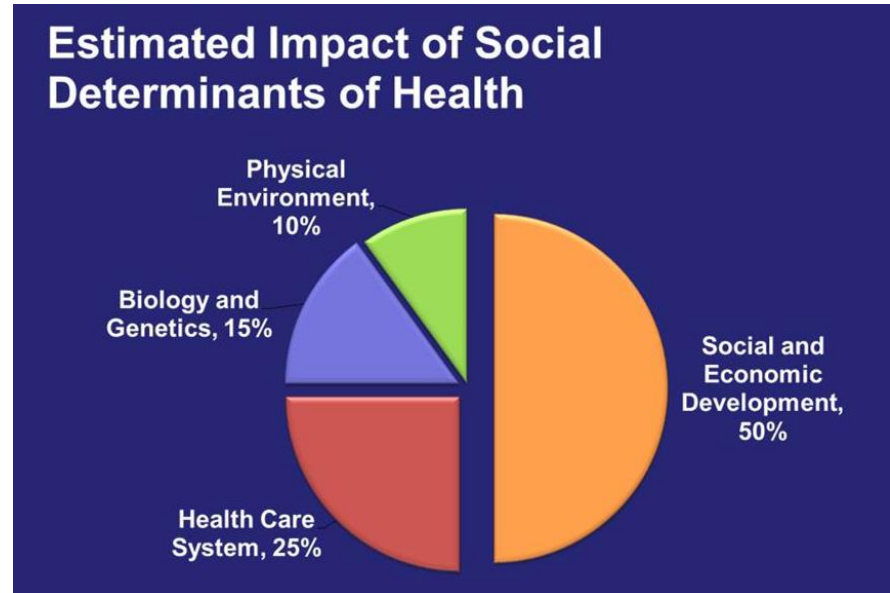# Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Health is about more than health care

Health care – what happens in a clinic, hospital, or doctor's office – accounts for between 10% and 25% of a person's total health.

Biology and genetics account for another 15%

The social determinants of health account for the rest.

Estimated Impact of Social Determinants of Health

Physical Environment, 10%

Biology and Genetics, 15%

Social and Economic Development, 50%

Health Care System, 25%

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity." – World Health Organization

Because *health* is so often confused with *health care,* it can be better to talk about *well-being.*
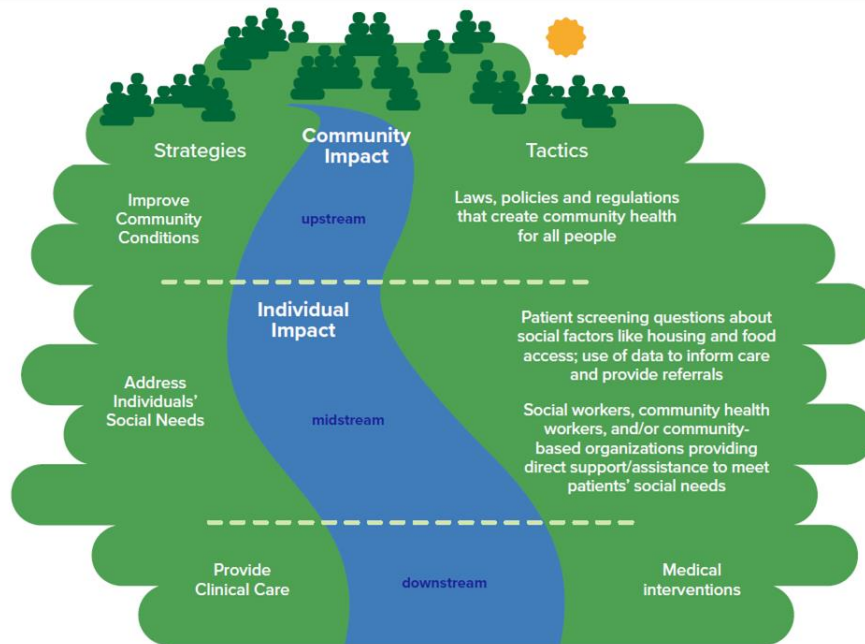
Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

To improve well-being, we can't provide support only when people are sick and in crisis.

We need to pay attention to people's individual needs – and to the conditions that affect *everyone's* well-being.
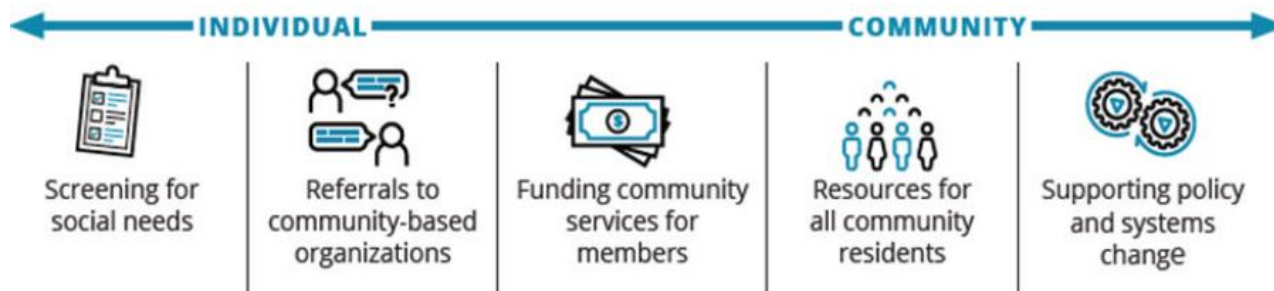
We need to work upstream.

