The Importance of an Effective Implementation Team - Learning From Failure

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Objectives of this talk

- Emphasizing the all encompassing, system wide involvement required for EBP implementation, scalability, and sustainability

- Highlighting the impact of a team (or lack of a team) managing the process of implementation and rollout of the EBP

- Defining the role of an implementation team

Orientation to Context of Observation

- Observation across 32 large scale implementation projects (multiple facilities, 4 or more treatment teams, clinical teams/ leadership involvement with access to executive leadership)

- Spans continuum of care, length of stay, and target populations

- Child and adolescent through standard adult services

- International locations including state and county systems, for profit /not for profit systems in the US, provincial government and large hospital systems in Canada, and regional and national initiatives with District Health Boards in New Zealand

NIRN's Definition of an Implementation Team

Implementation team members have special expertise regarding evidence based programs, implementation science and practice, improvement cycles, and organization and system change methods. They are accountable for making it happen; for assuring that effective interventions and effective implementation methods are in use to produce intended outcomes. Fixen, et al (2011), pg. 6.

Our Working Definition of Implementation Team

A clearly identified group of people who:

- manage the process of implementation (policy, structure, training, staffing)
- garner buy in (community relations)
- curry favor when needed (administration, front lines, unions, etc.)
- hold accountability and decision making
- possess enough influence to change practice, policy, schedules, and staffing when needed.
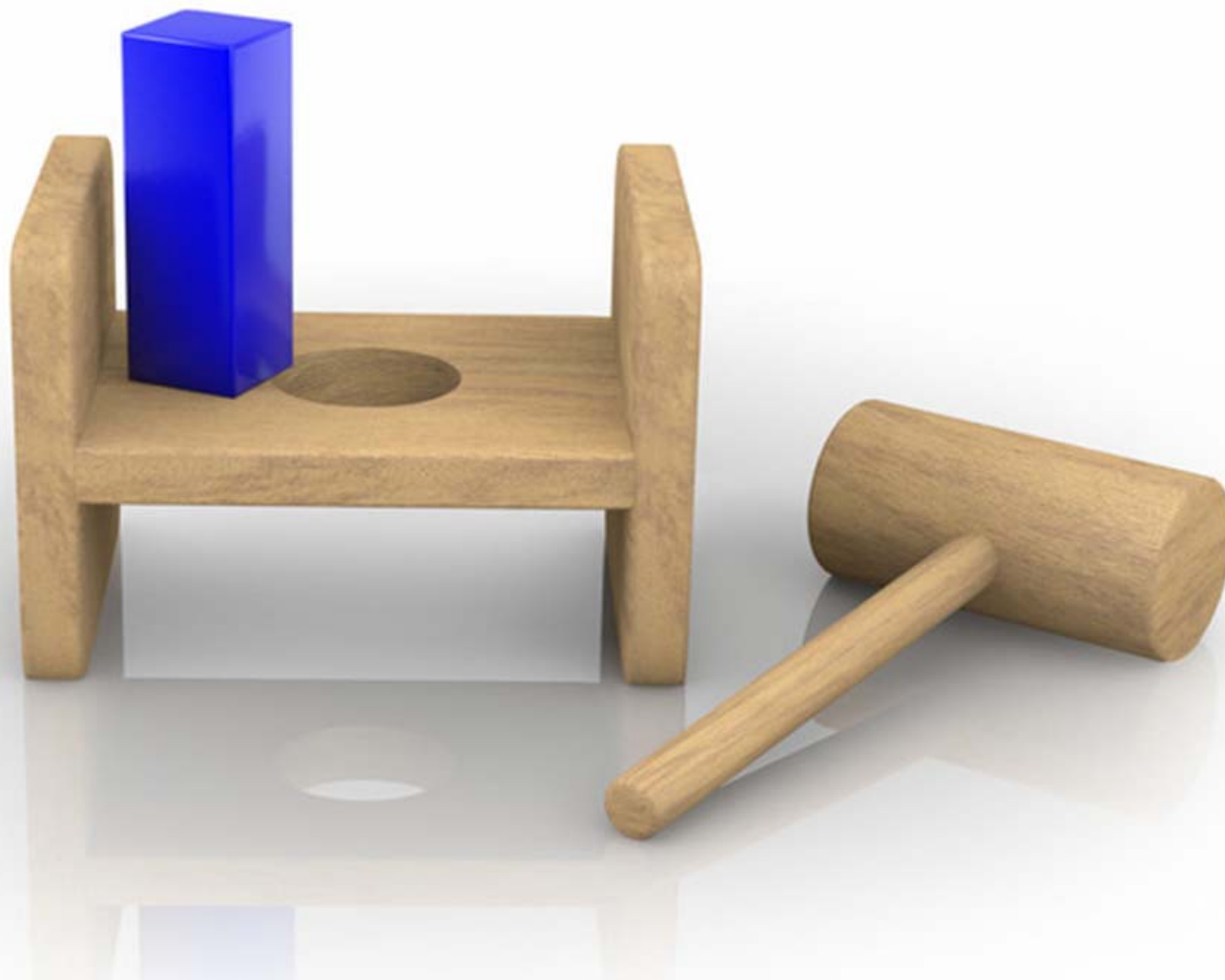
Overstating the obvious:
IMPLEMENTATION TEAMS ARE CRITICAL

