



The illustration depicts five diverse individuals standing in a row. Each person has a large, circular thought bubble above their head, filled with a specific letter. From left to right: a woman with blonde hair in a blue shirt and brown skirt has a yellow bubble with the letter 'C'; a man with dark skin in an orange vest and blue pants has a pink bubble with the letter 'A'; a man with a beard and mustache in an orange shirt and brown pants has a light blue bubble with the letter 'B'; a woman with dark skin in a yellow shirt and purple pants has a green bubble with the letter 'F'; and a man with glasses in a purple shirt and brown pants has a purple bubble with the letter 'S'. The background is a solid light beige color.

Perspectives on Progress, Redefining Readiness

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History - Florida VPK Provider Kindergarten Readiness Rate

- Florida voters approve a constitutional amendment mandating availability of [Voluntary Prekindergarten \(VPK\)](#), free for all 4-year-olds
- VPK is an additional year to ensure children develop skills and knowledge to be on grade level by 3rd grade
- Lawmakers fund minimally; Did not include many quality indicators initially intended (low bar to become provider)
- VPK needs a measure of provider performance
- Florida has a long history of [statewide Kindergarten Entry Assessment](#)

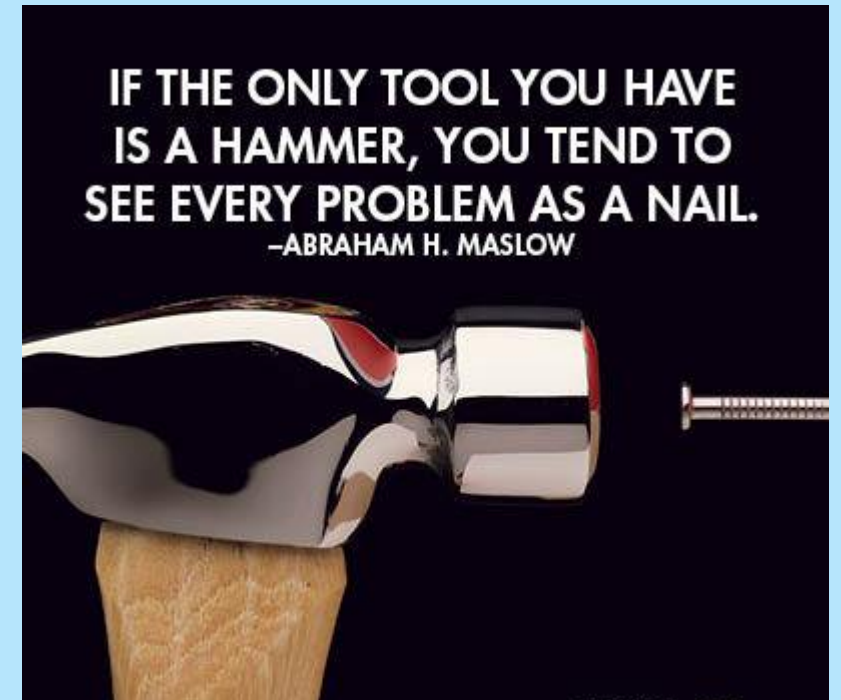


Applying a technical solution to an adaptive problem



Relating Child Outcomes to Provider Performance

Kindergarten Entry Assessment Results
=
Measure of VPK provider performance



Technical Solution Creates New Challenges



Use an existing assessment process for two purposes

- Are children entering kindergarten ready for kindergarten?
 - VPK Completer, Non-completer (less than 70%), Non-Attender
 - Free/Reduced Lunch, Race, English Language Learner, Special Needs, Age
 - County, Zip Code
- Did the VPK provider prepare children for kindergarten?
 - % of VPK Completers Ready for Kindergarten
 - Provider may be deemed Low-Performing/Provider on Probation



Use an existing assessment process for two purposes: determining child readiness and program quality

Policy Decisions

- Narrow KEA focus, emphasizing literacy and math
- Single rating / provider, not classroom level
- [Publicly available rate](#), but little data and non-specific reports available to providers
- Providers on Probation complete an improvement plan

