



## OUTCOME BASED SERVICE DELIVERY (OBSD) UPDATE

*"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."  
Einstein*



### Change by Sandra Maygard

With the advent of the Outcome Based Service Delivery (OBSD), one of the words being bantered about and focused upon is "Change". We are again in the midst of major changes – changes in thinking, changes in practice and changes in funding. As a result there are a whole range of terms being used: 'transformational change'; 'change management'; 'planning for change'; 'developing the capacity to change' and 'managing change'. All of which means adapting and/or refining systems, processes and resources – including all of the dynamics of asking staff and clients to interact in different ways from what was - what had been expected, known and to some degree comfortable.

Change is the one constant of the work we all do. There has not been any period of time, in the time that I have worked within the human services sector that we

have not been in the process of adapting to one change or another. So, in some respects, now is no different from the past, in that we are again being asked, to make changes.



What makes OBSD different is that the changes we are being asked to accommodate have the potential to produce radical changes in:

- how clients within the sector are engaged,
- how results (outcomes) are determined, measured and reported upon and
- how the people working within the sector view and interact with other people, programs and agencies working towards the same outcomes.

I have had the privilege of being involved in a number of "Think Tanks" over the last few months that have addressed the process of change, the barriers (traps) that impede change and the dynamics involved with implementation.

**OBSD UPDATE -  
AASCF News**

**Date:  
July, 2011**

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While much of the discussions have been focused upon the “big picture” of how to shift thinking and practice within large systems, there has been much discussion as to how to make OBSD understandable and real at the ground level – with front-line staff, supervisors, non-professional staff, small organizations and clients. While some of us get excited about the “big picture” changes and how the world will look differently in a few years (we hope) there are many people who are “in the trenches” doing the day-to-day work of helping people to better their lives and the lives of their children

To people working at the front-line, OBSD may appear to be esoteric, a fine vision and/or a hopeful picture of what could be. However, the day-to-day reality is that of working in a stressful, often conflict-ridden environment and juggling multiple priorities. There is always more work to be done than there are resources – staff, time and/or money. The trick is to try and figure out how to work more creatively, sort out the priorities and allocate the limited resources to where they will have the greatest pay-off over time.

Everyone within the sector needs to be aware of, learn about and allocate resources to accommodate Outcome Based Service Delivery .

There is a synergy happening , not only within Child Welfare but in many sectors - health, corrections and business, to shifting from a model of measuring *what* we do (outputs) to measuring *the benefits of what we do* (outcomes). Defining and measuring outcomes (positive, negative and unanticipated) of our work is more important than measuring the number of widgets (hours of service, bed nights, number of meetings, attendees, etc.).

There is already great awareness and focus upon attaining better outcomes for the families and children being worked with. It will be through OBSD that we have the opportunity to become more skilful at articulating what it is that works and sharing that information among ourselves. Tracking how we get to positive outcomes is important and part of the quality improvement systems within organizations. While we cannot let go of these systems and processes, we need to be clearer and more focused upon the outcomes and how they have been achieved. How are we capturing the stories? Relaying them to stakeholders (boards, staff, clients, funders etc.)? Who within the organization is responsible to gather the information? Plan for the changes? Track the changes that have been implemented? And keep everyone moving forward?

Change is daunting, takes time and requires a concerted effort on the part of all the people within the organization. If it is only top-down, the front-line staff, volunteers and clients are often the last to know what is happening and may not become involved until it has a direct impact on their lives.

To effectively implement change - to have the greatest impact in the shortest amount of time, is to consciously involve everyone, not just the professional staff. It is not unusual that the administrative and other staff having direct contact with clients have valuable input and/or influence. To illustrate this: When I worked at Terra, Dorothy, the janitor, maintained a close relationship with many of the young women and was probably the most important person they had contact with on a daily basis. We knew that her values and the messages given to the young women were congruent with the vision and philosophy of the agency and that her down-to earth, motherly approach reinforced the outcomes we were trying to achieve.

