

# **Communiversality**

**Logic Models for Major Programs of the Phyllis  
Wheatley Community Center**

Prepared in partnership with  
Phyllis Wheatley Community center

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**Logic Models for Major Programs of the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center**

Catherine C. Eichers

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## ***Executive Summary***

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The purpose of this project was to create logic models for each of the Phyllis Wheatley Community Center (PWCC)'s major programs, and to gain insight into the data collected and evaluation tools currently in use. After learning about logic model content and process, the Research Assistant worked with PWCC staff to create the models, which will help illustrate to funders and other stakeholders the impact of PWCC's work with children, families, and the North Minneapolis community, as well as inform PWCC's internal program evaluation and improvement work.

## ***Summary of RA's work on the Project***

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Between September 2006 and January 2007, the Research Assistant (RA) worked 8-10 hours per week creating logic models for Phyllis Wheatley's eight main programs: Academic Achievement, Men's Anger Management, Women's Anger Management, Domestic Violence services, the Mary T. Wellcome Early Childhood Development Center, the Northside Families Initiative, School Success, and the Seniors Alumni program.

First, the RA spent a few weeks reviewing materials from the United Way and the Wilder Research Center on the purpose of logic models and the process involved in creating them. PWCC's development director then worked with the RA to develop a standard set of questions that was used in interviews with each of the program's directors and staff to gather information on program goals, inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes. Each program's current evaluation tools and techniques were also inventoried. After a draft model was completed each program, the directors were asked to review the draft in order to make any comments and revisions for inclusion in the final product. On January 25, 2007, the RA will present the logic models to the PWCC Board of Directors for official acceptance.

## ***Outline of Goals and Objectives of Project***

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The project goals were as follows:

1. Identify key inputs, activities, and outputs which support desired outcomes for program participants.
2. Identify what data is being and/or should be collected as part of program evaluation practices.
3. Create a logic model for each program that illustrates how the program impacts the agency mission and benefits the community.
4. Write a project summary and presentation of the completed logic models.

## ***Tasks and Tools that were Used***

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The RA's primary tasks were to gain understanding of logic models as they are used in program evaluation, interview program staff, create a logic model for each program based on information gathered from the interviews, collaborate with staff to review and revise draft models, and incorporate comments into a final model for each program.

Before drafting the interview questions, the RA reviewed many outside resources to gain an understanding of logic models. Helpful resources included:

- Holm-Hansen, Cheryl. (2006). *How to Build a Logic Model: Tips for conducting program evaluation*. Wilder Research Center. Available online at <http://www.wilder.org/download.0.html?report=1900>.
- McCawley, Paul. *The Logic Model for Program Planning and Evaluation*. University of Idaho Extension. Available online at <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/LogicModel.pdf>.
- United Way of America. (1996). *Measuring Program Outcomes: A Practical Approach*.
- United Way of America. (1996). *Focusing on Program Outcomes: A Guide for United Ways*.
- Wilder Research Center. *Program Theories and Logic Models*. Available online at [http://www.cargill.com/files/tcf\\_logicmodel.pdf](http://www.cargill.com/files/tcf_logicmodel.pdf).

Other than the resources listed above, only the very basic tools of pens, paper, and a computer with email access, were required to complete this project.

## ***Research Findings***

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(see attached logic models)

The interviews with program staff often revealed information that, although not directly applicable to the logic models, was still interesting and relevant. The following sections detail these other tidbits of insight into PWCC's programs.

### ***Overall***

- By and large, program staff held positive views about creating the logic models. The common theme that emerged was the value of having everyone know what is going on in order to have everyone "on the same page."
- Nearly all staff mentioned a shortage of resources as a significant obstacle to their data collection and evaluation efforts.

### ***Mary T. Wellcome Child Development Center***

- One staff member suggested offering resources, such as clothing, food, and toys, inside PWCC so that parents do not have to travel all over to find these items.
- Although small in comparison to other early childhood programs, the program fee charged by MTW is an issue for parents.
- Many staff mentioned the program's impact on parents as significant, but currently there is no way to track or report on this unintended outcome beyond recording the number of events parents participate in.
- Some staff would like to be better able to connect parents with resources.
- Some staff mentioned that, although they enjoy the work they are doing, they struggle with low salaries.
- Staff are looking forward to finding out the long-term results of their efforts through Wilder's evaluation project.
- There is a wide range of computer literacy among staff. Therefore, once computerized data collection begins, PWCC will need to provide computer classes and training for

staff. However, even those who currently have no computer experience are open to new methods if they receive adequate training.

