

How to Establish a Food Policy Council

Diane Golzynski, PhD, RD
Fruit & Vegetable Nutrition Coordinator
Michigan Department of Community Health





Agenda

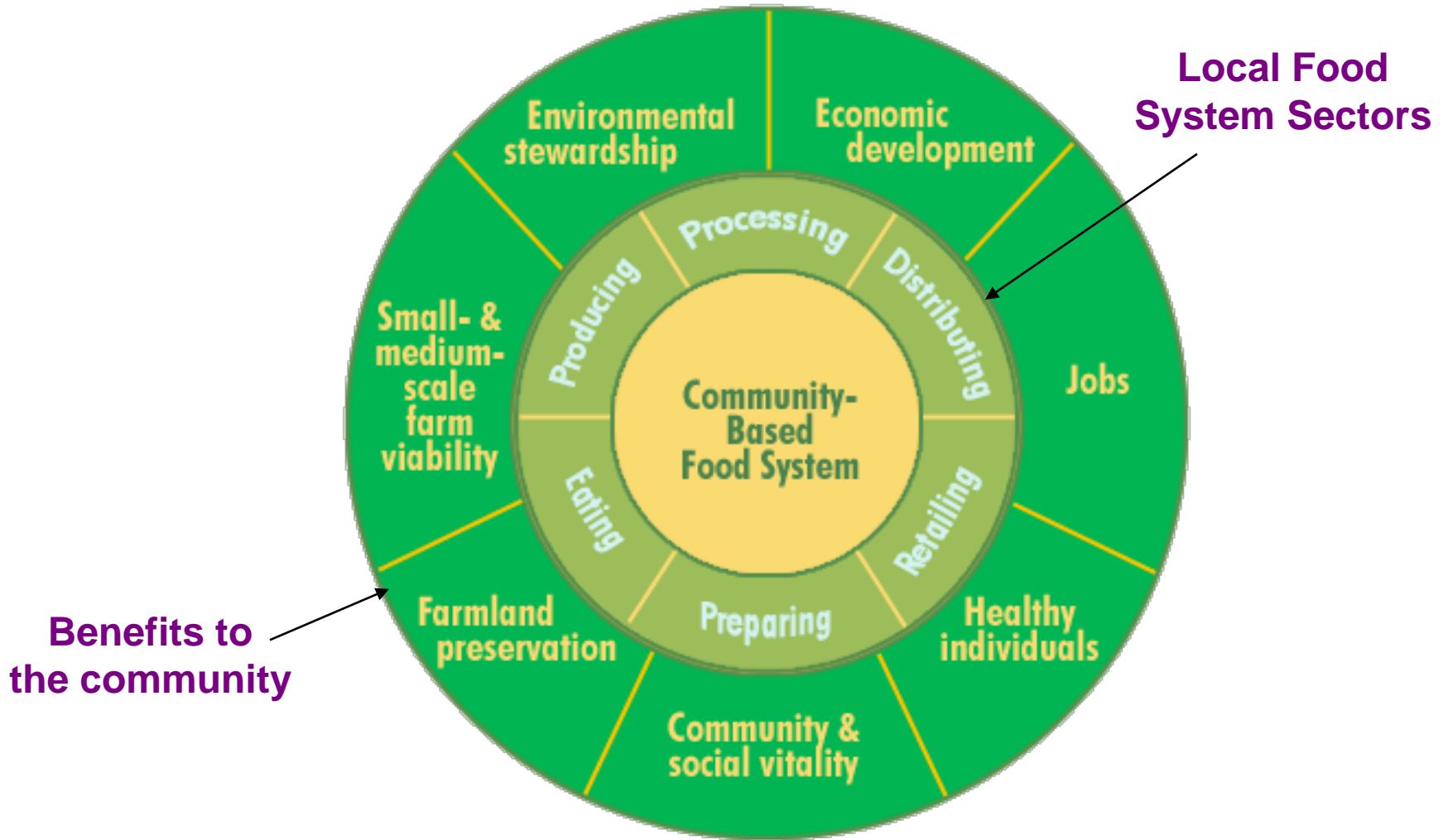
- What is a food policy council
- Steps in creating a sustainable local food policy council
- Identify successful initiatives for food policy councils and strategies to support these efforts

What is a food policy?

