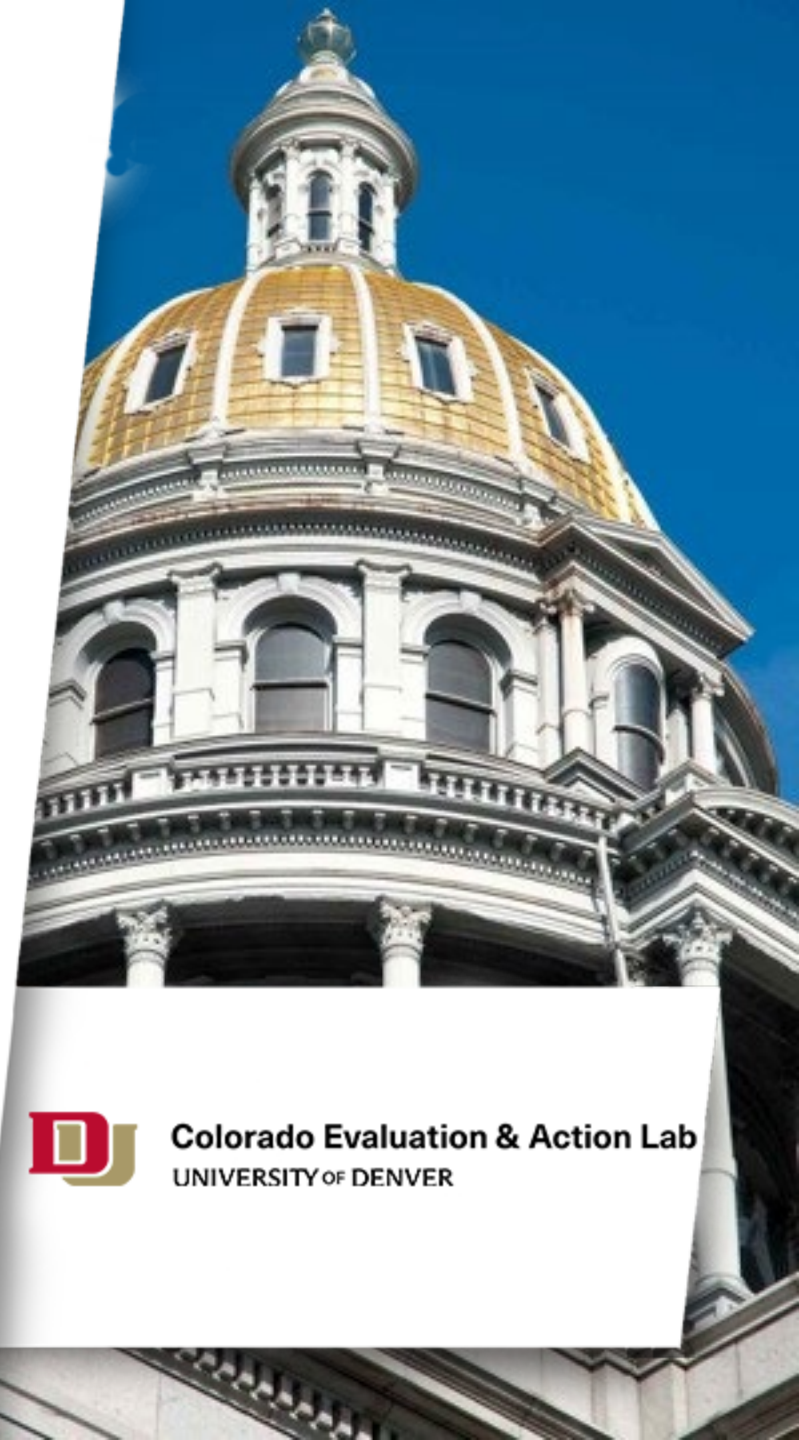


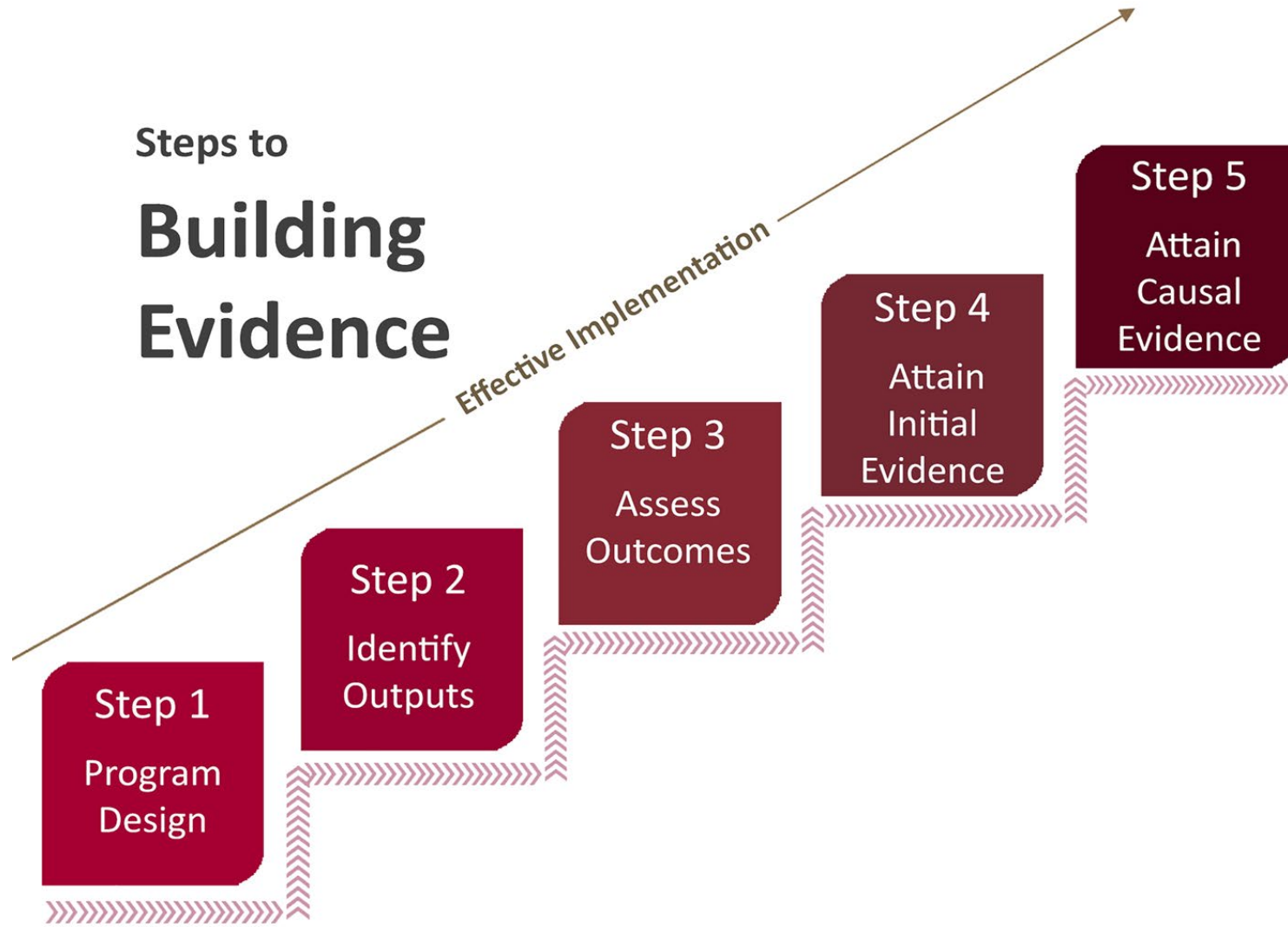
Advancing Evidence-Based Decision Making in Colorado: Theories of Change

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First step in the Steps to Building Evidence

