



FRAME WORKS INSTITUTE



Stuck in a Tale of Two Cities:

Mapping the Gaps on Child Development
and Well-Being in Jacksonville

A FRAMEWORKS RESEARCH REPORT
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Introduction

This is the third report to emerge from a multi-year, multi-method research project sponsored by the Northeast Florida Children’s Mental Health Coalition and its grantees and partners, including the Jacksonville Children’s Commission and the Partnership for Child Health, as part of the Kids ’N Care Initiative. The goal of the project is to develop a “core story” — a narrative framework of interwoven values, metaphors and principles — that advocates can use to build public support for evidence-based programs and policies to promote child well-being in Jacksonville, Florida, and to help Jacksonville residents appreciate and shape the integration of systems that affect children and the families and communities of which they are part.

In the first phase of this project, resulting in an interim MessageMemo,¹ FrameWorks researchers explored how Jacksonville residents think about children, child development, child well-being and children’s services. In this phase of the work, we asked the following questions:

- How do Jacksonville residents think about child development?
- How do Jacksonville residents think about the systems of care that affect child development?
- What particularities of attitudes toward history, government, race, etc. might impede integration of systems for children and families?

In the second phase of the project, FrameWorks took on a new set of questions about public understanding of the concept of *child rights*, and the role of the expert discourse around this concept, in the project’s broader communications and knowledge transmission effort. The questions taken up in this second phase are as follows:

- Where does the concept of child rights fit in the expert story?
- What cultural models are associated with child rights by ordinary Jacksonville residents?
- How can the reality of child rights be best communicated?
- How can the reality of child rights be best situated along with other important aspects of the core story of child development and well-being?

FrameWorks began its inquiry into these questions by first specifying a number of implicit understandings that inform its research on public thinking about child rights, and the conclusions that result from this inquiry:

- This is not a project devoted uniquely to translating child rights. That is, the research question that structures FrameWorks' approach, methods and conclusions for this phase of the project is not, "How should Jacksonville leaders talk about child rights?" Instead, the research question is, "How should Jacksonville leaders talk about child development, well-being and the importance of high-quality and integrated systems in improving child and community outcomes?" We have taken care in this phase of the research to understand how the topic of child rights influences, and is influenced by, these broader questions.
- The evaluation standards by which all messages should be judged effective are broad. FrameWorks characterizes an effective message as the one that lifts public support for the greatest number of effective policies, programs and practices. As we move into prescriptive testing, we will be investigating how various frame elements lift support for numerous policies and attitudes, of which child rights is one.
- FrameWorks makes a critical distinction between child rights as part of the *expert story of children's development and well-being* and child rights as a *message frame*. While we accept and integrate child rights into experts' understanding of children's well-being, and into the standards against which our communications strategies should be judged, we consider the use of child rights as a *message frame* to be an open empirical question. We are, therefore, agnostic about its use, pending empirical evidence of its relative effectiveness.

The remainder of this report is organized as follows. We first describe the untranslated expert story of child development and well-being, which includes our most recent inquiry into the expert discourse on child rights. We then present our findings on public thinking about child development, well-being and child rights. With these two sets of understandings in hand, we "map the gaps" between expert and public understandings of these topics. We conclude with a discussion of the work that has been done thus far to address these gaps, and chart a course for the next phase of prescriptive research to address the gaps and challenges that remain.

The Untranslated Expert Story of Child Development and Well-Being

FrameWorks began this project by establishing and distilling the knowledge that our Jacksonville partners were seeking to communicate. This was accomplished through a Pertinent Findings Report² that re-examined over 10 years of FrameWorks' research base on Early Child Development, Child Mental Health, Child Abuse and Neglect, Education, Juvenile Justice, Community Health, Government, and Budgets and Taxes.