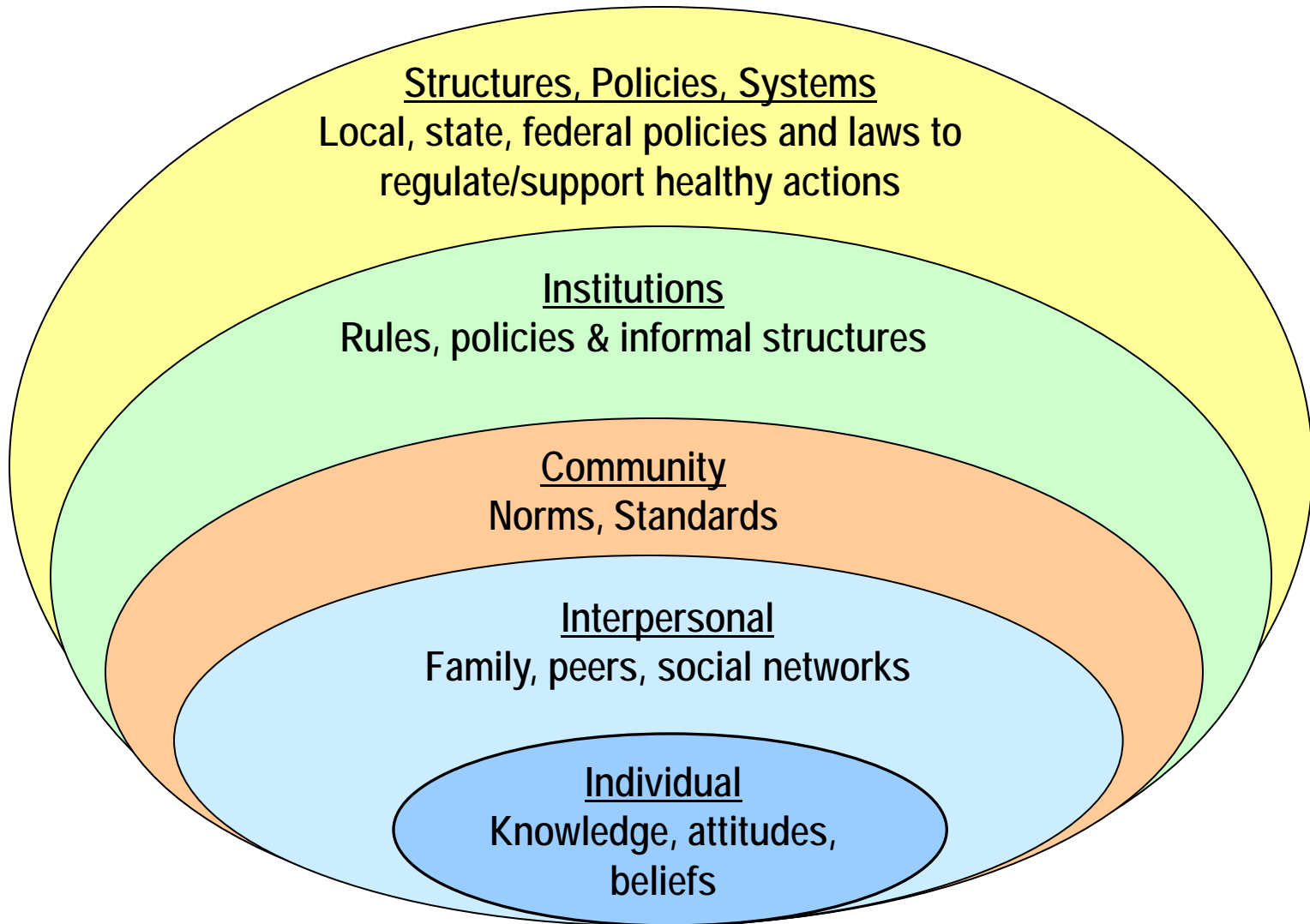
“Any decision made by a entity of power which shapes the type of food used or available – as well as their cost – or which influences the opportunities for farmers and employees, or affects the food choices available to consumers.”

