



Developing a Problem Statement and Selecting Interventions

Family Health Outcomes Project, UCSF

Objectives of this presentation

- Review Public Health Program Planning Process
- Summarize problem analysis process
- Review Steps 5 and 6 – Identifying a causal pathway and determining intervention points
- Identify resources for selecting an evidence based or promising intervention
- Develop a problem statement

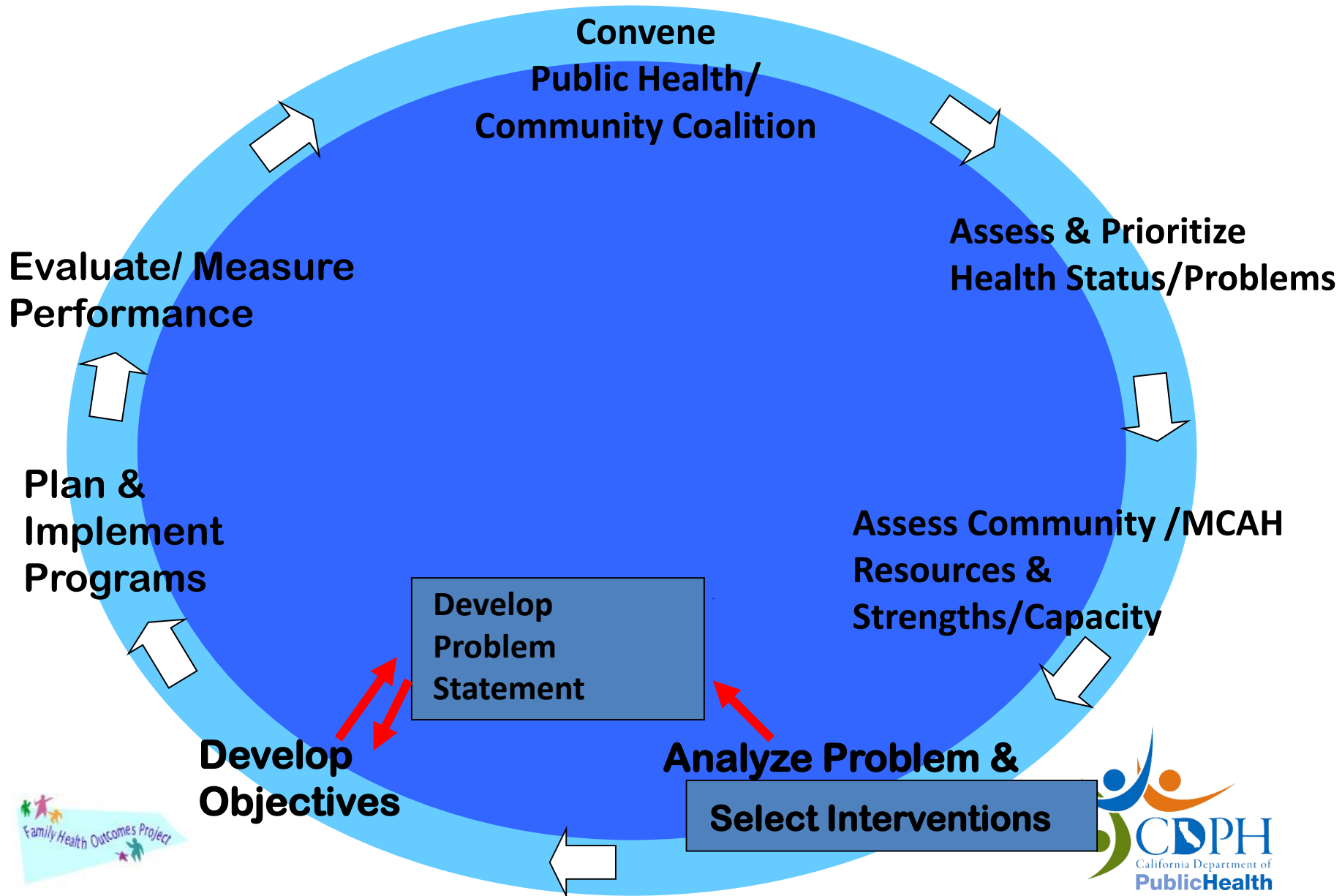


Scenario

- As the local MCAH Director, you have engaged a stakeholder group to review your needs assessment data, identified priority areas and gone through a problem analysis process. You have identified a number of potential causal pathways and intervention points.
- How do you determine which points to target with an intervention?
- How do you identify programs that would be effective and feasible to implement in your county?
- How do you craft a problem statement that summarizes the problem, its causes, consequences, the population(s) that are affected and the proposed solution