We do not need to keep recreating the same wheels, in isolation. We do need to learn from those who are further ahead in the process – the things that appear to be working, identifying the areas of potential conflict, the processes to facilitate collaboration and the defining of a practice model that allows for the focus to be maintained on achieving positive outcomes.

**I am more than willing to meet with agencies and/or groups of organizations to present an overview of OBSD and the learning that has evolved to date.**

*“Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind.  
To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse.  
To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better.  
To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better.”*  
*King Whitney Jr.*

### A Day in the Life of OBSD

Joni Brodziak – Executive Lead, Outcomes Based Services, Ministry Support

In the 2nd and 3rd edition of the AASCF Journal (available on the AASCF website: [www.aascf.com](http://www.aascf.com)), we provided an overview of the intention of Outcomes Based Service Delivery (OBSD), reviewed what is happening at the phase-in sites and touched on some of the lessons we are learning.

This article will dig deeper into the experiences of both ministry and agency staff at one phase-in site:

- What does OBSD mean in work with families?
- What are some of the notable differences, benefits and challenges?

#### Background

The Ministry of Children and Youth Services (CYS) and the contracted agency sector in Alberta are collaborating on revising the way that services for children and families are accessed, negotiated and delivered. At its most basic, OBSD is a new way of working with families

and contracted agencies to ensure the best possible service is provided.

Beginning in summer of 2009, phase-in sites were implemented in five regions. For each identified worksite, a lead community agency was selected and a funding model developed to provide the agency with the ability to work more closely with the caseworker and the family, very early in the onset of involvement. The phase-in worksites and agencies are working together to develop practices that better support the children and families they are involved with. These practices include:

- Early engagement of the family with supports;
- The development of a singular case plan that the caseworker, agency staff and family all contribute to;
- Collaboration on service delivery; and
- Service provision that is flexi-

ble and tailored to the individual family’s unique circumstances.

In Region 6, The Family Centre was the agency selected to work with the chosen Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) worksite, which is the North Central Neighborhood Centre.

Implementation began August 2009 and to date they have worked together with over 400 children. The model that The Family Centre uses is one of Family Intervention Generalists (FIGs) who become the family’s primary point of contact for agency services. These ‘FIGs’ work directly with the family and the ministry caseworker to plan out supports and then are responsible for assisting in families to meet their day to day goals as outlined by the agreed upon case plan.

The type of collaborative case

planning that is occurring at this phase-in site is already enabled by current policy and legislation. Although there is far more opportunity for agency voice in assessment and planning, delegated decision making remains the responsibility of ministry staff.

Caseworkers, who have worked within this OBSD site, report that their time is now better spent and families are receiving services faster. *“Instead of spending time on the phone, looking for someone who can assist with things like driving to an appointment, we know that we can focus on more value-added work,”* reports a caseworker. Workers have also reported that they have been able to increase their actual face to face contact with families.

While streamlining of administrative functions is important, the early front end involvement, frequency of support and the strengthened connections to the community enabled by The Family Centre are significant.

Kim Spicer, a supervisor in Region 6, North Central office says that: *“OBSD has had a positive impact on some of the most difficult parts of the job. Friday afternoons used to be one of the busiest times all week, as families look to get enough food or other services to last through the weekend. So much of our time was spent scrambling but now, because of our community partnerships, we have a place to go right away to get the needs met.”* Pauline Smale, Vice President of Client Services from The Family Centre, confirms that they have seen several examples where families “come to us late in

the week and we stabilize over the weekend and, in the end, the children are not apprehended”.

Both caseworkers and FIGs have noted that relationships with their colleagues are much stronger, under OBSD. While working so closely together takes some getting used to, it has added benefits such as increased satisfaction with their careers.

*One worker noted, “... It is reassuring to know that you are not alone and that there is someone you can talk things over with.”*

This level of collaboration is different and comes with some inherent challenges. Working together requires role clarity and building trust takes time. When asked what advice they would give to a site that is beginning OBSD, caseworkers noted that a high skill level from colleagues and strong support from leadership are crucial to success.