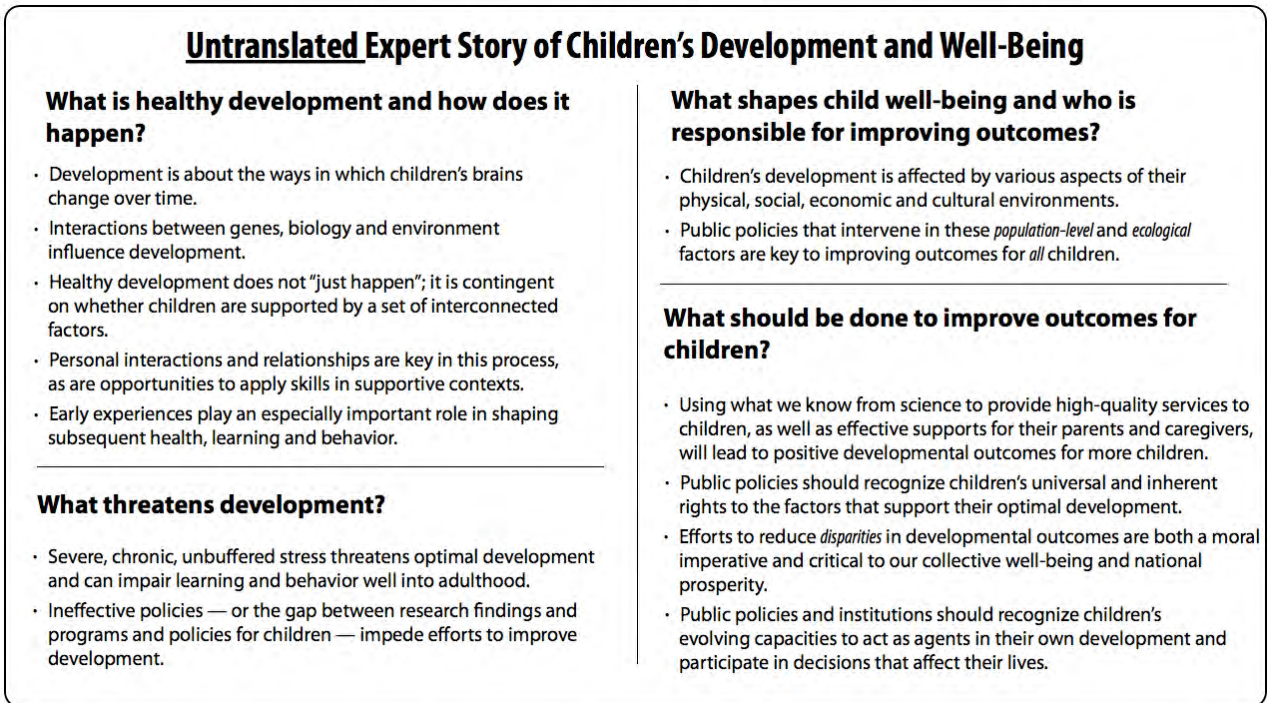
To this existing base of expert research, FrameWorks added a set of interviews with 15 expert informants who were recommended by the advisory committee for the Northeast Florida Children's Mental Health Coalition, the Jacksonville Children's Commission, and the Partnership for Child Health. In April and May 2013, FrameWorks researchers conducted interviews with 10 child rights experts. In January 2014, we conducted five interviews with expert informants — several of whom represent local leadership in Jacksonville — who have expertise in the specific domains (e.g., child protection, education, juvenile justice) with which the field of child rights is concerned. Interviews were conducted by phone, lasted approximately one hour, and, with informants' permission, were recorded and subsequently transcribed for analysis.

The resulting untranslated expert story of children's development and well-being presented in this report represents the synthesis of these bodies of research. We briefly summarize this untranslated expert story as follows:

Experts understand development as a *contingent* process that is *dynamically* shaped over time and continues through adolescence and into a person's late 20s. Experts focus considerable attention on the idea of the brain's capacity to change in response to experience — particularly during critical and sensitive periods, such as early childhood and adolescence, when brain plasticity is at its peak. Critical to experts' understanding is the view that healthy development — including cognitive functioning and the acquisition of important skills — does not “just happen,” but, rather, depends on the quality of a child's experiences, environments and influences. While experts emphasize the home environment as an important source of these experiences and influences, they are also deeply attuned to the importance of the broader ecology of the community, institutions and society in which children are embedded. Experts view children as agents in their own development, and assert that children's participation in decisions that affect their lives is vital and should expand and evolve as they mature. Experts' focus on improving development for *all*