- A consistent support staff person would make data collection and compilation easier.
- The Beginning Kindergarten Assessment numbers for North Minneapolis show that Asian and Hispanic children have the lowest rates of being on track for reading. One question raised by these numbers is how, if at all, the community's changing demographics affect PWCC's historical commitment to serving the African American community?

### **Seniors Alumni Program**

- Currently, the seniors program is for a specific community of Phyllis Wheatley alumni who participated in programs here during the 1920s and 1930s. This group is naturally aging itself out of PWCC programming.
- According to staff, a need exists in neighborhood for senior programming and activities.
- Some have tried to include seniors who are not program alumni in the Seniors Program events, but the old group does not seem open to new members. Issues between the alumni and new senior members include differences in education, work history, tenure in the community, etc.
- Currently, a handful of Phyllis Wheatley seniors informally organize themselves to participate in Park Board parties and events. An opportunity might exist for more formal organization of these events that would enable more people to participate.
- Currently, alumni participants chip in to cover the costs of their Christmas dinner. No fundraising done for seniors program at this time. PWCC provides the space for gatherings, but everything else is provided for and arranged by participants.
- Miss Lucille referred to it as a "club," rather than as a program, which might more accurately describe the nature of the senior alumni group.

### **School Success**

- Staff could use some help looking into other ways of measuring/tracking outcomes of virtues aspect of program in order to better measure the change in students' character that occurs through participation in School Success.
- This program is currently looking for volunteer mentors.
- If not being done already, an interesting breakout of data would compare results of kids who are in both School Success *and* Academic Achievement – how do they compare to other SS students? To other AAP students? Is there an added benefit by participating in both programs?
- One challenge for this program is a lack of support staff. With only one official staff person, there is little time to look at various cross-sections of data, figure out what those numbers might mean, and use the numbers to better match families with needed resources.
- Staff also wishes there was a way to measure what referrals families follow up on and what assistance they get in order to see how referrals affect children's school attendance.



## ***Academic Achievement***

- The director of this program does excellent job of using Excel to track results and produce visual depictions of outcomes for students.
- This program always experiences full enrollment, and there is always a waiting list. According to staff, the lack of money, staff, and space prevents expansion of the program.
- Staff would like a better measure of self-esteem and higher-order thinking skills.
- Some staff report that more skilled staff or more training for staff would allow for better observations of children's behavior and academic progress.
- In addition to simply listing parent involvement activities, parent surveys are a possible method of tracking and reporting on parent outcomes.

## ***Family Services Programs***

- Funding has been reduced for many of these programs without an accompanying reduction in target numbers. As a result, the client-to-staff ratio has increased significantly, and staff feel as if they are sacrificing quality of services in order to serve the same quantity of individuals. To reduce the burden on staff and ensure the quality of services provided, either funding needs to be expanded or target outputs need to be reduced.
- The Anger Management programs currently do not have a measurement tool to gauge participant self-esteem. Could the programs use the same self-esteem inventory test utilized by AAP and School Success in order to assess self-esteem, or is there another reputable test that can be used for adults?
- One challenge in producing logic models for the Family Services programs is the difficulty in accounting for activities and outputs when individuals receive multiple services. When individuals receive both individual and group services, it becomes challenging to accurately portray amount of work being done by staff without double-counting the number of individuals served.

## ***Project's Final Outcome***

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The final product of this project is a set of logic models that connects the condition/program area and how it is addressed by the program to the program's outcomes and relationship of these outcomes to PWCC's mission and, ultimately, to the way in which the community benefits from each program. PWCC will use these logic models to help illustrate to funders and other stakeholders the impact of PWCC's work with children, families, and the North Minneapolis community. The logic models will also inform PWCC's internal program evaluation and improvement work.

# Seniors Alumni Club

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** Older adults who spent much of their time in the 1920s and 30s socializing at Phyllis Wheatley now have few social outlets.