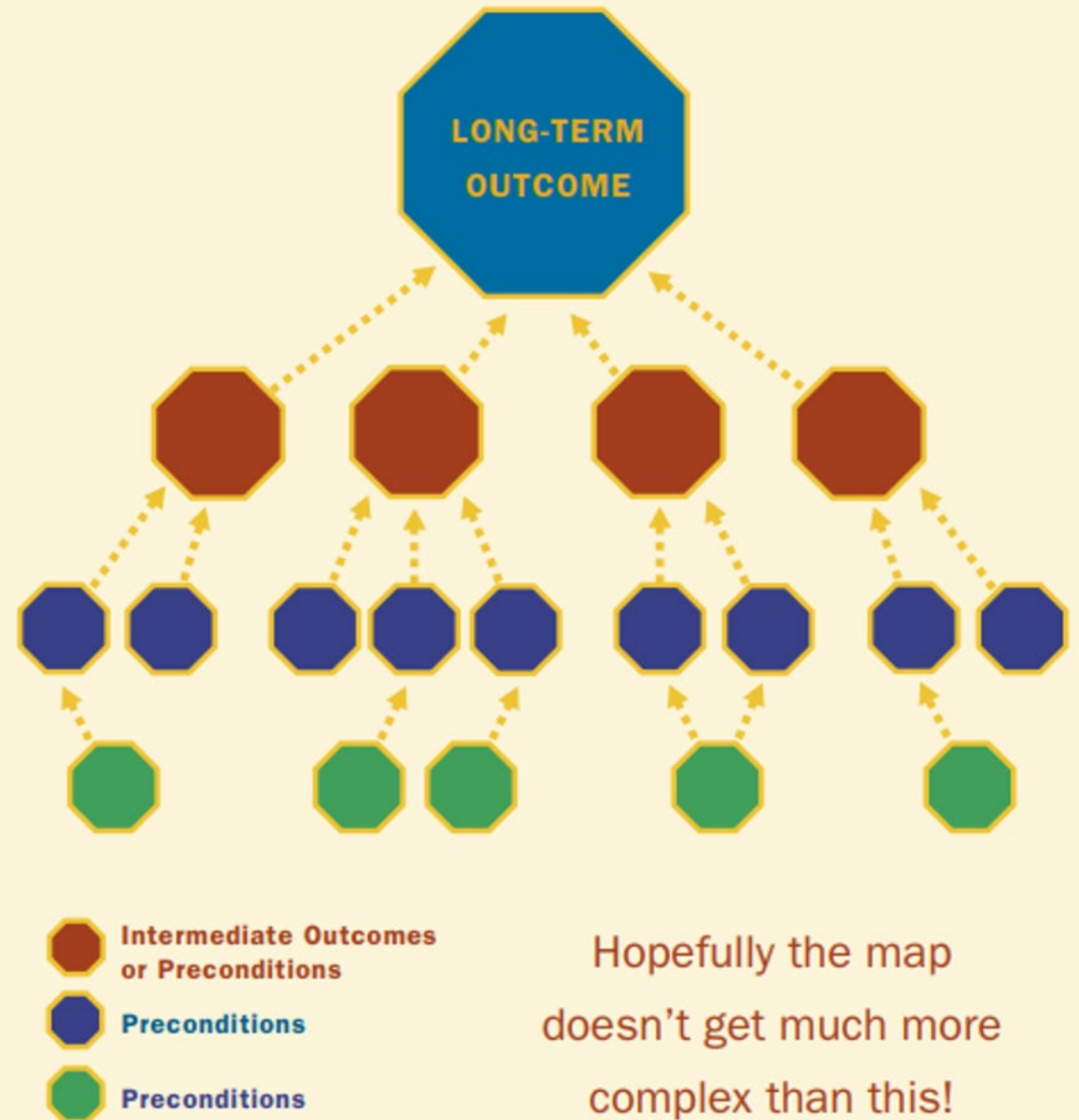


Theory of Change

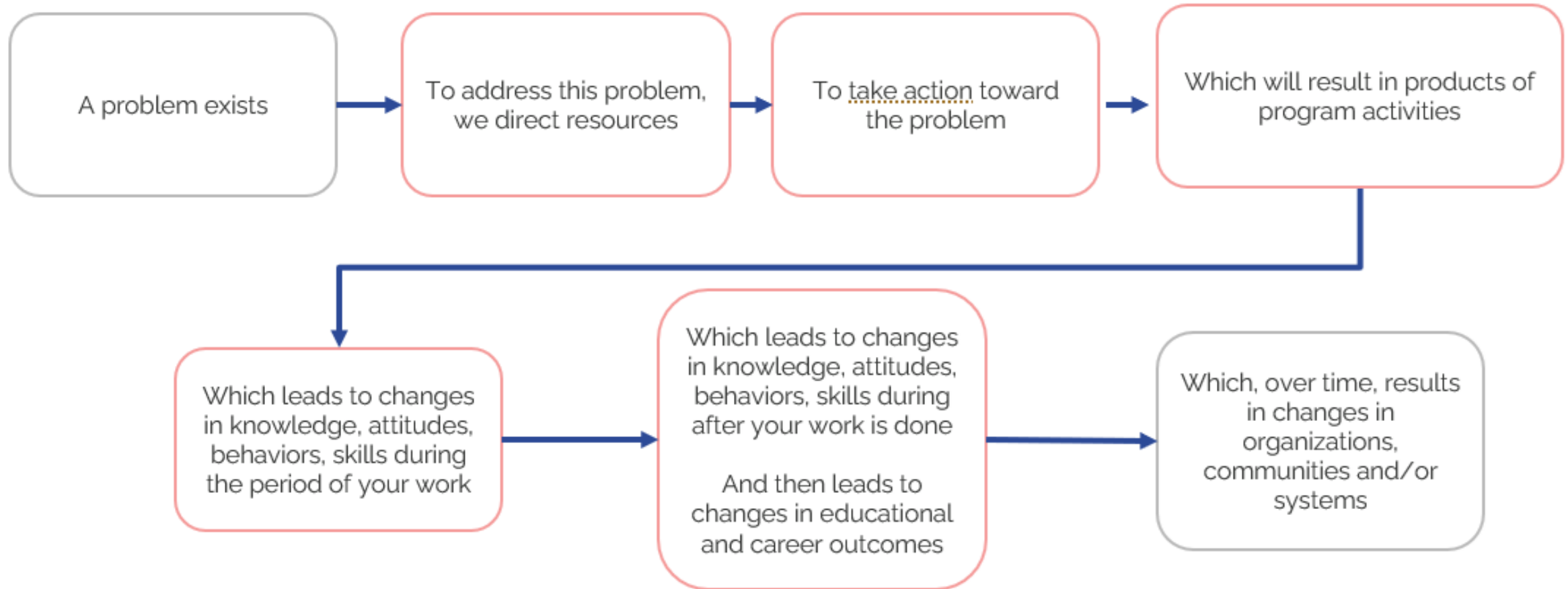
"A clear and concise articulation of our belief in how actions will result in desired outcomes."

Close Relatives:

- Logic model
- Driver diagram
- Results chain
- Outcome mapping



A simple path from here to where we are aiming to get...



Why use a Theory of Change?

- Helps **identify the essential elements** of a program or practice
- **Ensures goals are right-sized** for program or practice
- **Simplifies the world** to clearly see the processes most aligned with program goals
- **Makes visible your thinking and assumptions** for yourself and others
- **Provides a shared language** to avoid miscommunication
- **Identifies logical causal pathways** as well as potential unintended consequences
- **Guides your implementation model** to focus on meaningful activities
- **Identifies measures** to prioritize (and what not to)



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Examples



Simple If/Then EBDM Theory of Change

If

Colorado builds a common understanding of EBDM in state government

And

EBDM-supportive processes and resources exist and are used locally *within* state agencies

