

Selecting Benchmark Indicators and Tools Working with Evaluation Partners to Find the Right Measures for Your Programs

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- Tribal partners and colleagues in the Centers for American Indian and Alaska Native Health

Goals of this Session

Describe processes for identifying potential measures that will work for your program and reviewing and adapting selected measures to be appropriate for your community.

Identifying Potential Measures

- The six benchmarks –
 - Health, abuse/neglect, school readiness, crime/domestic violence, economic self-sufficiency, coordination of referrals
- Should we think of these benchmarks the same in tribal communities as in other communities? Do they have the same meaning?
 - Example: School readiness
- Are there benchmarks important in your community that are missing?
 - Example: Cultural engagement

What resources are available to help you find the right measures?

1. Your evaluation partner

- Expertise in measurement
- Access to scientific literature
- Access to a network of evaluators and researchers who can provide guidance on potential measures

2. Your team

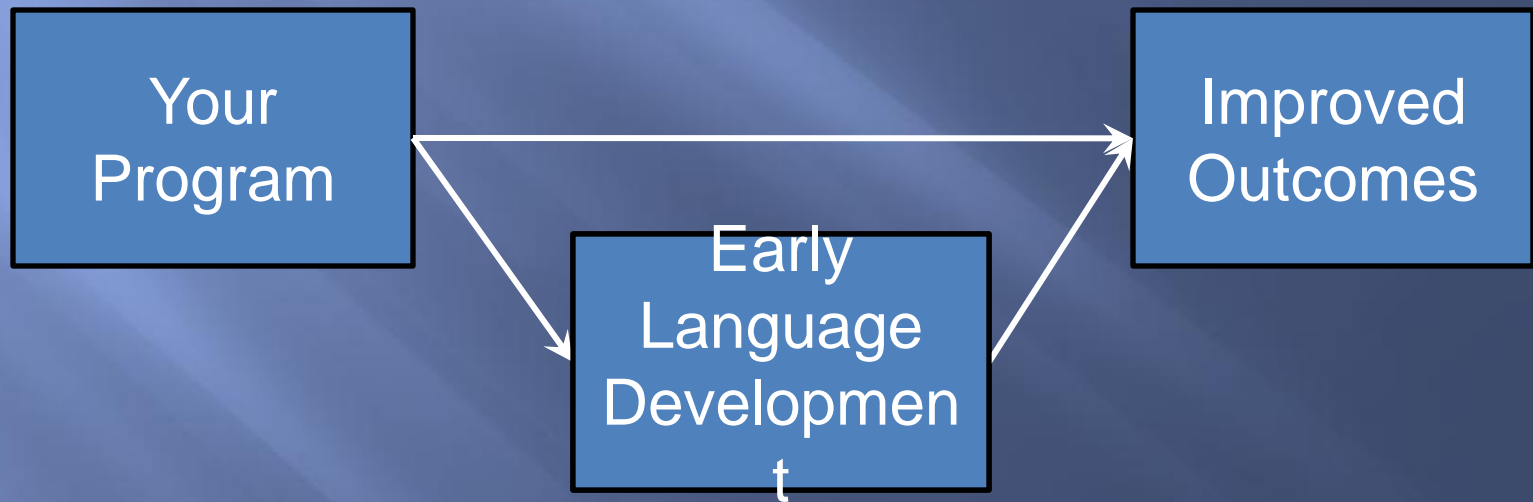
- Expertise in your community and culture
- Connections to other tribal communities who can provide guidance on measures they have found useful

Short-term assessment of long-term benchmarks

Depending on your program implementation design, you may need to evaluate early – before outcomes can fully unfold.

- Example: School readiness in 2-year-olds

Work with evaluation partner to identify potential “**mediators**”, based on existing research, that can be assessed in the short term



Feasibility and Cost

In choosing measures, you will also have to consider staff and financial realities.