*Source: Drake University Ag Law Center

Local Food System



Socio-Ecological Model



Food Initiative Examples

- Examples:
 - A decision by school officials to maintain a minimum of 20% of food purchasing dollars to be spent on foods raised by local farmers
 - Local governments and institutions set nutrition standards for all food served and sold on site
 - Increase the ability of low-income residents to participate in food assistance programs at multiple locations within their community
 - Regulatory and laws are examined for low-risk food-based business to eliminate or reduce unnecessary transaction costs and regulatory burdens
 - Zoning regulations that restrict the marketing of unhealthy foods to children

What is a food policy council?

- Connects all aspects of a local food system
- Examines food system
- Addresses food issues
- Suggests policy changes

Purpose of a food policy council

- Strengthens the local food system by connecting its various sectors
- Encourages networks and collaboration on projects between food sectors
- Tackles critical issues in the community regarding farm and food
- Can leverage resources and gain audience of local policy makers
- Can improve the quality of life through nutrition and economic improvements

Food Policy Council vs. Government

- Food system networks can address a variety of issues not normally examined by government such as:
 - Food assistance programs
 - Causes of hunger in a society
 - Empowerment of individuals to take charge of change
 - Mapping and publicizing local food resources
 - Creating new transit routes to connect underserved areas with full-service grocery stores
 - Persuading government agencies to purchase from local farmers
 - Organizing community gardens and farmers' markets

