



Overview of Implementation Science and the LI² Framework

Leveraging America’s Social and Economic Resilience TANF Learning Community (LASER TLC)

LI², a partnership between the Administration for Children and Families, Mathematica, the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University, and a working group of researchers and TANF practitioners, sought a better approach to bringing science- and evidence-informed innovation into public programs. LI² draws on several disciplines—including implementation science, human-centered design, and change management—to provide a framework and a process for planning, implementing, and testing changes (big or small) in public programs. LI² prioritizes co-creation and collaboration, especially between researchers and practitioners. It also emphasizes including diverse perspectives, such as those with lived experience operating and participating in public assistance and employment services.

LI² is guided at every stage by evidence, which is both an input and output of the process. With LI², existing evidence is used to inform the change process and to design innovative solutions; evidence is also created as solutions are tested and refined. LI² is an iterative approach to change and promotes a culture of learning through small-scale cycles of testing and improvement, known as road tests. The emphasis here is on strengthening implementation quality to ensure that the solution is well integrated into the organization and can be sustained.

LI² has three phases: Learn, Innovate, Improve. Each phase has a core set of objectives and process steps to guide the team’s efforts; however, LI² is incredibly flexible and can be adaptively used in nonlinear ways to meet teams where they are at. In the end, LI² is intended to produce impact—both in terms of achieving specific change goals as well as building the capacity of the organization to use and build evidence moving forward.

LI²: Learn, Innovate, Improve Framework

