Habits of a Systems Thinker

- Seeks to understand the big picture
- Observes how elements within systems change over time, generating patterns and trends
- Recognizes that a system's structure generates its behavior
- Identifies the circular nature of complex cause and effect relationships
- Makes meaningful connections within and between systems
- Changes perspectives to increase understanding
- Surfaces and tests assumptions
- Considers an issue fully and resists the urge to come to a quick conclusion
- Considers how mental models affect current reality and the future
- Uses understanding of system structure to identify possible leverage actions
- Considers short-term, long-term and unintended consequences of actions
- Pays attention to accumulations and their rates of change
- Recognizes the impact of time delays when exploring cause and effect relationships
- Checks results and changes actions if needed: "successive approximation"
Your system...any system is perfectly designed to produce the results you are obtaining.

(Adapted from Carr, 2008)
FIGURE 1-1 The complex landscape that affects children ages 0-8.
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