*“You need to have a strong team of people you can count on, people you know you can trust to do the work that needs to be done,”* states a caseworker.

This need for a trusting, collegial relationship cannot be overstated. It is important to remember that these are children and families who are subject to services under the Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act and, as Pauline indicates *“behind every creative solution or service approach that is developed, there is a ministry case-*

*worker who was willing to support it”.*

**Strong senior leadership at the highest levels of the department was noted to be crucial to the success or failure of OBSD.**

**So what does this mean in a practical sense?**

Managers at OBSD sites are building in more time for meetings, both among their own staff and with the contracted agency, as information sharing and the opportunity to debrief case particulars are vital.

The need for training or training materials as well as the time to review them is equally important.

Flexibility is also valued; it was noted that whenever innovation is introduced into the way we work, there needs to be a fundamental understanding that changes takes time and that positive results build as experience in the methodology increases. The appeal of this type of flexibility is likely one of the reasons that OBSD has been embraced to the extent that it has.

The funding approach for agencies appears to enable more innovation and nimble responses to support the specific and unique needs of families. Caseworkers are freed from having to find ways to meet the families’ need within the traditional menu of available services (although many of those are still required and available). Within the current limitations of non-OBSD sites, a caseworker might struggle to find a way to pay for unusual

costs and be left to make short term decisions that meet imminent needs only. At the OBSD site, with better partnership and the ability to be creative, these situations are sometimes avoided. For example, in one circumstance, the team was able to keep children in their home of origin (avoiding removal and maintaining a familiar home environment) by quickly developing a plan to pay for half of a damage deposit and provide respite while the family made more long term sustainable arrangements to improve their situation. *“OBSD allows us to practice as we would have always wanted to, with more time and with more room to be innovative,”* notes Kim.

OBSD is seen as the natural evolution of practice and consistent with the Casework Practice Model principles of Assessment, Collaboration and Engagement. While the ministry and agencies are pleased with the initial results and continue to be motivated to move forward, there is recognition that time and

attention are crucial elements to successful implementation.

**The question remaining is what is the long term impact on the child and family?**

Families report that they feel an increased sense of involvement, which can lead to a corresponding sense of empowerment to make long term positive changes.

Although it is far too early to make any claims about the success of OBSD, there have been some promising trends for children and families to date, including:

- More children are receiving services at home than in care.
- Children and families involvement is more focused and of a shorter in duration.
- Families are expressing a greater deal of engagement in planning and are feeling supported to be successful.

There are also some other interesting results emerging related to how

children fare while they are receiving services.

*For example, a recent review of some of the data revealed that 98% of all school aged children who were placed in care, at this OBSD site, remained in the school they attended prior to being placed in care.*

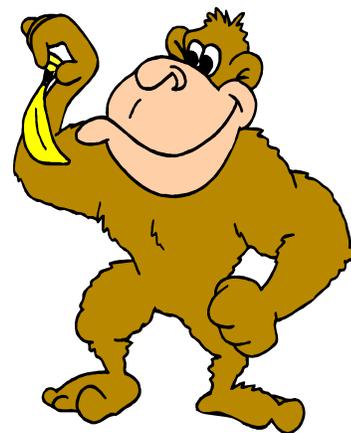
While this figure in and of itself does not necessarily mean a positive long term outcome, the well-being of children is promoted by continuity of relationships, community and school.

Regions and contract agencies are currently working on the implementation of additional phase-in sites to continue to build our joint understanding of the impacts and opportunities of OBSD.

We will continue to work with phase-in sites, in order to learn from these real world examples and the experiences of staff, who actually provide services, to give us the best .

***“It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”***

*Charles Darwin*



### ***Upcoming Events***

*Registration forms available on the AASCF web-site: [www.aascf.com](http://www.aascf.com)*

**AASCF Call For AASCF Journal submissions - August 15, 2011**

**AASCF Call For Speakers - Closes August 15, 2011** The 4<sup>rd</sup> annual ***Strengthening Today, Building Tomorrow*** conference is January 26 -27, 2012 at the Fantasyland Hotel in Edmonton. We are looking for speakers/presenters with new insight, practical solutions or best practices.