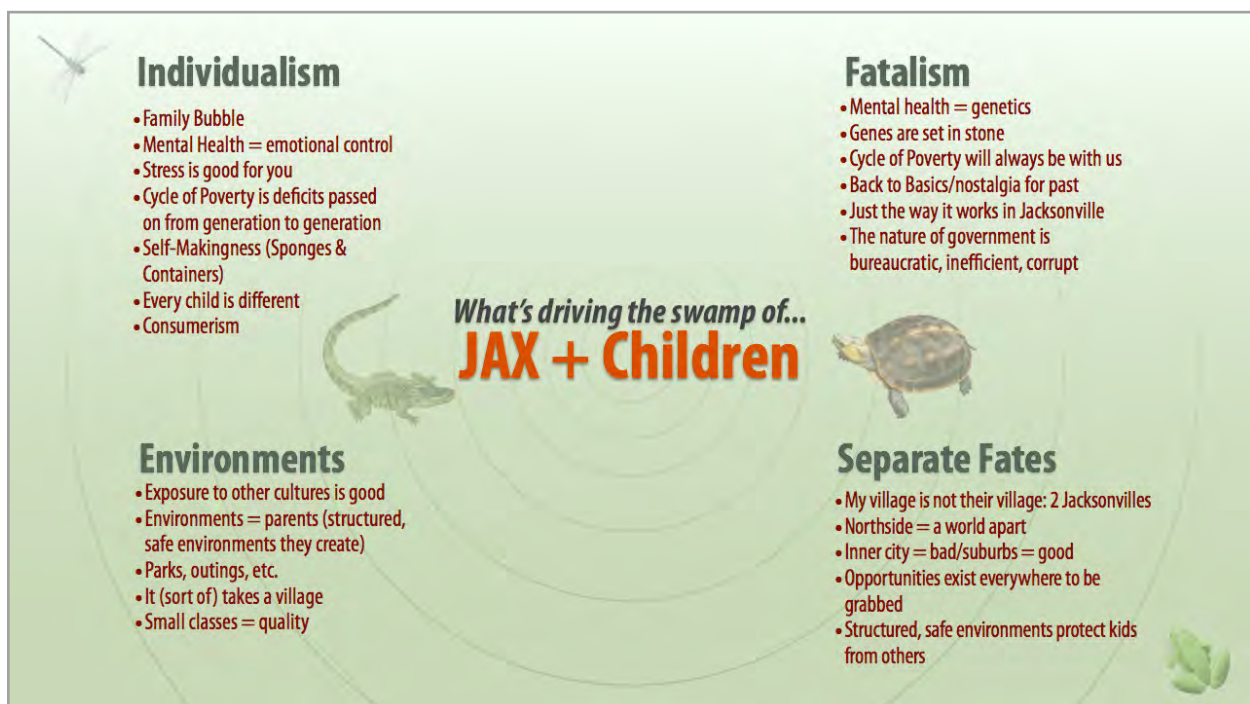
children rests in the conviction that it is both the moral and the smart thing to do; children’s rights — that is, their access to the full set of factors that support their optimal development — should be provided to *all* children and should not be withheld based on the perceived “worthiness” of the child in question. In short, experts recognize that our society and civic life are strengthened when all children are provided with the opportunity to flourish and meet their full potential.

The diagram below represents this untranslated expert story.



The Public Story of Child Development and Well-Being

To understand the shared patterns of reasoning — what anthropologists call “cultural models”³ — that Jacksonville residents bring to this discussion of children’s development and well-being, FrameWorks conducted 30 Cultural Models Interviews and 41 On-the-Street Interviews with Jacksonville residents who are not experts on these issues. These interviews were designed to explore how Jacksonville residents think and talk about children’s development and well-being, and the institutions and systems that serve children and families in their city. The findings from this first round of research were reported in the descriptive sections of the Message Memo⁴ and in the confirmatory cultural models report,⁵ yielding the following “swamp” of public thinking — a set of implicit understandings and assumptions that exist just under the surface and become active when people are asked to think and reason about children’s development and well-being:



In August and September 2013, FrameWorks researchers conducted an additional 20 Cultural Models Interviews on the topic of child rights. The goal of these interviews was to explore how public understanding of child rights might be leveraged to translate the expert story provided above and to deepen our understanding of how Jacksonville residents think about children, children’s issues and the provision of services. The findings from these recent interviews are described below.

Public Thinking on Child Rights

There are two dominant cultural models that structure how Jacksonville residents think and talk about child rights. These models represent the most “top-of-mind” responses to the introduction of the topic of child rights, and consist of both a *negative* and *positive* valence.

- **The *Culture Of Entitlement* model:** The topic of children’s rights brings to mind concerns over children’s inflated senses of entitlement and the notion that “children today” have *too many* rights.

Researcher: What rights do you think they have now?

Informant: I mean I don’t know necessarily, like, specific rights. They are not — everything is too lenient on them. I don’t think they should be running around cussing at adults. Or cussing really, period. Or, you know, smoking or I mean just things you didn’t do when you were a kid when I was growing up.