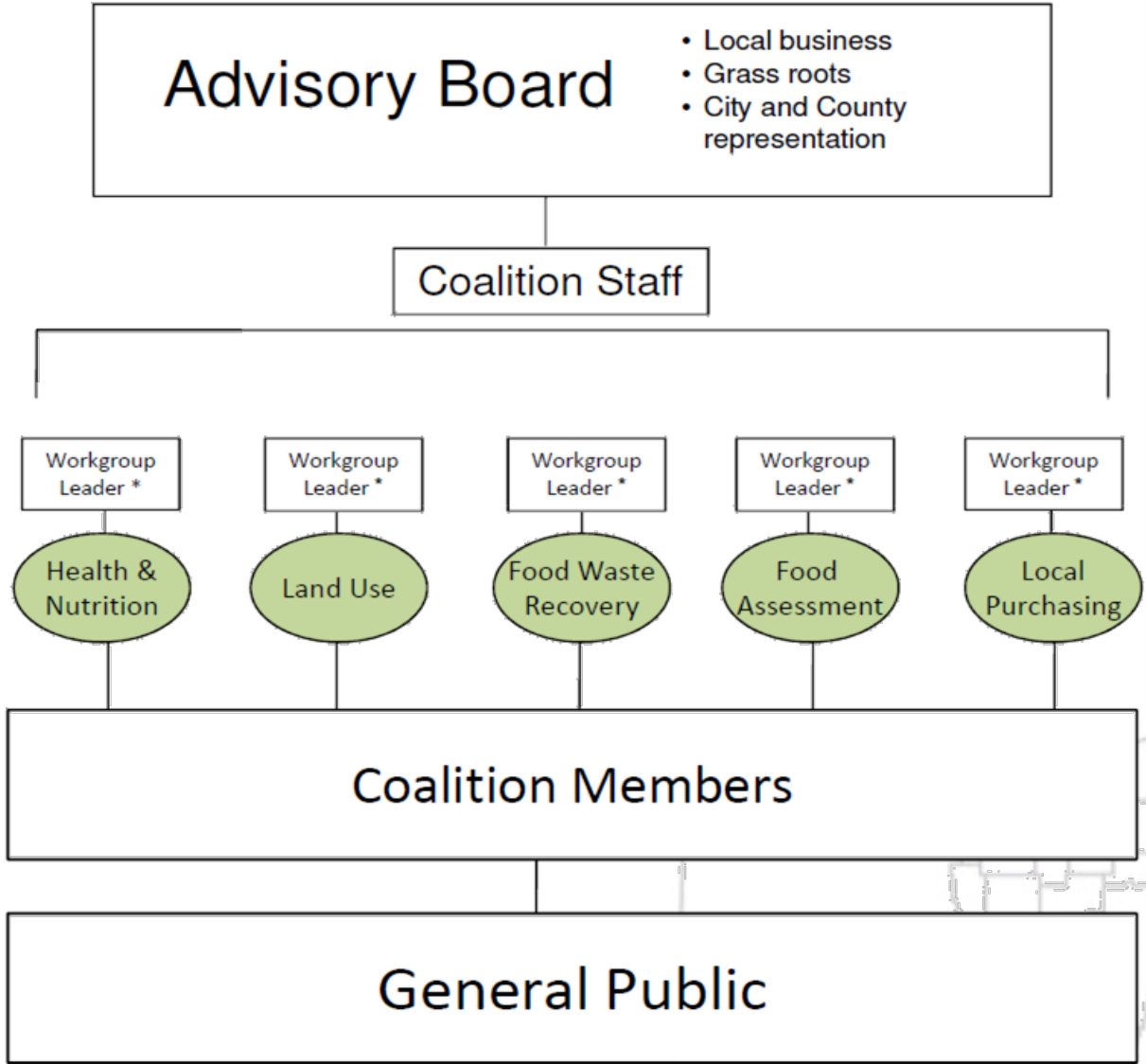
“Steps” to Creating a Food Policy Council

1. Develop a planning committee
2. Assess the community’s needs
3. Establish committee framework
4. Take action to meet goals
5. Evaluate
6. Network and market the council

Not an exact science!

- There is no “exact recipe” for creating a local food policy council
 - Political climate
 - Geography
 - Scope
 - Capacity
 - Funding
 - Environment
 - Demographics
 - Food system gaps

Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy (OH)



Governance

- Majority of current councils nationally are independent of local government
- Can be “sanctioned” by government
 - Resolution
 - City ordinance
 - Sub-committee of local government
- List of councils/networks and their governance
 - www.foodsecurity.org/FPC/council.html

Governments can...

- Legitimize actions of the food policy council
- Serve as a food system planning venue and promote coordination between food system stakeholders
- Consider access to affordable food retail outlets in local planning
- Accept responsibility for ensuring that food goals are met
- Allocate government resources, regulation, management and administration
- Be responsible for public education and awareness
- Cause conflicts of interest
- Cripple ability to tackle certain issues

Governance examples

- Greater Grand Rapids (MI) Food Systems Council
 - Independent, non-profit, non-political, membership based
- New Haven (CT) Food Policy Council
 - City ordinance
- Dane County (WI) Food Policy Council
 - Resolution passed by county board
- Santa Fe (NM) Food Policy Council
 - Joint resolution between Santa Fe County and the City of Santa Fe

Sample Goals for local food policy councils

- Increase and improve access to nutritious, affordable and culturally suitable foods
- Ensure availability of inner-city supermarkets
- Promote healthful eating
- Encourage nutrition education in schools
- Build sustainable food systems
- Promote household and community gardens and community supported agriculture
- Promote buying/utilizing local food
- Promote local food processing
- Develop emergency feeding programs
- Promote local farmers markets

Michigan Good Food Charter

LOCAL AGENDA PRIORITIES

Community-based



1. Expand and increase innovative methods to bring healthy foods to underserved areas as well as strategies to encourage their consumption.