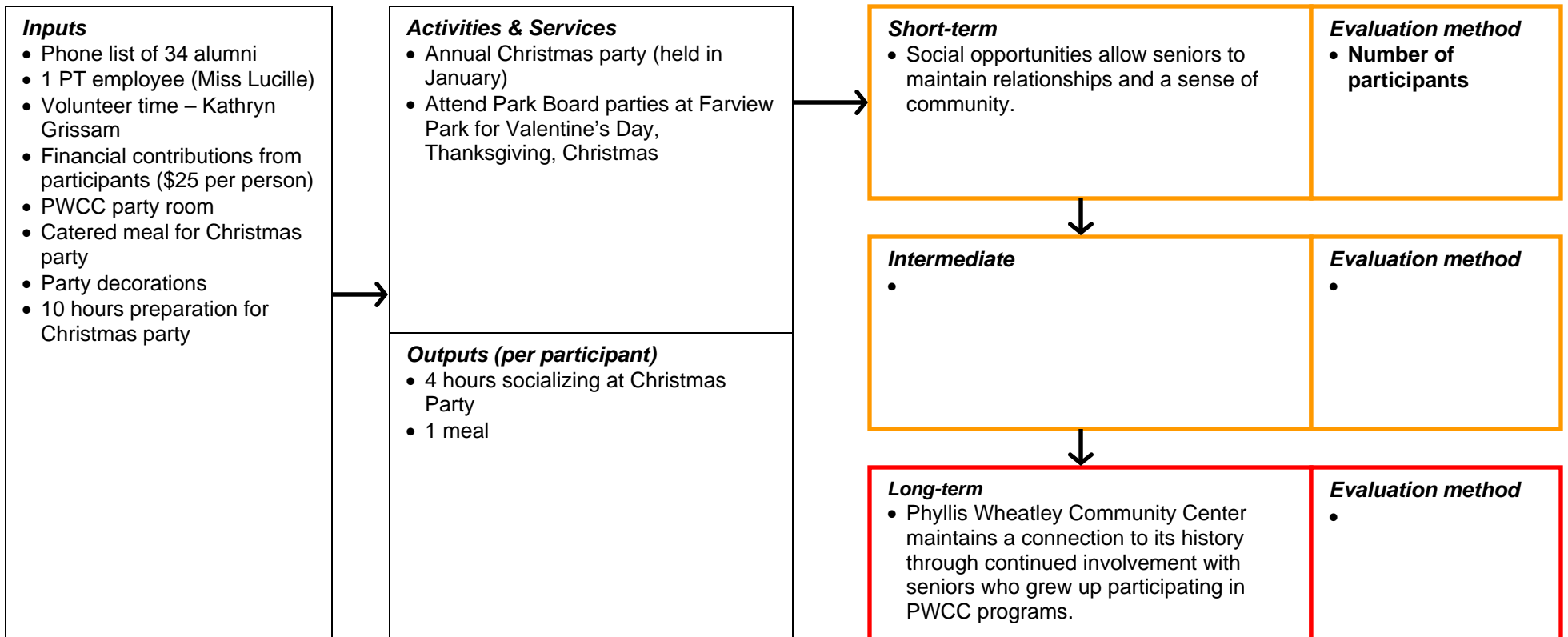
**What We're Doing:** Organizing activities and outings to bring together seniors who went to Phyllis Wheatley in the 1920s and 1930s.

**Why We're Doing It:** To preserve the relationships built and community that was formed at Phyllis Wheatley in its early days, as well as to maintain a connection to PWCC's historical roots.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes



# School Success

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** Truancy is a problem for a number of Northside Elementary School students. If a student's attendance rate drops below 84%, Hennepin County intervenes. Because these students are elementary school age and parents hold primary responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance at school, frequent absences often indicate significant challenges at home.

