

SUCHADA P. BAZZELLE

JUVENILE COURT JUDGE



- Appointed in 2007 by Governor Jon Huntsman
- Served as a Juvenile Court Guardian ad Litem for seven years before taking the bench
- Courthouse is in Provo, Utah
- Juvenile justice and child welfare cases
- Judge in the Infant and Toddler Court Program
- Adjunct professor at Brigham Young University Law School
- Interests: Family, travel, and time consuming, expensive and/or tedious hobbies such as needlework, scrapbooking and birdwatching

F. RICHARDS SMITH, CWLS JUVENILE COURT JUDGE



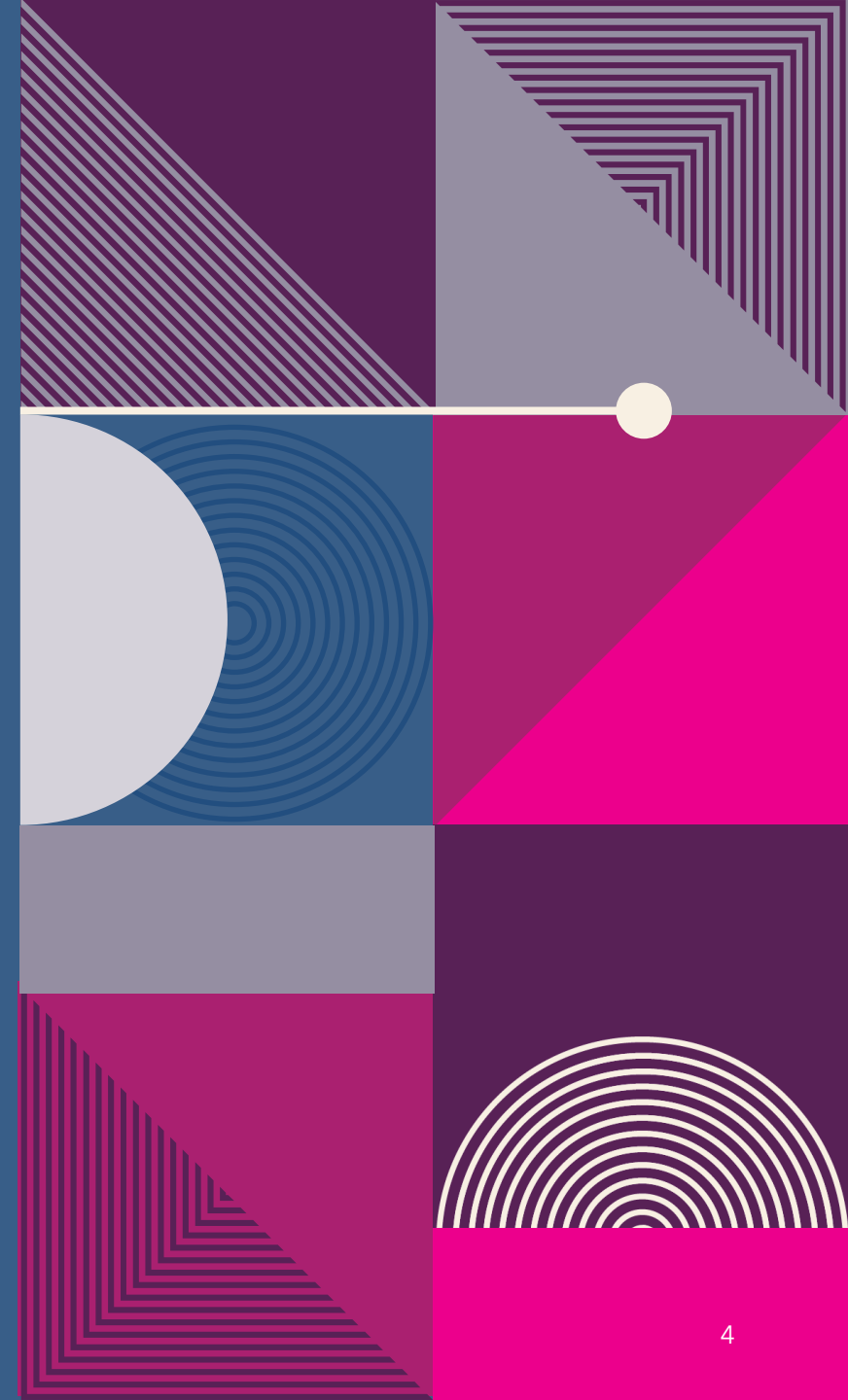
- Appointed in 2012 by Governor Gary Herbert
- Served as a Guardian ad Litem before taking the bench, with prior civil litigation practice
- Courthouse is in Spanish Fork, Utah
- Juvenile justice and child welfare cases
- Has two specialty courts: Juvenile Recovery Court and Juvenile Behavioral Health Court
- Lived experience: Fostered and adopted teenage son through the child welfare system
- Interests: 18 Grandchildren!; Gardening; and Sunshine, the 106 lb. yellow English Lab



**COLLABORATION:
COMING TO THE TABLE
FOR THE BENEFIT OF
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES**

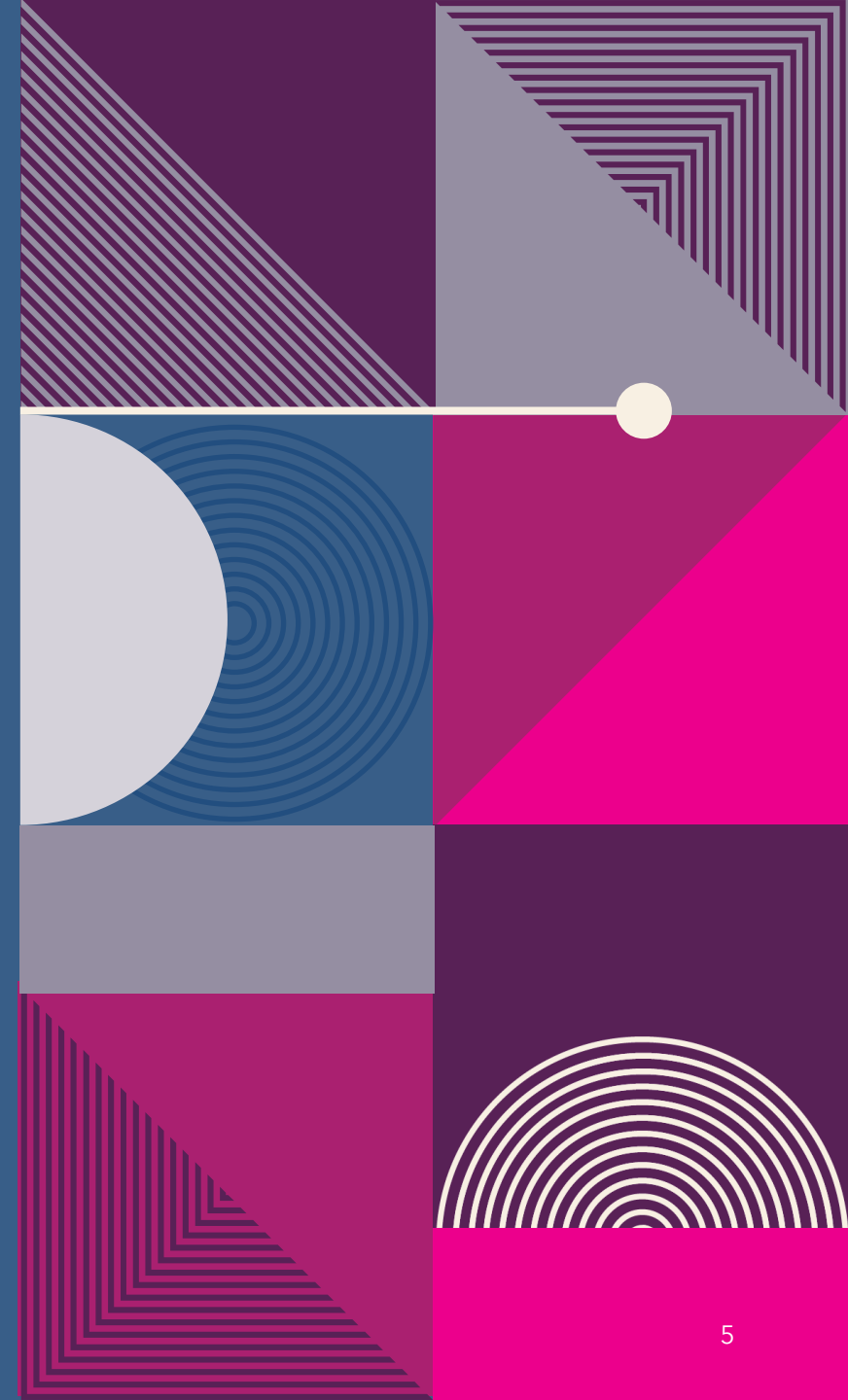
WHAT IS COLLABORATION?