Adapted from Health Affairs, *Castrucci and Aurbach, 2019*
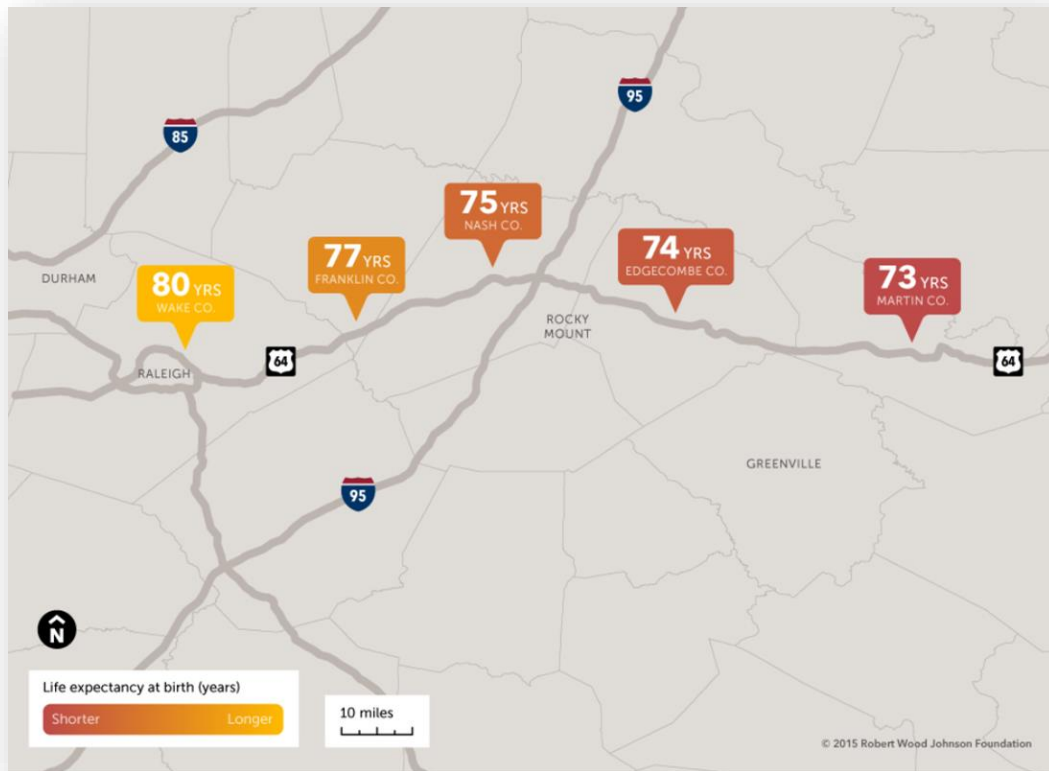
Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Continuum of strategies to address health issues

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

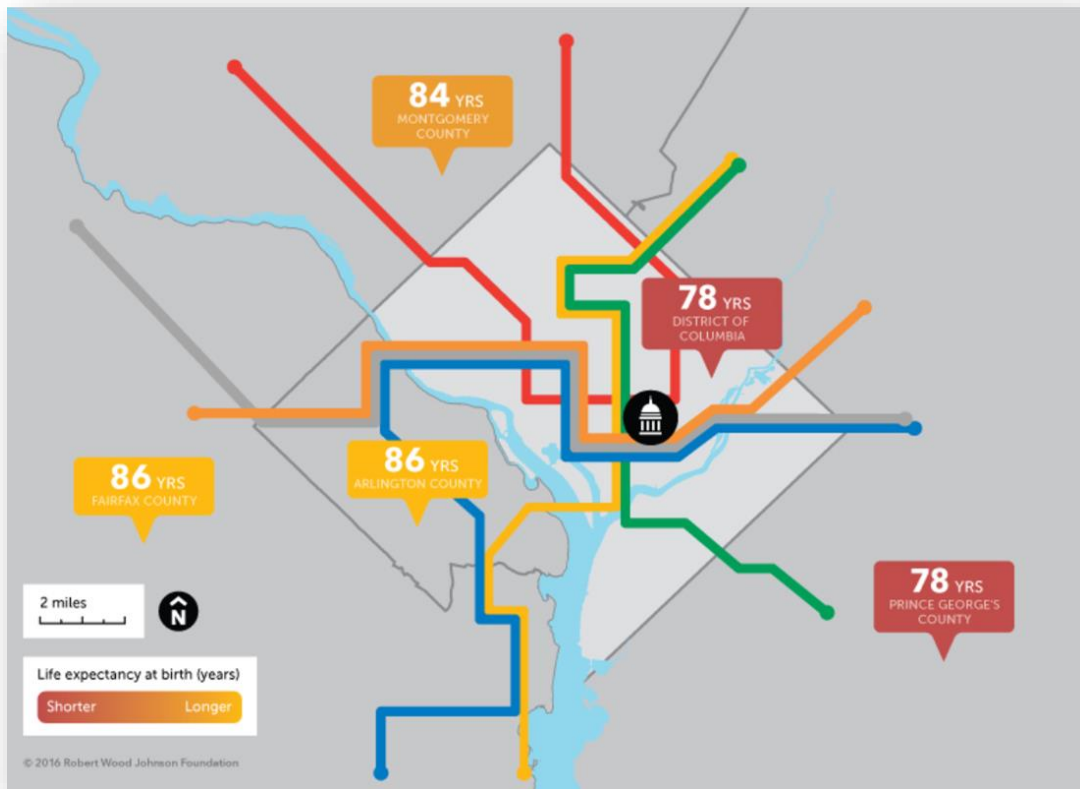**Where** you live strongly influences **how long** you live

The life-expectancy gap along I-64 in North Carolina is 7 years

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

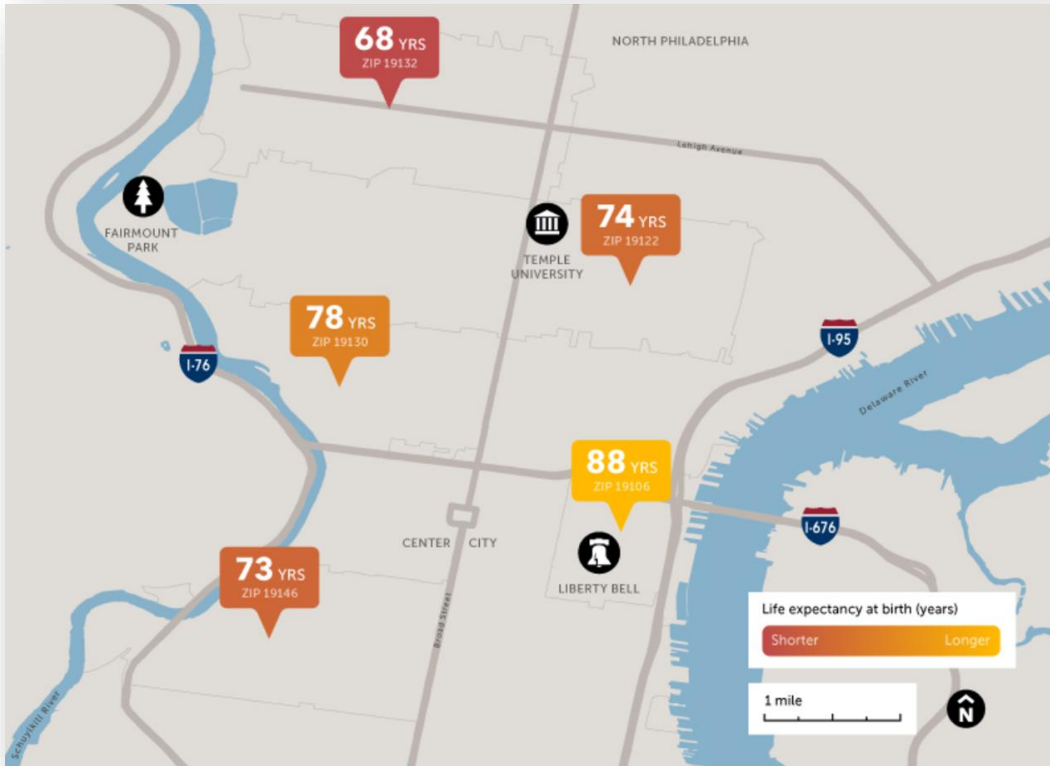**Where** you live strongly influences **how long** you live