- Availability of trained personnel (some measures require extensive training to administer)
- Cost of measures (“proprietary” measures can be expensive, need to budget for these)
- Time to administer measures (direct assessments of children, observations of families can be lengthy)
- “Participant burden” (children have short attention spans, parents are busy)

Make choices about what is most essential and most practical in your community – to get the most important information within the limits of the available time and money.

- Evaluation partners can help with this, using their experience with measuring outcomes, using assessment tools, and doing evaluation with many children and families.
- You can help with this, using your specific experience with children and families in your community, and your understanding of available resources within your program.

Reviewing and Adapting Measures

Steps in the process:

- Community review
- Suggested adaptations
 - Maintaining reliability and validity
- Pre-testing adaptations

Community Review

- Item-by-item within measure-by-measure review
- Identifying items that seem incongruent with community context – can result in unreliability and/or invalidity
- Identifying items that are culturally inappropriate
 - Cultural taboos
 - Mismatch between cultural ways and assessment

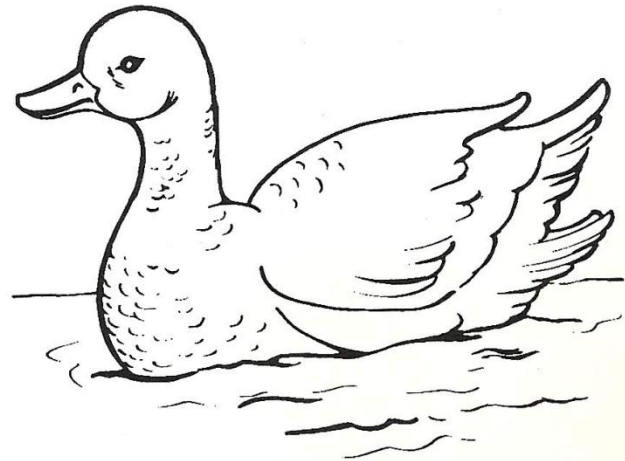
Review will often result in decision that available measures are likely to work just fine in your community.

- Emergency room visits, infant growth markers
- Examples from the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) – an assessment of early language development.

hand



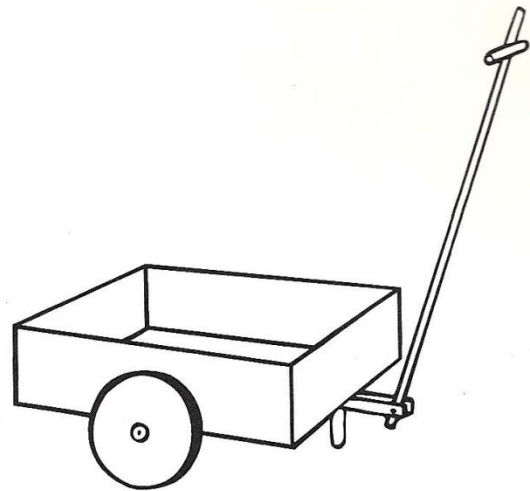
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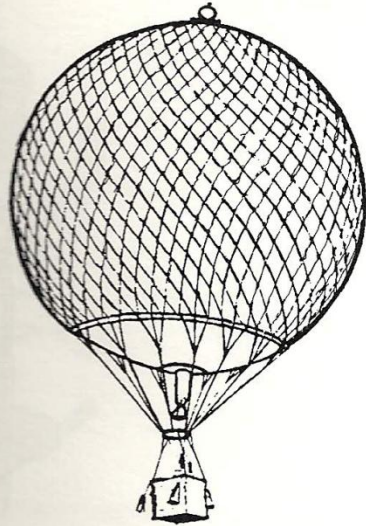
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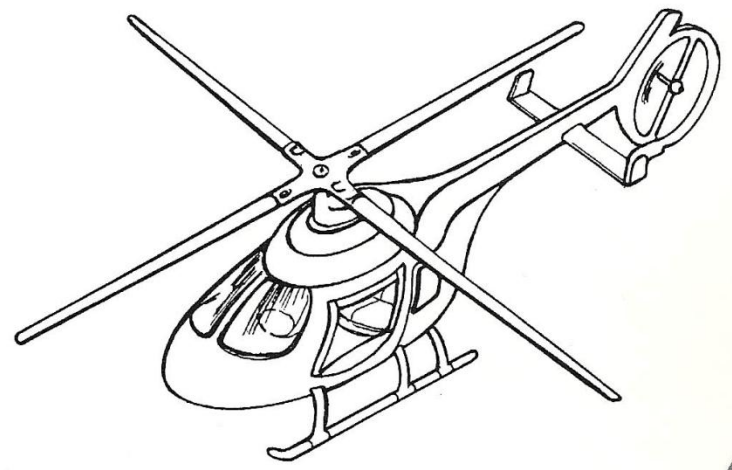
Review may sometimes highlight mismatches between standard measures and your context