- A partnership or union
- Between two or more people or entities
- Who are committed to a common goal or value
- And are willing to commit resources or energy
- To strive for the possibility of producing an outcome greater than any one member could produce alone

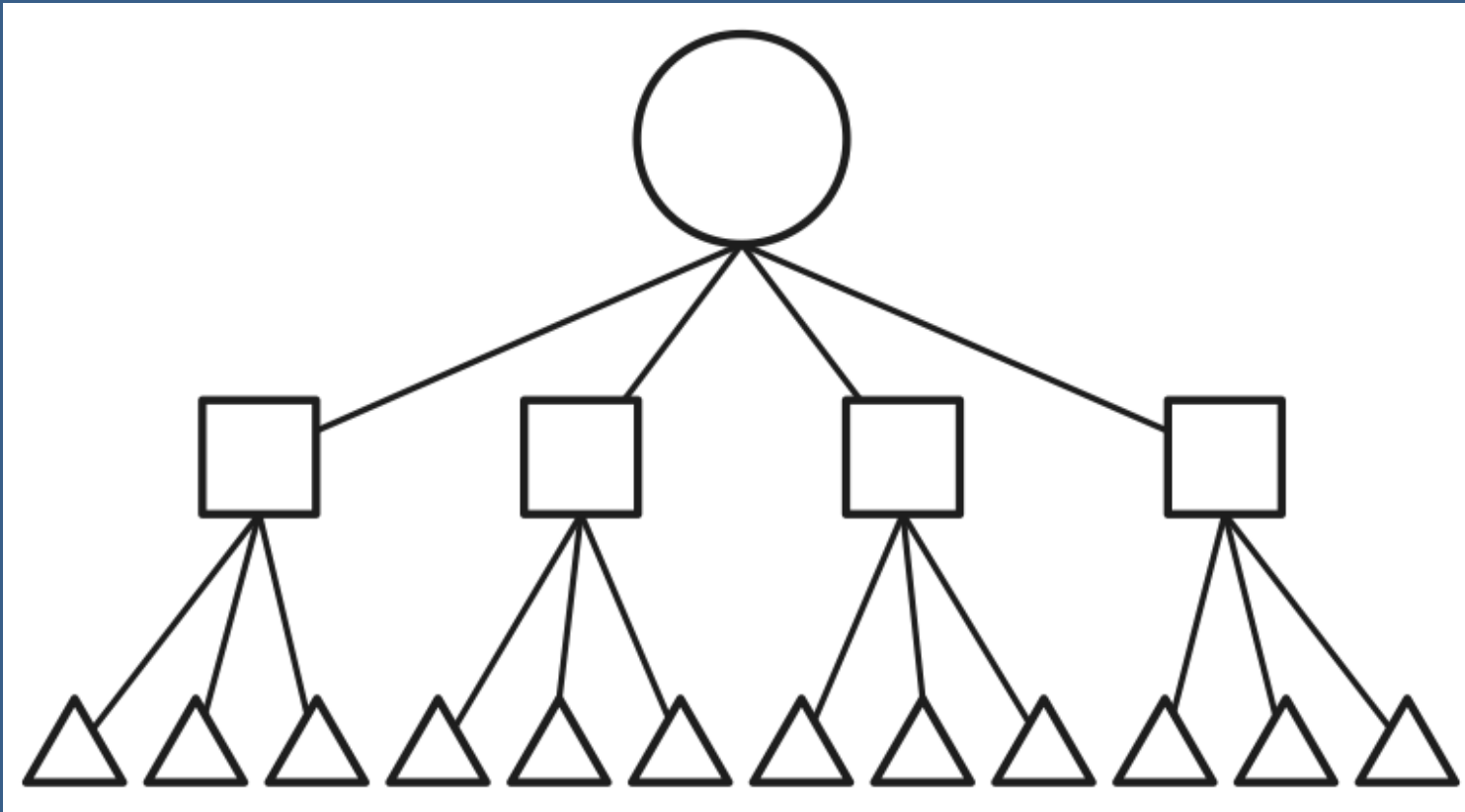


WHY COLLABORATE?

- Beneficial for Children and Families
- Beneficial for Systems and the Community
- Beneficial for Program Sustainability



PYRAMID HIERARCHY



DISADVANTAGES

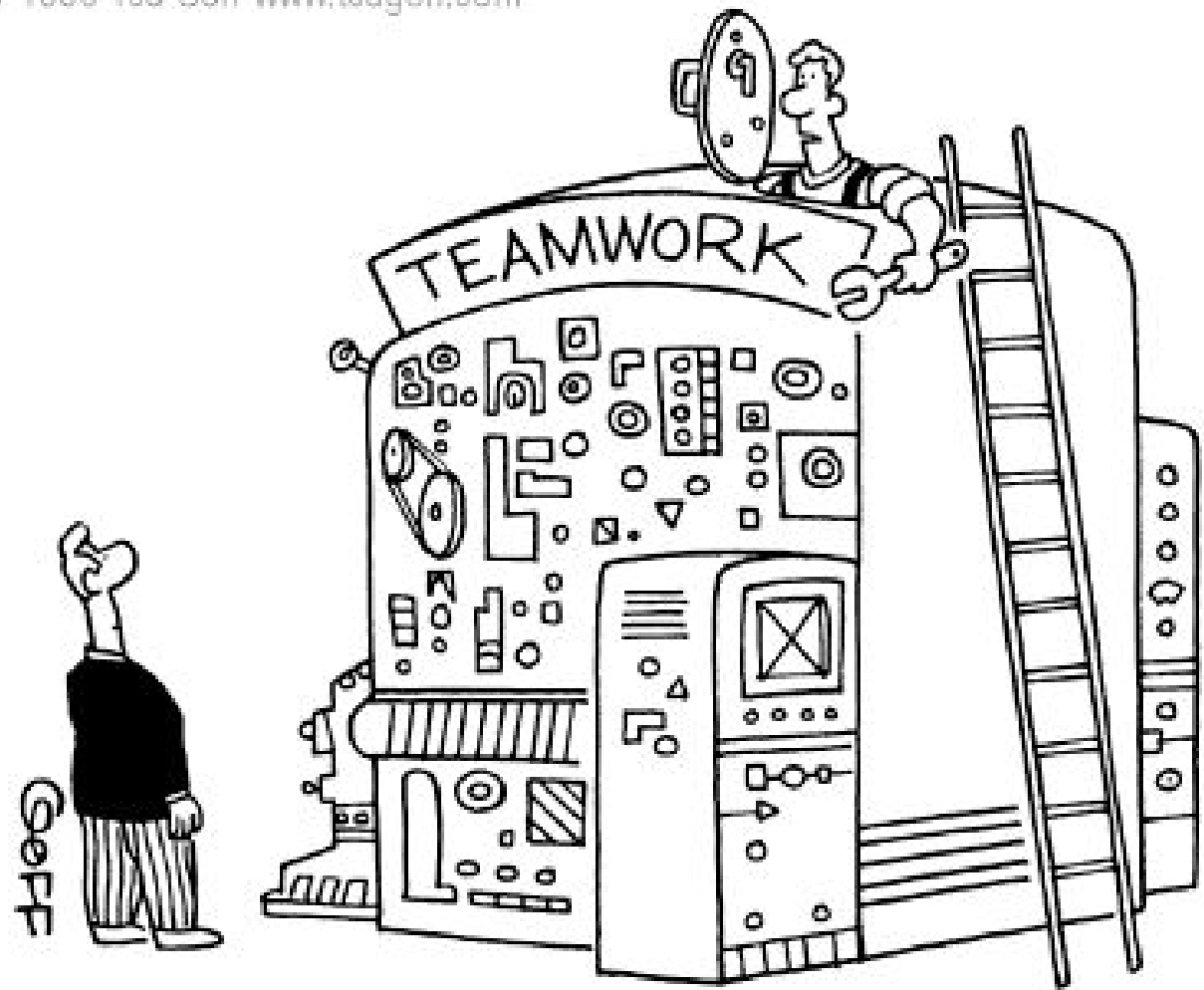
- Excessive layering
- Inconsistency
- Communication delays
- Less Flexibility
- Relationship issues
- Stifled innovation and creativity