The life-expectancy gap between subway stops in Washington, DC is 8 years

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

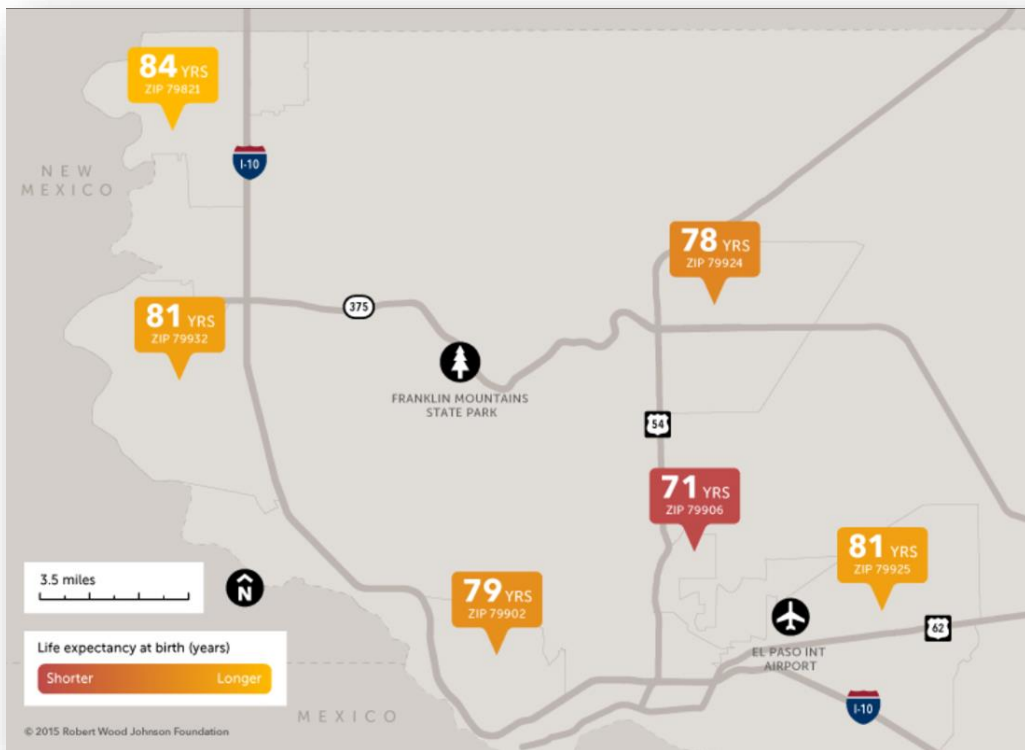**Where** you live strongly influences **how long** you live

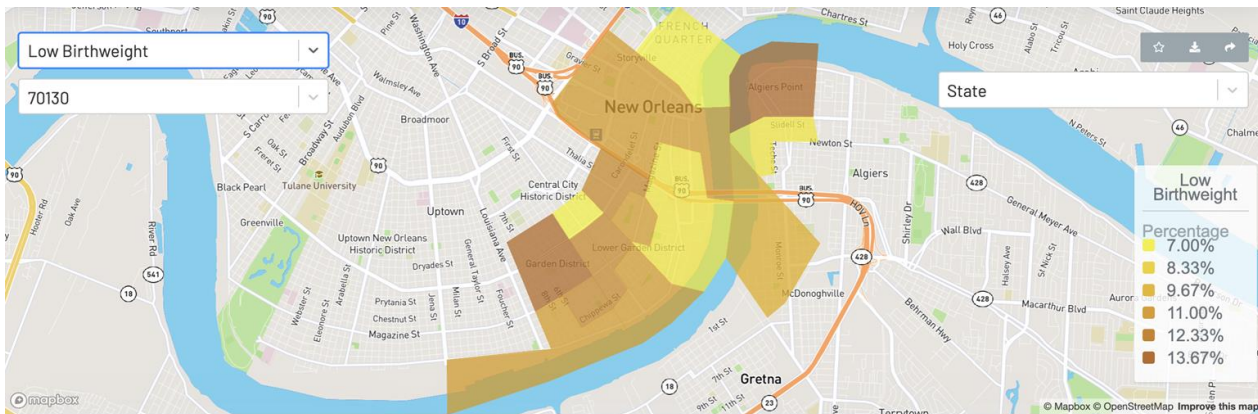The life-expectancy gap across neighborhoods in Philadelphia is 20 years

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Where you live strongly influences **how long** you live

The life-expectancy gap across parts of El Paso neighborhoods is 13 years

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health
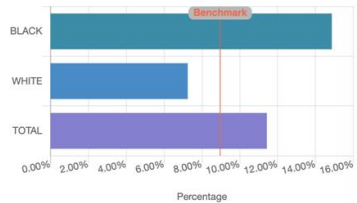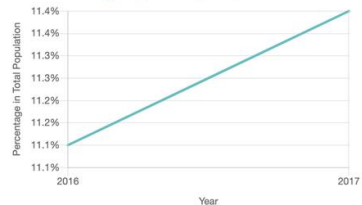
Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Shortcomings of *Social Determinants of Health* as a framework

It is a "negative" concept
- The determinants are defined as what they're *not* – biology, medicine, healthcare
- The word "determinant" suggests something that is all-powerful – it *determines*
- The result is to think in terms of opposing forces – medicine/healthcare vs. determinants – each defined by what it's not

It doesn't resonate with the broader population or with everyday experience
- Ordinary people almost never talk about SDOH
  - It's a concept familiar to healthcare and social-service insiders but not the general population
- Because it puts the primary emphasis on "health," people in non-health fields (e.g. education) are seldom drawn to it
- It's not inspiration and doesn't naturally prompt creative thinking
  - Difficult to galvanize broad commitment

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Two Ways of Looking at Well-Being

Personal Factors
Individual perspectives and experiences that affect how we think, feel, and function and how we evaluate our lives as a whole

The Impact of Surroundings

Urgent Services
Services that anyone under adversity might need temporarily to regain health and well-being

Vital Conditions
Properties of places and institutions that we all need all the time to reach our full potential

Rises and falls, from birth to death
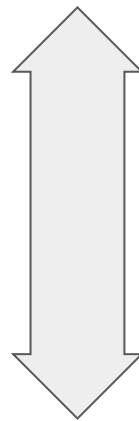
Legacies that persist over generations

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Ways of Looking at *Personal* Well-Being

Well-Being and the Social Determinants of Health

Ways of Looking at *Personal* Well-Being

The Vital Conditions

Successor Framework to the Social Determinants of Health

Developed by . . .