Program Planning Cycle



Steps in a Problem Analysis

1. Examine epidemiologic data
2. Examine literature and consult experts (*if possible and as needed*)
3. Determine extent to which these factors are active in the community



Steps in a Problem Analysis

4. Determine relative contribution of each identified factor
5. Identify the interrelationships among factors – causal pathways
6. Determine the most effective points in the causal pathways for intervention



Social/Economic/Policy Level

Racial and social discrimination

High Unemployment

Inadequate subsidized health Insurance for the poor

Poverty

Low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates

Limited availability of health services

Family/Community/Institutional Level

Family has limited income

Lack of affordable services

Family lacks health Insurance

Lack of local providers accepting Medi-Cal

Lack of education

Language / Cultural barriers

Lack of Public transportation

Individual Level

Lack of knowledge

Lack of transportation

Client doesn't know she is pregnant

Client does not know how to access services for low **income** residents

Homelessness

Target Outcome(s):

Prenatal care



Step 5: Identify Causal Pathways

Process: Review your data, consult experts/consult stakeholders/search online sources to determine the association between causes and risks and negative health outcomes

- Determine how identified causal and risk factors interact with each other to either increase the chances of a negative outcome or to promote a positive one
- Determine the sequence of events/behaviors that lead to the negative outcome



What information do I need to know be able to identify a causal pathway?

- Which populations are most at risk?
- Which risk or causal factors are most strongly associated with the identified problem?
- Which factor(s) contributes most to the size of this problem?
- Which point of intervention will have the greatest potential for improving an outcome?



Identifying Consequences

Definition:

The effects of the problem on individuals, families and society.

Can include financial, physical and psychological effects on the individual, the family or the community



Consequences: Example of Lack of early Prenatal Care

- Delays timely diagnosis and management of maternal and fetal problems resulting in higher maternal and infant morbidity and mortality
- Potential for delays in child development



Exercise 1

- Identifying causal pathways and intervention points in Daisy County's problem analysis diagram on lack of prenatal care
- Drafting problem statements



Process for Working with Stakeholder Group on Causal Pathways

Options

- Ask each participant to review the diagram and using her/his knowledge and experience propose one pathway. Then have people share.

Or

- Break into small groups and have each groups propose a pathway and have groups share