Support

TX / Program Fidelity

TEAM

Implementation Management

Communication

What We Have Experienced Over Time

- Systems with "someone" (often it is one person) managing the process of implementation had better outcomes than systems that left every clinical team managing their own success.

- In most situations, one person with enough influence or authority became the champion who provided some of the functions identified by NIRN as essential to the role(s) of an effective implementation team.

Variables that Impact Implementation

- Fiscal year

- Staff turnover

- Impact of budget cuts

- Competing initiatives and mandates

- Improper implementation of EBP

- The role of unions in service delivery

- Scalability when large system is involved

- Communication managers to sell up and down the chain of command

Role(s) of the Team

- Plan the management (of the practice) and manage the plan – implementation and training

- Tend to awareness, support, buy in, staffing, funding, culture, policies, programming, sustainability

- Internal expertise with the EBP – content and provision

- Clinical and administrative expertise

"Special expertise regarding evidence based programs, implementation science and practice, improvement cycles, and organization and system change methods." Fixsen, et al (2011)

Systemic Perspective of Implementation Teams

- Must be multi level and inclusive of system components – administrative, fiscal (budgeting and purchasing), clinical, data management, quality assurance, etc.

- Must have at least one member (internal) who is expert or working towards expertise in the EBP (ahead of the pack)

- Must have at least one member who participates in all training

- Must have influence and authority to open doors and move the system

Things to Remember

- Feedback loops, documentation, and communication plans are CRITICAL

- Important to always go back to the mission and focus of the organization and the intended outcome of the implementation initiative underway

- Focus on change management – it is the difference between implementation and training

Quinn, M. (2011)

Contributors to Successful Outcomes

- Honesty
- Transparency
- Good coffee (tend to the basics)
- Well run meetings
- Adjusting expectations
- Humor
- Informal follow up with connections
- Quick wins
- Document everything
- Involve "them" in finding the solution

Quinn, M. (2011)

What to Remember

Programs implemented with an implementation team managing effective use of implementation science and the evidence based practice saw 80% use of the model within 3 years of the initiative starting. Initiatives with no team monitoring the implementation or practice saw 14% use of the model over 17 years.