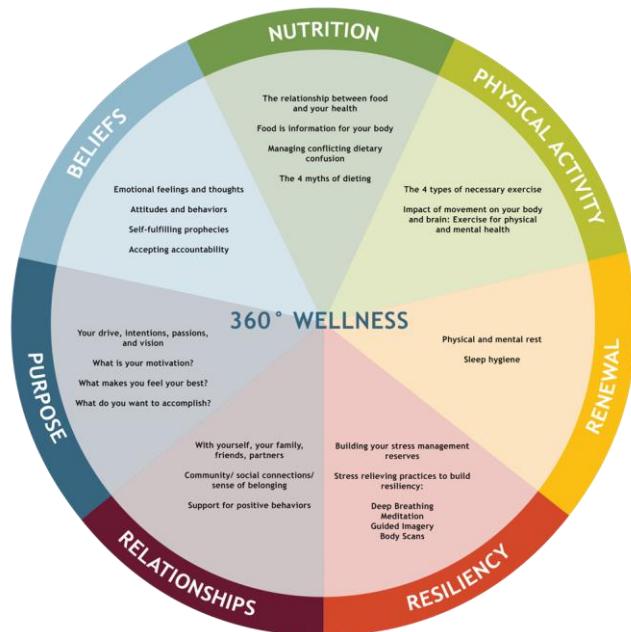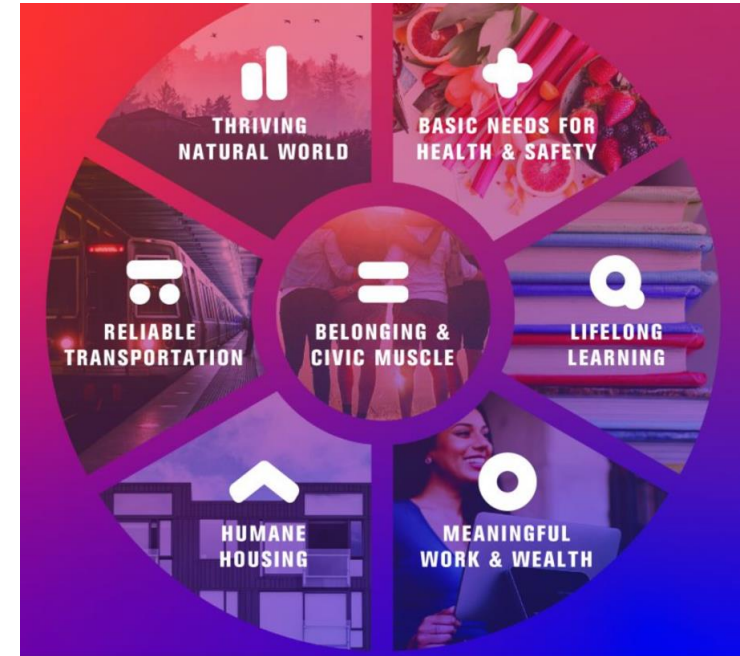- ReThink Health, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, The Wellbeing Trust, and Wellbeing In the Nation (WIN)
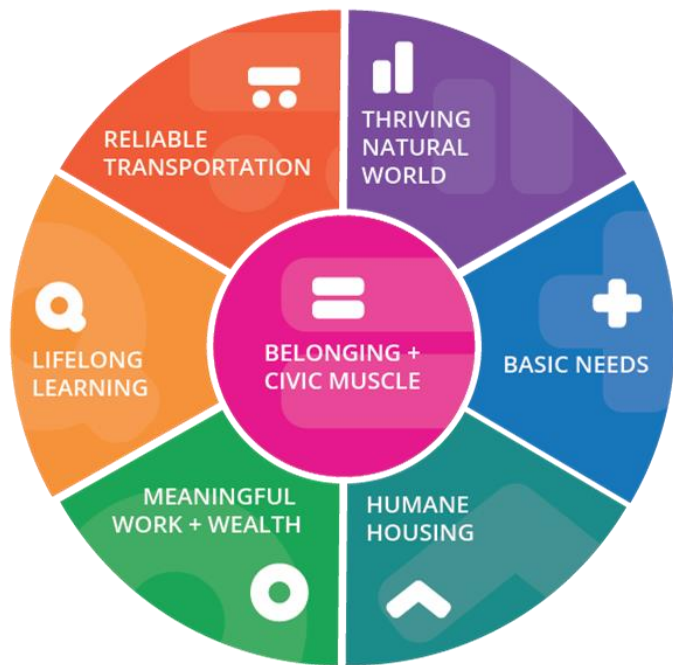
Designed to . . .

- Align with lived experience and be rooted in widely-held norms
- Pertain to all domains of life, including health (i.e. more broadly applicable than SDoH)
- Emphasize interdependence
- Line up with most existing sources of data, research, and funding

Seven Vital Conditions

The Vital Conditions

|		
	THRIVING NATURAL WORLD	*Sustainable resources, contact with nature, freedom from hazards* Clean air, water, soil; healthy ecosystems able to sustainably provide necessary resources; accessible natural spaces; freedom from the extreme heat, flooding, wind, radiation, earthquakes, pathogens
	BASIC NEEDS FOR HEALTH + SAFETY	*Basic requirements for health and safety* Nutritious food, safe drinking water; fresh air; sufficient sleep; routine physical activity; safe, satisfying sexuality and reproduction; freedom from trauma, violence, addiction and crime; routine care for physical and behavioral health
	HUMANE HOUSING	*Humane, consistent housing* Adequate space per person; safe structures; affordable costs; diverse neighborhoods (without gentrification, segregation, concentrated poverty); close to work, school, food, recreation, and nature
	MEANINGFUL WORK + WEALTH	*Rewarding work, careers, and standards of living* Job training/retraining; good-paying and fulfilling jobs; family and community wealth; savings and limited debt
	LIFELONG LEARNING	*Continuous learning, education, and literacy* Continuous development of cognitive, social, emotional abilities; early childhood experiences; elementary, high school, and higher education; career and adult education
	RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION	*Reliable, safe, and accessible transportation* Close to work, school, food, leisure; safe transport; active transport; efficient energy use; few environmental hazards
	BELONGING + CIVIC MUSCLE	*Sense of belonging and power to shape a common world* Social support; civic association; freedom from stigma, discrimination, oppression; support for civil rights, human rights; civic agency; collective efficacy; vibrant arts, culture, and spiritual life; equitable access to information; many opportunities for civic engagement (voting, volunteering, public work)