Programmatic Outcomes

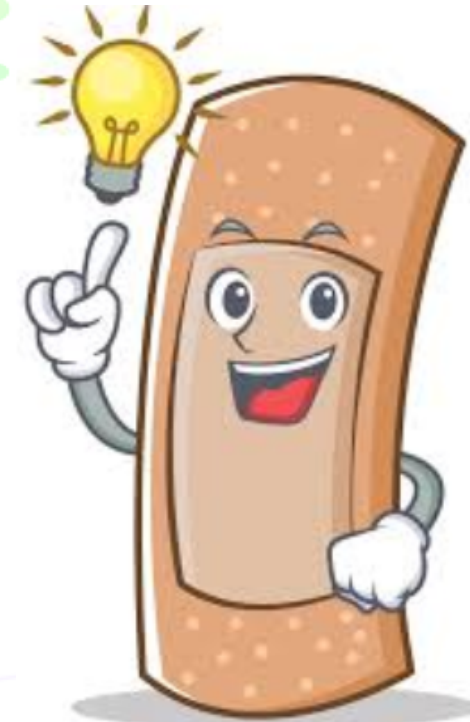
- Narrowing of instructional practices/Increase in didactic and whole group instruction
- Focus on literacy and math
- Little support and few data available for providers
- Onus for improvement is on provider