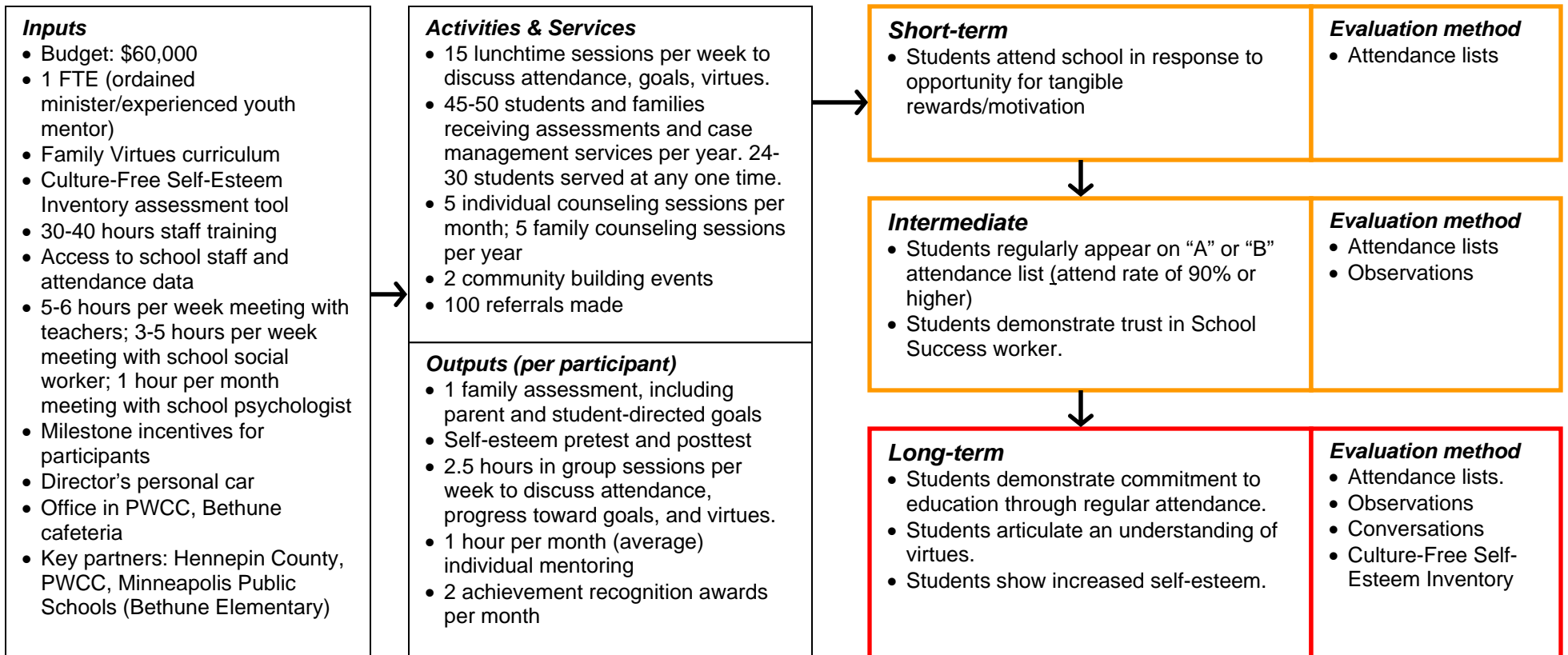
**What We're Doing:** As a community-based organization, Phyllis Wheatley is positioned to work closely with families whose children attendance rate is 84-92% in order to prevent Hennepin County's Child Protection department from becoming involved. Phyllis Wheatley's School Success program uses a whole-family approach to address home and family issues, problem-solving and goal-setting skills, and low self-esteem in order to boost participants' attendance rate, foster positive academic outcomes, and promote a positive attitude toward school and education.

**Why We're Doing It:** To take an asset-based preventative approach that addresses obstacles to regular attendance and creates an environment that makes school something to look forward to for both children and families in order to reach families before the Child Protection gets involved.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes



# Northside Family Initiative (NFI)

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** Families in North Minneapolis experience a myriad of economic and social challenges. The Northside has one of the area's highest concentrations of single parent families and highest rates of teen pregnancy. Although many single parents have some assets to draw on, including personal support networks, access to community resources, knowledge, and experience, they often lack a few basic life skills necessary to successfully balance the demands of working and raising a family.