Belonging & Civic Muscle is at the center because it is both a vital condition and a practical capacity that is necessary for success in every other kind of work

http://thriving.us

The Vital Conditions

Vital Conditions	Urgent Services
Properties of places and institutions that we all need all the time to reach our full potential	Services that anyone under adversity might need temporarily to regain their best possible well-being
1. **Basic needs for health & safety** 2. **Lifelong learning** 3. **Meaningful work & wealth** 4. **Humane housing** 5. **Thriving natural world** 6. **Reliable transportation** 7. **Belonging & civic muscle**	1. **Acute care for illness or injury** 2. **Addiction treatment** 3. **Crime response** 4. **Environmental cleanup** 5. **Homeless services** 6. **Unemployment and food assistance**
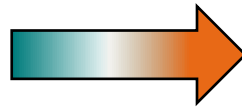
If vital conditions are not fulfilled, or if there is a disruptive shock, demand for urgent services will grow

The Vital Conditions

This is where the majority of spending and attention goes

But urgent services are only good for addressing crises

They aren't designed to help people build thriving lives

The Vital Conditions

Vital Conditions		Urgent Services	
Basic Needs for Health and Safety	Humane Housing	Acute Care for Illness or Injury	Homeless Services
Lifelong Learning	Stable Natural Environment	Addiction and Recovery Services	Environmental Clean-Up
Meaningful Work and Wealth	Reliable Transportation	Criminal Justice, Violence, and Emergencies	Unemployment and Food Assistance

Urgent services are necessary, but they shouldn't dominate our attention and spending

The vital conditions provide positive goals that are

- Positive
- Measurable
- Motivating
- Easy to understand
- Mutually reinforcing

The Vital Conditions
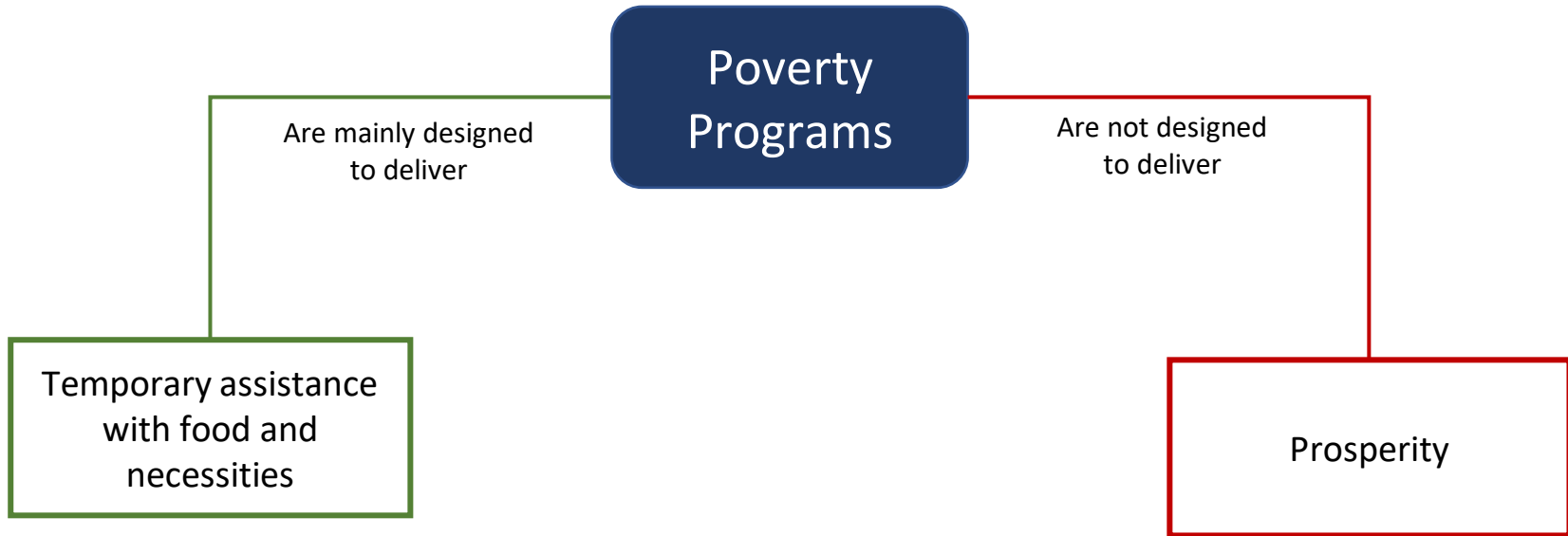
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                    ┌─────────────────┐
                    │                 │
                    │     Poverty     │
                    │    Programs     │
                    │                 │
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Are mainly designed to deliver