(Fixen, et al (2011), pg. 16.)
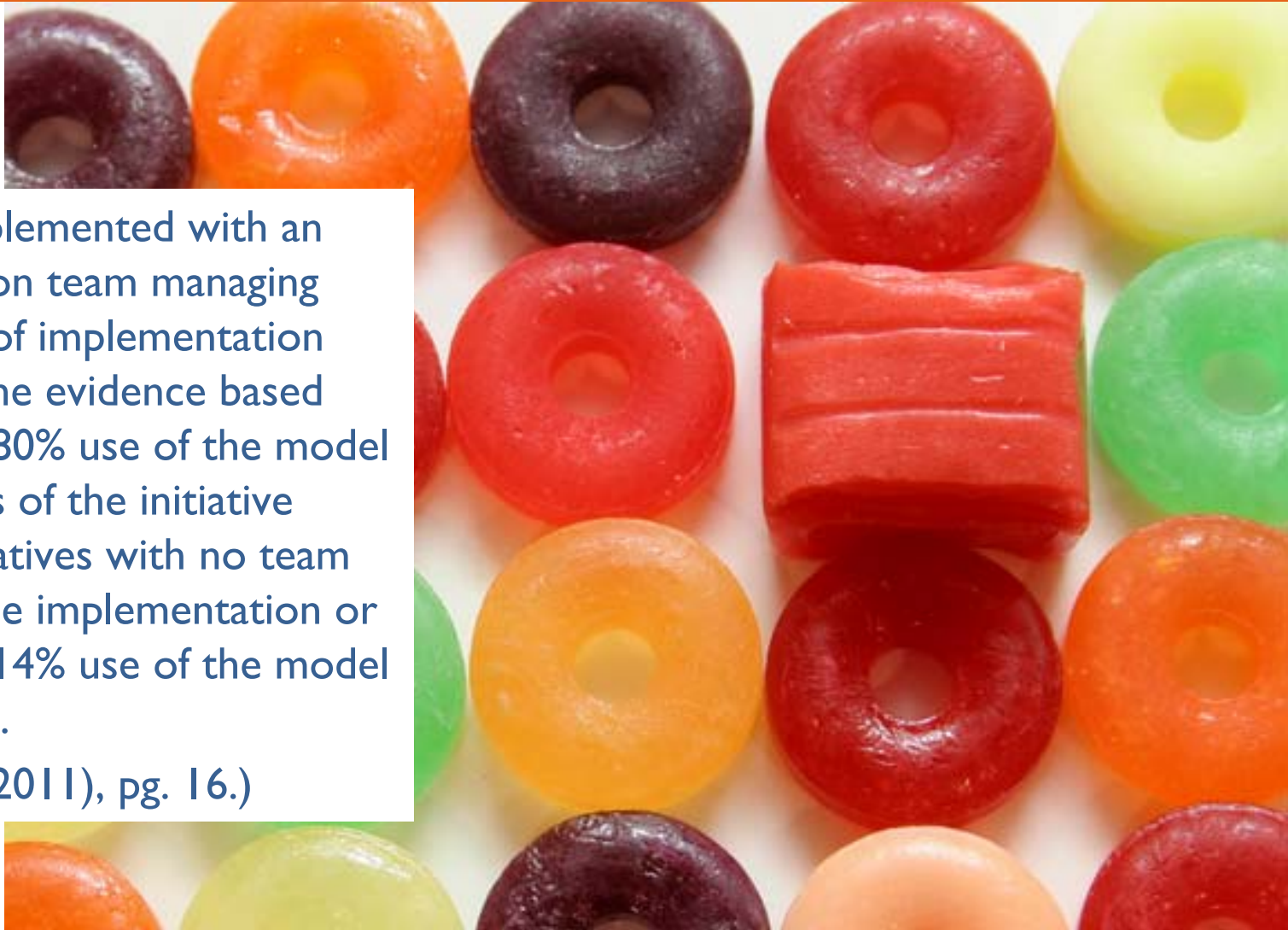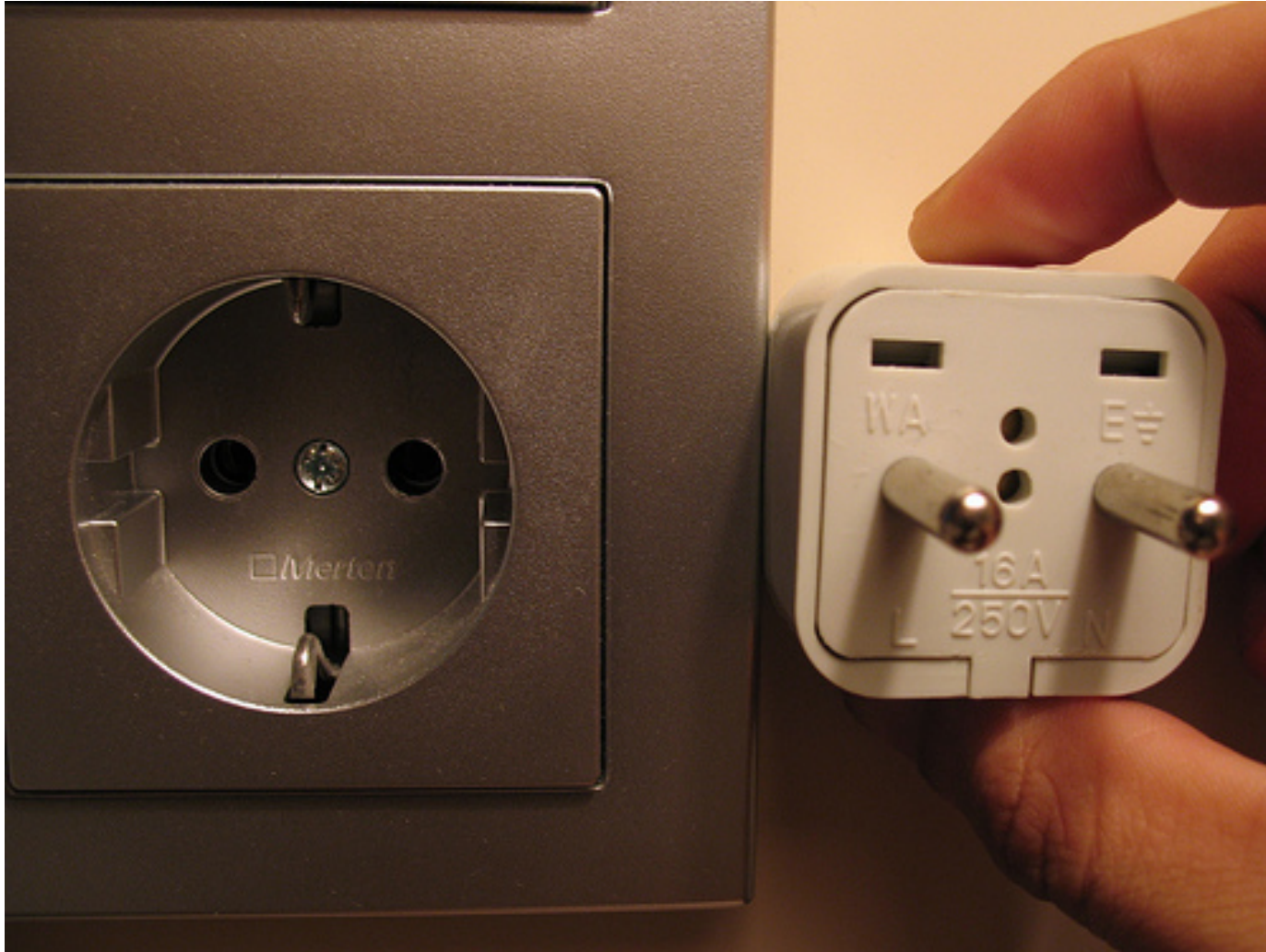
Fixsen, D., Blase, K., Metz, A., & Van Dyke, M. (under review). Statewide Implementation of Evidence-based Programs. *Exceptional children.*

Quinn, M. (August 2011) Delivering Evidence Based Programs in Community Settings. Washington, DC: Global Implementation Conference.

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