2. Improve school food environments and reduce school sales of low-nutrient, high-sugar, high-fat and calorie-dense foods through snack and vending machines or competitive food sales.



3. Maximize use of current public benefit programs for vulnerable populations, especially children and seniors, and link them with strategies for healthy food access.



4. Provide outreach, training and technical assistance to launch new grocery stores and improve existing stores to better serve underserved people in urban and rural areas.



5. Establish food business districts to encourage food businesses to locate in the same area and to support their collaboration.



6. Use policy and planning strategies to increase access to healthy food in underserved areas.



7. Review and seek appropriate revisions to state and local land use policies to preserve farmland and blend protection with farm viability programs.

Market-based



8. Encourage institutions – including schools, hospitals, colleges and universities – to use their collective purchasing power to influence the food supply chain to provide healthier food and more foods grown, raised and processed in Michigan.

Sample Local Food Opportunities

1. Facilitate policies for preferential purchasing maximizing available Michigan-grown and processed products.
2. Facilitate policies to ensure foods served meet nutrition standards.
3. Work with school districts on breakfast.
4. Set healthy meeting policies, farm-to-work policies, and lactation support policies.
5. Implement breastfeeding policies with hospitals and health care providers.
6. Implement local zoning policies to restrict marketing of unhealthy foods to kids.
7. Local policies to support home gardening, beekeeping, and backyard chicken ordinances.

Stakeholders/Partnerships

- Grocers
- Farmers
- Faith-based leaders
- School personnel
- Distributors
- Wholesalers
- Other food groups
- Producers
- Government officials
- Environmental workers
- Scholars
- Non-profit workers
- Educators
- Chefs

Funding

- Some national sources of funding are:
 - U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
 - Drake University Ag Law Center
 - Community Food Security Coalition
 - Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture
- Some sources of funding in Michigan are:
 - Council of Michigan Foundations
 - Michigan Department of Community Health



Who has food councils/networks?

- **More than 25 states**
 - Alabama, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, **Michigan**, Missouri, Montana, New Jersey, New York, New Mexico, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wisconsin, Oregon, and Utah
- **Over 50 local communities such as:**
 - Berkeley (CA), Yolo County (CA), Hartford (CT), Atlanta (GA), Chicago (IL), Salina (KS), Holyoke (MA), Twin Cities (MN), Portland-Multnomah (OR), Lane County (OR), King County (WA), and Dane County (WI)

Michigan Communities Leading the Way

- Greater Grand Rapids Food Systems Council
- Washtenaw County Public Health
- Ottawa County
 - Food Insecurity Needs Assessment for county
 - Report of Findings will guide strategic planning
- Farm and Food Action Council of Southern Clinton County
 - Resolutions of support from 3 townships & 1 city
 - Currently seating council & beginning work with 4 workgroups
- Greater Lansing Food System Network
- Detroit Food Policy Council
- Flint
- Good Food Battle Creek

Michigan's Food Policy Council (then)

- Created by executive order by Governor Granholm in June 2005 with monetary support from WKCF
- 20 recommendations provided to the Governor covering these broad issues:
 - Expanding food-related businesses and jobs
 - Creating urban and rural partnerships
 - Improving access to fresh and healthy foods
 - Promoting purchase of Michigan foods
 - Enhancing agricultural viability
- To see full report, visit: <http://www.michigan.gov/mfpc>

Michigan's Food Policy Council (now)

- **Mission:** Michigan is a state with a thriving food system and industry, well-nourished, healthy people and strong, diverse food economy
- **Vision:** The MFPC cultivates a safe, healthy and available food supply for all residents while building on the state's agricultural diversity to enhance economic growth

MFPC Draft Goals

1. Good Food Charter Alignment
2. Local Food Policy Network Development
3. Council member engagement
4. Marketing the MFPC