Social/Economic/Policy Level

Racial and social discrimination

Low wages jobs

Inadequate subsidized health Insurance for the poor

Poverty

Low Medi-Cal reimbursement rates

Limited availability of health services

Family/Community/Institutional Level

Family has limited income

Lack of affordable services

Family lacks health Insurance

Lack of local providers accepting Medi-Cal

Lack of maternal education

Language / Cultural barriers

Lack of public transportation

Individual Level

Client doesn't know she is pregnant

Lack of knowledge of benefits of care

Lack of transportation

Client does not know how to access services for low income residents

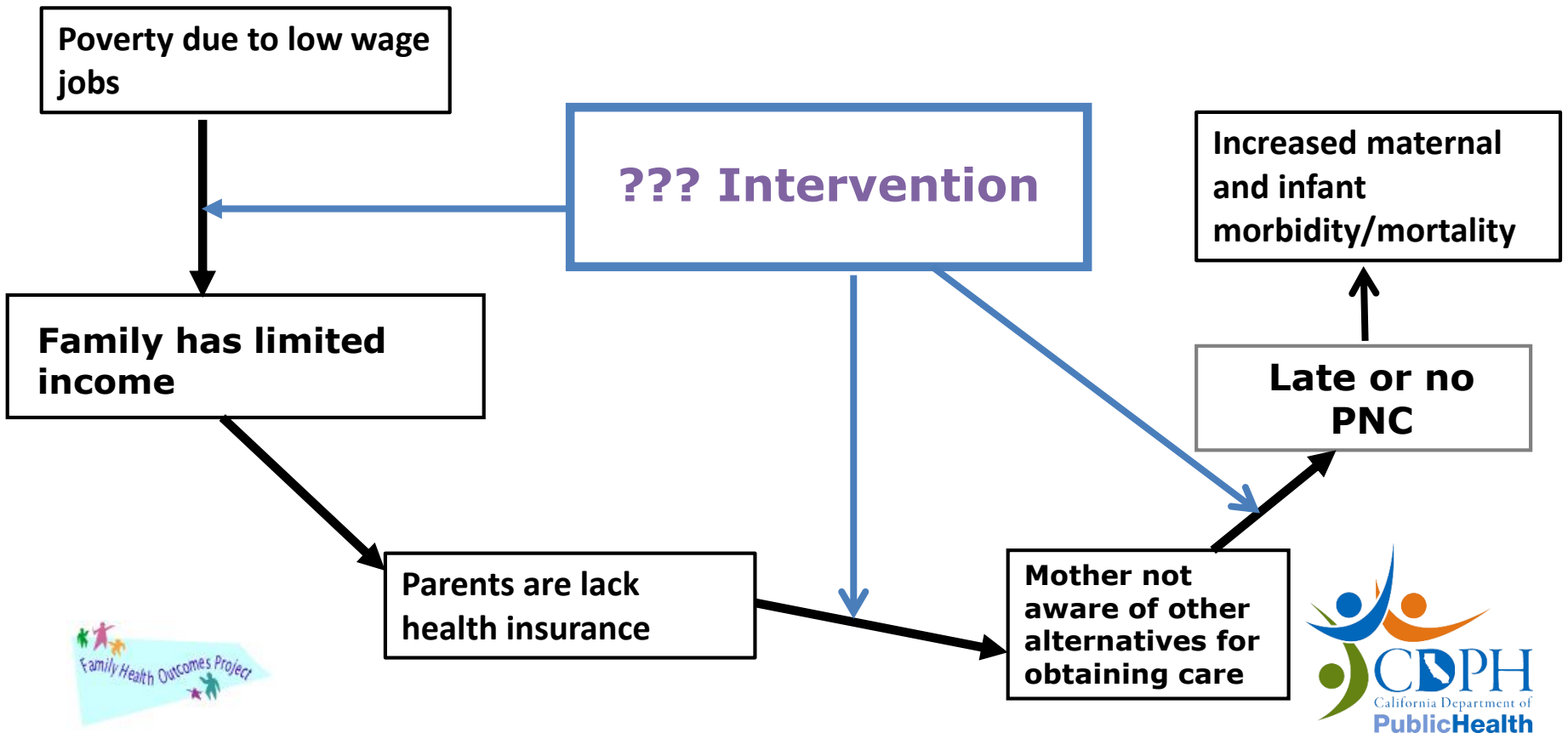
Homelessness

Target Outcome(s):

Late or no Prenatal care



Diagramming Causal Pathways to Identify Strategic Interventions for Prenatal Care



Preliminary Problem Statement

- Generally a statement in words about what our understanding is of a causal pathway(s)
- Requires knowledge of local data on populations most impacted
- Relates to HP 2020 objective where there is one or other comparison value i.e. state average



Value of Problem Statement

- Summarizes in simple language the outcome of the problem analysis process including the causes desired outcomes and rationale for a public health program
- Provides a starting point for developing measurable objectives



Suggestions for problem statement at this point

- In our sample pathway let's say that the population most impacted are the low income uninsured, most of whom are Hispanic
- Your turn



Problem Statement

Low-wage jobs results in high poverty rates/ lack of health insurance that covers prenatal care and leads poor women, particularly Hispanic women, to obtain late or no PNC during pregnancy resulting in rates of early PNC that are significantly lower than the HP 2020 and the CA rate for Hispanic women



Step 6: Determine Intervention Points

- Determine where you would get the greatest effect
- Determine whether there have been well evaluated interventions
- Assess the available resources



Identify Effective Intervention Strategies

Intervention assessment involves

- Assessing the adequacy and effectiveness of current programs addressing the problem
- Consulting databases of proven and promising interventions (i.e. Community Toolbox)
- Reviewing health and social sciences literature to identify proven and promising interventions
- Consulting with the target community
- Doing an environmental scan: politics, policy, programs
- Assessing the feasibility of implementing the identified interventions (\$, expertise)