Layered, Well-Meaning Bandage Approach

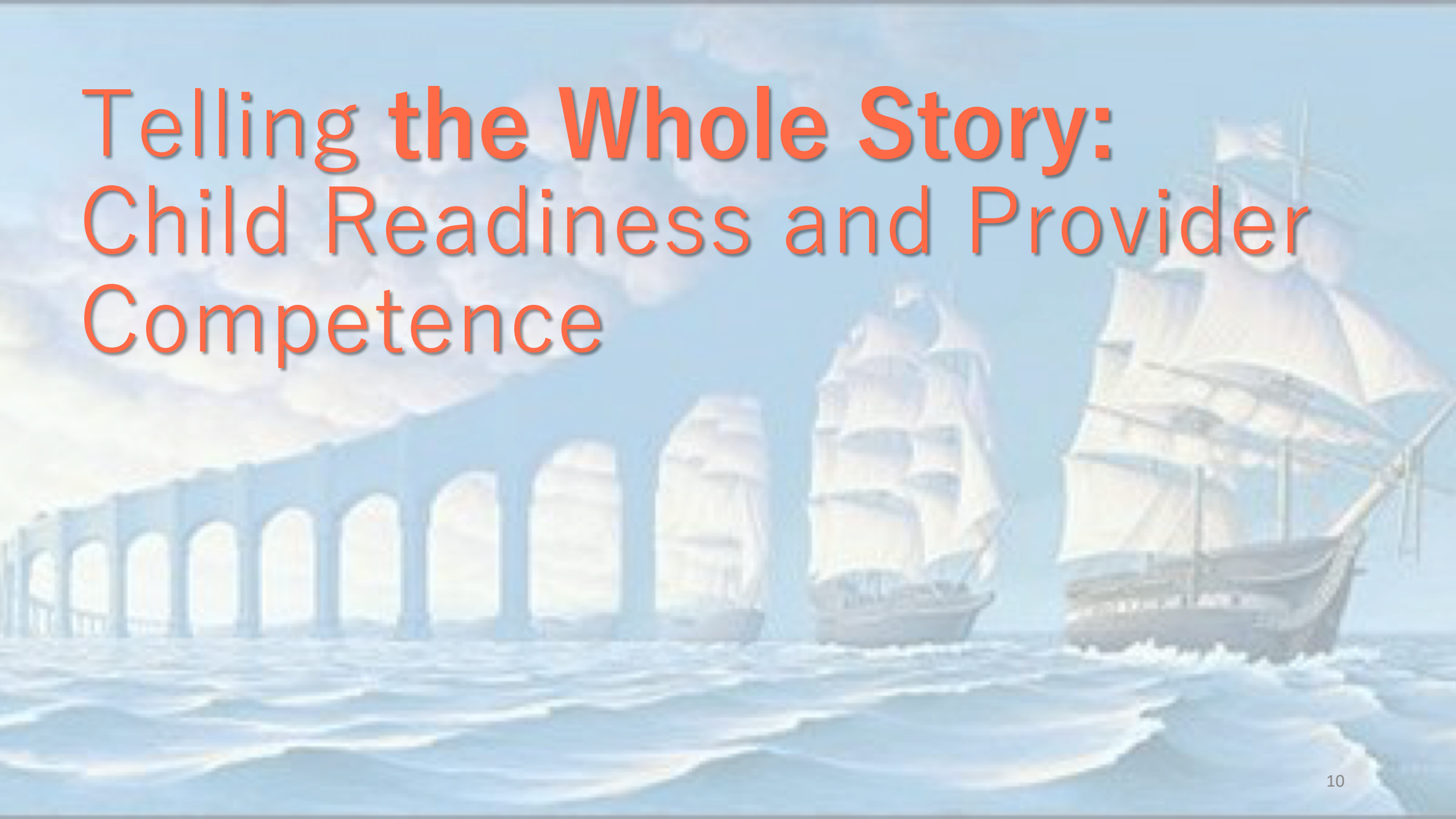


Programmatic Bandages

- Training and resources demonstrate learning trajectories and meeting standards through appropriate, rich, engaging instructional practices
- VPK staff provide conference sessions statewide to increase appropriate practice, share knowledge and develop provider awareness about process
- [VPK Assessment](#) developed so providers can progress monitor during VPK year
- Regional staff are experienced early childhood educators who provide valuable technical assistance, training, and modeling for providers
- Additional regional staff are hired, allowing smaller regions/more face time with providers



Telling the Whole Story: Child Readiness and Provider Competence



Telling the Whole Story

- Assumptions:
 - **All children should be ready for kindergarten.**
 - **Child outcomes are better when teachers' instruction is rich, engaging, and filled with appropriate practices and families are engaged.**
 - **Child outcomes are better when teachers and families are included in the policy conversations throughout the process.**
- For our county:
 - **What does a kindergarten-ready child look like and how do we know?**
 - **What do high-quality classrooms/teachers look like and how do we know?**
- What factors/variables contribute to our definitions?
- How can we show a complete picture?