- **The *Care and Protect* model:** The topic of children’s rights also elicits talk about children’s right to be nurtured and cared for, and to be protected from mistreatment by more powerful adults. Discussion often centers around “the basics” — love, adequate food, shelter, clothing and education. This model derives from three foundational understandings: first, that *children are developmentally immature*, with capacities that have yet to be fully realized; second, that *children have a right to the things they need to survive and grow*; and third, that *children are inherently more vulnerable* because of their incomplete physical and mental development, and therefore require protection from mistreatment.

Researcher: So when you hear the term “children’s rights,” what do you think of?

Informant: I believe they have the right to be protected ... When I say protected I mean they need to be cared for. I’m not saying never discipline them, because if you never discipline them then you have a bigger problem. But you need to make sure they are good so you just got to protect them and nurture them, it’s their right to have those tools that they need to grow up. I mean, they have to. I mean they are kids, they don’t know anything, you have to teach them.

Jacksonville residents drew upon two models to reason about *why* children have rights — rights as *inherent* and rights as *earned*. Many informants found themselves toggling back and forth between models, and in something of a conundrum — wanting to assert universal natural rights, but feeling that many of those rights should be dependent on maturation and capacities.

- **The *Natural Rights* model:** According to this model, rights are an inherent feature of being a person. When thinking through this model, all children have certain rights that are owed to them simply by virtue of their being alive. This model has a strong *moral* dimension, as these rights are considered fundamental and often “God-given.”

Researcher: If you're trying to define what a right is to someone who's never heard of the concept, how would you explain what a right is?

Informant: A right is something every God-given human is supposed to have. You have a right to free speech. You have the right to say what you feel. You have a right to eat. And you have a right to be loved, taken care of. Because the kid didn't ask to be born. The parents put them in this, and they need to take care of them. That's the right they deserve.

- **The *Rights Are Earned* model:** This model positions rights as behaviors that are earned based on merit. That is, rights are gained over time based on the accrual and demonstration of capacities. As applied to children, the model is about the gradual emergence of conceptual and rational capacities that enable the child to make ever-better decisions and choices.

Informant: It's up to the parents to train that child up to do the right thing. But if that child decides to go the other way, their rights are going to be taken. So they don't have the right anymore. Their rights are going to be taken away from them. They can't say, "Well, I have the right to be out." Or "I have the right to not be in here." But you did wrong so that's where they put you. And you have to earn that right back. You have to earn it back.

When asked to talk about the locus of responsibility for ensuring children's rights, informants consistently focused first on parents, or other legal guardians, as the primary sources of both responsibility and authority for children. Informants also discussed the role of adult relatives and teachers, particularly with respect to intervening in cases of

maltreatment. Finally, informants held a dominant model of the “state” as the authority of first, and sometimes last, resort when parents fail in their obligations to children.

Implications of Public Thinking on Child Rights

The findings described above deepen and confirm the models identified in FrameWorks’ previous set of Cultural Models Interviews. For example, the same dynamic associated with child mental health (“little adults” vs. “not fully formed”) is observed when people attempt to “think” child rights — and toggle back and forth between children as immature beings who have therefore not yet earned full status as rights-holders, and children as rights-holders just as adults are. The public’s default to the *Family Bubble* is also fully evident in its thinking about child rights, particularly in the understanding that parents and families are the ultimate authority for ensuring and protecting children’s rights. Lastly, public thinking about the right to “care” and “protection” echoes earlier cultural models findings on the necessity of ensuring that children live and grow in “structured and safe” environments.

There are numerous findings in this analysis that cast doubt on the effectiveness of child rights as a message *frame*. Perhaps most importantly, Jacksonville residents hold conflicting views on whether children do, in fact, have the rights to which experts assert they are entitled. Instead, reasoning with one of their dominant cultural models, members of the public quickly come to suspect that children these days have “too many rights.” Also telling is the fact that children’s right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives — a core tenant of the expert understanding — is strikingly absent from public thinking. Lastly, the public understanding of rights as *earned privileges* collides with the expert view of rights as inherent and universal. Given the problematic construction of this topic in the public’s mind, efforts to use a child-rights frame to advance support for policies and programs are likely to be met with considerable skepticism, and even explicit pushback. Taken together, these findings suggest that an untranslated child-rights message frame will, instead, lead people in unproductive directions.

A Revised Swamp of Public Thinking

These and other patterns of thinking that Jacksonville residents apply to reason about child rights have been integrated into our distillation of public thinking about children’s development and well-being, resulting in the following modified “swamp” diagram:

Gaps in Understanding



With this research base in hand, we now turn to “mapping the gaps” between expert understandings of children’s development and well-being, and the ways in which Jacksonville residents understand these issues. Through this exercise, we identify and prioritize specific communications challenges.