I'm more than happy to collaborate. Just tell me what to do.

A SHIFT IN THINKING

Hierarchical Mindset	Network Mindset
Mechanistic worldview	Living systems worldview
Systems seen as a hierarchical pyramid	Systems seen as a web of interactions
Organization at the center of focus	Purpose at the center of focus
Top-down, directive leadership	Distributed, servant leadership
Centralized decision-making	Collective decision-making
Impulse to command and control	Impulse to connect and collaborate
Information restricted	Information shared
Task-oriented	Relationship-oriented
Bias towards deliberate strategy	Embrace of emergent strategy



"There are some egos in here gumming it up."



**“THERE IS IMMENSE POWER
WHEN A GROUP OF PEOPLE
WITH SIMILAR INTERESTS
GET TOGETHER TO WORK
TOWARD THE SAME GOAL”**

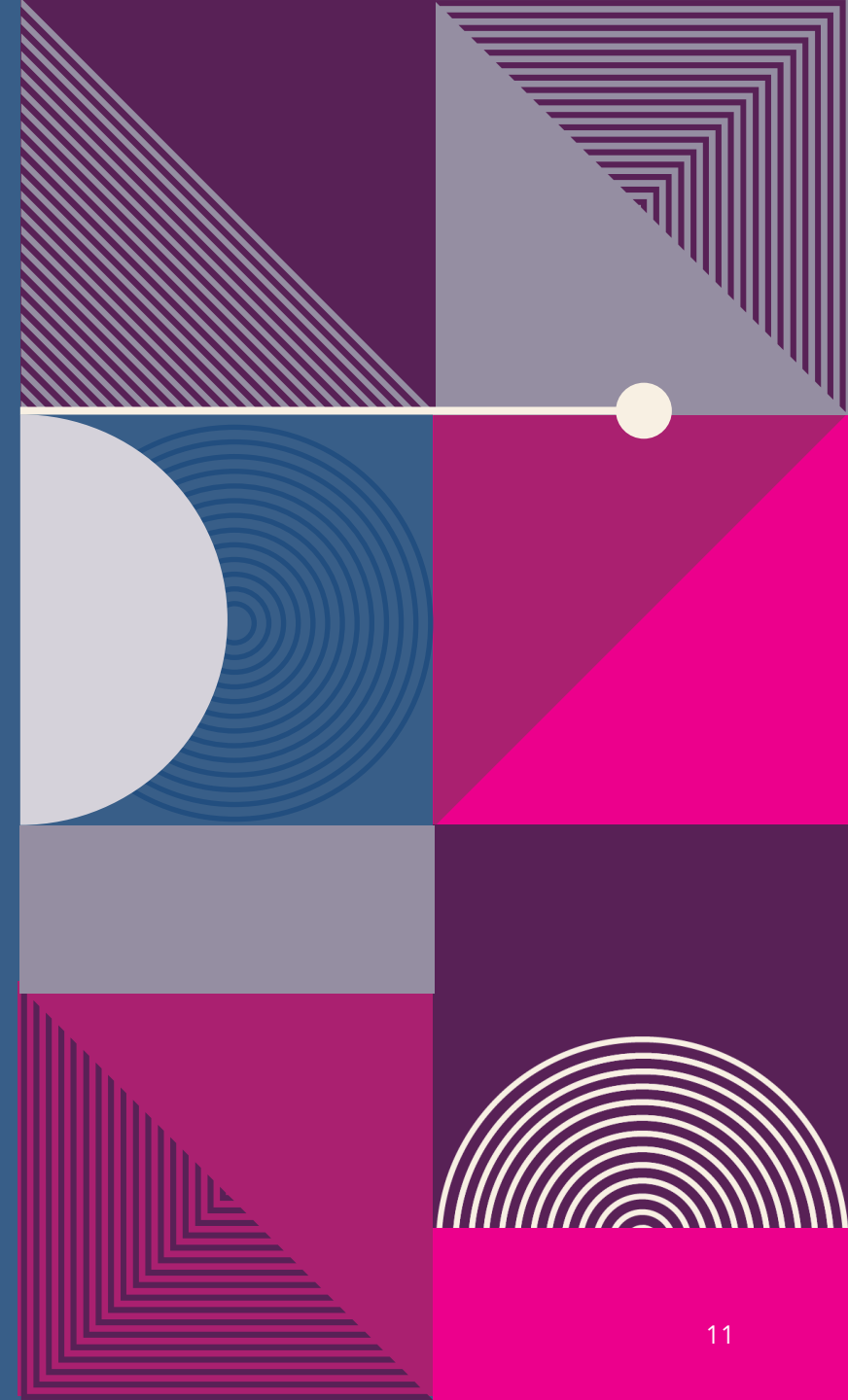
- Idowu Koyenikan, Wealth for All

I HAVE AN IDEA...

Dr. Jennifer Mitchell

Vice President of
Clinical Strategy
and Innovation

The Children's Center Utah





ZERO TO THREE:

A membership-based organization that leads private and public initiatives while partnering with other leaders in the child development field.

Mission:

To ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. At ZERO TO THREE, we envision a society that has the knowledge and will to support all infants and toddlers in reaching their full potential.