**AASCF Leadership Bursary Application - Deadline September 15, 2011**

**AASCF Annual General Meeting, Friday September 30, 2011**, Capri Conference Centre in Red Deer

#### **Workshops/Training Opportunities:**

**Christopher Bauer, PhD, HSP, CFS (back due to popular demand!)**

**Professional Ethics Ideas & Tools with Christopher Bauer**

Calgary **September 16, 2011** 9:00 – 12:00, Edmonton **September 23, 2011** 1:00 – 4:30

**High Impact, High Return on Investment**

Calgary **September 16, 2011** 9:00 - 12:00, Edmonton **September 23, 2011** 1:00 – 4:30

**Dr. William Marsden, Ph.D.**

**Signs of Safety: An Overview**

Wood's Homes—805-37 St. N.W. Calgary **September 19 and 20, 2011**

\$150.00 (includes lunch both days and 12 hours of ACSW continuing Competency Credit)

If you are interested in registering, please contact: [laura.wilson@woodshomes.ca](mailto:laura.wilson@woodshomes.ca).

**Charmaine Hammond**

**Building Teams From Good To Great: How to Create Teamwork by Design, not by Default**

Calgary **October 25, 2011**, Edmonton **October 18, 2011**

\$100.00 + GST \$5.00 = \$105.00 (Lunch Included)

**Dr. Bob Lonne** author of *Reforming Child Protection* will be in Alberta:

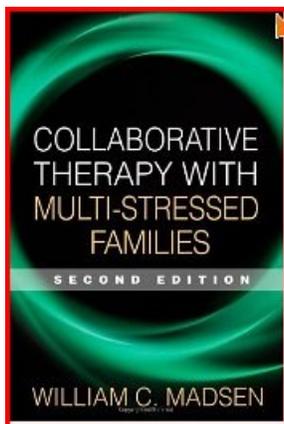
Keynote speaker and presenter at ***Learning Our Way Symposium - November 16, 2011***

Agency workshops in Edmonton **November 14, 2011** and Calgary **November 18, 2011**

Details about the Symposium and Workshops are being worked out and will be made available by the end of the summer.

***They always say time changes things,  
but you actually have to change them yourself.***

**Andy Warhol (1928 - 1987),**



**William Madsen, Ph.D.** is the Founder and Director of the **Family Centered Services Project**.

He provides international training and consultation regarding collaborative approaches to working with families and assists community agencies and government departments develop institutional practices and organizational cultures that support family centered practice.

He is the author of numerous articles, *“Collaborative Therapy with Multi-Stressed Families” (2nd Edition)* and is currently working on another book entitled, *“Helping: Towards More Supportive Services”*.

He has been involved with the signs of safety approach and its implementation across several jurisdictions.

## Signs of Safety: An Overview

**When:** September 19 and 20, 2011

**Where:** Woods Homes  
3rd floor– 805-37 Street N.W., Calgary

### Course Overview:

Across north America, services for families are undergoing profound changes. Community and government agencies are searching for effective models that support strength-based, culturally responsive, empowering partnerships with families. This workshop offers an integrated practice framework and will provide an overview of the Signs of Safety approach. The Signs of Safety is a solution orientation to work with families child protection concerns. It looks to expand the investigation of risk to include signs of safety which can strengthen a family’s ability to protect and nurture their children. It is gaining international interest as a clear practice framework. That can lead to better outcomes for children in the long run.

### Learning Outcomes:

1. To provide an overview of the Signs of Safety approach, it’s history and increasing international application.
2. To explore the principles of practice related to assessing safety as well as risk.
3. To examine the clinical practice and tools with opportunities for case planning in child protection.