Resources for Determining Appropriate Intervention

- See the FHOP Website for:
 1. [Sample Action plans](#)
 2. [Links for Best Practices](#)
 3. [AMCHP Intervention Comparison Tool](#)
 4. [Program Adaptation Checklist](#)
 5. [AMCHP Organizational Readiness Checklist](#)



FHOP Website

- Show where Sample Action Plans are located on [FHOP's website](#)



2. Weblink Examples

- Health People 2020 Structured Evidence Queries
https://phpartners.org/ph_public/hp2020
- Model Practice Database from NACCHO
<https://eweb.naccho.org/eweb/DynamicPage.aspx?site=naccho&webcode=mpsearch>
- Community Guide (U.S Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/>
- Community Toolbox (Kansas University) - <https://ctb.ku.edu/en>
- NREPP: National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices <https://www.samhsa.gov/nrepp>
- Other links and resources on FHOP website
<https://fhop.ucsf.edu/intervention-planning-resources-and-tools>



3. AMCHP Intervention Comparison Tool Criteria – use when you have several possible interventions

- Outcomes achieved
- Setting for particular programs (e.g. rural, urban)
- Intended population (e.g. race-ethnicity, income level)
- Resources (e.g. structural, financial)
- Intervention components
- Organizational capacity
- Community and Environmental factors
- Relationship to existing programs



4. Program Adaptation Checklist

- Objectives (these objectives fit the needs of your audience)
- Approach used (premises, concepts, theory has appropriate fit)
- Content (education level, depth of coverage, and comprehensibility, terminology)
- Level of understanding or acceptance (culture, politics)
- Fit with community resources
- Worked on pilot test

