

Remembering a Healthy Future

Gathering Wisdom for a Shared Journey IX

Vancouver, BC

May 17, 2018



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Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

Terry L. Cross, Seneca Nation
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Shirley Williams, Lummi Nation
Whiteswan Environmental, **WE** (One Mind for
the Purpose of the Work)

Decolonization

“Colonization dismembered our culture, our people, and our families.

Our job is Re-membering.”

Theda Newbreast
Blackfeet



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Teaching Good Ways to Live

Respect

Family

Wisdom

Generosity

Gratitude

Witnessing

Ceremony

Spirit

Belonging

Self-governance

Place

Culture

Humor/Joy

Harmony

Humility

Ancestors



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Decolonization and Healing

- Colonization happened to us
- Profound, complex, inter-generational, continuing trauma
- There is nothing wrong with us
- We are vital human beings to whom terrible things happened
- Trauma can be healed
- We know how heal



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Trauma Impacting Our Children

- Historic/Intergenerational
- Complex Trauma
- Victim of Violence, Sexual Assault, Emotional Abuse, Bullying, Separation
- Bystander Trauma, Witnessing Violence
- Chronic Trauma (Poverty, Discrimination)
- Secondary Trauma



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Symptoms of Post-Colonialism

- Intergenerational trauma
- Lateral oppression and violence
- Internalized racism—self-blame
- Identity politics
- Dismembered social norms
- Blaming the victim
- Adverse childhood experiences



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RISK FACTORS

What is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)?

The experience of “significant abuse or household dysfunction during childhood”

Specific indicators:

- Recurrent physical abuse
- Recurrent emotional abuse
- Contact sexual abuse
- An alcohol and/or drug abuser in the household
- An incarcerated household member
- Someone who is chronically depressed, mentally ill, institutionalized, or suicidal in the household
- Mother is treated violently
- One or no parents
- Emotional or physical neglect



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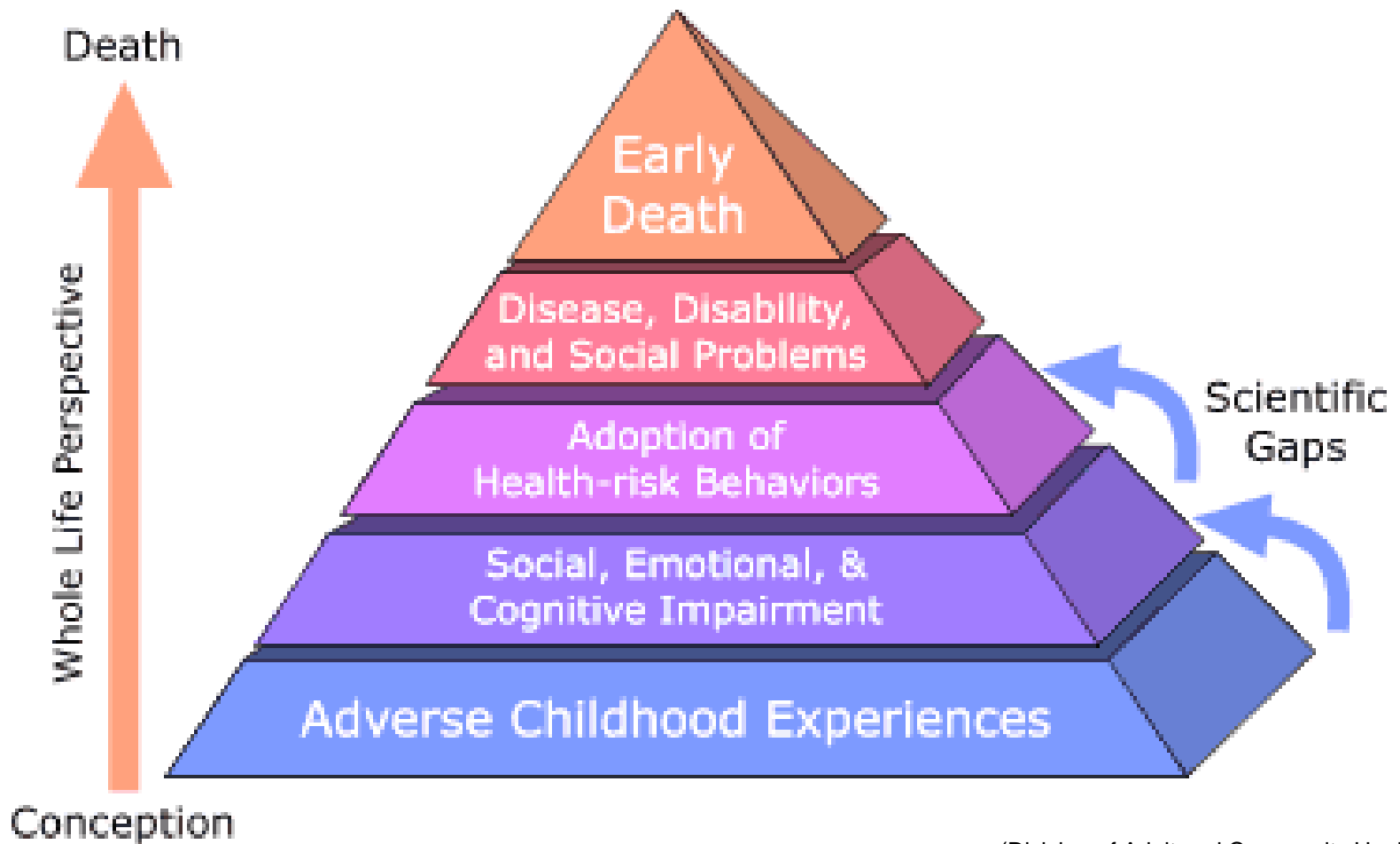
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(Division of Adult and Community Health,
National Center for Chronic Disease
Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC, 2010)