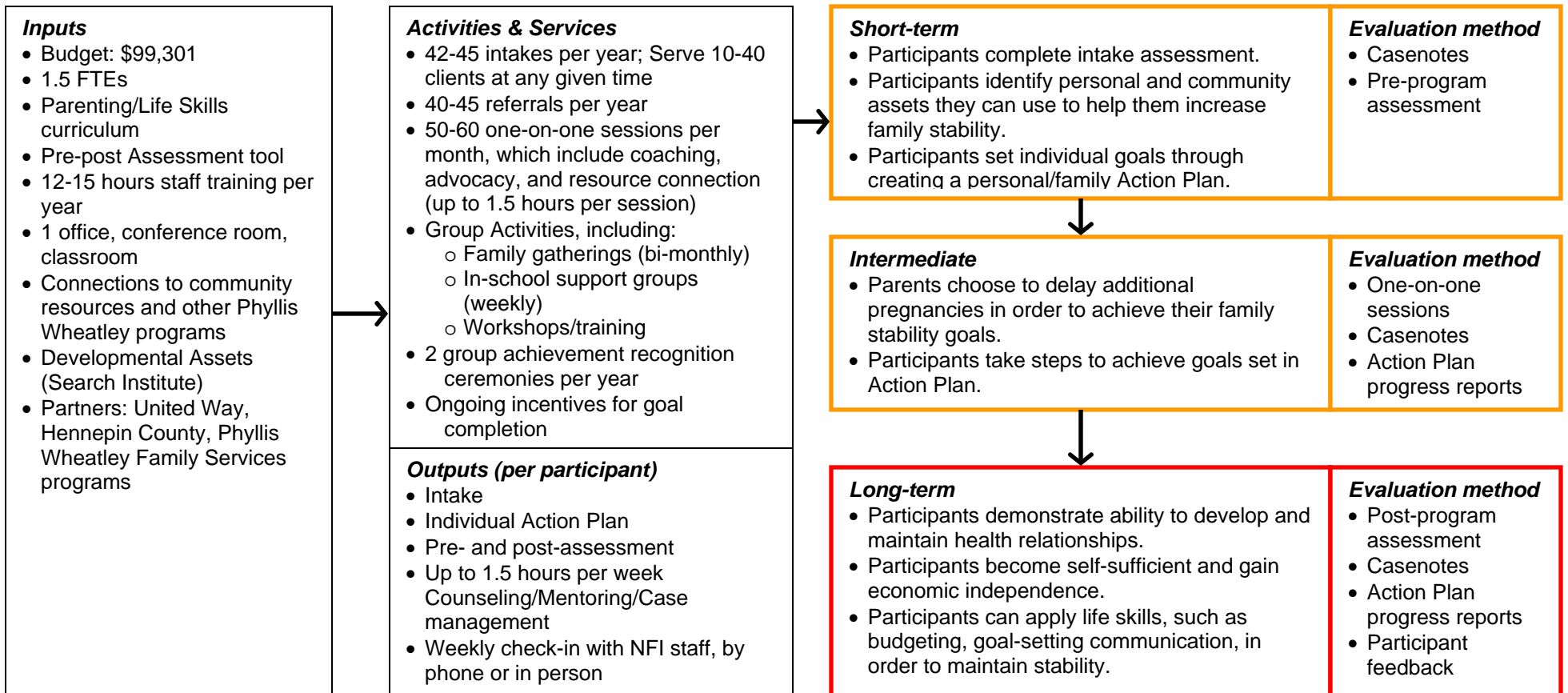
**What We're Doing:** The NFI builds upon single parents' personal assets by providing nonjudgmental support and assistance in developing life skills such as goal setting, planning, communication, problem solving, and decision making. Through NFI, participants can get connected to low-income housing opportunities, training for higher-wage jobs, and support in meeting the goals participants set for themselves around the areas of decision-making, communication, healthy relationships, parenting choices, financial management, and asset-building.

**Why We're Doing It:** To help families obtain the skills and resources necessary for self-sufficiency and long-term stability.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes



# Mary T. Wellcome Child Development Center

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** Only 42 percent of kindergartners in North Minneapolis are on track to read well in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Racial disparities exist, as well: 46 percent of African American children, 35 percent of Asian, 17 percent of Hispanic, and 61 percent of White kindergartners in North Minneapolis are on track for reading.<sup>1</sup> Children in the neighborhood experience a number of obstacles to academic success. Currently, 57 percent of MTW students come from single-parent homes.