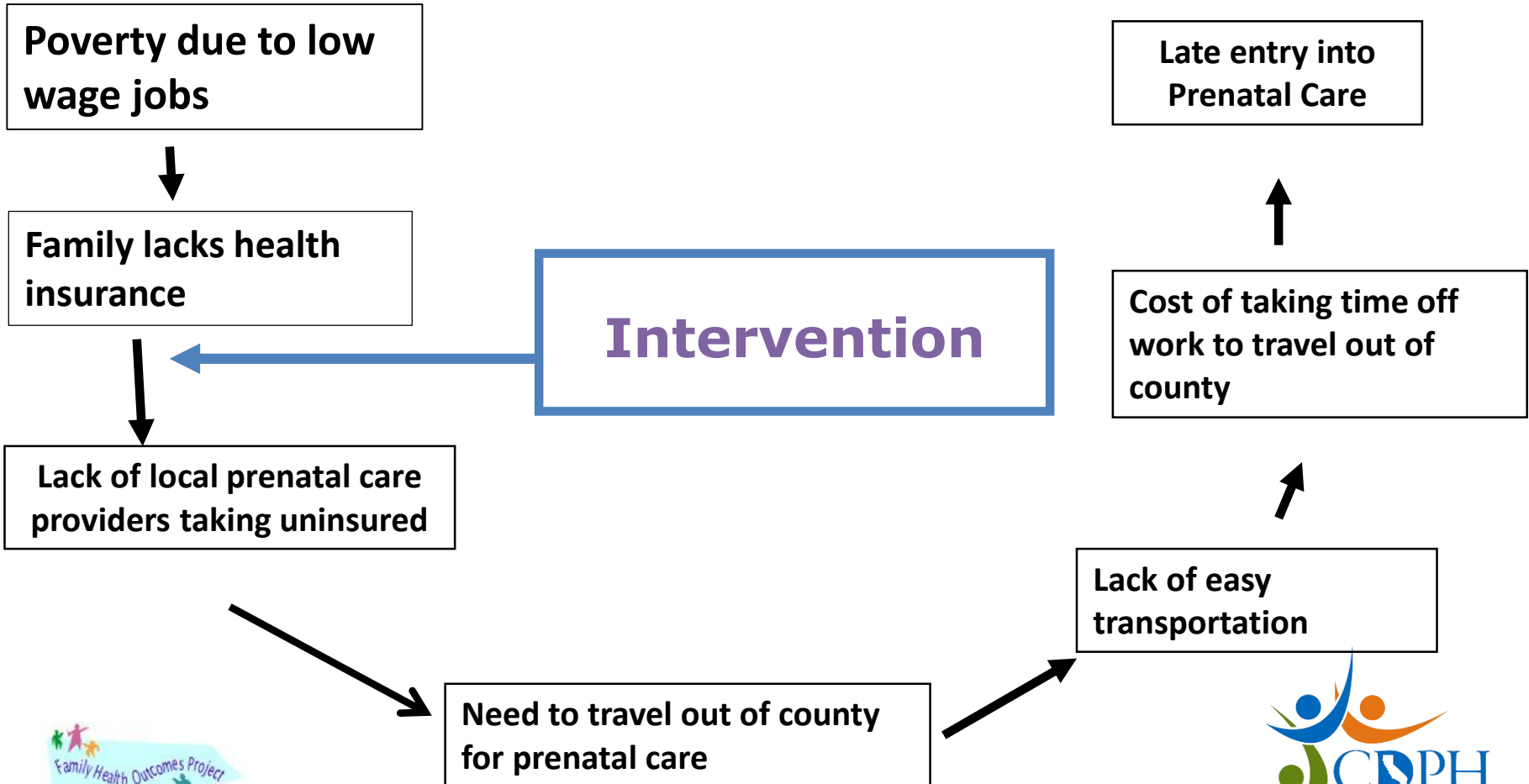


5. Organizational Readiness Checklist for Implementation - AMCHP

Capacity and Resources	Yes, we have this capacity (2)	We do not presently have this capacity, but we can build it (1)	No, we do not have this capacity (0)	Comments
PREIMPLEMENTATION				
Staffing e.g.				
Training				
Recruitment				
Adaptation (If necessary)				
IMPLEMENTATION				
Program Implementation				
MAINTANENCE				
Plans for sustaining program/policy/strategy				Proposed methods:



Revised Causal Pathway Prenatal Care



Why this pathway

- Affordable Care Act extends eligibility for MediCal and access to private insurance for other low income and uninsured residents
- The local providers who haven't been willing to take uninsured are willing take newly insured patients
- County can educate providers about ACA
- County can provide outreach to increase ACA enrollment



What Would the Problem Statement Be Here

- The statement will now be related to the particular intervention point and the particular intervention
- Your suggestions?



Revised Problem Statement & Intervention Strategy

- Lack of health insurance results in local PNC providers not willing to accept uninsured clients leading to late or no PNC particularly for Hispanic women
- Enrolling more women into ACA insurance programs and outreaching to providers will result in increasing rates of early PNC in targeted populations