And

EBDM-supporting structures are in place globally *across* state government

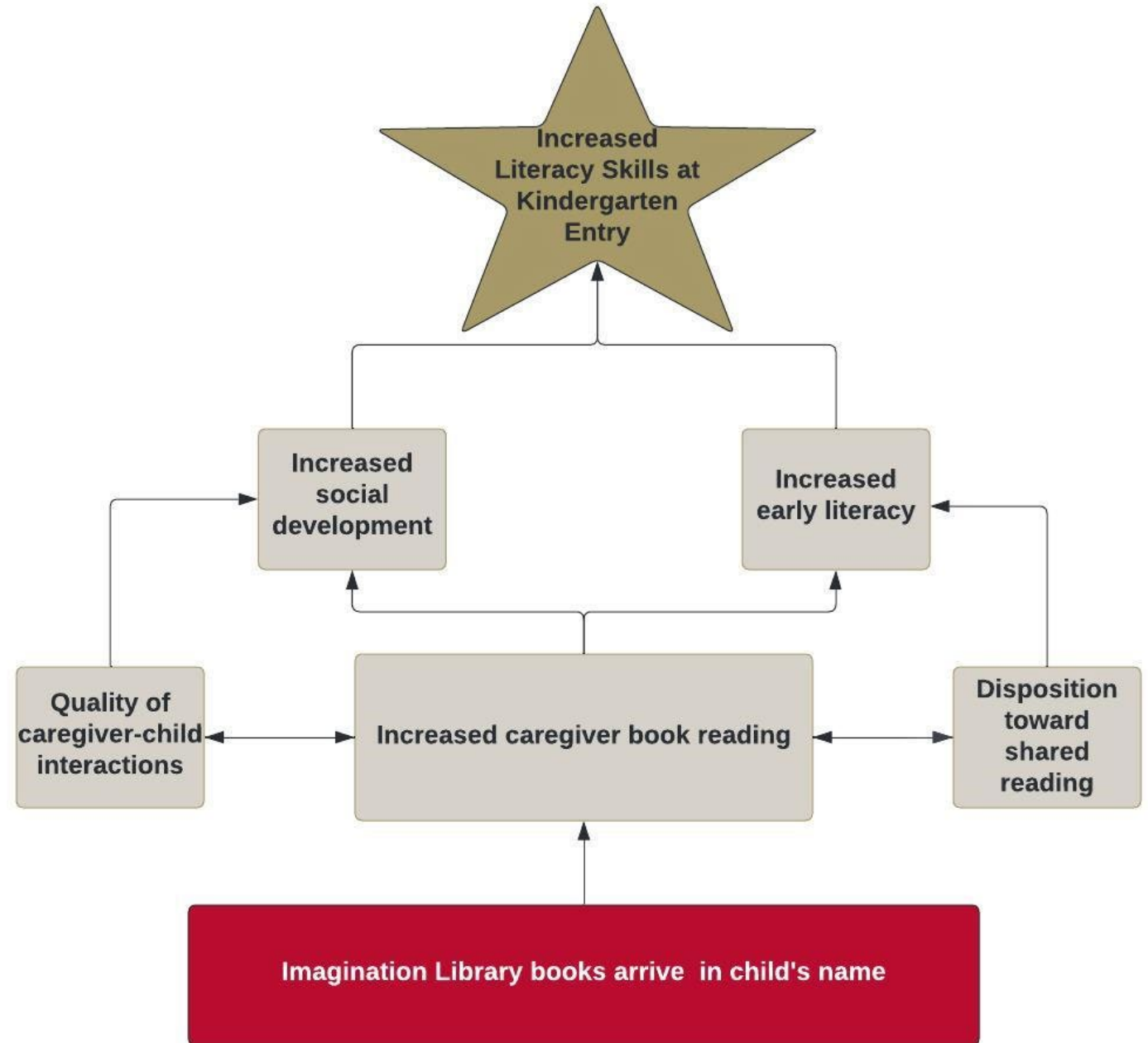
Then

Effective use and generation of research evidence can become widespread and sustained