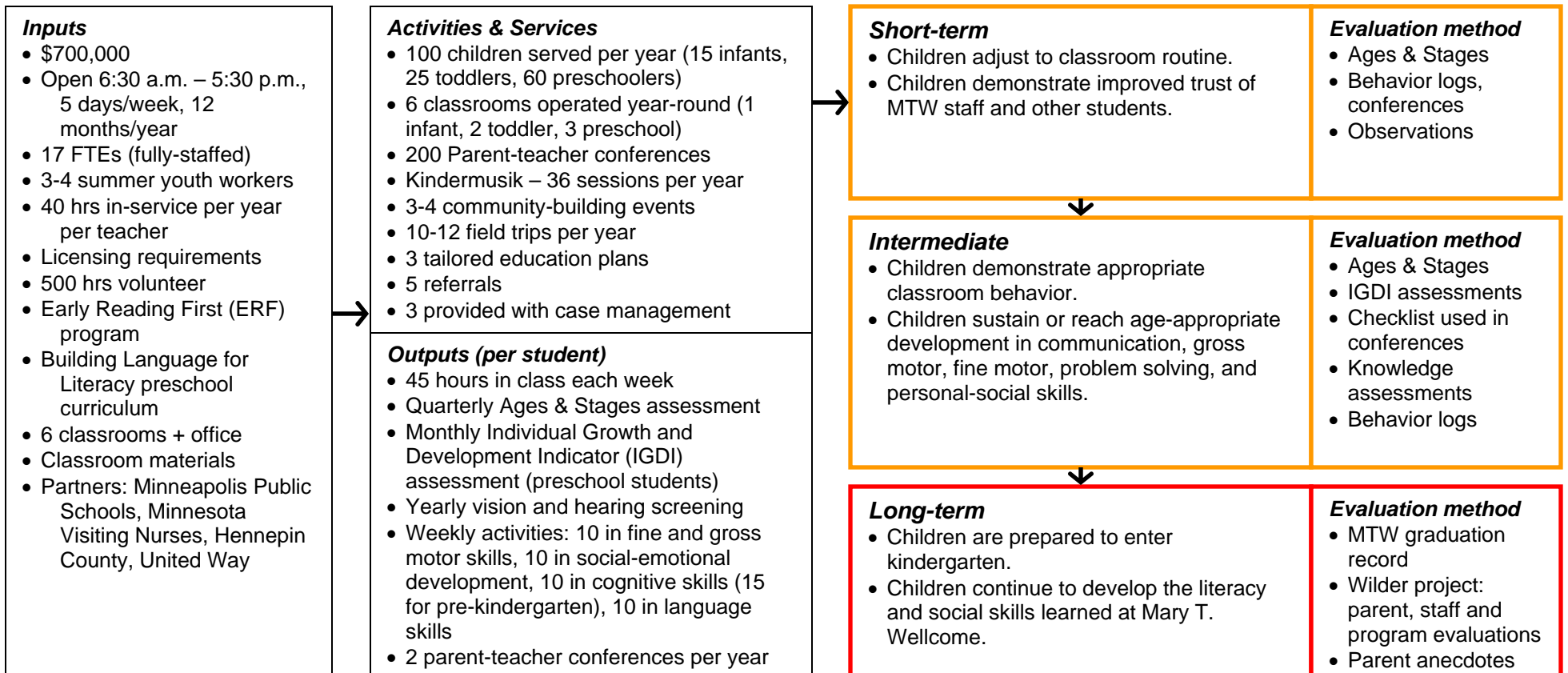
**What We're Doing:** Mary T. Wellcome reaches children early in life to provide a comprehensive, educational, and developmentally-appropriate program that cares for infants, toddlers and preschoolers. MTW offers a variety of learning experiences to foster the children's physical, cognitive, social and emotional development, within a nurturing and caring environment.

**Why We're Doing It:** To ensure that every child in MTW's programs is cognitively, socially, and emotionally prepared for kindergarten.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes



<sup>1</sup> Northside Student Beginning Kindergarten Assessment Results, Fall 2005. Prepared by MPS Research, Evaluation and Assessment.

# Mens Anger Management Program

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** North Minneapolis has a high incidence of domestic violence, as well as a high number of ex-offenders re-entering society. Additionally, many individuals in the community need support as they transition from chemical dependence to a chemical-free lifestyle.