The ACE Study

- The ACE Score is a count of the total number of ACE indicators for an individual.
- The score ranges from 1 (low trauma) to 9 (high trauma).
- In the mainstream population, as an ACE score increases, the risk for numerous health problems increases.

ACE Study Model

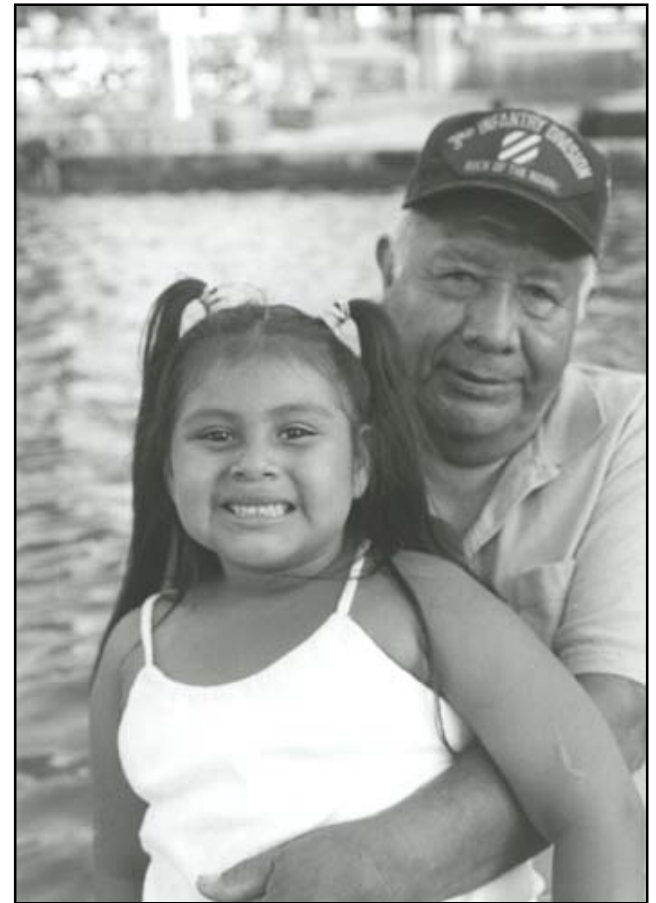


The good news...



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PROTECTIVE FACTORS

What is a Protective Childhood Experience (PCE)?

Positive relationships and experiences while growing up that protect young people from negative influences and behaviors.