- Emergency room visits may not be a clear cut indicator, depending on the service ecology in your community
- Language development in bilingual/Native-speaking families or in remote reservation communities may not be easily assessed by standard items.

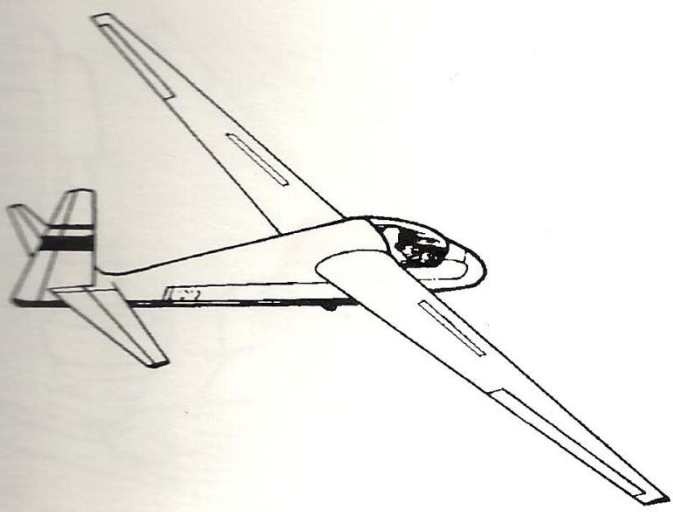


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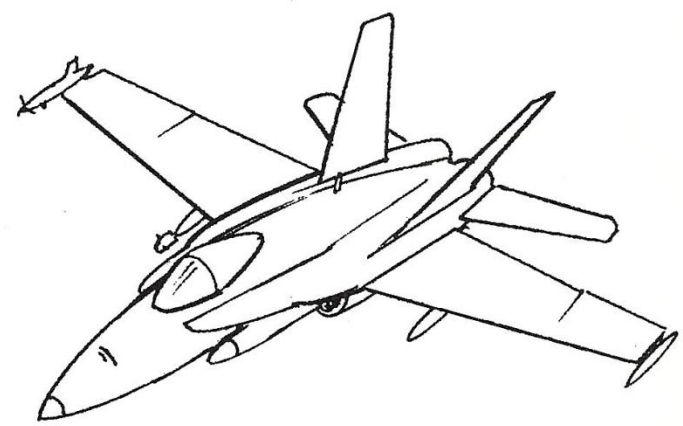