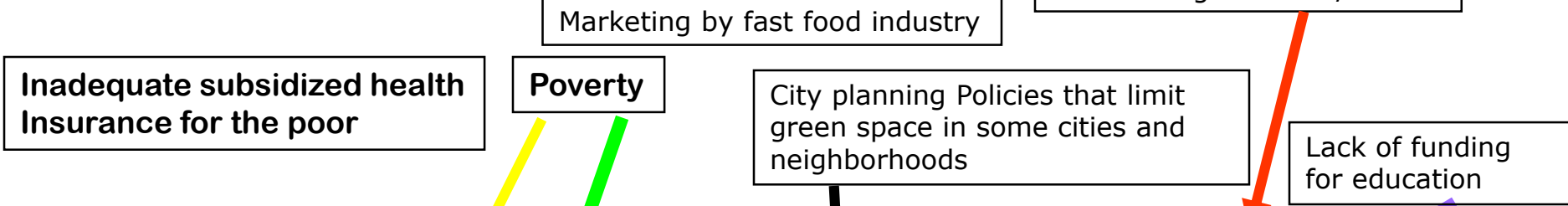


Example 2

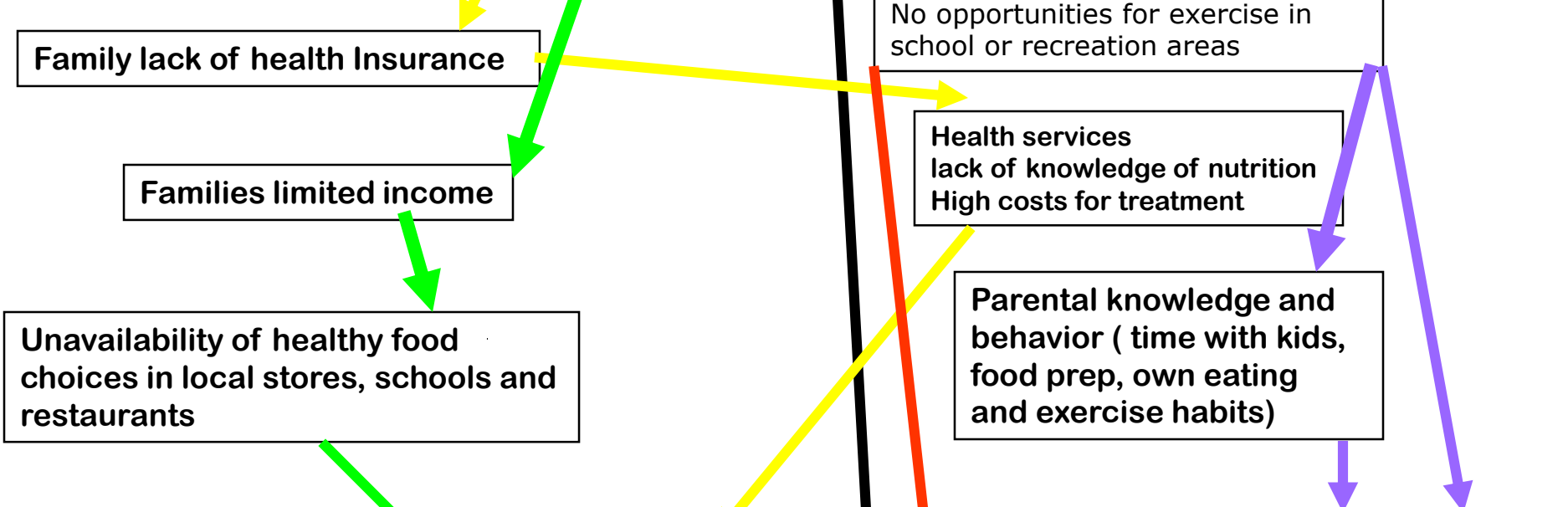
- Identifying intervention points in Daisy County's problem analysis diagram on obesity, developing a problem statement and identifying potential interventions



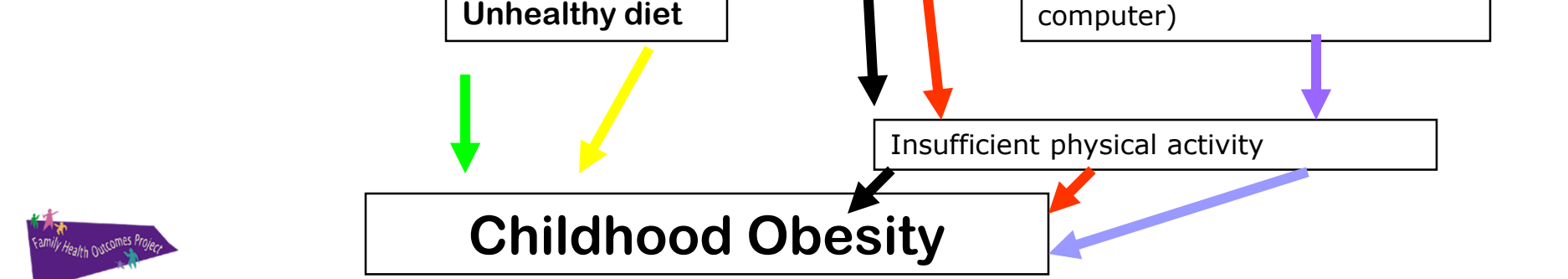
Social/Economic/Policy Level



Family/Community/Institutional Level



Individual Level



Causal pathway for Childhood Obesity

Unsafe neighborhood/streets



No opportunities for exercise in school or recreation areas



Insufficient physical activity



Childhood Obesity

Suggestions
for potential
problem
statements?

Where are
potential
intervention
points?



Sample Problem Statement

(Based on research of causes/risks and promising interventions, input of experts and review of local program's – gaps and experience),

Budget cuts in the local school district serving the most impoverished part of our county have resulted in layoffs of the physical education staff and ending of PE classes which is contributing to increasing rates of childhood obesity that can lead to diabetes and cardiac problems.



Questions?



References

- [The Planning Guide: Developing an Effective Planning Process: A Guide for Local MCH Programs](#) (2003, 2nd Edition) by Oliva G, Belfiori J, Thind N, Ezrr S, & Gee J

FHOP Website and contact information

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