

Using Family Life Education Methodology: The Planning Wheel in Family and Consumer Sciences

Carmen Irving, CFLE; Katie LaPlant CFLE; Patrice Powers-Barker, CFLE (Certified Family Life Educator)

INTRODUCTION

Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) professionals develop, teach, and evaluate programs on a wide variety of topics including but not limited to, parenting education, health and nutrition, and money management skills.

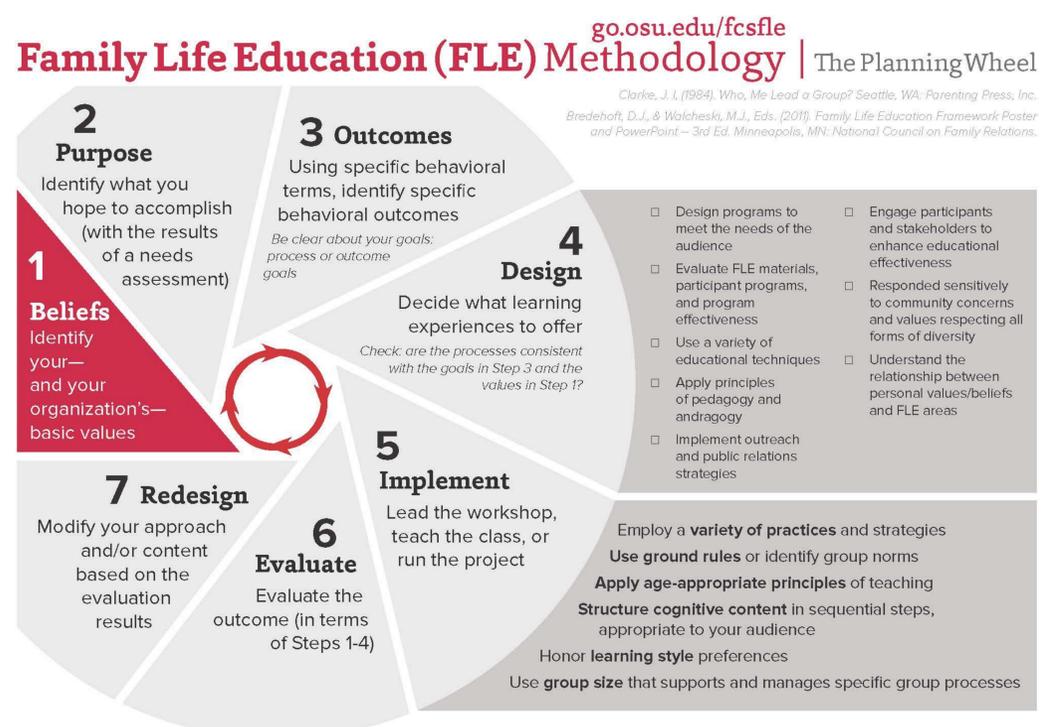
The Extension Program Logic Model is a valuable foundation for research-based work. The Family Life Education (FLE) Framework, developed by the National Council on Family Relations includes: ten content areas across four broad age groups and Family Life Education Methodology including a Planning Wheel for planning and implementing FLE programs.

The Planning Wheel was developed to plan, develop, implement, and evaluate programs in Family Life Education, and it is easily adaptable for a broad range of programs within Family and Consumer Sciences. Using both the FLE Framework and the Logic Model offers a strategy for new and experienced Extension colleagues to better work together to offer research based content and method for FCS programming.

METHODS

The Planning Wheel was developed by Jean Clarke and publicized through the National Council on Family Relations.

- To better share the Planning Wheel with Ohio State University Extension FCS staff, an infographic was created using the content of the Planning Wheel and best practices for Family Life Education programming.
- The Planning Wheel infographic and supporting material was presented to FCS staff as part of professional development training at an annual team meeting
- FCS team members were invited to use the wheel as part of their work in their communities as a tool develop strong programs that gives merit and credibility to Family and Consumer Sciences as well as Family Life Education
- After the professional development, follow up email communication as well as verbal stories highlighted how the planning wheel was used with different Extension teams and topics
- The OSU Extension team communicated with a fellow Family Life Educator about his use of the Planning Wheel with staff at a Head Start program in Michigan.



Family and Consumer Sciences
College of Education and Human Ecology
College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences
Infographic created by: Chelsea Rye

RESULTS

From a follow up survey with Family and Consumer Sciences Educators who attend the session on the Planning Wheel, it was found that a few educators used the Planning Wheel in programming. The Planning Wheel is one tool of many that will continue to strengthen work in Family and Consumer Sciences and help work more strongly in a team planning process.

Since spring of 2015, the planning wheel has been used for working Extension groups on a variety of topics and partnering groups:

- Breakfast on the Farm, on-farm tour event, Northwest Ohio. A cross program area educational event partnering between Extension staff and partners in neighboring rural and urban counties.
- Real Money Real World* youth financial program planning between county Extension 4-H, FCS staff and County Extension Director.
- Aging Smart* curriculum development. A multifaceted program as a result of the partnership between county Extension FCS Educators and the Office of Gerontology and Geriatrics.

CONCLUSIONS

As Family and Consumer Sciences Educators develop, implement, and evaluate programs, it is important to utilize a framework and tools to guide the educational practices. The Planning Wheel is a tool that can be used to plan, implement, and evaluate programs across all areas of Family and Consumer Sciences.

One of the future implications from the development of this tool is to streamline the process for educators in program development. This is to make sure that as Educators we have a theoretical background behind our programs, making sure that programs within Family and Consumer Sciences are credible and based on research. We see this Planning Wheel as one of many useful, professional tools that will help all of us continue to “Put the Puzzle Together” and “Solidify Our Purpose & Value for the Future.”

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