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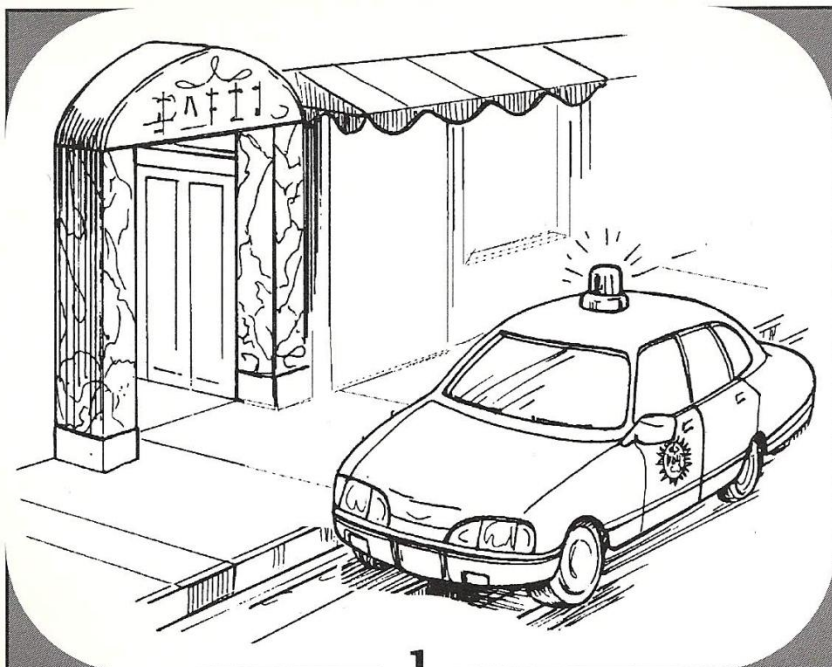
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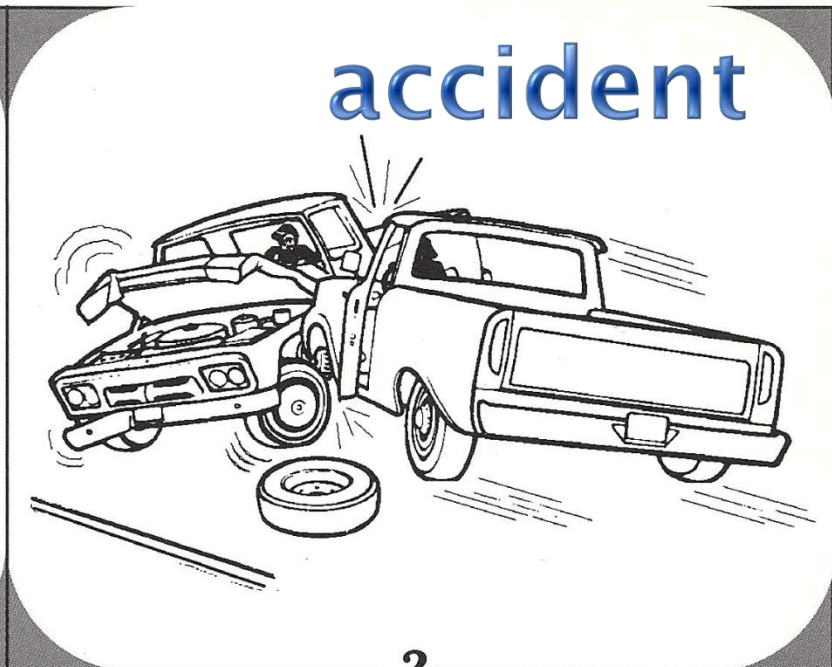
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Review may sometimes make it clear that cultural practices and norms are inconsistent with existing measures