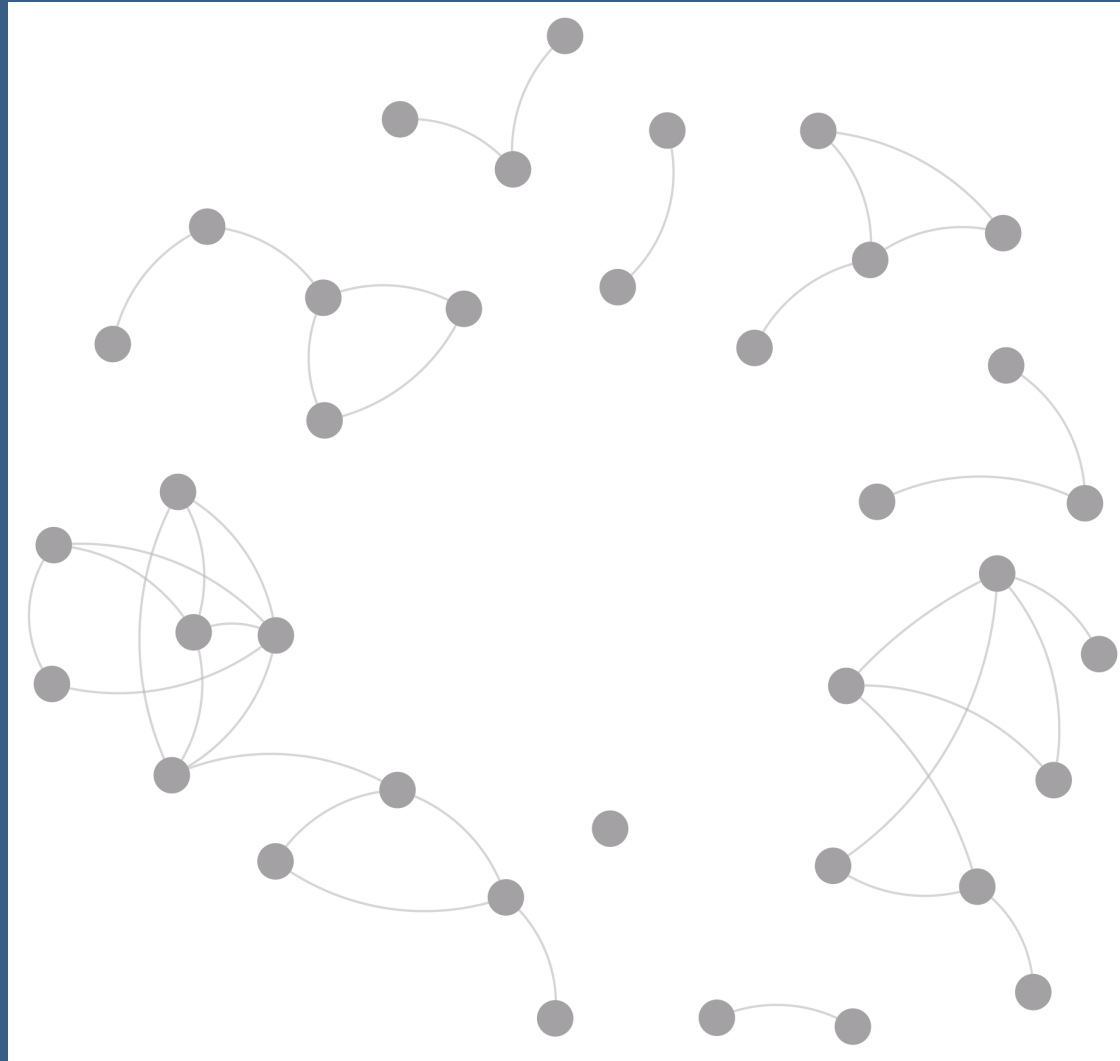
“A big piece of our work is confronting the system that we exist within and acknowledging that there are opportunities for growth. We can do better. That can be a really hard message to hear when you've been doing this work for a long time and it can feel like a personal attack. So much of this approach is relationally driven. We work to build up the relationships and trust we have with community partners and recognize our shared goal to help families thrive. We can't do that unless we are willing to be a little bit humble about where we are in the process and what opportunities we have to grow.”



Tiffany Perry
State Coordinator
Infant Toddler Court Program
The Children's Center Utah



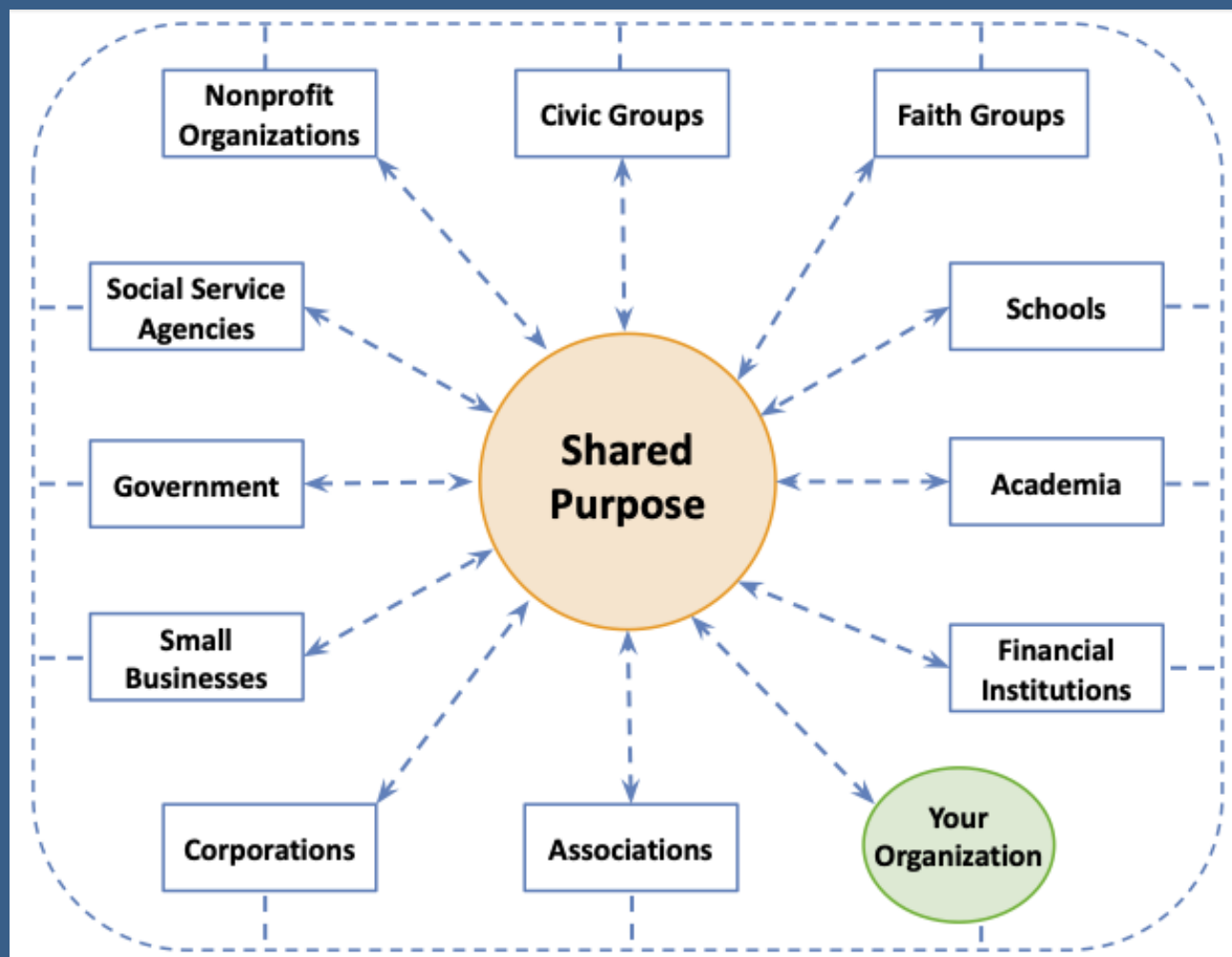
SCATTERED FRAGMENTS



DISADVANTAGES

- Elements of the system are disconnected
- Some people know and interact, but overall the larger system is fragmented
- Without connection, information doesn't flow
- People remain closed off from hearing new perspectives