Specific Indicators:

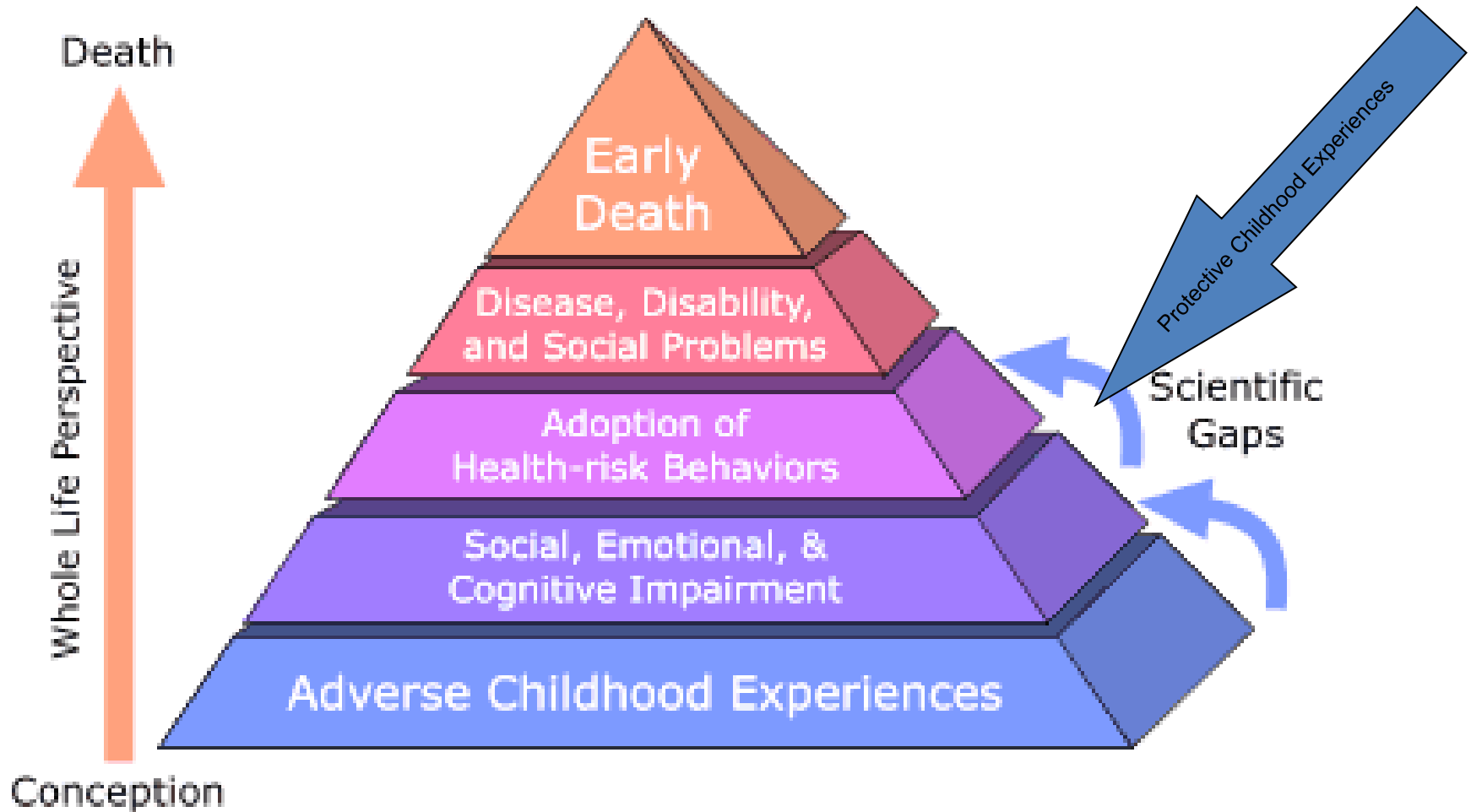
- Supportive adults
- Positive peer groups
- School activities
- Family resources
- Spiritual/Religious Connection
- Connection with Tribal elders, learning a Tribal language
- Safe and strong community