Michigan's Guide to Developing Local Food Policy Councils

Local Food Policy Council Guide

LOCAL FOOD POLICY COUNCILS
A GUIDE FOR MICHIGAN'S COMMUNITIES

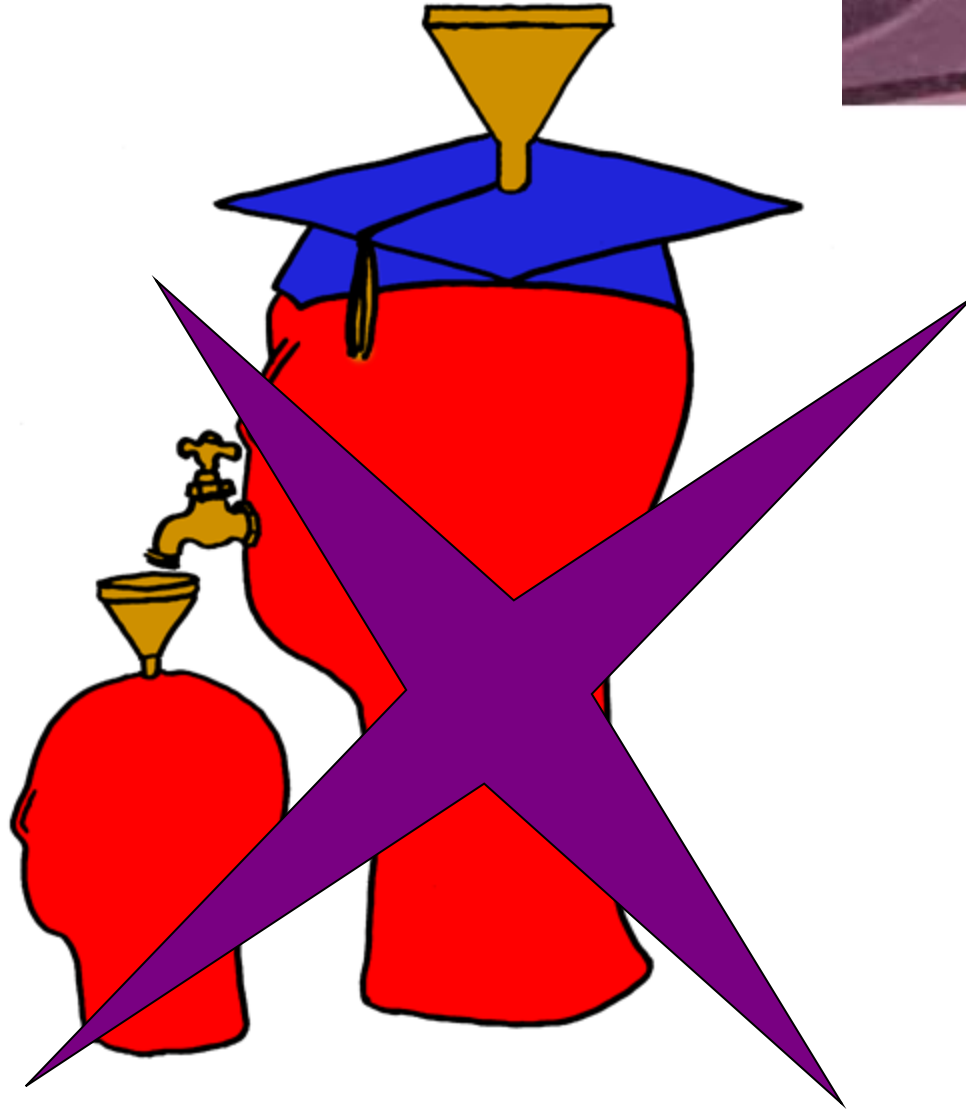
DRAFT VERSION

October, 2011

