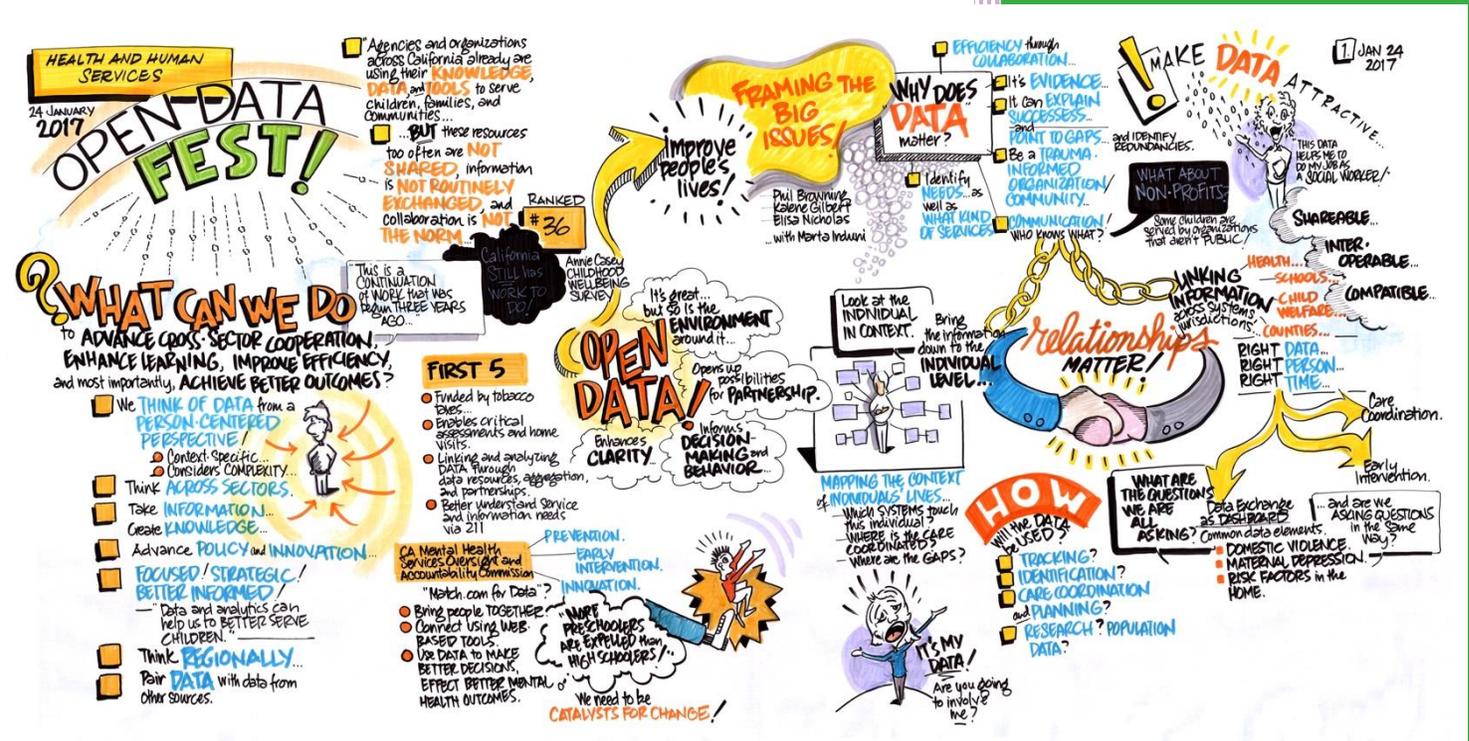


HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES OPEN DATAFEST

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS - HHS OPEN DATAFEST, LOS ANGELES JANUARY 24, 2017



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Approximately 100 attendees, representing a broad range of disciplines focused on improving the lives of children, participated in the Open DataFest at the Ronald Tutor Campus Center at the University of Southern California on Jan. 24, 2017. The event was organized by Stewards of Change Institute (SOCl) in collaboration with First 5 LA, the California Health and Human Services Agency, the California Health Care Foundation, the Mental Health Oversight and Accountability Commission, kidsdata.org and MarkLogic.

The intent of this first-of-its kind symposium was to bring together knowledge, expertise, practical tools and innovative thinking relating to children's mental and behavioral health, adverse childhood experiences, social services and early childhood development. Our goals were to foster cross-sector personal and professional connections and, equally important, to promote understanding about the value of such connections in order to: increase cooperation and collaboration; instigate actions toward new and/or better systems for information/data exchange; and, most pointedly and vitally, improve outcomes for children.

Participants appeared highly engaged throughout the day of interactive sessions, and many commented that they came away with actionable new ideas and relationships that were in clear alignment with the goals of the event. Our hope is that attendees will follow up on the DataFest by building (or continuing to build) cross-sector collaborations to advance information-sharing, and thereby promote progress within and among the diverse sectors that they represent.

A copy of the event agenda, along with graphic murals highlighting key event elements, accompany this report. We urge everyone to view the murals, in particular, as they provide both a timeline of the day and vivid illustrations that capture key points made by presenters and attendees alike. In addition, SOCl is currently conducting an online survey of attendees to glean more-specific insights, including what next steps they foresee for themselves and/or would like the organizers to take.

To focus the discussions, everyone was asked to keep the following context in mind throughout the day: Agencies and organizations across California already are using their knowledge, data, and tools to serve children, families, and communities. But these resources too often are not shared, information is not routinely exchanged and collaboration is not the norm. What can be done to

advance cross sector cooperation, enhance learning, improve efficiency and most importantly, achieve better outcomes?

Recommendations that arose from various interactive activities during the course of the Open DataFest were to:

- **Genuinely (that is, not just rhetorically) recognize children as a priority and invest in them as a matter of course** – indeed, as the norm. Doing so should entail a multi-sector effort from child welfare, public health and juvenile justice, among other sectors that significantly touch their lives. Financial incentives would stimulate participation
- **Make it more “attractive” to utilize data** by presenting it in forms that making it easier to share and understand across sectors – and compatible among them. Among other things, that means linking information across systems and jurisdictions, including health, schools, non-profits, child welfare and counties. To quote a participant in the event: “The right data needs to be available to the right person at the right time.”
- **Create a data-exchange dashboard with common elements.** Data could flow into such a hub from disparate sources (ex., government, health, mental health, social services, schools, non-profits), then could be disseminated into the community for various uses. This type of data-sharing could, for example, stop health-related outbreaks.
- **Involve lawyers early in the process of forming data-exchange agreements, policies and procedures** – notably including HIPA and PERPA experts – in order to lower later legal roadblocks and increase the prospect of “yes.”
- **Demystify what data-sharing means.** Too often, would-be beneficiaries of information are wary of it or simply don’t yet understand its possible value. Explaining those things enables users to become more comfortable integrating it into their work, to grasp its import, to draw appropriate conclusions from it and to utilize it to shape better policy.
- **Networks matter, visibility matters and champions are crucial.** The last point, in particular, was made numerous times; i.e., promoting data-sharing and interoperability is smoother and faster when someone like a senior agency or organizational official actively leads the way.
- **Continue to learn from each other** by sharing best practices, case studies and practical tools, as well as data. It was pointed out repeatedly that engaging in such multi-sector collaboration has numerous benefits, including increasing efficiency, which resulting in more children and families seeing positive outcomes even when budgets are tight.