



Funder's Use of Network Analysis to Build Intentional Collaboration

Panel Session 545

in Lone Star D

AEA 2010

By David Dobrowski and Raul Martinez

presentation outline

- Start with **framing** and **context setting**
- Next, we'll walk through **the agenda and activities** used at a previous First 5 grantee meeting
- Then, we'll present **results** of the activities
- End with lessons learned and **BIG** ideas

framing and context setting

framing and context setting

- ***First 5 Monterey County*** invests in agencies that support families with young children
- 25 funded agencies
- Place-based approach



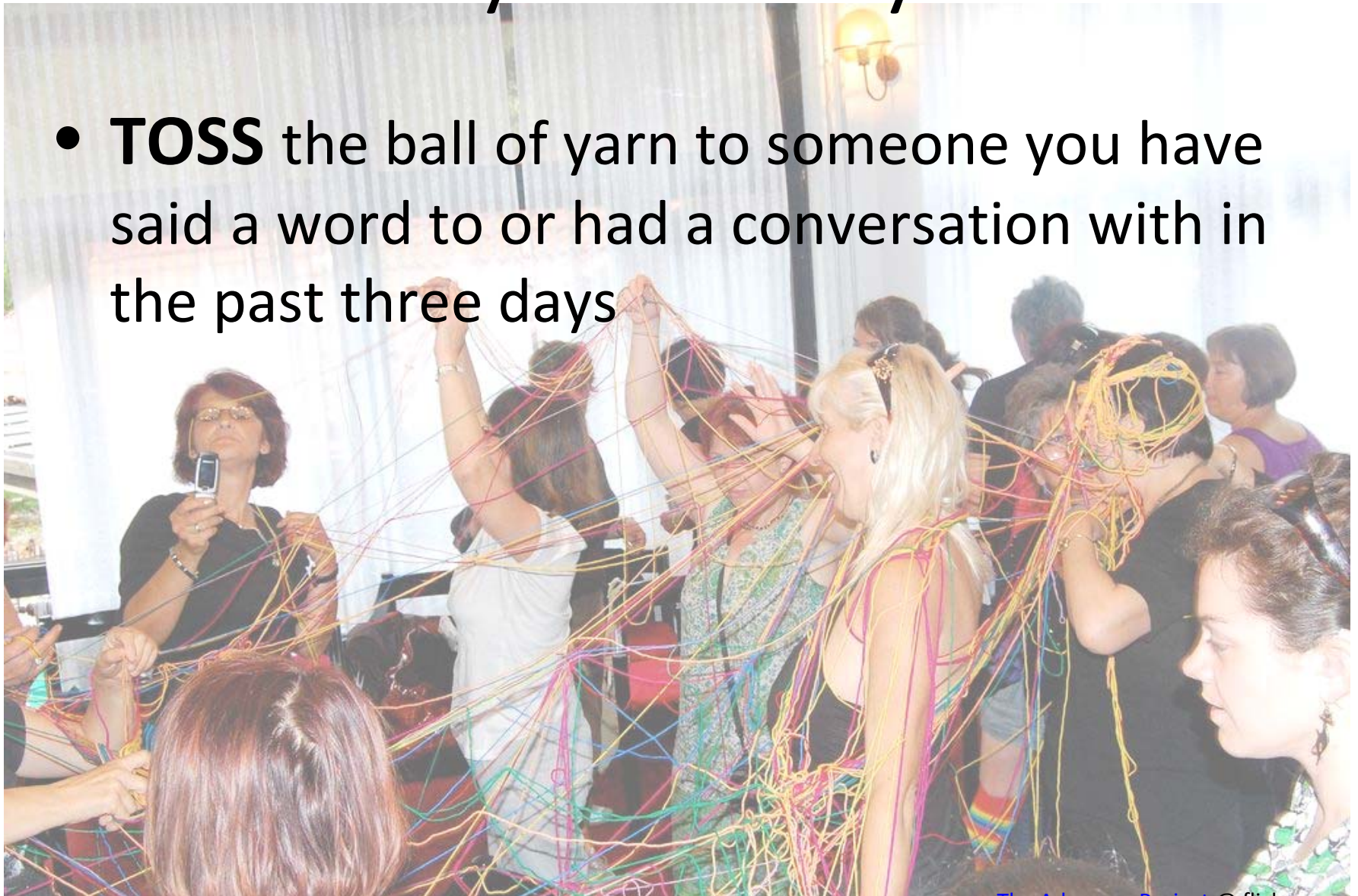
process

learning circle agenda

- Welcome (10 min)
- Highlight story (5 min)
- How we did financially (15 min)
- Evaluation highlights (45 min)
- Break (15 min)
- **Network mapping (60 min)**
 - Highlight story (5 min)
 - Sustainability report (40 min)
 - Announcements (10 min)
 - Small group meeting (30 min)