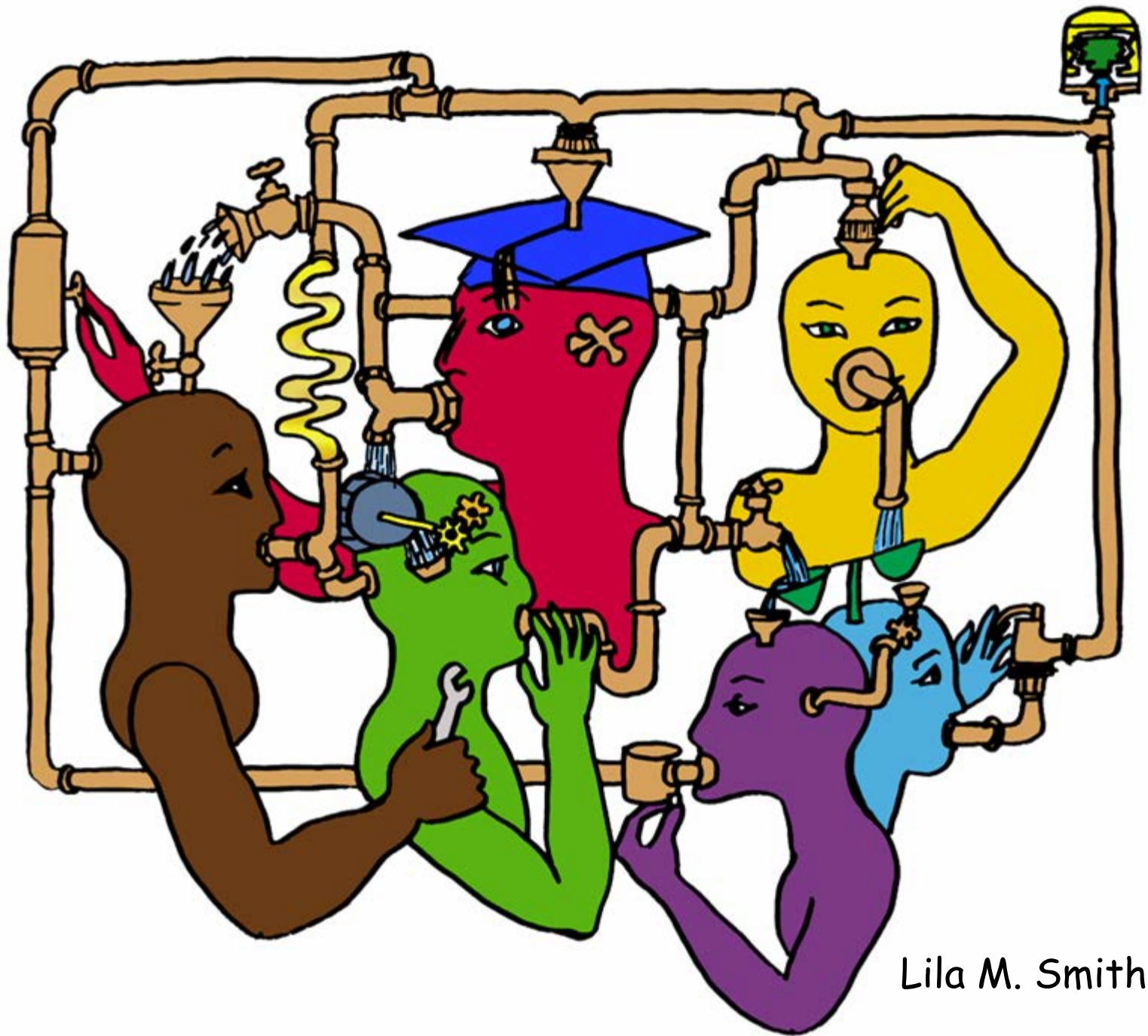
To be posted at:

www.mihealthtools.org/mihc

www.michigan.gov/mfpc



Lila M. Smith



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Questions?

Diane Golzynski
(517) 335-8980
GolzynskiD@michigan.gov