Analysis revealed a clear set of gaps between expert and public understandings. These gaps represent disconnects between expert understanding and public thinking that are likely to impede the public’s ability to consider new and wider perspectives on policies and systems to improve children’s development and well-being.

- 1. Process of Child Development: Contingent and Dynamic vs. *Black Box*.** While experts understand children’s development as a dynamic process that is shaped over time by the interaction of genes, biology and environments, Jacksonville residents lack a solid understanding of *how* development unfolds, and the factors that support positive developmental outcomes. Instead, thinking is focused on *what* children

should learn. The process of development itself is assumed to happen automatically, as part of the natural course of physical development and maturation.

- 2. Process of Child Development: Active and Participatory vs. Passive and Static.** Experts view development as an active process in which children themselves are key participants. Furthermore, they recognize that children’s capacities to act as agents in their own development — and to participate in decisions that affect their lives — expand as they grow. For the Jacksonville public, dominant *Sponge* and *Container* cultural models instead structure the understanding that development is largely a static and passive process — one in which a child “soaks up” or gets “filled up” with content handed down from parents and other adults.
- 3. What Causes Child Mental Health: Interaction of Genetic Predispositions and Environmental Conditions vs. Genetics and Emotional Control.** Experts assert that children’s mental health depends on the interaction of a complex set of internal and external factors. By contrast, Jacksonville residents assume that mental *illness* is caused by genetics, while mental *health* is the result of a child’s mastery over his or her inner emotional life.
- 4. What Explains Children’s Developmental Outcomes: Population- and Systems-Level Factors vs. The *Family Bubble*.** Experts consistently take a population- and systems-level approach to understanding children’s issues — training their attention on the institutional, legal and policy/service structures in which children are embedded, and the extent to which these structures support (or not) children’s development. The Jacksonville public, on the other hand, explains children’s developmental outcomes in terms of the *Family Bubble*. This model focuses nearly exclusive attention on the role played by parents in determining their children’s well-being, and assumes no connection between parents and the contexts and environments that surround them.
- 5. Environments: Complex and Multi-Level vs. Good or Bad.** Experts are deeply attuned to how the environments in which children live and grow shape their development in complex and dynamic ways. When the Jacksonville public thinks about how environments shape children’s development, their focus is typically on “good” vs. “bad” families, and the extent to which “bad” family dynamics are passed from generation to generation.
- 6. Locus of Responsibility: Collective vs. Individual.** Experts are consistent in asserting a collective moral imperative to ensuring that every child is given the

opportunity to grow, develop and learn to their full potential. In contrast, dominant cultural models like the *Family Bubble* and *Self-Makingness* — among others — result in the understanding that responsibility for children’s development and the protection of their rights lies, first and foremost, with families and individuals themselves.

7. **Fates: Shared vs. Separate.** Related to the point above, experts understand that our collective prosperity depends on the positive development of *all* children. Most Jacksonville residents recognize that there are vast differences in how children in different parts of the city are doing. However, this recognition is not accompanied by a sense that those differences matter for the future of the city and its population — but, instead, by an assumption of *separate* rather than *shared* fates.
8. **Disparities: Structural Causes vs. Missed Opportunities.** Experts view disparities in children’s educational and developmental outcomes as the result of unequal environments. Put another way, they focus attention on the fact that the factors that support optimal development are unequally distributed. The Jacksonville public hews instead to the understanding that the resources necessary for success *are* available to all Jacksonville residents; people need only to take advantage of them.
9. **Can Children’s Development be Improved? Idealism vs. Fatalism.** While experts recognize that much work has to be done to in order to improve developmental outcomes for all children, they are committed to building the systems and institutions that translate this aspiration into reality. The Jacksonville public holds a far more fatalistic view. According to this perspective, poverty and crime are intractable features of the city’s landscape, and thus part of the inevitable life experiences of some of its children.
10. **Child Rights: Inalienable vs. Earned.** Experts maintain that the rights to the factors that support their development and well-being must extend to *all* children, regardless of their individual life circumstances. While this model is available to the general public, Jacksonville residents also hold a strong understanding of rights as *privileges that are earned* by demonstrating responsibility and developmental maturity. This model structures the understanding that child rights are bestowed — and can be rescinded — by adult authority.
11. **Entitlement: Real vs. Too Much.** Experts assert that children are entitled to the experiences, environments and interconnected set of factors that support their

optimal development. Among the Jacksonville public's strongest defaults, on the other hand, is the notion that children have *too many* rights, and make too many demands on their parents and others.