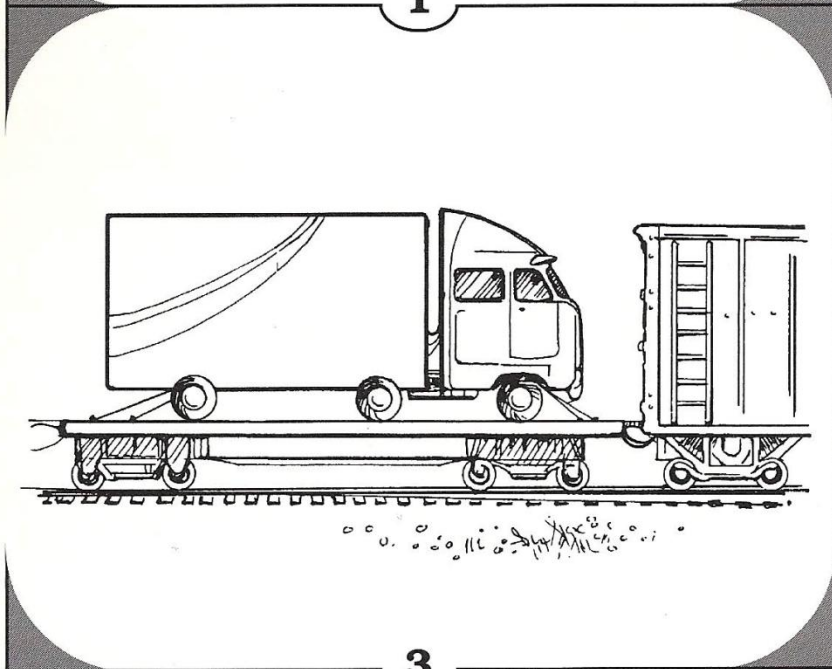
- Cultural norms may influence the way children view the pictures in the PPVT.



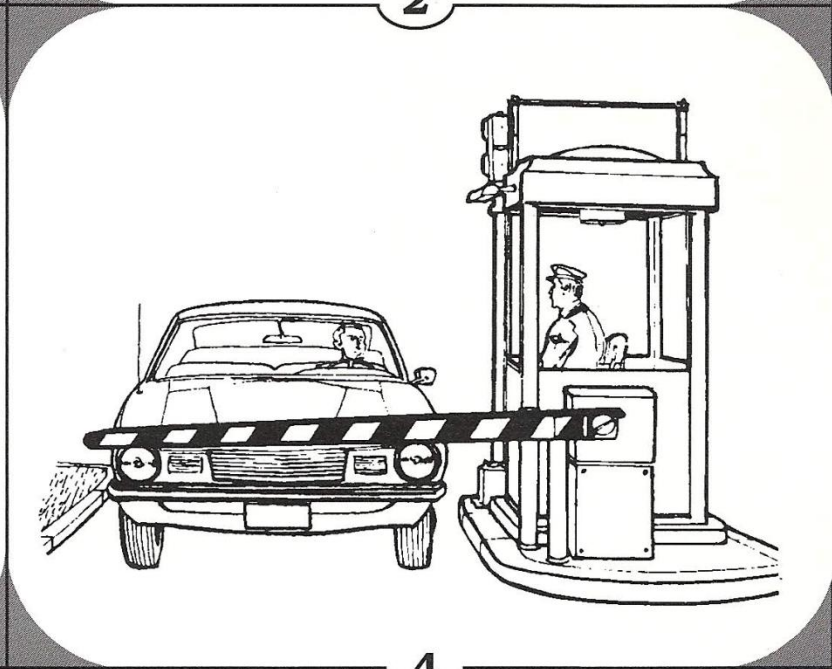
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Levels of community review

- **Team review** – project leaders sit down with evaluation partners to go through potential measures
 - Take the time to do this step carefully and thoroughly
- **Community Review** – find broader input where needed
 - Community advisory board, local teachers or health service providers who can help review measures for local applicability and appropriateness, focus groups

Consider PROCESS as well as CONTENT of measures.

PPVT administered by outside experts, trained on the measure.

- Usually adult stranger
- Often Non-Native
- Native from different community/tribe
- Protocol is to work hard to engage child through animated conversation

Cultural mismatch?