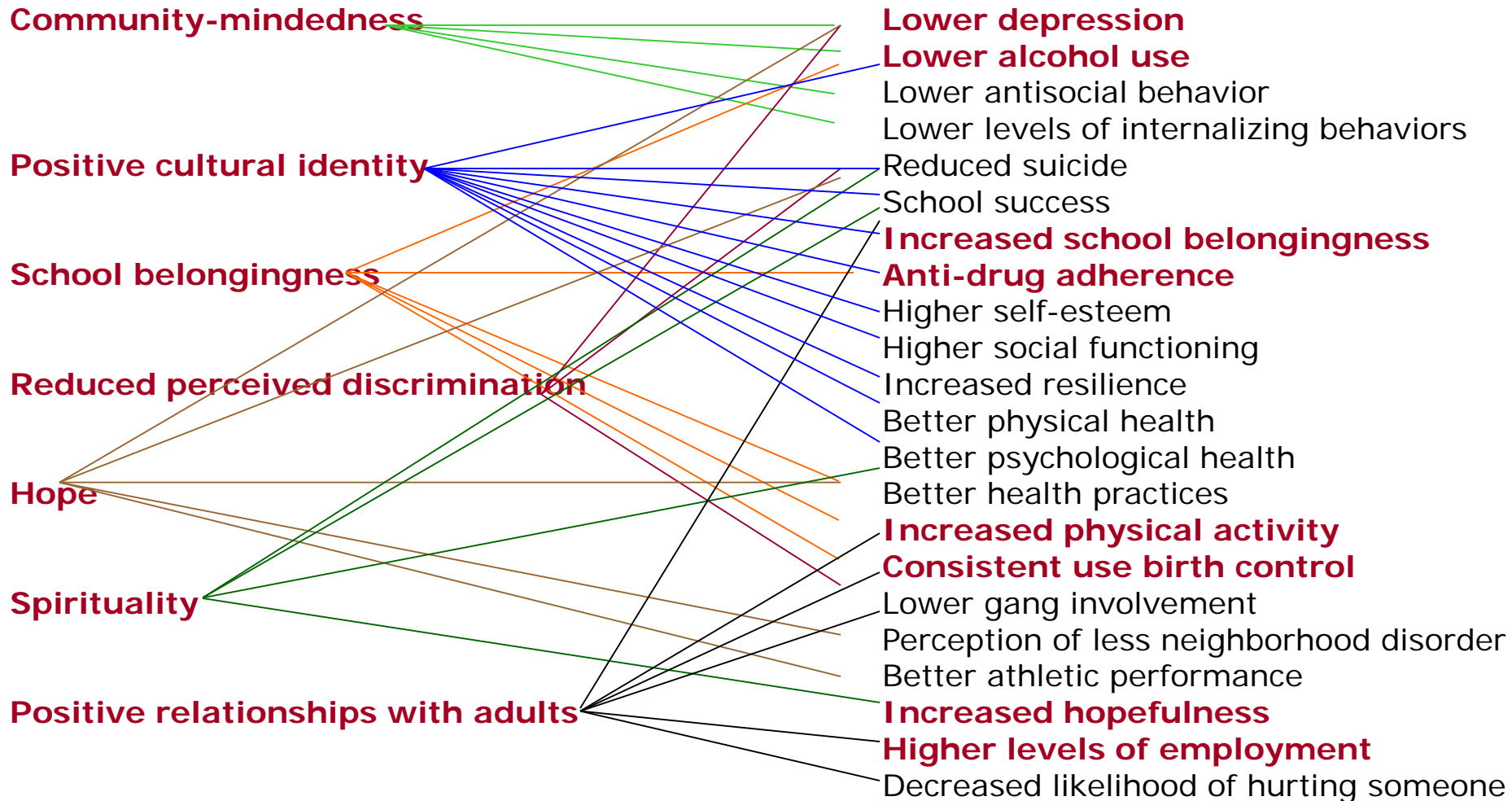
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ACE Study Model



Relationship of NAYA-identified outcomes to existing evidence



Outcomes in red are NAYA-identified outcomes; all items in right column are outcomes from the research literature.

Research Findings

- Positive cultural identity linked with lower suicidal thoughts
- Positive relationships linked with:
 - lower depression,
 - less substance use, and
 - lower suicidal thoughts
- Connection with spirituality linked to lower depression
- Positive sense of community linked with lower depression



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Teaching Good Ways to Live

Promotes Mental Health!