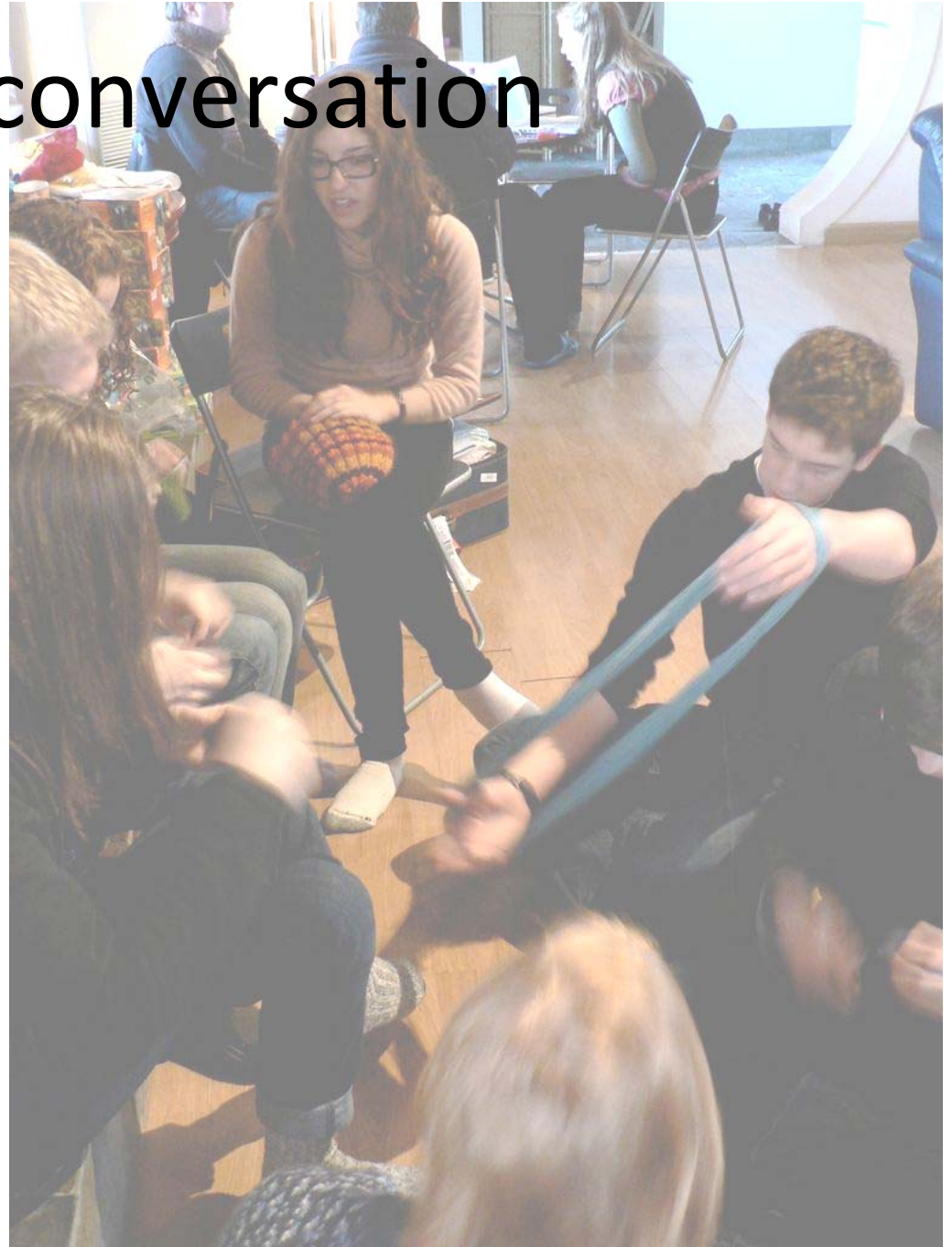
yarn activity

- **TOSS** the ball of yarn to someone you have said a word to or had a conversation with in the past three days



