_Dec-3-2015.pdf

SELECTION CRITERIA

When selecting a change management approach (CMA), organizations should ask, Does this CMA . . .

1. Integrate well into current processes?
2. Support our defined business goals?
3. Include enough detail to be implemented effectively and is it easy to use?
4. Require ongoing consultant input?
5. Provide a step-by-step roadmap on how to use the methodology?
6. Accommodate the assessment of the work culture receiving the change?
7. Support our defined business goals?

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When selecting a change management approach (CMA), organizations should ask, Does this CMA . . .

8. Accommodate the assessment of cross-cultural impact?
9. Involve outsiders to add perspective to the leadership vision?
10. Account for delays before change initiatives gain acceptance and generate results?
11. Alleviate anxiety and encourage participation in change by employing a thorough communication plan?
12. Facilitate behavior change by aligning compensation systems with the strategic vision?
13. Identify change resisters through careful performance monitoring?
14. Sustain the change momentum through constant adjustments and the introduction of new challenges?
15. Prioritize initiatives instead of trying to change everything at once?
16. Engage top management to execute the change?
17. Include elements that are measurable in terms of time and cost?

Other questions include:

18. Is the cost to implement this change management approach affordable?
19. Is this change management approach effective for individual change?

The following table describes some of the most frequently used organizational change management models along with the core elements, benefits, and limitations of each.

SELECT RESOURCES

MODEL	DESCRIPTION	STEPS/ELEMENTS	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<p><i>Accelerating Implementation Methodology (AIM)</i> http://www.imaworldwide.com/aim-change-management-methodology-description</p>	<p>AIM is a flexible framework for managing organizational changes by focusing on the human-side of new projects</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define the change • Build agent capacity • Assess the climate • Generate sponsorship • Determine the change approach • Develop target readiness • Build communication plan • Develop reinforcement strategy • Create cultural fit • Prioritize action 	<p>Can be applied to any kind of initiative or project</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerous, complex steps • Proprietary • Business-oriented

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MODEL	DESCRIPTION	STEPS/ELEMENTS	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<p><i>ADKAR Model</i> https://www.prosci.com/adkar/adkar-model</p>	<p>This model provides clear goals and outcomes for change management activities using a simple, easy-to-use framework for everyone in an organization to think about change.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness • Desire • Knowledge • Ability • Reinforcement 	<p>Rewards individual change within an organizational change process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be cumbersome for larger organizations • More of an individual change model
<p><i>Bridges Transition Model</i> https://wmbridges.com/what-is-transition</p>	<p>This model focuses on the adjustment people make when going through a transition</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Endings/letting go • Neutral zone • New beginnings 	<p>Includes a step-by-step guide to foster emotional acceptance of change</p>	<p>Not a framework for operational change</p>
<p><i>Change Acceleration Process (General Electric)</i> http://massleague.org/Calendar/LeagueEvents/ClinicalQualityConference/2013/C2ManagingforChange.pdf</p>	<p>The model illustrates the key processes involved in facilitating effective change by identifying sources of resistance and creating influencing strategies to overcome the resistance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a shared need • Shaping a vision • Mobilizing commitment • Making change last • Monitoring progress • Changing systems & structures • Leading change 	<p>Reinforces benefits of paying attention to the human and technical aspects of change</p>	<p>Framed using the lens of securing a competitive advantage over other companies</p>

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MODEL	DESCRIPTION	STEPS/ELEMENTS	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<p><i>Change Leader's Roadmap</i> http://www.beingfirst.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/AR_PDF_AwakeAtTheWheel_v2_091123.pdf</p>	<p>This model reflects the change leadership needed for transformational organizational change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare to lead the change • Create organizational vision, commitment, and capability • Assess the situation to determine design requirements • Design the desired state • Analyze the impact. • Plan and organize for implementation • Implement the change. • Celebrate and integrate the new state • Learn and course correct 	<p>Moves beyond developmental and transitional change to transformational change and related leadership behaviors</p>	<p>Only focused on skills and tasks of a leader</p>
<p><i>Deming Cycle</i> https://deming.org/explore/p-d-s-a</p>	<p>An ongoing process consisting of a logical sequence of four repetitive steps for continuous quality improvement and learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan • Do • Study • Act 	<p>Structured framework for organizational change</p>	<p>No process to address emotional resistance or opposition forces</p>
<p><i>Development, Implementation, and Assessment Approach (PII)</i> http://ncwwi.org/files/Change_Implementation/The_Development_Implementation_and_Assessment_Approach.pdf</p>	<p>The Approach involves activities that can be organized within four implementation stages: exploration, installation, initial implementation, and full implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and understand population • Develop Theory of Change • Assess and select innovation • Implementation supports overview • Plan for implementation • Develop or adapt innovation • Develop or adapt supports • Initial implementation and testing • Monitor and Assess the Innovation • Plan for sustaining the innovation 	<p>Focused on innovation implementation in social work settings</p>	<p>Not focused on full-scale organizational change</p>