An Emerging Reframed Story of Child Development and Well-Being

Gaps Addressed by Previous Prescriptive Research

FrameWorks began prescriptive research in June 2013, conducting On-the-Street Interviews to see whether a set of Explanatory Metaphors and values could address some of these gaps.⁶ A number of the frame elements tested showed promise. Below, we briefly describe the effects of these frame elements in relation to the gaps discussed above. Shortened versions of the tested iterations are provided in italics.

1. *Levelness.*

Children’s mental health is like the levelness of a piece of furniture — like a table. Just as the levelness of the table is what makes it usable, a child’s mental health is what enables him or her to function and do the things that they need to do. Some children’s brains develop on level floors. This stability happens when they have healthy supportive relationships, high-quality education, and things like good nutrition and health care. Other children have brains that develop on sloped or uneven floors. This instability happens when they’re exposed to abuse or violence, have unreliable or unsupportive relationships, and don’t have access to key community resources. Just as a table that’s not level cannot level itself, children need support and help to create stable and level mental health so that they can function productively.

The metaphor proved useful in driving home the relationship of the child to his or her environment, promoting a better understanding of functioning as the goal of development, and making contextual interventions easier to contemplate.

This Explanatory Metaphor addresses the following gaps:

- Gap No. 1: Process of Child Development: Contingent and Dynamic vs. *Black Box*.
- Gap No. 3: What Causes Child Mental Health: Interaction of Genetic Predispositions and Environmental Conditions vs. Genetics and Emotional Control.
- Gap No. 5: Environments: Complex and Multi-Level vs. Good or Bad.

2. Outcome Scales.

Think of a child's development as a sort of scale. One side of the scale gets stacked with positive things like supportive relationships with adults. The other end gets loaded down with negative things like abuse, neglect or community violence. The goal of every community is to have as many kids as possible tipped towards positive outcomes. We can do this by offloading negative weight from the negative side and stacking positive factors on the positive side. We can also do things that help the child develop coping skills — that push the balance point (the fulcrum) over to one side and make the scale able to bear more negative weight and still tip positive.

This metaphor provided a strong tool for bolstering thinking about how environments and community-level factors influence development and, in so doing, diminished myopic focus on the *Family Bubble*.

This Explanatory Metaphor addresses the following gaps:

- Gap No. 1: Process of Child Development: Contingent and Dynamic vs. *Black Box*.
- Gap No. 4: What Explains Children's Developmental Outcomes: Population- and Systems-Level Factors vs. The *Family Bubble*.
- Gap No. 5: Environments: Complex and Multi-Level vs. Good or Bad.

3. Resource Grid.

There's a grid of resources that runs through Jacksonville and supports children and families — it keeps children healthy, provides them opportunities for success, and helps develop their talent and potential. The resource grid is made up of the system of schools, hospitals, parks and other institutions that make resources available when children and families need them. The problem is that the grid is not set up in a way that allows these resources to run evenly throughout the city. What we need to do is repair the grid so that everyone in Jacksonville can plug in and get the resources they need. When the city's resource grid is fully developed and working, Jacksonville's children will be successful.

This metaphor elicited support for equal access to resources, and promoted thinking about collective responsibility for children's outcomes.

This Explanatory Metaphor addresses the following gaps:

- Gap No. 4: What Explains Children’s Developmental Outcomes: Population- and Systems-Level Factors vs. The *Family Bubble*.
- Gap No. 5: Environments: Complex and Multi-Level vs. Good or Bad.
- Gap No. 8: Disparities: Structural Causes vs. Missed Opportunities.

4. Prevention/Ingenuity.

We can do more in our country to prevent problems for children before they occur. Instead of responding to problems after they arise and grow bad, we should use our resources and ingenuity NOW to prevent things from getting worse later. According to this view, we are better off when we take steps today to invent and promote high-quality programs for young children. This is innovation, and this is how we improve the well-being of our children, our city and our nation.

This value promoted engagement with the topic of improving children’s well-being and helped divert thinking away from fatalistic assumptions that “nothing can be done.” However, the fatalism understanding is strong in the Jacksonville context and attaches dominantly to thinking about the ability of public services to improve outcomes. While this value moves people a step in the right direction, additional communications work is necessary.

This value *partially* addresses the following gap:

- Gap No. 9: Can Children’s Development Be Improved? Idealism vs. Fatalism.