spur conversation

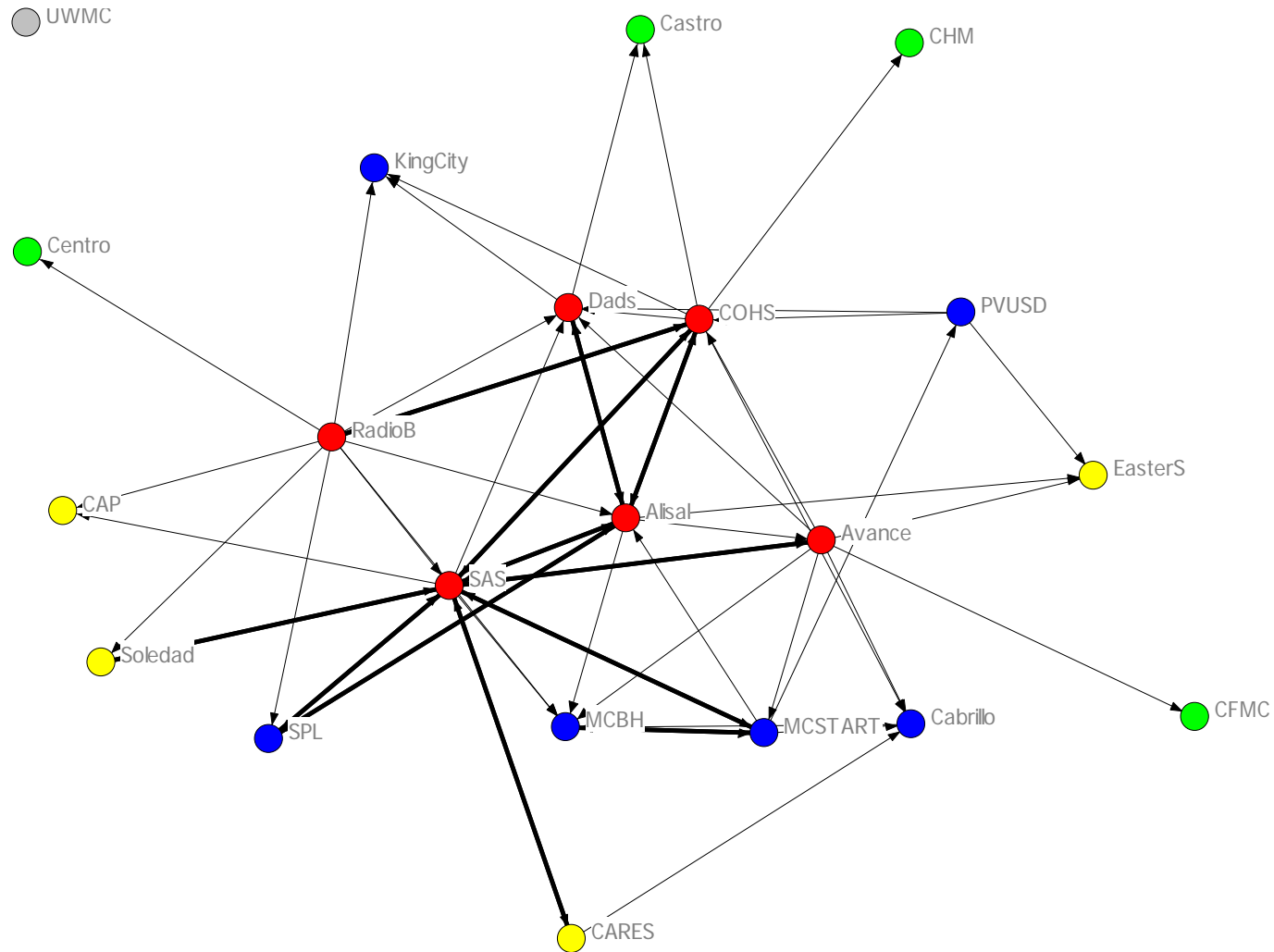
- What does the term “collaboration” mean to us?
- How is my relationship with other agencies viewed?