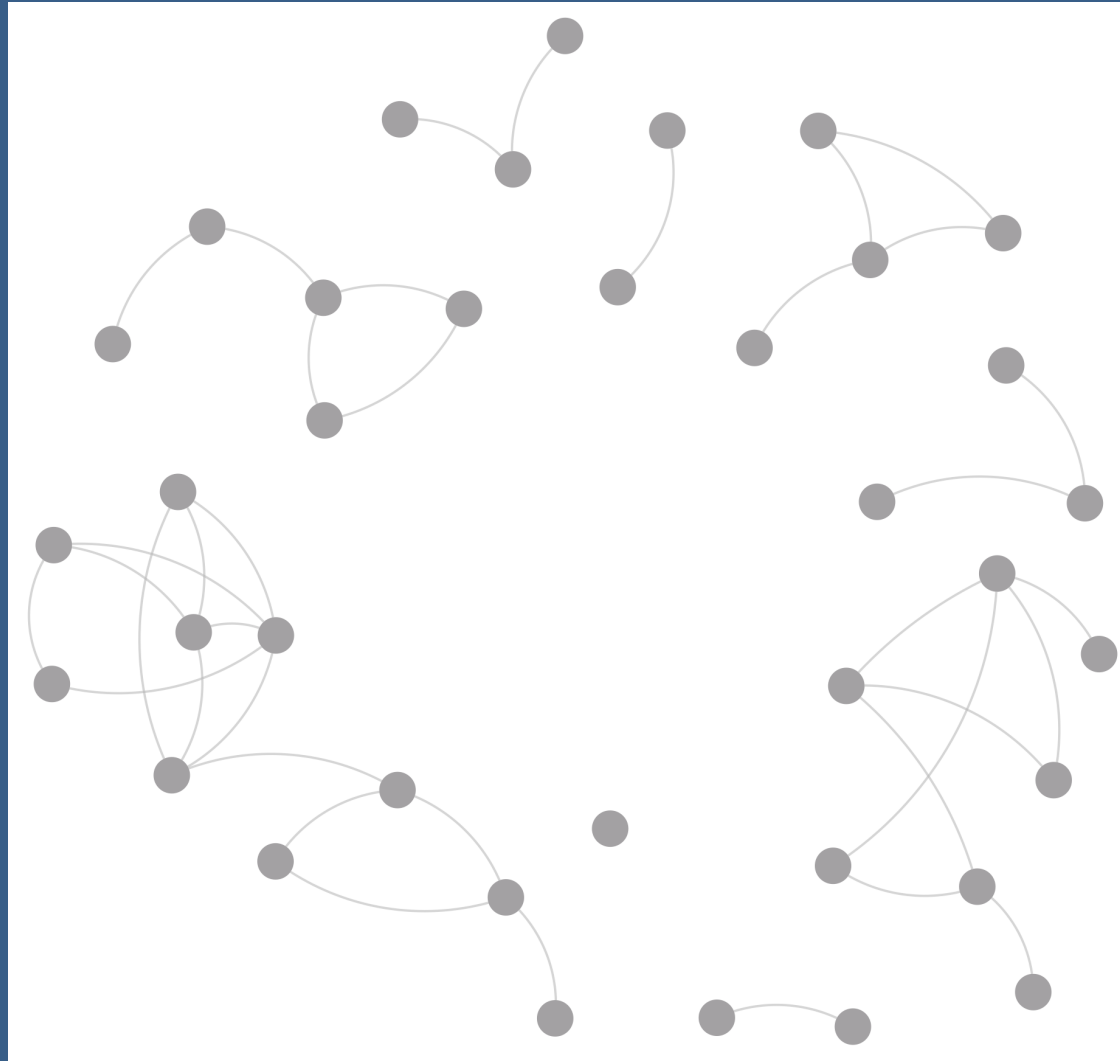
PURPOSE AT THE CENTER



VANTAGE POINT NORTH



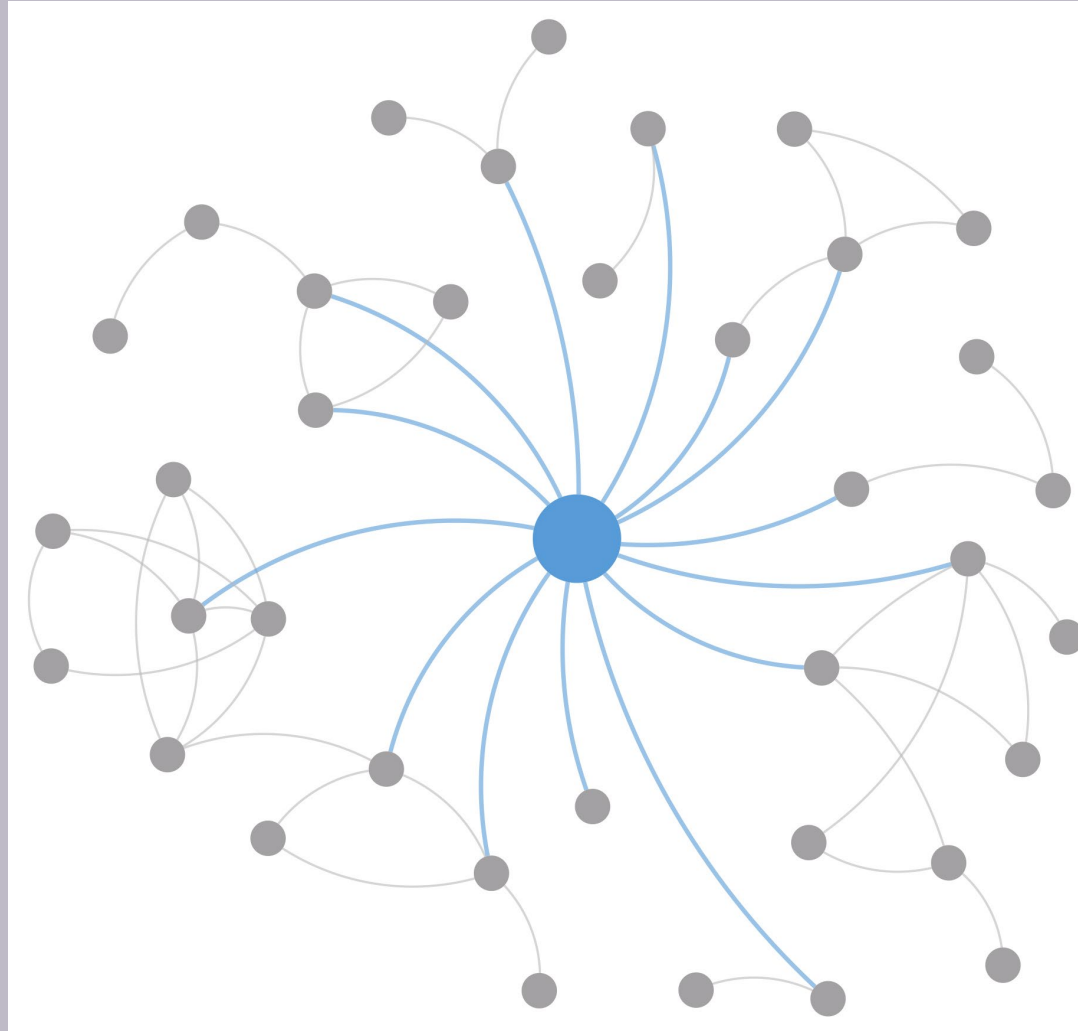
SCATTERED FRAGMENTS



DISADVANTAGES

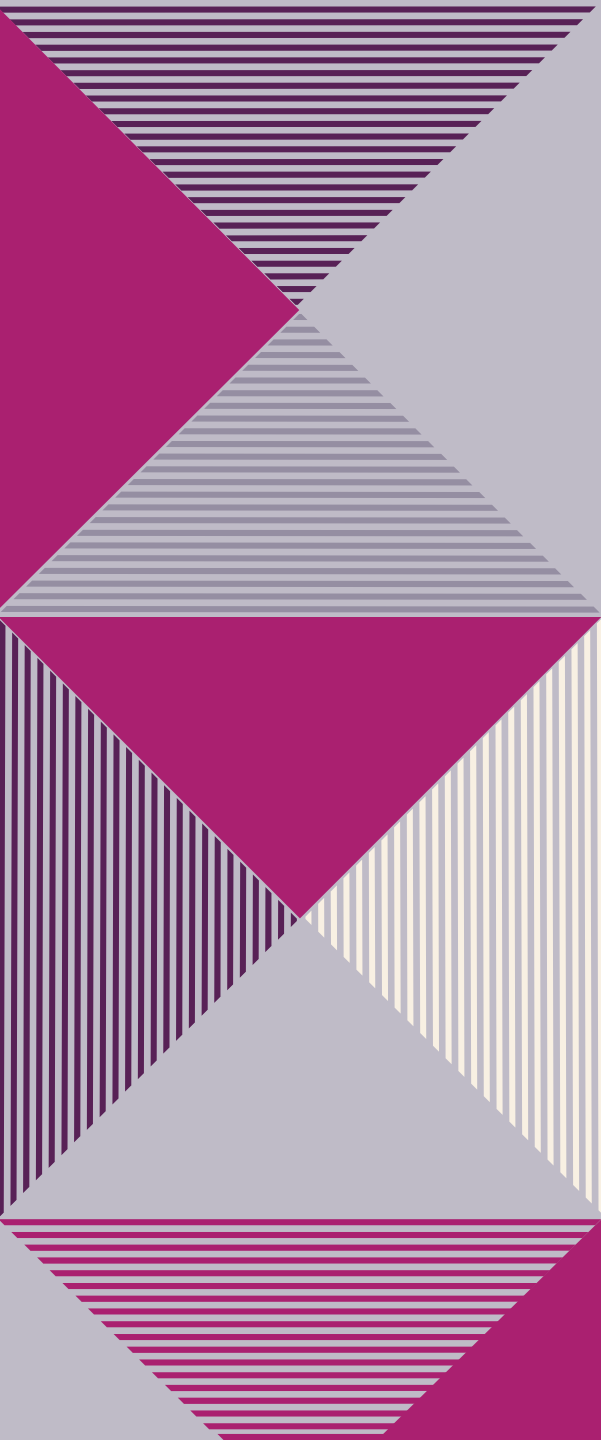
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HUB AND SPOKE NETWORK