5. Fairness Between Places.

As we set out to improve things for children and families in Jacksonville, our most important goal should to create fairness across parts of the city. We need to make sure that no matter where a child lives in this city, they have an equal opportunity to live in a healthy environment and have access to resources and services. Put simply, our goal should be to create a Jacksonville where all children — regardless of where they live — have a fair chance to reach their potentials and become successful.

This value proved useful in eliciting support for the idea that where children live should not determine their access to various kinds of resources. Research showed that the value should be used after first introducing the concretizing power of *Outcomes Scale, Levelness* or *Resource Grid*. However, the *Separate Fates* understanding is powerful, and constitutes a major impediment to communicating about child well-being and service provision in Jacksonville. Fully addressing this challenge requires support from other frame elements.

This value *partially* addresses the following gaps:

- Gap No. 7: Fates: Shared vs. Separate.
- Gap No. 8: Disparities: Structural Causes vs. Missed Opportunities.

Remaining Gaps

Given the gaps in understanding between experts and members of the Jacksonville public described above, and the prescriptive research conducted to date to address these gaps, we now turn to describing how we propose to identify and test frame elements that address the remaining gaps. The following table summarizes the results of prescriptive research conducted thus far, and maps the remaining gaps to frame elements which we hypothesize will prove most useful. Shaded cells indicate gaps to be targeted in the next stages of prescriptive research, and which will be addressed by values, metaphors, exemplars or other frame elements. In the text that follows this table, we provide additional details about our prescriptive approach to each of the remaining gaps.

Gap	Frame Element to Address This Gap
Gap No. 1: Process of Child Development: Contingent and Dynamic vs. <i>Black Box</i>	Explanatory Metaphors: <i>Levelness, Outcomes Scale</i>
Gap No. 2: Process of Development: Active and Participatory vs. Passive and Static.	Partially Addressed by Existing Metaphors: <i>Serve and Return</i> and <i>Skill Ropes</i> Requires Additional Frame Elements to Communicate Other Aspects of Youth Participation

Gap	Frame Element to Address This Gap
Gap No. 3: What Causes Child Mental Health: Interaction of Genetic Predispositions and Environmental Conditions vs. Genetics and Emotional Control	Explanatory Metaphor: <i>Levelness</i>
Gap No. 4: What Explains Children’s Developmental Outcomes: Population- and Systems-Level Factors vs. The <i>Family Bubble</i>	Explanatory Metaphors: <i>Outcomes Scale, Resource Grid</i>
Gap No. 5: Environments: Complex and Multi-Level vs. Good or Bad	Explanatory Metaphors: <i>Levelness, Outcomes Scale, Resource Grid</i>
Gap No. 6: Locus of Responsibility: Individual vs. Collective	Additional Frame Elements
Gap No. 7: Fates: Shared vs. Separate	Partially Addressed by the Value: <i>Fairness Between Places</i> Requires Additional Frame Elements
Gap No. 8: Disparities: Structural Causes vs. Missed Opportunities	Explanatory Metaphor of <i>Resource Grid</i> ; and Value of <i>Fairness Across Places</i> (partially productive)
Gap. No. 9: Can Children’s Development Be Improved? Idealism vs. Fatalism	Partially Addressed by the Values: <i>Prevention/Ingenuity</i> Requires Additional Frame Elements
Gap No. 10: Child Rights: Inalienable vs. Earned	Additional Frame Elements
Gap No. 11: Entitlement: Real vs. Too Much	Additional Frame Elements

Gap No. 2: Jacksonville residents’ default understanding of development as a passive and static process is fundamentally at odds with the expert view, which positions children as active agents and increasingly central participants in their developmental trajectories. As such, this understanding represents a major challenge to building public support for science-based policies and systems to support children’s well-being. The *Outcomes Scale*, tested in previous prescriptive research, shows promise in focusing the public’s attention on the dynamism of children’s development. However, we anticipate that additional

prescriptive work will be necessary to bridge the fundamental gap around children’s agentic role in their own development.

Gap No. 6: The tendency to default to individual-level explanations — that is, to describe large-scale problems in terms of small-scale causes — represents a deeply held and highly unproductive pattern of thinking.⁷ While FrameWorks’ initial prescriptive research has shown that Explanatory Metaphors like *Levelness* and *Resource Grid* give people concrete ways to think about the interaction of children and the resources and contexts in which they live and grow, more work is needed to effectively shift the Jacksonville public towards the perspective that the city’s children are a *collective* responsibility. We suspect that values, with their ability to “collectivize” issues that might otherwise be viewed at the individual level, will be particularly well-suited to this task.