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Nation Building

On a Foundation of Mental Health

- Self governance
- Dependability of institutions
- Alignment with Culture
- Leadership (now and future)
- “Vibrant” people



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Children's Mental Health Initiative

- Based on
 - Culture
 - Community needs
 - Community based standards
- Development and implementation a community based service model
- System of care philosophy
 - Holistic



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System of Care:

A philosophy of how care should be delivered

- Addressing physical, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and social needs
- Community-based
- Comprehensive
 - Accessible
 - Individualized
 - Coordinated and collaborative
- Family driven
- Youth guided
- Culturally aligned



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Fit with Indigenous Thought Relational Worldview



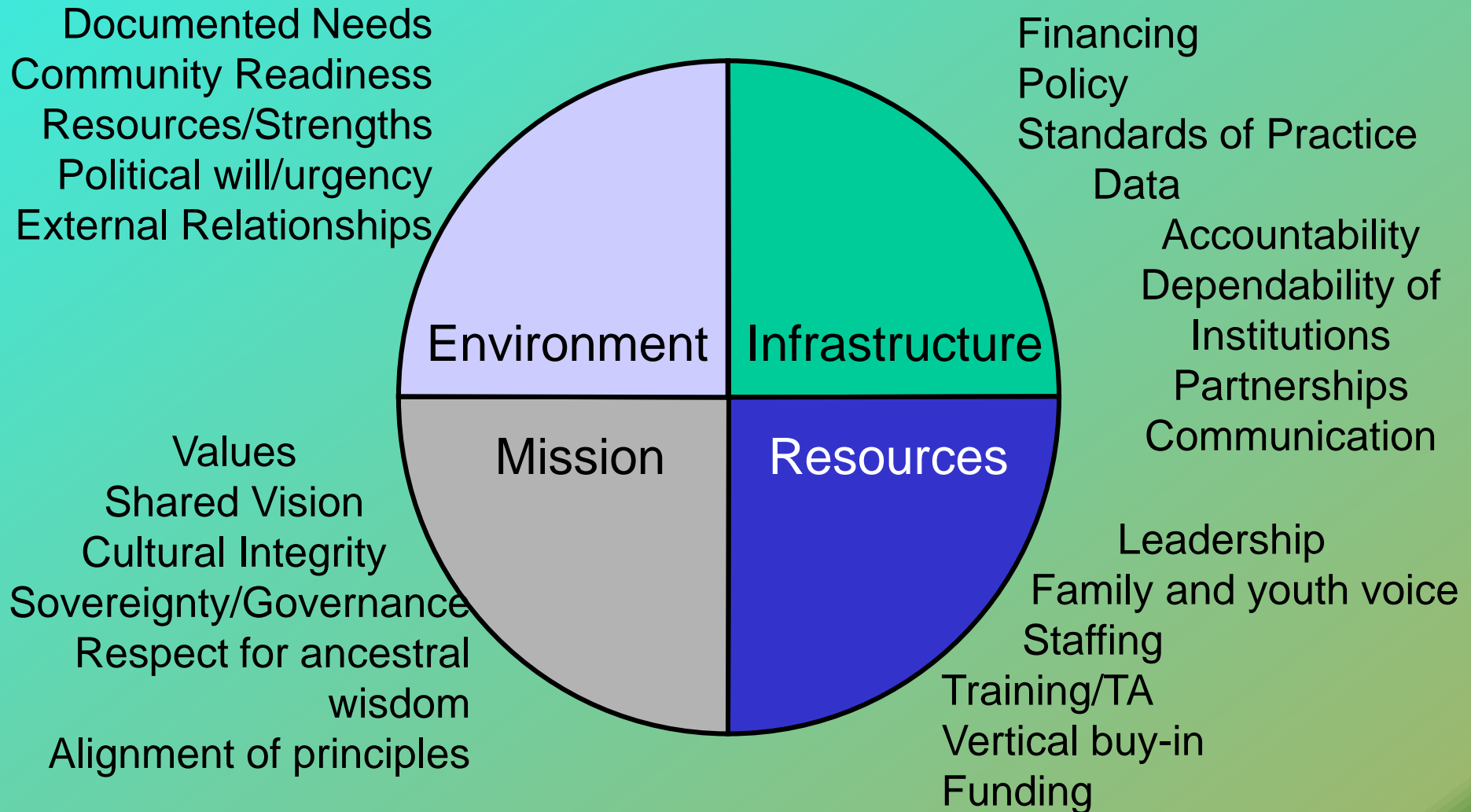
BALANCE



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Essential Elements for Systems Change



Great Grandmas Matter!



My Mom and Grandson

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