### Cost:

\$150.00 –includes both days, lunch and a parking pass

**ACSW Continuing Competency Credit:** 12 hours

If you are interested in registering, please contact:  
Laura Wilson at [laura.wilson@woodshomes.ca](mailto:laura.wilson@woodshomes.ca).

## Tools to Assist with Implementation of OBSD

This section of the newsletter will be focused upon the tools and/or approaches that may be of use to an agency, as they move forward with implementing OBSD.

While there are phase-in projects that have been operating from a couple of months (Peace River, High Prairie and High Level) to over two years (Calgary and Edmonton) there are only relatively few agencies actively working from an OBSD perspective—those are either a lead agency, those that are currently contracting with a lead agency or those who have decided that a new way of working will benefit their clients and are actively making the changes to implement OBSD –irrespective of having an “OBSD contract”. Some agencies are waiting to see how OBSD will play out and what they will need to do to accommodate the changes and some are waiting to see if OBSD will go the way of other good initiatives over the years and fade away.

Those who are pro-actively analysing their internal structures and processes, capacity and programming to address the changes that an OBSD approach implies will be in a better position to apply to be a lead agency, when new opportunities arise or will be in a better position to work with a lead agency from a collaborative and outcome focused perspective.

With each newsletter, we will focus on one or more tools that are being used and are seen to be evidenced based approaches to achieving positive outcomes for children and families. It is our intent to share information with agencies, not attempt to dictate the use of a particular tool or approach.

### Readiness Assessment Tool

I have been working with John Gaye and Larry Gazzola from the Ministry to create an **OBSD Readiness Assessment Tool** that may be used by the Regions and agencies to prepare for OBSD.

The tool is a checklist identifying issues that need to be considered to prepare for, implement and evaluate OBSD. It is designed to be used by different groups of people - CFSA's, agencies applying to be a lead agency and non-lead agencies preparing to work from an OBSD model. We think the questions being asked and issues being raised for consideration have applicability to all programs and agencies. If nothing else, this tool has the capacity to raise the issues and provide a framework to begin the discussions of OBSD internally.

Once the Readiness Assessment Tool have been completed, it will be made available on the AASCF website or by contacting me directly—hopefully within the next month.