Are not designed to deliver

Temporary assistance with food and necessities

Prosperity

The Vital Conditions

The Vital Conditions

Homelessness Programs

Are mainly designed to deliver

Are not designed to deliver

Temporary shelter

Long-term housing security
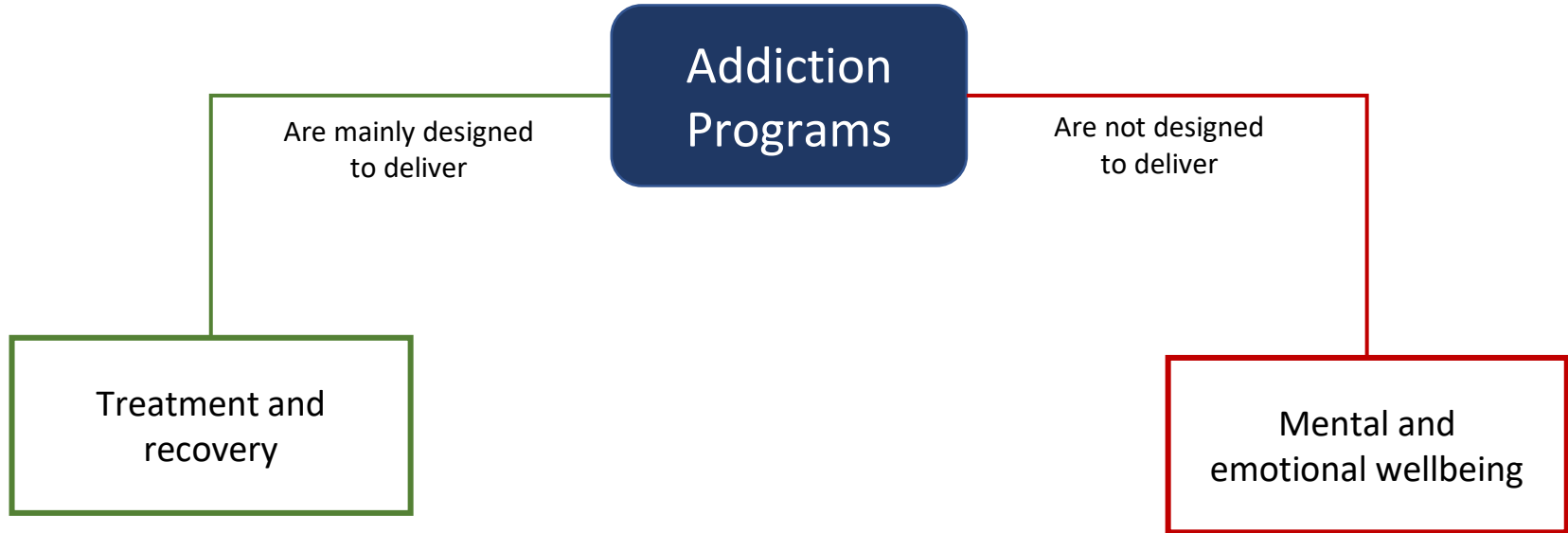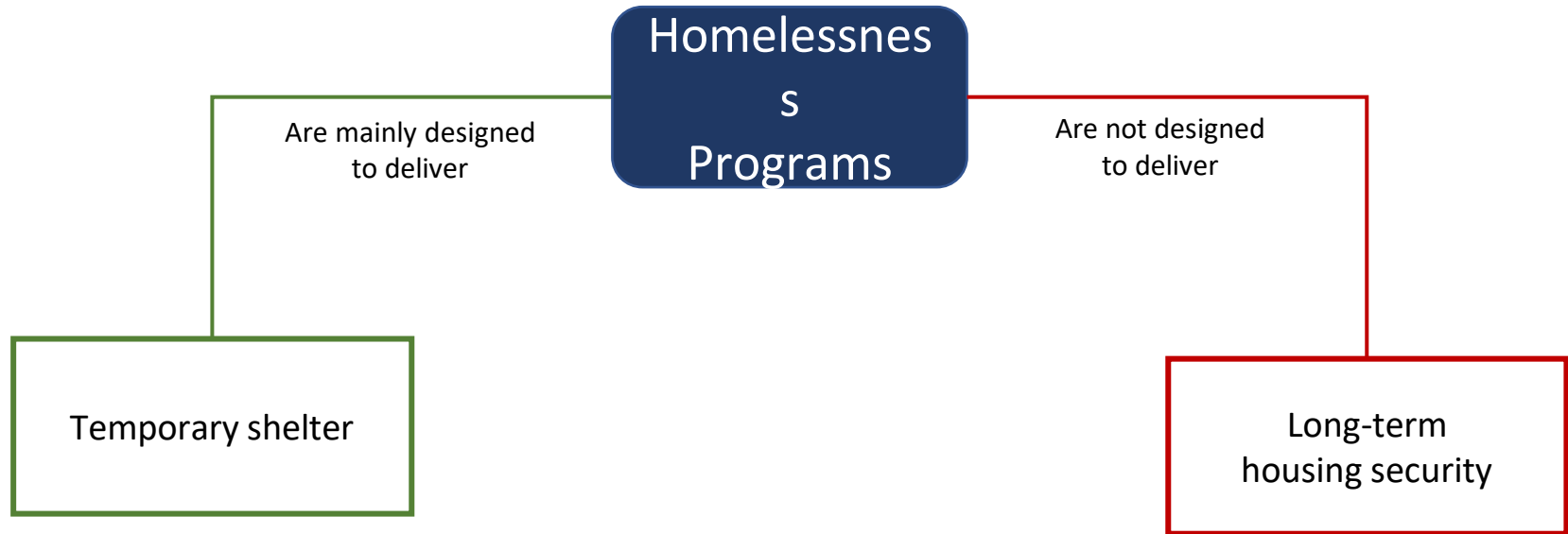
The Vital Conditions
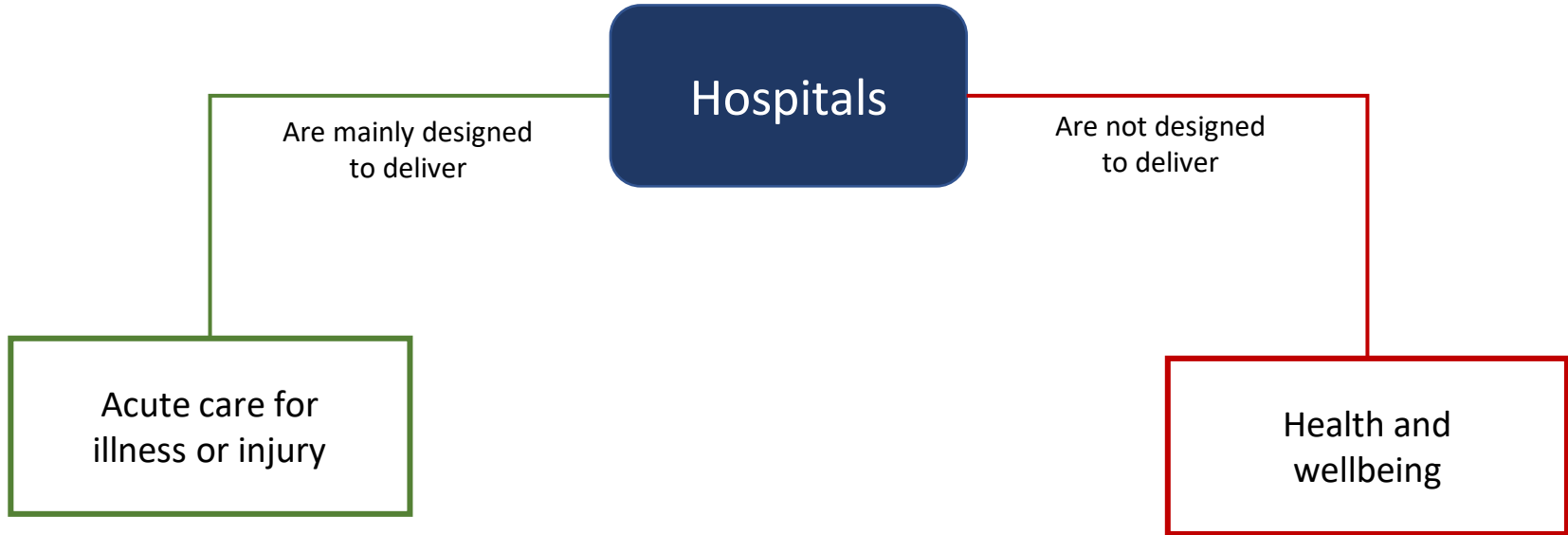
The Vital Conditions

The vital conditions as questions

- Do you have freedom from regular exposure to hazards?