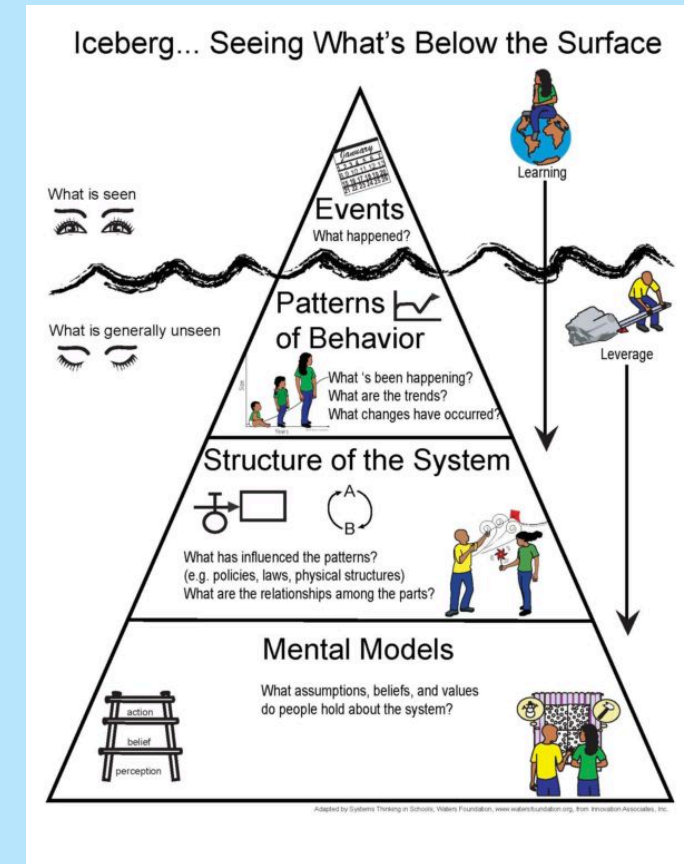
Telling the Whole Story

- Assumptions:
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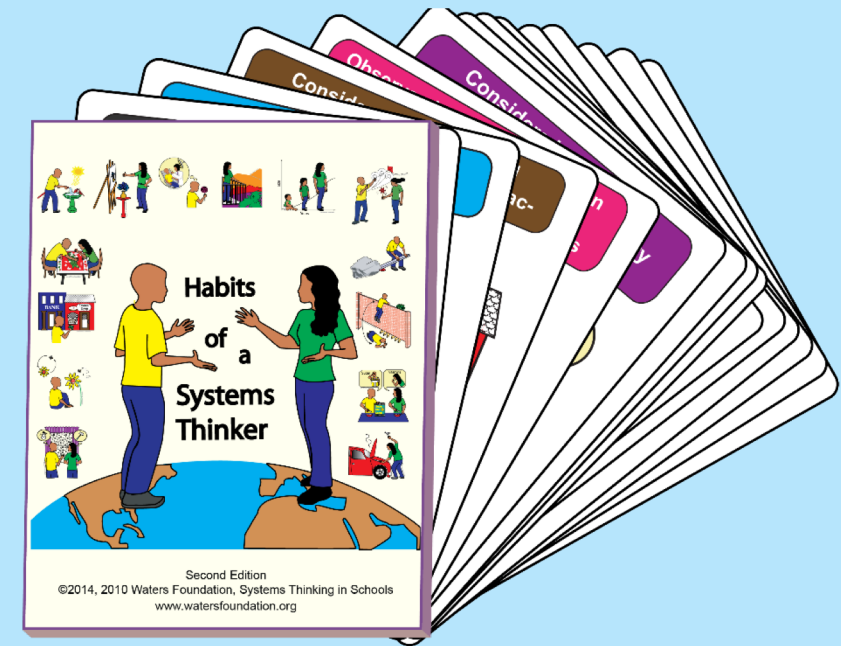
Telling the Whole Story

- Define:
 - What does a kindergarten-ready child look like?
 - What do high-quality classrooms/teachers look like?
 - What factors/variables contribute to our definitions?
- 2018-2019
 - Determine existing data points
 - Determine needed data points
 - Determine existing resources
- 2019-2020
 - Determine plan for gathering needed data points
 - Feasibility of data collection in small number of schools
 - Establish additional school districts who may want to pilot in 2020-2021
- 2020-2021
 - Pilot district-wide
 - Disseminate results to state



Telling the Whole Story

- 2018-2019
 - Determine existing data points
 - Teacher/para credential(s) and experience
 - VPK Assessment results
 - Kindergarten Entry Assessment results
 - Progress report / standards achievement
 - Others?
 - Determine needed data points
 - E.g., CLASS tool, EarlyEd Essentials Survey
 - Determine existing resources
 - Early Learning Coaches, Experienced Pre-K staff, Families, Other local subject matter experts, Community members



Reflections





"Every Child" Perspective

Redefining conversations

Unintended consequences of policy

There is significant stress on VPK providers (schools and early learning programs) to ensure that children are “ready” for kindergarten, and the pressure falls disproportionately on teachers. Florida measures readiness based on an online kindergarten entry assessment and links those scores to where the child attended VPK the prior year. The assessment looks at predictors of school success, namely literacy and number sense skills.

While child outcomes are very important, other important inputs should be considered when determining the efficacy of a teacher or a program efficacy. At the district level, there is an opportunity to create a data system where children’s learning and teachers' instruction is looked at more comprehensively. A richer data story can give a more complete picture and improve the teachers’ opportunities to instill rigorous, appropriate practices in their classrooms.