### Wraparound and Family Centered Practice

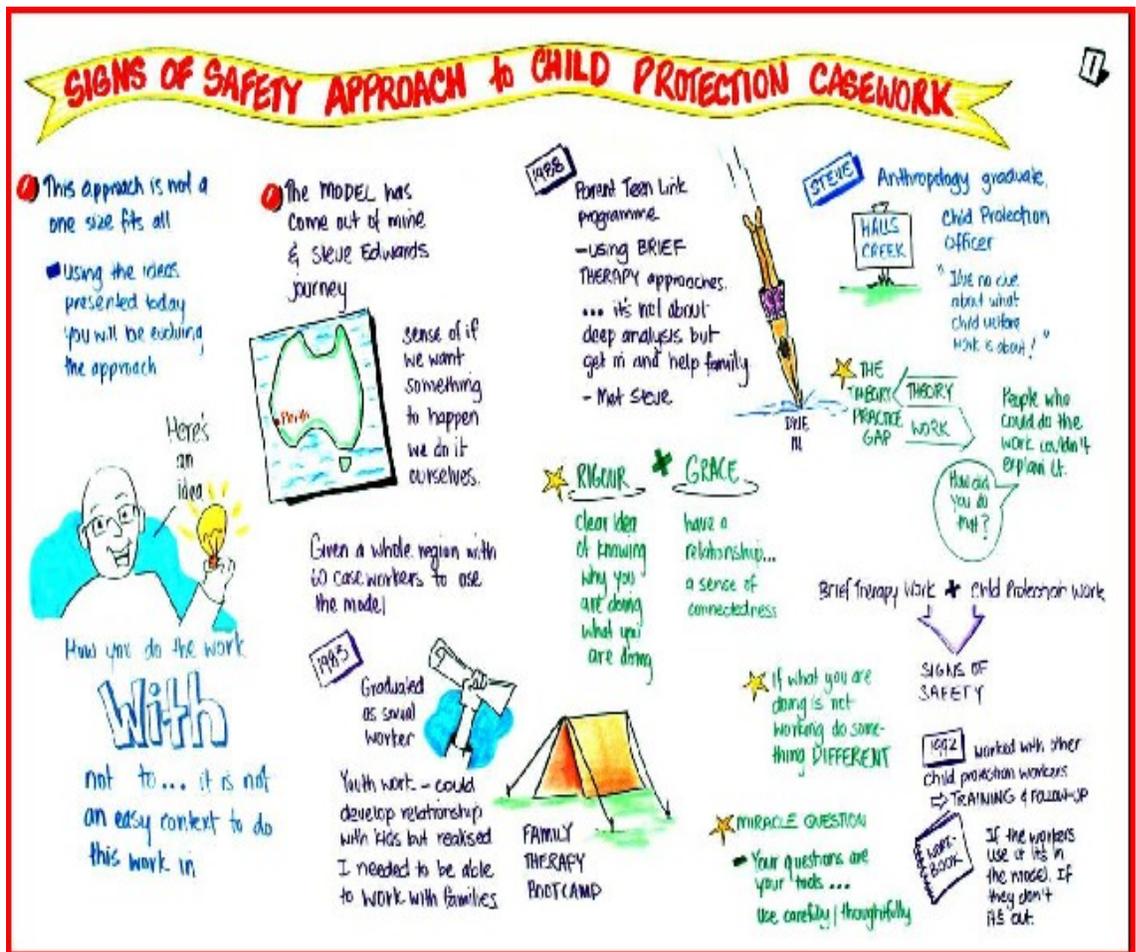
There is an excellent presentation (video and powerpoint ) worth looking at outlining the process of change undergone by Brevard Family Partnership, Florida entitled ***Transforming Child Welfare Case Practice: Implementing Wraparound and Family Centered Practice Into Systems of Care***, Dr. Patricia Nellius-Guthrie, Rennee Rich, Kim Coviello, Becky Petty, August 27, 2009: <http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/confvids/depend09/transformcw/fs.html>

## Signs of Safety

**The Signs of Safety Approach to Child Protection Casework** is one of the practice models being used within the OBSD phase in projects - Calgary and Lethbridge . Other sites are using a variety of other strength based models and approaches. We are highlighting this approach now, as Woods Homes is offering an overview of Signs of Safety in September .(see page 7)

The Signs of Safety approach to child protection casework was developed through the 1990's in Western Australia, by Andrew Turnell and Steve Edwards in collaboration with over 150 West Australian child protection workers (CPW's) and is now being utilized in jurisdictions in the U.S.A., Canada, U.K., Sweden, Finland, Holland, New Zealand and Japan.

This approach focuses on the question, "How can the worker actually build partnerships with parents and children in situations of suspected or substantiated child abuse and still deal rigorously with the maltreatment issues?" This is a partnership and collaboration grounded, strengths-based, safety-organised approach to child protection work, expanding the investigation of risk to encompass strengths and Signs of Safety that can be built upon to stabilize and strengthen the child's and family's situation.



A format for undertaking comprehensive risk assessment - assessing for both danger and strengths/safety – is incorporated within the one-page Signs of Safety assessment protocol (this one page form is the only formal protocol used in the model). The approach is designed to be used from commencement through to case closure and to assist professionals at all stages of the child protection process, whether they be in statutory, hospital, residential or treatment settings

This graphic record was created by artist Mary Brake at a Signs of Safety workshop in Auckland, March 2004 . For more info: [www.reflectiongraphics.com](http://www.reflectiongraphics.com)

This information was taken directly from their web-site: [www.signs of safety.net](http://www.signs of safety.net)