DISADVANTAGES

- Overreliance on the hub
- Limited autonomy for spokes
- Communication bottlenecks
- Less flexibility and speed
- Consistency challenges



Great job! You left nothing for me to do
except take credit for it.



Tiffany Perry
State Coordinator
Infant Toddler Court Program
The Children's Center Utah

“Collaboration should occur at multiple levels and information needs to flow in all directions. At the higher level, we need people who are in charge of analyzing the data and making decisions and policies around how we engage with families. But they need to also listen to the front-line participants, such as caseworkers and the families themselves. They need to understand what the actual needs are. They need to be informed by the experience of the families who *are* the data.”

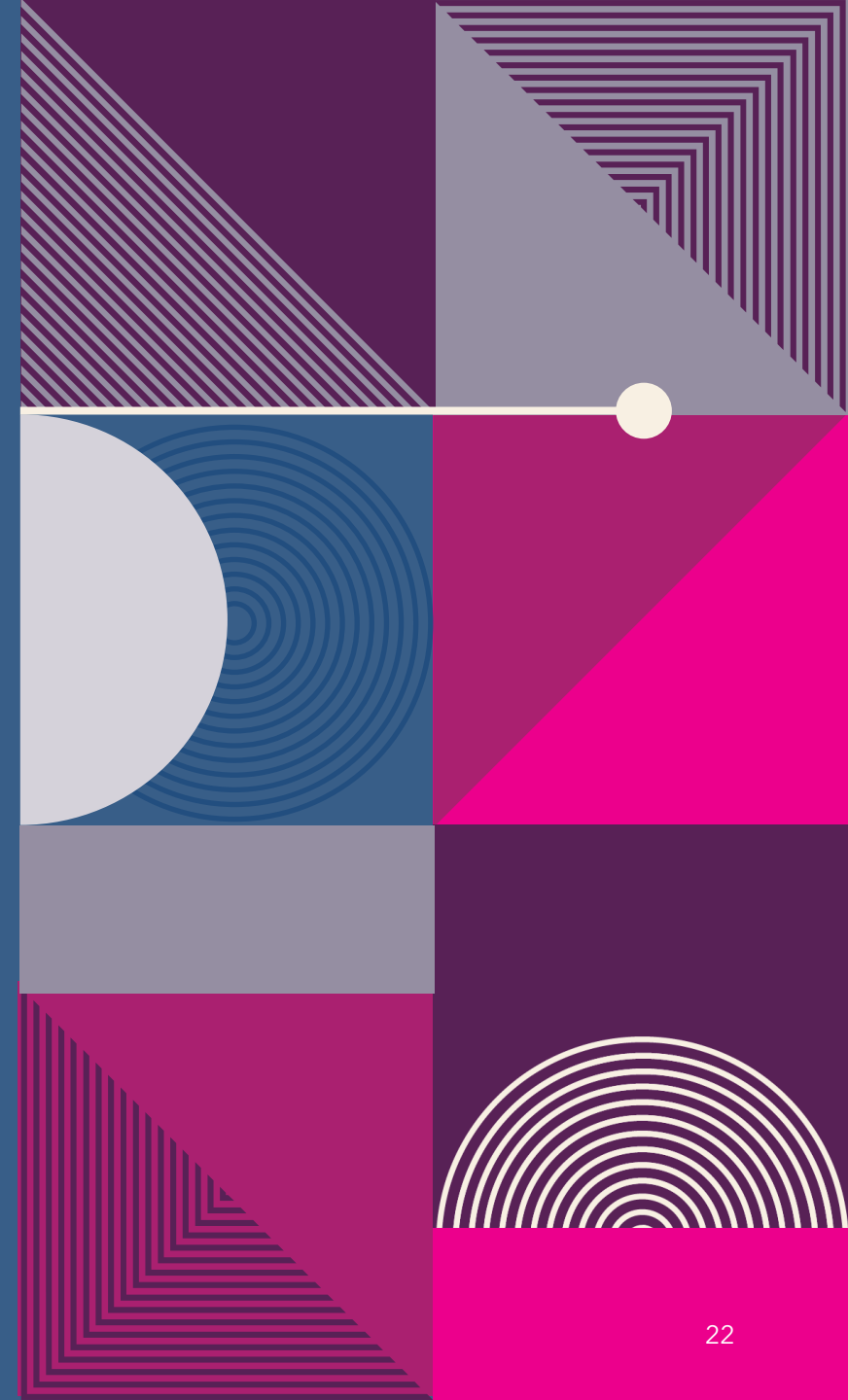


SAFE BABIES PROGRAM

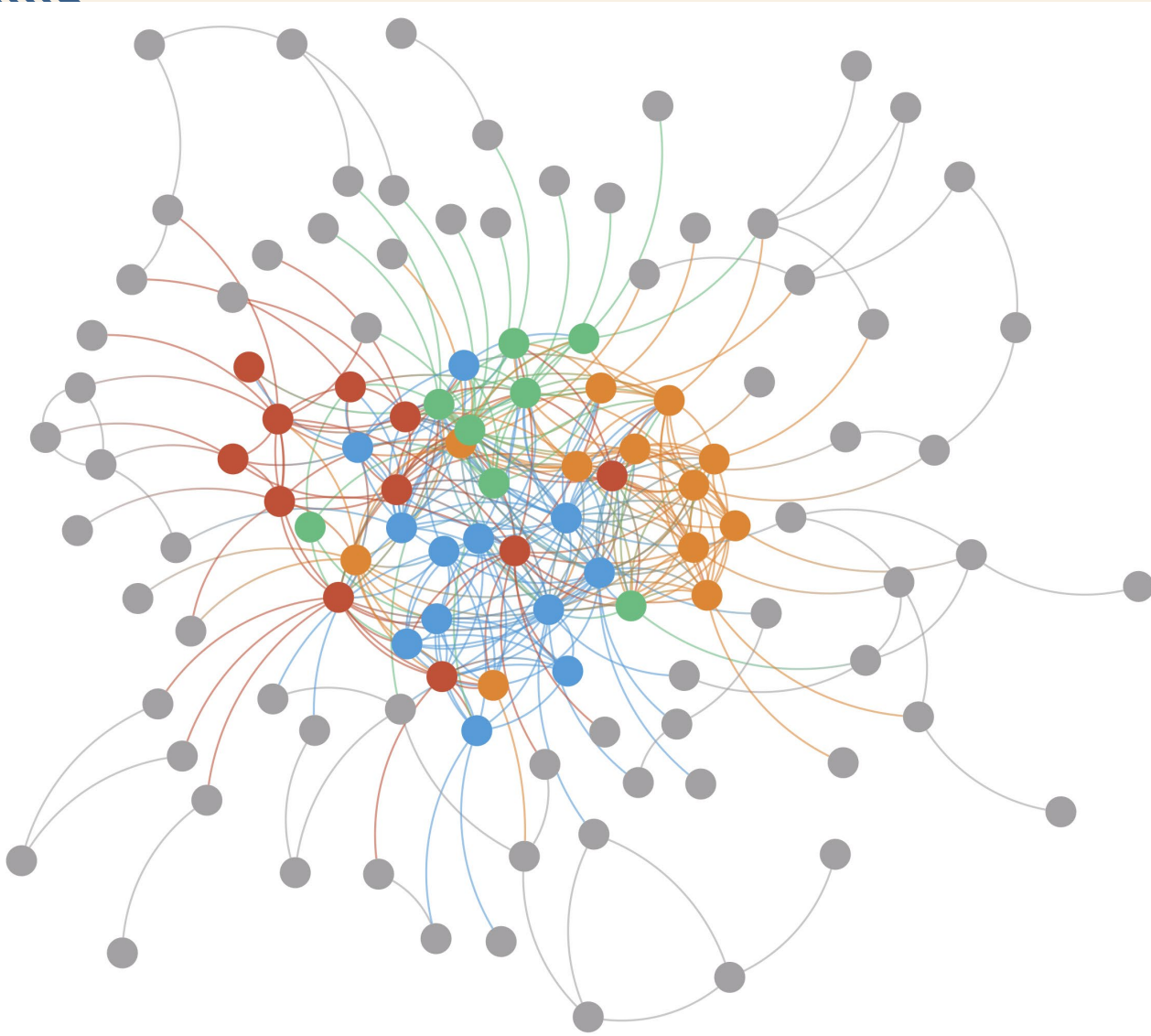




“We like to bring together people from radically different fields and wait for the friction to produce heat, light and magic. Sometimes it takes a while.”



CORE/PERIPHERY NETWORK



- Whole system works in tandem
- Strong, trusting relationships between people and organizations
- Information shared freely between the parts
- Expanded perspectives
- Reduces assumptions about each other's intentions
- Each part of the system consistently interacts with others and finds ways to work together
- Multiple resources are known about and coordinated

DREAM BIG

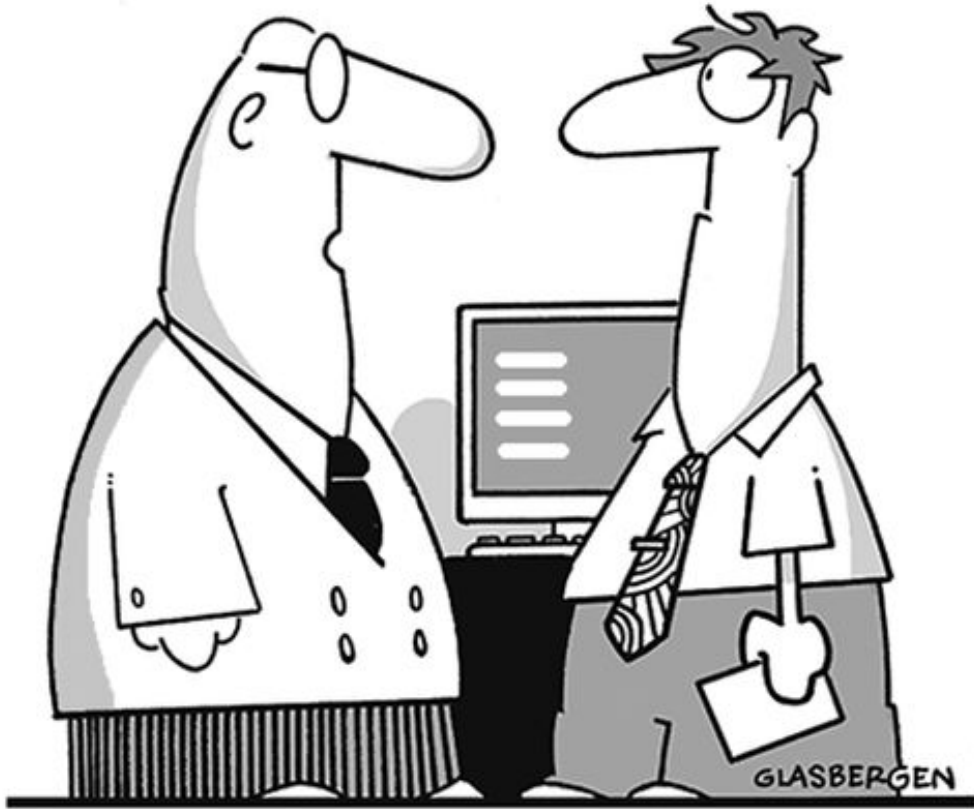
OUR KIDS ARE WORTH IT



Janene Candelot
Program Manager
Wasatch Behavioral Health