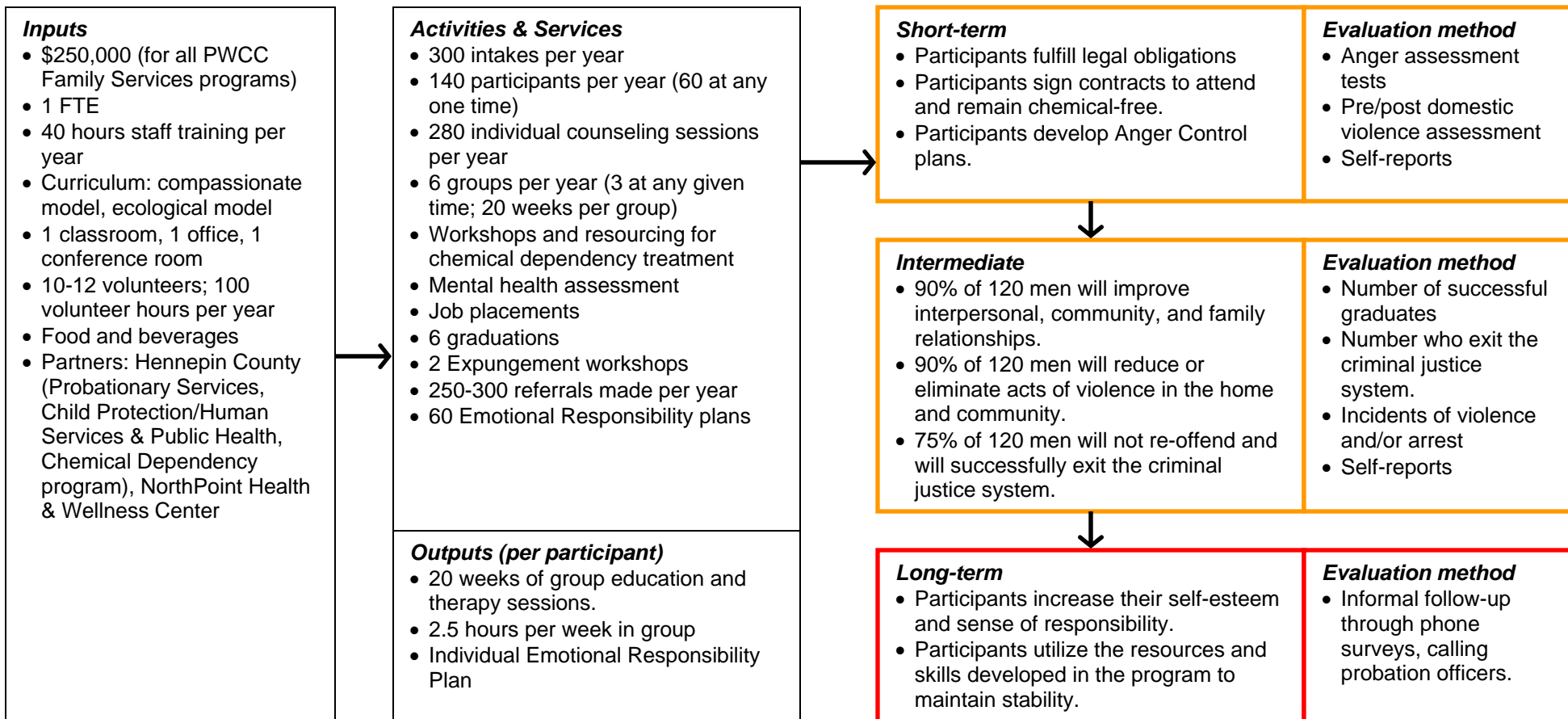
**What We're Doing:** PWCC offers education, therapy, and assistance with resource attainment to support men as they learn to live violence-free lives.

**Why We're Doing It:** Through education, intervention, and prevention, PWCC hopes to connect community members with educational, psychological, and economic resources in order to support their maintaining violence-free lives and thereby reduce violence in the community.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes



# Womens Domestic Violence Program

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** The 55411 zip code has 7 times greater incidence of domestic violence than other areas, as measured by the number of emergency room visits resulting from abuse.