sharing network maps with agencies

- Explained how to read and see a map
- Gave participants time and space to reflect
- Asked participants to envision how they would like the system and the nature of their interactions with other agencies to change

collaboration level findings



results

result #1: I'm not as central as I thought

- Program coordinator of a funded agency realized she was on the periphery of the network.
- Network analysis provided her peers with the opportunity to assess the interactions they had with her program
- Which challenged her assumptions and motivated her to develop a plan of action

result #2: **Service hubs need to collaborate better** with programs in their focus area

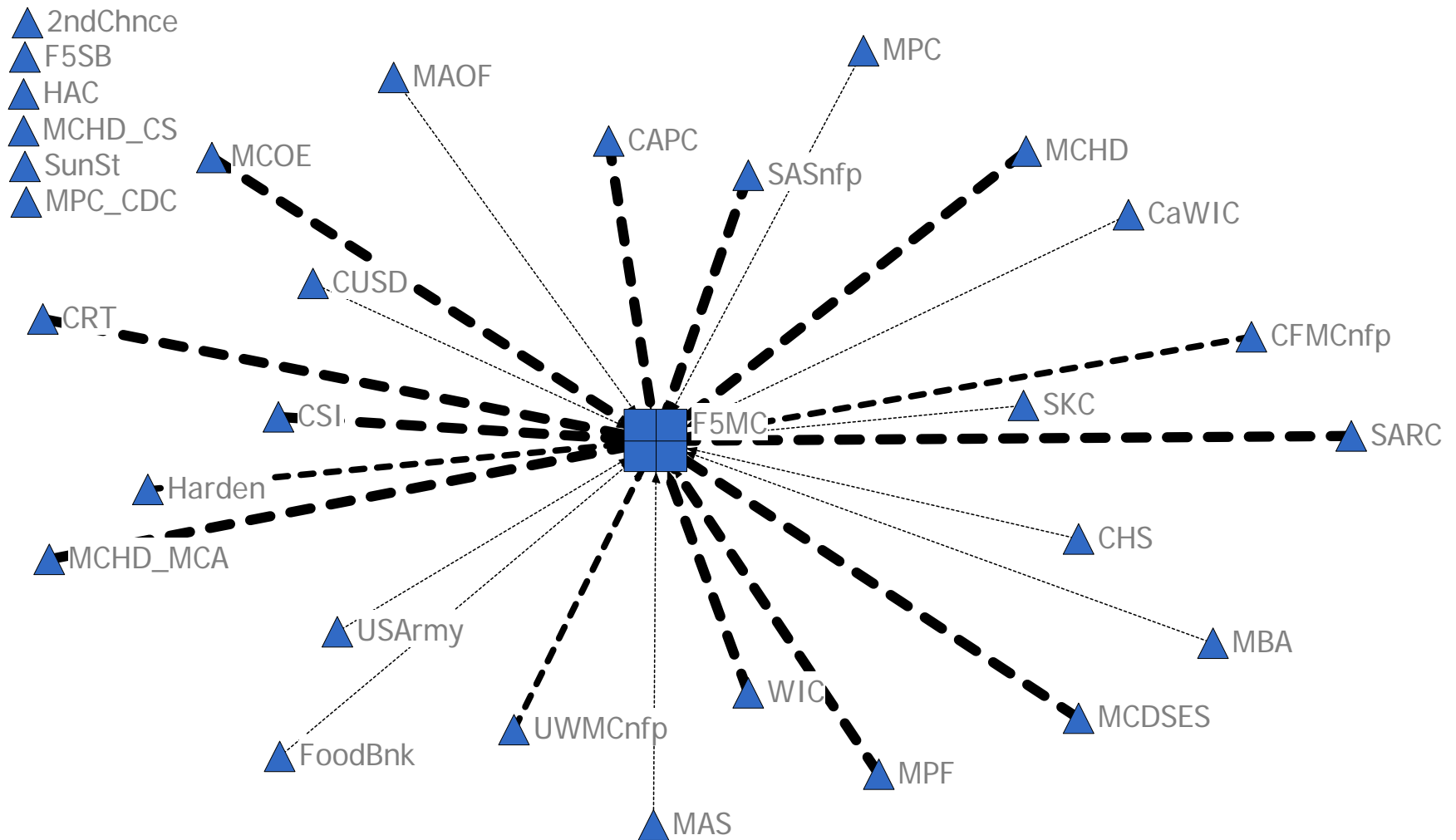
- Family Resource Centers (FRCs) funded as “hubs”
- Review of network analysis revealed that FRCs need to work more closely with others in their geographic focus areas
- Stimulated ideas for networking based on the results of other FRCs in Monterey County