“Looking back on it, there were a lot of things that they told me couldn't be done. But I've always felt that if we have a kid and there's a need, we have to take down the barriers and meet the need. We're all part of the system. If we are closed off from each other and pushing back all the time, then that affects the work and it definitely affects the kids and their families. So we have to make it work. These are our kids. We have to figure out what we are going to do to help them.”

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glasbergen.com



**“To be an effective team leader, you need
patience, strength, insight, tenacity and courage.
If that doesn’t work, bribe them with doughnuts.”**

MAKE THE SHIFT



Set Aside: Win/Lose

Adopt: Problem Solving

Redefine what it means to win.

In most of the cases, for most of the time, everyone is working toward the same objective: *Shared Purpose*

SET THE STAGE





MEDIATION CAN RESET RELATIONSHIPS

From: adversarial and resistive

To: collaborative and problem-solving



"A parent takes a big identity hit when someone says they have harmed their child. By the same token, a child protection worker takes an identity hit when they are accused of lying about a situation. When people feel backed up against a wall, they tend to push back and that increases the conflict. But when an identity hit has happened, respect is the antidote."

NINI RICH

ADR DIRECTOR, UTAH STATE COURTS



"Mediation is a great setting for respect to be offered. When people sit around a table to talk about an issue, it gives a voice to people who have, up until that point, felt voiceless. A parent can say, "This part of the petition is okay, but this part is wrong." When the state's attorney who, in the eyes of the parent, has all of the power, answers, "Okay, how can I correct that?" and the parent sees that a change they asked for is being made, the tension level drops. It resets the relationship from purely adversarial to much more collaborative."