To Achieve

Smart state investments and improved outcomes for Coloradans

Simple Bottom to Top Theory of Change



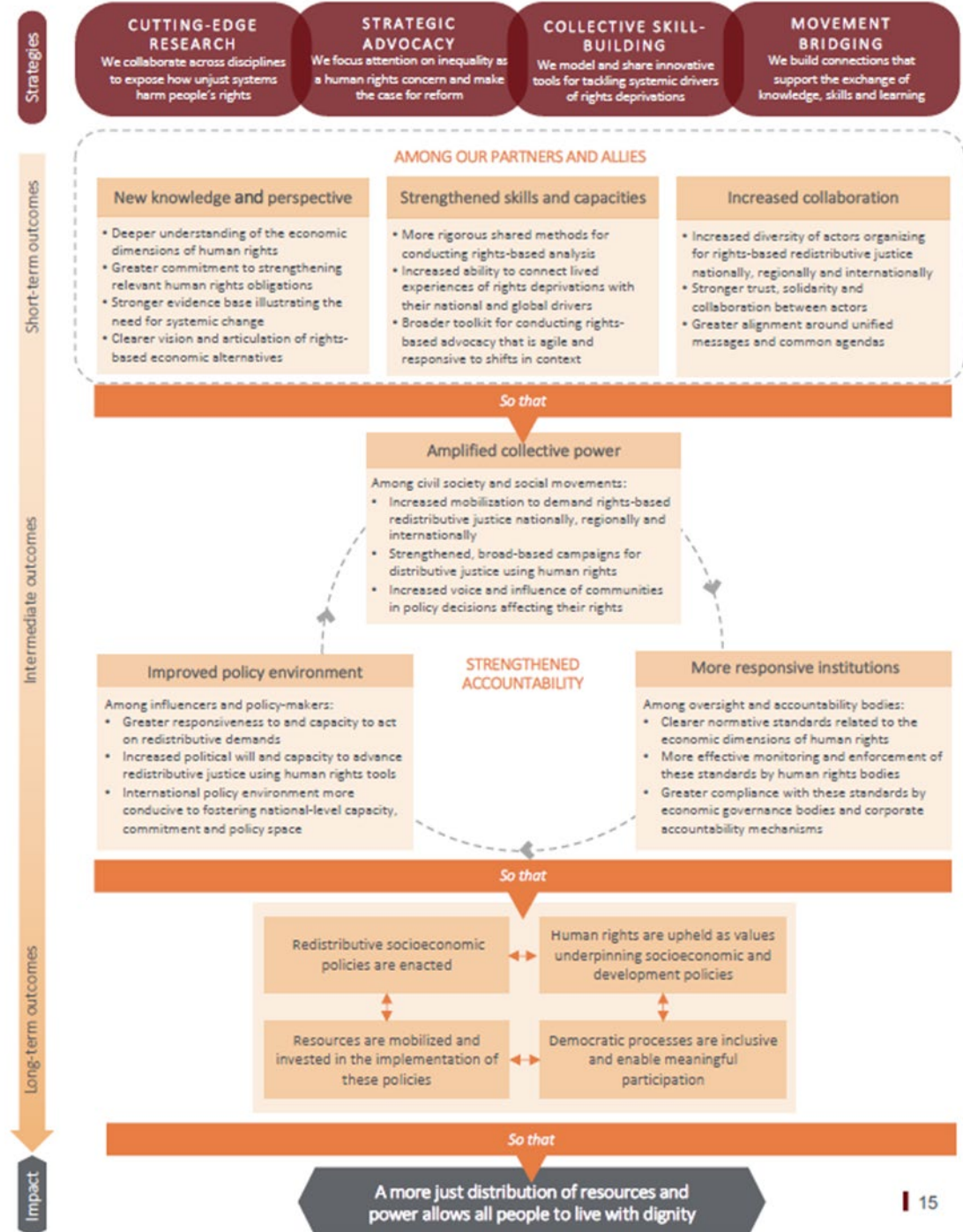
Simple Bottom to Top Theory of Change

Outputs and outcomes articulated

(Example compiled by OMNI Institute)



Simple Top to Bottom Graphic with If/Then Flow



Sound Discipline Theory of Change

CONNECT. LEARN. THRIVE.

Strategies



Empower professionals and parents to effectively connect with youth, using brain science and trauma-informed practices.



Train and coach school discipline data teams to create and build sustainable systems for solution-focused practices.



Facilitate community-wide learning and action to promote solution-focused discipline practices in families, schools and organizations

Outcomes

Among Teachers, Parents, and Other Professionals

- Shift in understanding of youth misbehavior
- More effective disciplinary practices
- Increased skills for responding effectively to youth misbehavior

Among Students and Youth

- Greater empathy, agency, and self-regulation
- Greater resilience
- K-12 academic success
- High school graduation and post-secondary success

Among Families, Schools, and Community-Based Organizations

- Positive changes in school climate
- Fewer disciplinary incidents
- Increased attendance and decreased truancy
- More time for instructional leadership
- Increased parent engagement in school
- Increased use of approaches that identify behavior patterns and prevent behavior problems
- Well-supported data teams in schools



Common Theory of Change Pitfalls

1. **Treating as a compliance exercise** rather than a learning opportunity
2. **Starting with a prefab format** – be creative and own it
3. **Developing in isolation** rather than collaboratively with implementation partners
4. **Minimizing the context** of program or practice
5. **Shoving in a drawer** and forgetting it should be an ongoing strategy document



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Please reach out! We're here to help.

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