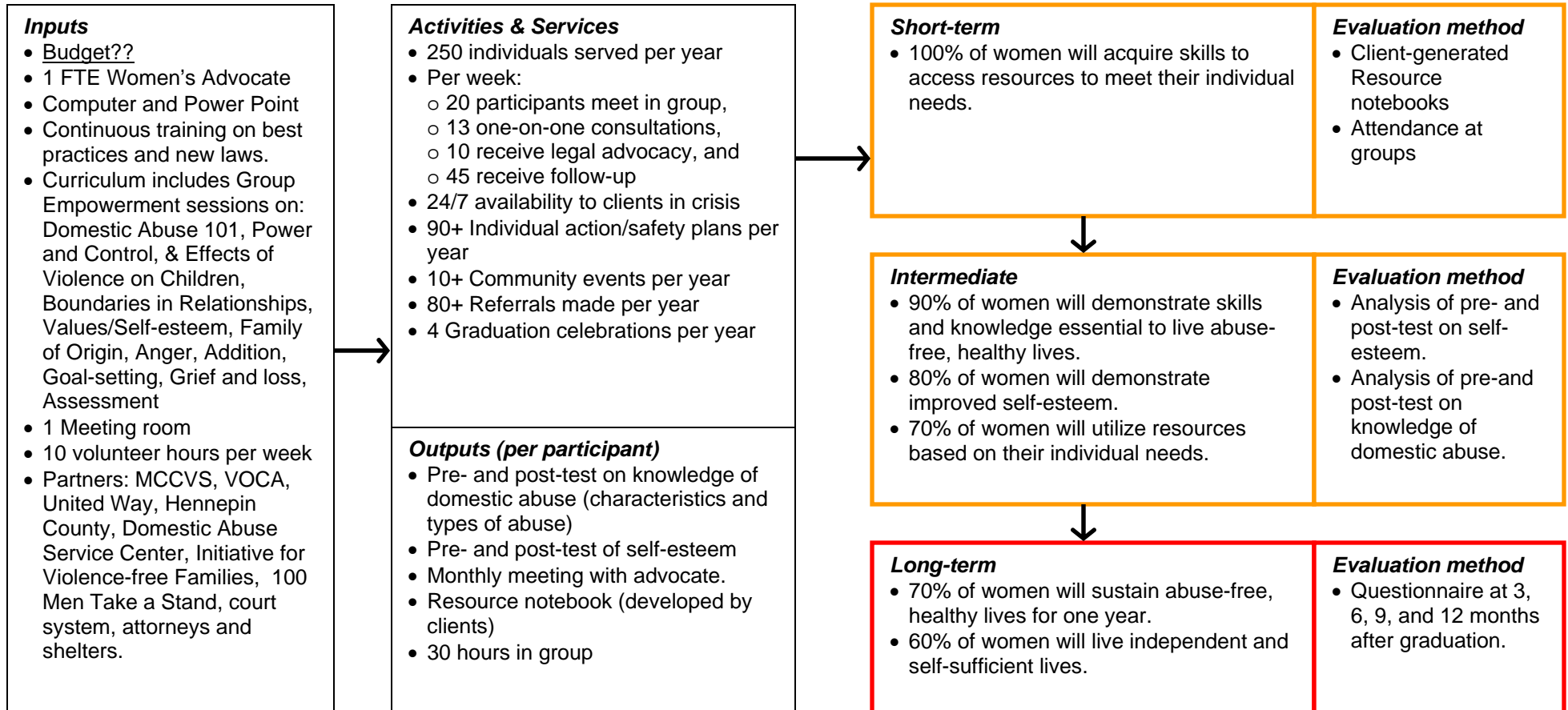
**What We're Doing:** Phyllis Wheatley's Women's Program works in collaboration with other agencies to support, educate, and empower victims of domestic violence with information and legal advocacy as they strive to live a violence-free life.

**Why We're Doing It:** Meeting the individual needs of victims through ongoing support and legal advocacy will help address the need in the community for domestic violence intervention and prevention. Additionally, Phyllis Wheatley believes that long-range safety and security can be restored by establishing strong, effective partnerships and by building the capacity for the community to respond in a coordinated manner to the problem of domestic violence.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes





# Womens Anger Management

## Community Condition / Needs & Strengths

**The Need:** Some women in the community present aggressive and/or violent behavior, exacerbated by unhealthy lifestyles and poor decision-making.

**What We're Doing:** Using classroom lectures and activities, as take-home assignments, and positive cross-cultural collaborative experiences to improve participants' behavior in a cognitive manner.

**Why We're Doing It:** In order to improve communication skills and promote healthy thinking that leads to healthy behavior among women in the community. Participants become responsible, viable supportive individuals for their families and the surrounding community.

## Inputs

## Outputs

## Outcomes