Think carefully about how to adapt testing protocol to fit with cultural ways

Deciding when to adapt

- Standardized assessment tools – tread carefully, rely on evaluation partners
- Weigh pros and cons of each adaptation

Standardized measures may need to be used as is, but interpretation may need to reflect knowledge of the shortcomings

Standardized measures may need to be adapted or supplemented, or alternative scoring considered

May be useful to supplement standardized measures to provide a fuller/more accurate picture of outcomes in your community

Considering ways to adapt

- Rewording of survey items, to include local language (without changing content)
 - Example: “anxious”
- Changing content of survey items to reflect local practices
 - Example: Extending family & parenting
- Adapting process of administration to be more in line with cultural norms

Maintaining measure integrity in adaptations

Think about reliability and validity in the adaptation process:

- Reliability – measuring something well
- Validity – measuring what you intended to measure

Pre-testing measures you intend to use

- Pilot testing of child assessments
- “Cognitive testing” of final survey items
- Final revisions

Evaluating Outcomes

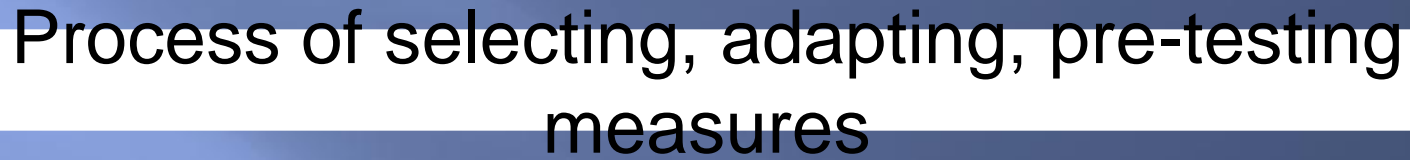
FIRST, confirm effectiveness of measures:

- Evaluate both standard and adapted measures
- Tests of reliability and validity
- Evaluation partners can work with you to confirm that both of these important criteria are met

THEN, interpret findings

- Ongoing, circular process of analysis, review, discussion
- Involves both evaluation of data and thoughtful consideration
- Consider how measures used may affect outcomes observed
- Community involvement in interpretation of data is important

Process of selecting, adapting, pre-testing
measures



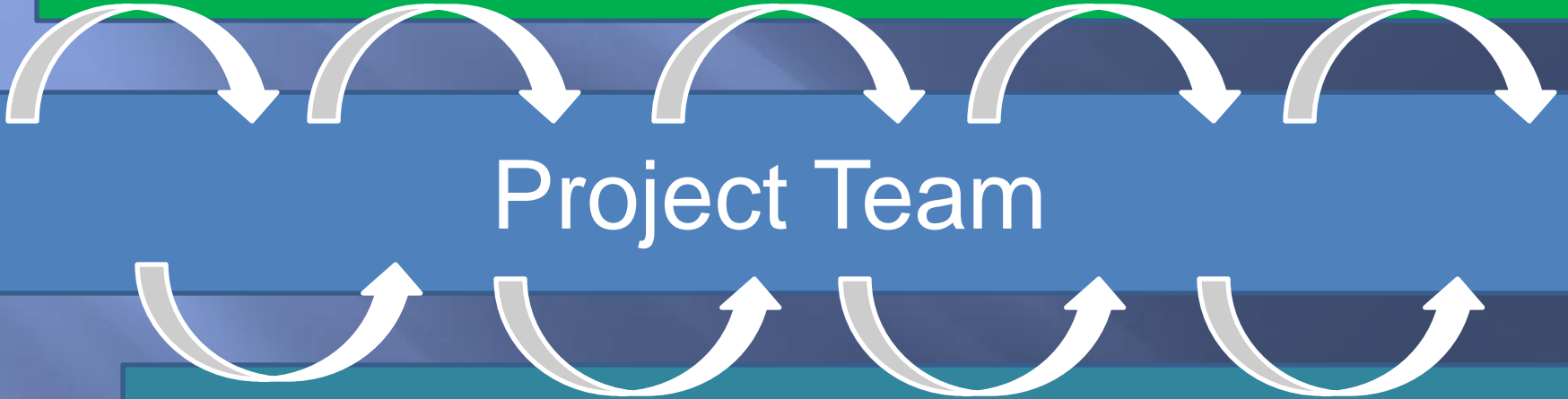
Evaluation Partners



Project Team



Community Advisors



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