Reflection from a FRC program coordinator

“I realized that I wasn’t connecting with one of the programs (CARES) but they were connecting with the other FRCs. I wanted to learn what they were doing so I could do the same thing. It informed me about what other connections I could make because other funded agencies are making those connections.”

“The findings inspired me to do better and connect with two other programs (Dads in Action and CARES), so when we look at next year I want to see growth.” ~ Rosemary Hernández, Program Coordinator, Pajaro Family Resource Center

result #3: Increased awareness of how non-funded agencies perceive First 5



lessons learned and **BIG** ideas

Lessons Learned / Recommendations

- Make it fun
- Make Social Network Analysis tangible
- Provide guidance and space for reflection



what are your **BIG** ideas or
takeaways?

for further information

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addendum

a little more background

- Our methodology was based in large part on the following publication:
- **Measuring Collaboration Among Grant Partners**, Bruce B. Frey, Jill H. Lohmeier, Stephen W. Lee and Nona Tollefson, *American Journal of Evaluation* 2006; 27; 383, DOI: 10.1177/1098214006290356 (<http://aje.sagepub.com/content/27/3/383.abstract>)

background (cont)

F5MC Systems Change Summary: Background Information

F5MC Systems Change ELO Priority

F5MC is committed to playing a role as a catalyst, convener and facilitator. In this role, the Commission encourages systems change by supporting innovative thinking, promising practices and policy development by bringing people and organizations together. Although this role expands beyond its funded partners, **F5MC** actively works to facilitate increased coordination and collaboration to strengthen the system of services for Monterey County's youngest children and their families.

F5MC Systems Change Evaluation Approach

To examine interactions and collaboration among funded partners, a web-based survey was administered to program coordinators and line staff. Survey participants were asked to identify the nature of their agency's relationship with other funded agencies, based on the Levels of Collaboration Scale.

0=No interaction	1=Networking	2=Coordination	3=Collaboration
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Aware of organization▪ Loosely defined roles▪ Little communication▪ All decisions are made independently	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Share information▪ Some defined roles▪ Frequent communication▪ Some shared decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Share ideas and resources▪ Frequent communication is characterized by mutual trust▪ Decision making is done jointly

background (cont)

Reading the Maps






Circles: Represent funded partner agencies.