- Do you have adequate healthcare / nutritious food / freedom from violence, addiction, and crime?

- Do you have humane, secure housing?

- Do you have rewarding work / financial security?

- Do you have adequate education, training, and lifelong learning?

- Do you have reliable, safe, and accessible transportation?

- Do you have a healthy attachment to community and civic life / do you have a support network?

Only about 40% of Americans can answer yes to all of these questions

The rest are struggling – or actively suffering

YES

NO

Likely to be Thriving

Likely to be Struggling or Suffering

High Demand for Urgent Services

The Vital Conditions

THRIVING TOGETHER

A SPRINGBOARD FOR EQUITABLE RECOVERY & RESILIENCE IN COMMUNITIES ACROSS AMERICA

JULY 4, 2020

Vital Conditions

THRIVING NATURAL WORLD
Sustainable resources, contact with nature, freedom from hazards
Clean air, water, soil; healthy ecosystems able to sustainably provide necessary resources; accessible natural spaces; freedom from extreme heat, flooding, wind, radiation, earthquakes, pathogens

BASIC NEEDS FOR HEALTH & SAFETY
Basic requirements for health and safety
Nutritious food, safe drinking water; fresh air; sufficient sleep; routine physical activity; safe, satisfying sexuality and reproduction; freedom from trauma, violence, addiction, and crime; routine care for physical and mental health

HUMANE HOUSING
Humane, consistent housing
Adequate space per person; safe structures; affordable costs; diverse neighborhoods (without gentrification, segregation, concentrated poverty); close to work, school, food, recreation and nature

MEANINGFUL WORK & WEALTH
Rewarding work, careers, and standards of living
Job training/retraining; good-paying and fulfilling jobs; family and community wealth; savings and limited debt

LIFELONG LEARNING
Continuous learning, education, and literacy
Continuous development of cognitive, social, emotional abilities; early childhood experiences; elementary, high school, and higher education; career and adult education

RELIABLE TRANSPORTATION
Reliable, safe, and accessible transportation
Close to work, school, food, leisure; safe transport; active transport; efficient energy use; few environmental hazards

BELONGING & CIVIC MUSCLE
Sense of belonging and power to shape a common world
Social support; civic associations; freedom from stigma, discrimination, oppression; support for civil rights, human rights; civic agency; collective efficacy; vibrant arts, culture, and spiritual life; equitable access to information; many opportunities for civic engagement (voting, volunteer, public work)

The Vital Conditions

The challenge is to build a regional portfolio that finds the right balance between investments in vital conditions and urgent services
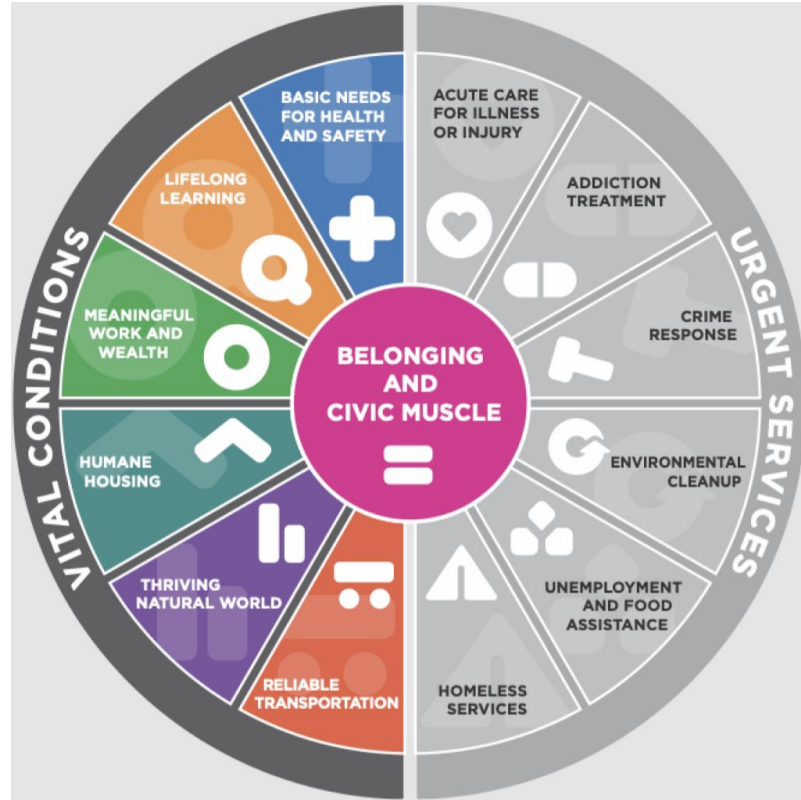
The Vital Conditions

The federal government has adopted the vital conditions as an internal organizing framework (CDC, CMS, FEMA, Dept of Transportation, HUD, USDA, Dept of Education, etc.)

High-Level Overview: Vital Conditions Mapping Data Gathering and Analysis

	Thriving Natural World	Basic Needs for Health & Safety	Humane Housing	Meaningful Work & Wealth	Lifelong Learning	Reliable Transportation	Belonging & Civic Muscle
Included in Draft Version of Vital Conditions Mapping Tool; Refinement May Be In Process							
ACF	■	■	■	■	■		■
ACL		■		■		■	
ASPR	■		■		■		■
CDC	■		■		■	■	
CMS		■	■			■	
Dept of Ed							
FEMA	■	■	■		■	■	■
HRSA		■			■		■
NIST	■	■		■	■	■	■
OMH	■	■	■	■	■		■
SAMHSA	■	■	■		■	■	■
USDA	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
In Progress; Data Forthcoming							
DOT							
HUD							

Measuring Well-Being

Why measure well-being?

- Consistent relationships between well-being and health outcomes, including longevity

- Higher well-being predicted lower risk of all-cause mortality

- Higher self-reported life satisfaction was associated with lower mortality

"People indicated that the items in our well-being assessments were easy to complete, highly relevant, and joy-producing. **They stated appreciation for the opportunity to provide information that actually matters to them**."