## *Resources - OBSD*

**Transforming Child Welfare Case Practice: Implementing Wraparound and Family Centered Practice Into Systems of Care**, Dr. Patricia Nellius-Guthrie, Rennee Rich, Kim Coviello, Becky Petty, August 27, 2009 - an excellent video and slide presentation – Brevard Family Partnership, Florida: <http://centervideo.forest.usf.edu/confvids/depend09/transformcw/fs.html>

**Rethinking and Reforming Child Protection Systems** - Power point presentation by Bob Lonne <http://www.strengthbasedstrategies.com/POWER%20POINT%20PRESENTATIONS/LonnePpt.pdf>

**AASW President Dr Bob Lonne on 9AM with David & Kim (Part 1) video ...**  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PLN38MPT3HQ>

**Signs of Safety:** [www.signsofsafety.net](http://www.signsofsafety.net)

### Change

**Frustrated By Resistance To Change?** Resistance to change is a normal response. Our attitude towards resistance is the key to successful change: <http://www.change-management-coach.com/resistance-to-change.html>

**Organization and Change. Methods, Models and Theories :** [http://www.12manage.com/i\\_co.html](http://www.12manage.com/i_co.html)

**Major Roles During Change and Capacity Building** Adapted from “Field Guide to Consulting and Organizational Development”: <http://managementhelp.org/misc/roles-during-change.pdf>

**Organizational Change and Development (Managing Change and Change Management:**  
[http://managementhelp.org/org\\_chng/org\\_chng.htm](http://managementhelp.org/org_chng/org_chng.htm)

**Change Management Organizational and Personal Change Management, Process, Plans, Change Management and Business Development Tips:** <http://www.businessballs.com/changemanagement.htm>

**Change Management Models**—Someone wise once said all models are wrong, some models are useful. If we apply this to change management models the idea is the same.  
<http://www.change-management-coach.com/change-management-models.html>

**Models of Change and Overcoming Employee Resistance**, Rafe Harwood: <http://www.unfortu.net/~rafe/links/change.htm>

**Managing Change in the Workplace - 4 Key Steps to Incremental Change :** <http://www.ecademy.com/node.php?id=137732>

**Organizational Change: A Comparison of Four of the Best Models of All Time** – Paul Gerhardt , 2004  
[http://www.paulgerhardt.com/homework/ORGANIZATIONAL\\_CHANGE.pdf](http://www.paulgerhardt.com/homework/ORGANIZATIONAL_CHANGE.pdf)

**Strategies For Managing Change in the Workplace: Dealing With People's Emotions**  
<http://www.leadership-and-motivation-training.com/strategies-for-managing-change.html>

## Resources —OBSD continued

**Changing Workplace Culture :Key Steps:** <http://www.leadership-and-motivation-training.com/changing-workplace-culture.html>

**Change-Management-Coach.com!** This site is full of free change management tools and information created to help you be an effective leader of change in the workplace, and in your personal life: <http://www.change-management-coach.com/index.html>

### Collaboration

**Tamarack Institute for Community Engagement** - an Institute dedicated to the art and science of community engagement and collaborative leadership. This web-site is home to Tamarack's growing learning community of practitioners, from different sectors, who are working together to change the world one community at a time. We are learning with and from one another about addressing complex community issues, creating positive change, sharing responsibility and leadership for building vibrant communities across Canada and beyond:  
<http://tamarackcommunity.ca>

**Merger Manual** prepared by Big Sisters and Big Brothers Societies of Edmonton and Area -1993 (PDF on the AASCF/OBSD web-site)

**Should we dance? A resource for effective partnering;** prepared by Anne Goldblatt; February 2007 based on discussions of the Partnership Dialogue, Edmonton, Alberta; Sponsored by Inner City Connections and Community Partnership Enhancement Fund:  
<http://cpefalbertacapitalregion.ca/downloads/toolbox/shldwedance.pdf>

**Collaborative Journeys:** ideas, practices and stories for people wanting to work better together. Collaborative Journeys is Ben Ziegler's blog. Ben is a mediator, consultant on collaborative practice, and thinks "living" systems. His home base :  
<http://www.collaborativejourneys.com>

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