Lines: Represent interactions between two agencies. Thick lines represent reciprocal interactions, where both agencies reported the same Collaboration score.

Arrows: Show the direction of an interaction and whether the relationship between two agencies is reciprocal or non-reciprocal. Arrows point from the responding organization to the agency with which they report an interaction.

Colors and Placement: Represent the “closeness” of each agency. Agencies that are closest to other agencies are shaded red. These are the agencies that have the most direct connections with other network members and are placed at the center of the network. Agencies with lower closeness scores are shown in order of closeness by blue, yellow, green and gray shading, respectively, and are placed farther from the center of the network.

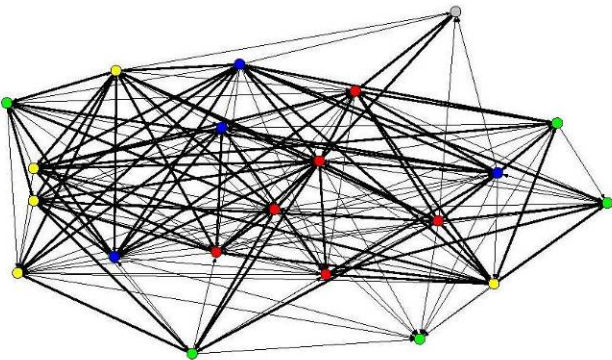
Agency Labels: See Appendix A for agency names and corresponding abbreviations.

Greatest to fewest interactions:     

background (cont)

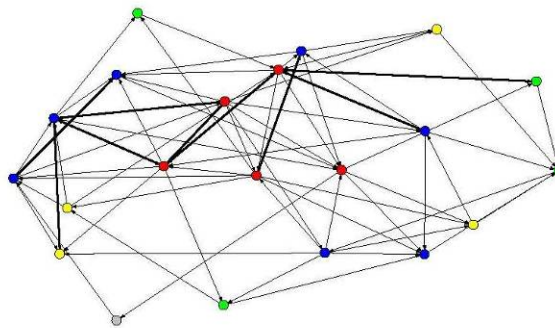
F5MC Systems Change Summary: To what extent are programs collaborating?

Networking



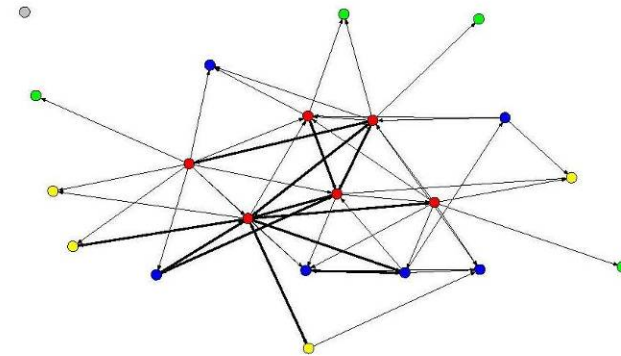
- 1) At this level funded partners are aware of other agencies but do not define roles. Agencies communicate occasionally and make decisions independently.
- 2) Most of the interactions between funded partners were at the *Networking* level. At this level, the *F5MC* funded partner network is very dense.

Coordination



- 1) At this level funded partners share information, communicate frequently, and there are some defined roles and some shared decision making.
- 2) Fewer interactions were reported compared with the *Networking* level.
- 3) Findings suggest that several funded partners are "key players" in the network due to their central positions.

Collaboration



- 1) At this level funded partners share information and resources, communicate frequently with mutual trust, and make decisions jointly.
- 2) At this level, funded partners reported the fewest interactions of any levels.
- 3) The star pattern shows that a few funded partners at the center of the network are connected with the most collaborative interactions.
- 4) One agency had no collaborative interactions.