NINI RICH ADR DIRECTOR, UTAH STATE COURTS

GAINS

FROM RESETTING RELATIONSHIPS

More willing to engage in services

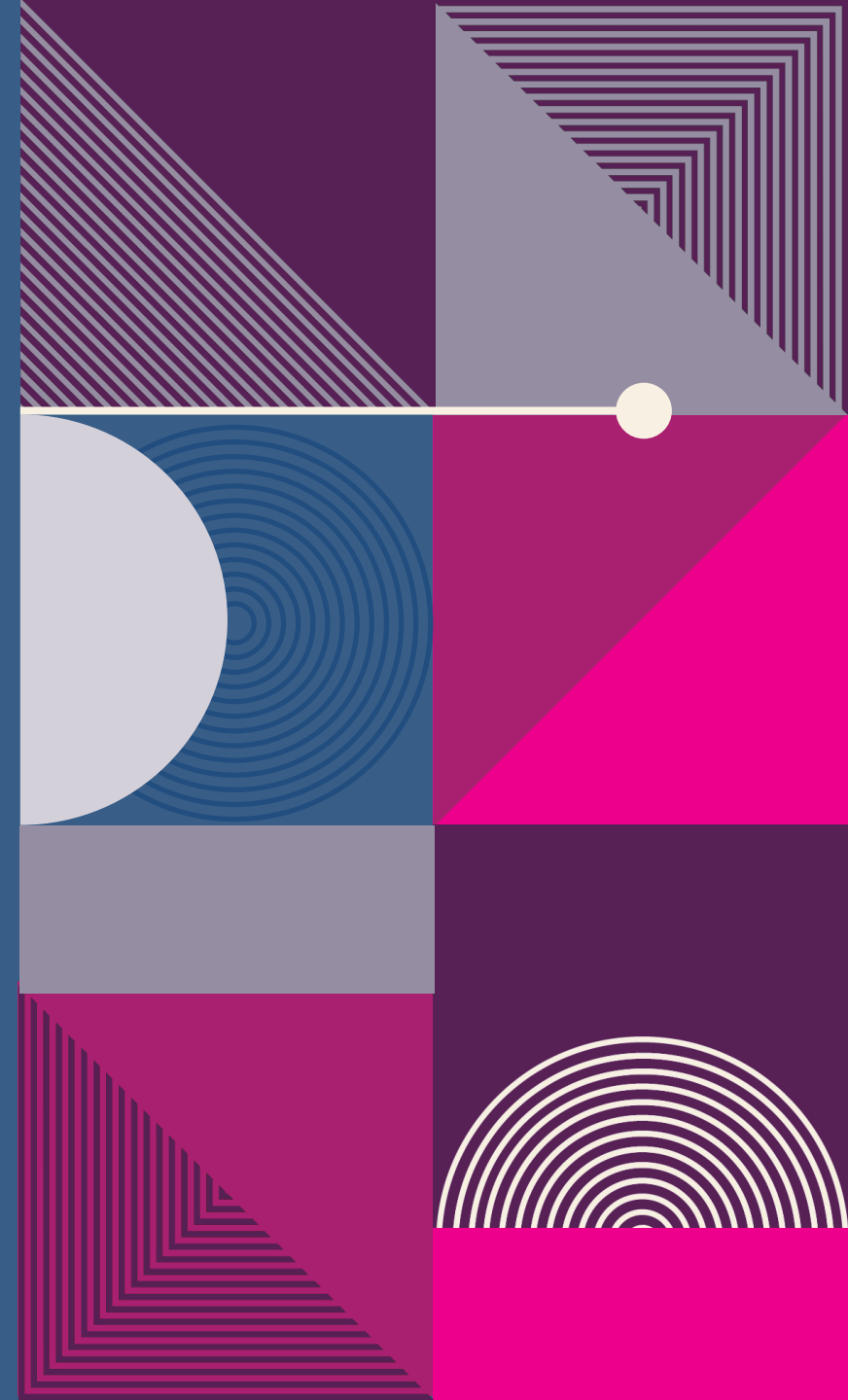
Earlier engagement

Better communication between parent and caseworker

More effective casework

Reduced stress levels, including for children

More?





UTAH STATE COURTS CHILD WELFARE MEDIATION PROGRAM

FOURTH DISTRICT JUVENILE COURT - FY 2023

463 NEW MEDIATION REFERRALS

378	(93%)	Resolved without trial
6	(1%)	Partially resolved before trial
24	(6%)	Proceeded to trial on all issues
0	(0%)	Still in process

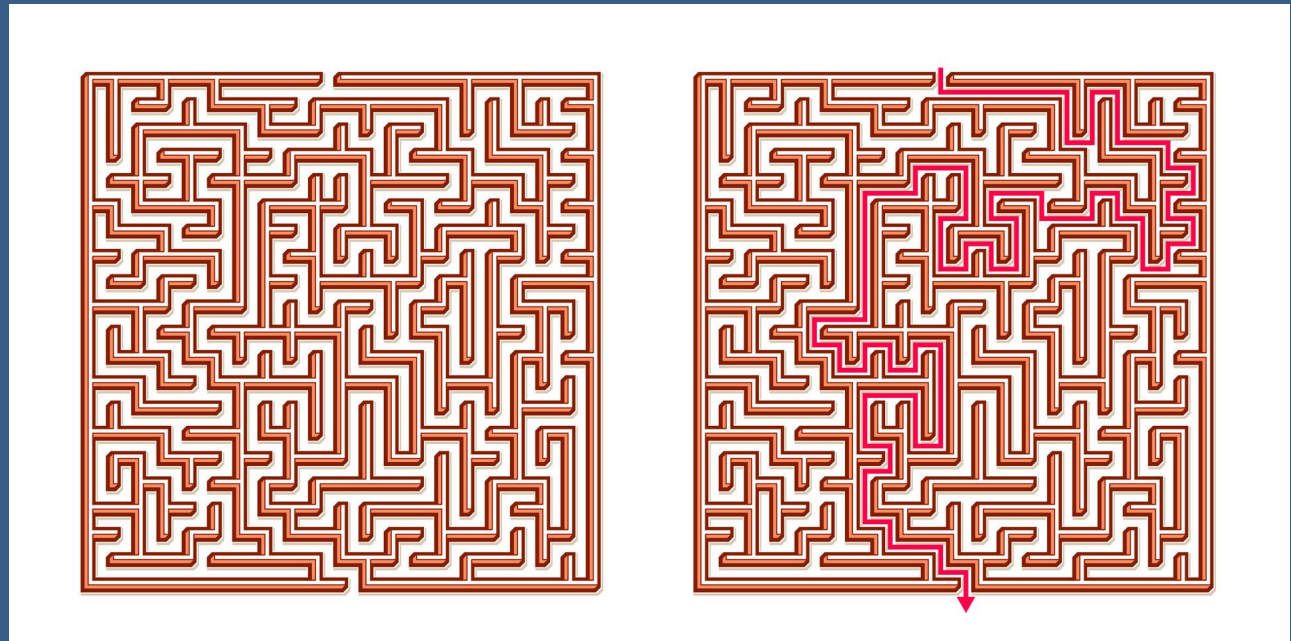
408 TOTAL MEDIATIONS CONVENED

CASE RESULTS BY ISSUE

Issue	Cases	Settlements
Shelter/Custody Petition	106	103
Protective Supervision Petition	184	181
Termination of Parental Rights by State	22	11
Custody/Placement	32	32
Permanency	19	18
Private Petition	9	7
Private Termination of Parental Rights	8	6
Visitation	9	9
Service Plan/Motion to Enforce	1	1
Family and/or Professional Conflict	1	1
DCFS Substantiation	2	2
Child Protective Order	15	13
Totals	408	384 (94%)

CHILD & FAMILY TEAMING

The Driving Collaborative Force



BUILDING A TEAM

CONSIDER THESE PLAYERS:

Child Welfare:


- State's Counsel
- Caseworkers
- Child's counsel/Guardian ad Litem
- Parents
- Parents' Counsel
- Child's placement, where appropriate
- Treatment Providers
- Family Support – relatives, church, community
- School Representatives

Juvenile Justice:

- Child
- Parents
- Defense Counsel
- Prosecutor
- Probation Officer
- Treatment Providers
- Family Support – relatives, church, community
- Mentors
- School Representatives



FINAL TIPS & TAKEAWAYS

- Start with your child and family team – with an emphasis on TEAM!
 - Examine what you have and build on it
 - Check out these sites:
 - Converge.net
 - <https://www.aecf.org/resources/four-approaches-to-family-team-meetings>
 - Someone has to be a leader! Judges are a great resource – get their buy-in.
 - Focus on fact that in most of the cases, most of the time, everyone should be working toward the same goal. If you are not, reevaluate your process.
 - Shift from win/lose to problem solving
 - A collaborative approach works everywhere
 - 3 keys to creating a more collaborative approach: Leadership, Education, and Persistence
- 

THANK YOU!

Judge Suchada Bazzelle

Judge F. Richards Smith

Thank you and credit for ideas and graphics to:

Erlichman, David. *Impact networks: Create Connection, Spark Collaboration and Catalyze Systemic Change*. Oakland CA, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2021.

Schmitz, Paul. *Everyone Leads: Building Leadership from the Community Up*. San Francisco CA. Jossey-Bass, 2012.

Converge Network, converge.net