Gap No. 7: In our initial set of On-the-Street Interviews, the value of *Fairness Across Places* showed some promise in foregrounding thinking about the shared fates of different parts of the city, and the importance of addressing inequality between places. However, given the dominance of the *Separate Fates* cultural model among the Jacksonville public — and its ability to derail a new narrative about the well-being of Jacksonville’s children in the absence of strategic framing — we plan to direct additional prescriptive work towards this gap.

Gap No. 9: The undercurrent of fatalism that runs through Jacksonville residents’ understandings of children’s development and well-being — and the potential of institutions and systems in their communities to improve developmental outcomes — represents a major impediment to effective communications. The value of *Prevention/Ingenuity* represents an important tool in beginning to overcome this dominant understanding. However, we suspect that additional communications work that focuses on creating a strong sense of efficacy — the belief that problems can be addressed and outcomes improved — is also necessary.

Gaps No. 10 and No. 11: While experts assert children’s entitlement to a universal and inalienable set of rights, Jacksonville residents hold a far more skeptical and ambiguous view. None of the prescriptive tools tested to date address these gaps in understanding. In future prescriptive work, we will investigate the utility of child rights language as a message frame to gather further empirical evidence about its effectiveness as a communications tool. However, in light of our findings, we suspect that child rights may need to be thought of, instead, as an *outcome* that frame elements need to be able to communicate, rather than a communications frame itself. To that end, we also intend to

compose a battery of attitudes and policies designed to test other frame elements' ability to help people think more positively about a child rights agenda.

Conclusions

FrameWorks' research to date has provided insight into (1) the untranslated expert story of child development and well-being,⁸ (2) the dominant patterns of thinking that communicators can anticipate from members of the Jacksonville public,⁹ (3) the primary gaps between these expert and public understandings, and (4) an initial set of frame elements that hold promise in redirecting thinking towards policy solutions to advance the well-being of all Jacksonville children.¹⁰

Research will continue in the coming months with a second round of qualitative and quantitative work designed to test the potential of additional frame elements to bridge remaining gaps between public and expert understandings. Alongside these research activities will be a series of both on-site and online training modules and community engagements. The end goal is an evidence-based communications strategy and toolbox that will be shared by community organizations and leaders, and used to build public support for policies and systems of care to improve the well-being of Jacksonville's children.

About The FrameWorks Institute

The FrameWorks Institute is an independent nonprofit organization founded in 1999 to advance science-based communications research and practice. The Institute conducts original, multi-method research to identify the communications strategies that will advance public understanding of social problems and improve public support for remedial policies.

The Institute's work also includes teaching the nonprofit sector how to apply these science based communications strategies in their work for social change. The Institute publishes its research and recommendations, as well as toolkits and other products for the nonprofit sector, at www.frameworksinstitute.org.

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Endnotes

¹ Bales, S.N. (2013). *Talking child well-being and public health in Jacksonville: A FrameWorks MessageMemo*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

² Lindland, E., Lorick-Wilmot, Y., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2013). *Development and disparity: A meta-analysis of FrameWorks research on children's issues*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

³ Quinn, N., & Holland, D. (1987). Culture and cognition. In D. Holland & N. Quinn (Eds.). *Cultural models in language and thought* (pp. 3-40). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

⁴ Bales, S.N. (2013). *Talking child well-being and public health in Jacksonville: A FrameWorks MessageMemo*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

⁵ Lindland, E., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2013). *"If you've got a good harness on your kids ...": Models of child well-being and learning among Jacksonville residents*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

⁶ A detailed presentation of the results of this research can be found in: Bales, S.N. (2013). *Talking child well-being and public health in Jacksonville: A FrameWorks MessageMemo*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

⁷ Bales, S.N. (2013). *Talking child well-being and public health in Jacksonville: A FrameWorks MessageMemo*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

⁸ Lindland, E., Lorick-Wilmot, Y., Haydon, A., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2013). *Development and disparity: A meta-analysis of FrameWorks research on children's issues*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

⁹ Lindland, E., & Kendall-Taylor, N. (2013). *"If you've got a good harness on your kids ...": Models of child well-being and learning among Jacksonville residents*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.

¹⁰ Bales, S.N. (2013). *Talking child well-being and public health in Jacksonville: A FrameWorks MessageMemo*. Washington, DC: FrameWorks Institute.