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MODEL	DESCRIPTION	STEPS/ELEMENTS	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<i>EASIER Model</i> Book: <i>How to Manage Organizational Change</i>	This six-step model outlines the process for managing organizational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Envision • Activate • Support • Implement • Ensure • Recognize 	Checklist of operational and emotional elements of organizational change	Relies on leadership effectiveness and response
<i>Kotter's 8 Step Change Model</i> https://www.kotterinternational.com/8-steps-process-for-leading-change/	This model encourages new behaviors for successful organizational change, and is widely accepted across many industries as an effective model for implementing organizational change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a sense of urgency • Build a guiding coalition • Form a strategic vision and initiatives • Enlist a volunteer army • Enable action by removing barriers • Generate short-term wins • Sustain acceleration • Institute change 	Provides an 8-step, actionable checklist	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks measurement processes • Time consuming • No steps can be skipped
<i>LaMarsh Managed Change Model</i> http://www.lamarsh.com/about/successful-change-management/	This model focuses on the identification, analysis, and mitigation of resistance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the change • Prepare the change • Implement the change • Sustain performance 	A wide array of tools to support the change process	Model and all related tools are proprietary and costly

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MODEL	DESCRIPTION	STEPS/ELEMENTS	BENEFITS	LIMITATIONS
<i>Lewin's 3 Stages of Change</i> http://www.nwacademy.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/86_1722011_lewin_s_change_management_model.pdf	This model involves raising awareness that change is necessary; moving toward a new, desired level of behavior; and solidifying that new behavior as the norm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Freeze • Unfreeze • Refreeze 	Simple steps to combat emotional resistance and opposition	No mechanism for addressing ongoing change
<i>McKinsey 7S Framework</i> https://www.strategic-managementinsight.com/tools/mckinsey-7s-model-framework.html	This model focuses on internal/ structural aspects that need to be aligned for successful, holistic change in an organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy • Structure • Systems • Style • Staff • Skills • Shared Values 	Provides guidance and focuses on the whole organization	Very complex; All factors are interrelated, such that failure in one part becomes failure in all
<i>NIRN Stages of Implementation</i> http://implementation.fpg.unc.edu/sites/implementation.fpg.unc.edu/files/NIRN-StagesOfImplementationAnalysisWhereAreWe.pdf	Stages can be used to better understand stage-based activities to improve implementation of Evidence-Based Practices or evidence-informed innovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exploration • Installation • Initial Implementation • Full Implementation 	Tool can be used to plan for or assess status of current stage activities related to intervention implementation	Not focused on full-scale organizational change
<i>Switch Framework</i> http://heathbrothers.com/download/switch-framework.pdf	Techniques/ examples for the interconnected elements of motivating people to act differently in support of a change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct the rider • Motivate the elephant • Shape the path 	Good overview/ stories for modeling change	No framework for operational change; More of an individual change model

Change management in the child welfare context

Additional resources provided below reflect change management processes within the unique context of public child welfare. While the items below do not specifically elevate one change management model over another, many of the key steps and strategies for implementing and sustaining change mirror elements of several change management models in the section above.

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SELECT RESOURCES

Author/Title/Date	RESOURCE LOCATION	DESCRIPTION
James Bell Associates and ICF International – <i>The Use of Implementation Projects to Support Change in Child Welfare</i> (2014)	https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/cb/topic_paper.pdf	This brief describes the implementation projects of several child welfare jurisdictions, providing an overview of: approaches and findings related to assessing change in implementation capacity; project evaluations and outcomes; and keys to successful implementation
National Child Welfare Workforce Institute – <i>Change & the Roles People Play</i> (2016)	https://ncwwi.org/index.php/resource-library-search/resource-topics/community-context/item/1578-change-the-roles-people-play	This microlearning discusses how stakeholders embrace change at different stages of a change initiative and offers strategies for engagement
National Child Welfare Workforce Institute – <i>Child Welfare Means Change Management</i> (2014)	http://ncwwi.org/index.php/link/110-making-a-difference-3-child-welfare-means-change-management-stories-lessons-learned-from-lamm-alumni	This webinar highlights lessons regarding change management in child welfare learned by participants in NCWWI's Leadership Academy for Middle Managers
National Technical Assistance and Evaluation Center for Systems of Care – <i>Systems of Care Leadership Series: Gaining Buy-In From the Front Line During Times of Change</i> (2011)	https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/GainingBuy-InFromtheFrontLine.pdf	This document examines the role of front-line staff in implementing comprehensive systems and organizational change and outlines key steps and strategies for engaging the front line during times of change

- 1 National Child Welfare Workforce Institute. (2014). *Child welfare means change management: Stories & lessons learned from LAMM alumni* (Webinar May 28, 2014). Retrieved from <http://ncwwi.org/index.php/link/110-making-a-difference-3-child-welfare-means-change-management-stories-lessons-learned-from-lamm-alumni>
- 2 U.S. News & World Report. (2015). *Why 80 percent of New Year's resolutions fail*. Retrieved from: <http://health.usnews.com/health-news/blogs/eat-run/articles/2015-12-29/why-80-percent-of-new-years-resolutions-fail>

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