- Health and Well-being Measurement Approach and Assessment Guide (p. 27)

Measuring Well-Being

Cantril's Ladder

- An overall measure of how someone feels about his/her life using two simple questions

- The first question asks people to rate their lives on a ladder
  - Where the bottom in their worst possible life (0)
  - And the top is their best possible life (10)

- The second question asks them to rate where they think they will be on the ladder in 5 years
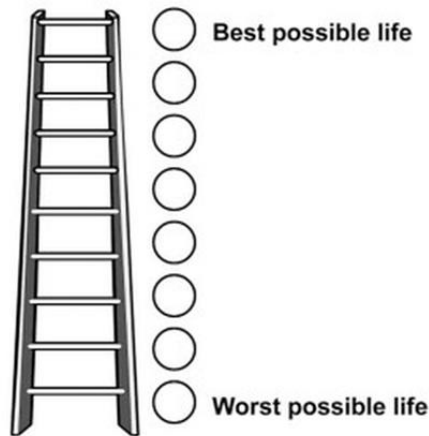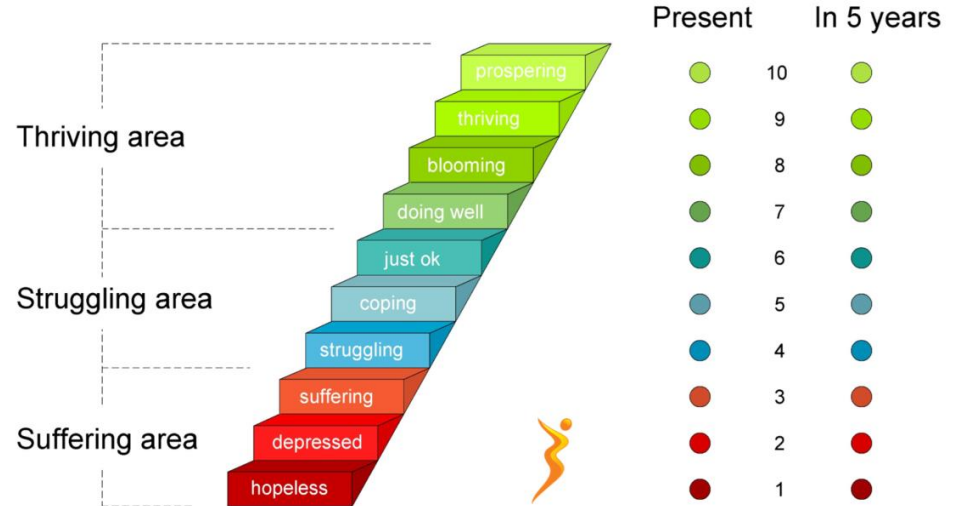
Measuring Well-Being

Cantril's Ladder

A score of 7+ means that a person is thriving

A score of 4-7 means that a person is struggling

A score of under 4 means that a person is suffering

Shown in research to correlate strongly with health outcomes

Measuring Well-Being

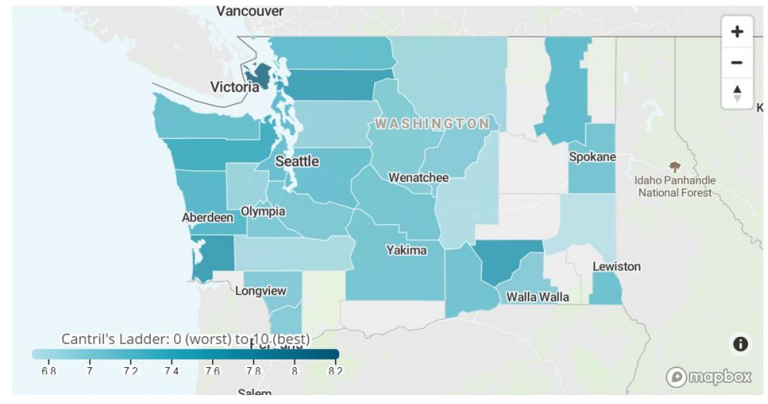Example use of a well-being survey: The Fox Cities (rural Wisconsin)

- 6 months

- 3,000 surveys

- 81 facilitated conversations

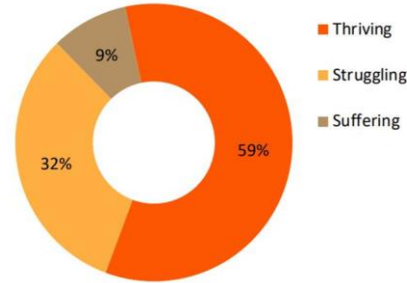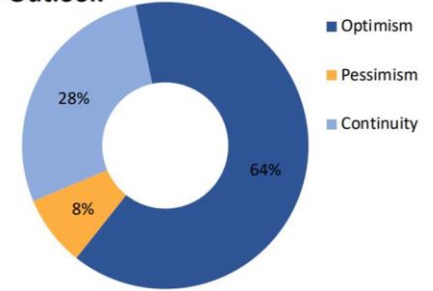- 14 community members analyzed conversation comments, survey results

https://imaginefoxcities.com/

Measuring Well-Being
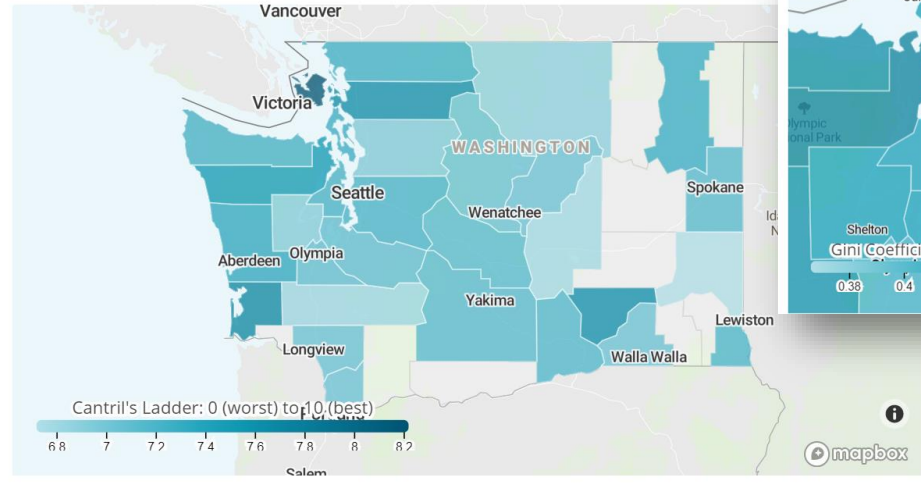
Measuring Well-Being

Uses of Wellbeing Measures

- Identify which populations to focus on

- Monitor the health of a population over time

- Evaluate improvement efforts
    - Change in Cantril's Ladder responses can be seen as soon as 3-6 months

Measuring Well-Being

Cantril's Ladder at Present: Mean Response (2017)

Gini Index of Income Inequality (2013-2017)