



Leading for Equitable Early Childhood Systems

Preconference, Monday 8:30-12:00

BUILD QRIS National Conference
July 16-18, 2018
San Diego, California



Equity, after all, does not mean simply equal funding. Equal funding for unequal needs is not equality. *Jonathan Kozol*



Facilitators of the Journey

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Department of Education, Early Learning Division
- **Aisha Ray, Ph.D., BUILD Initiative**
- **Michelle Stover-Wright, M.S., BUILD Initiative**

**AND
ALL OF YOU**



Overview for today

- ❖ What does it mean to lead for racial equity?
- ❖ Why does equity matter in early childhood systems?
- ❖ Racial equity challenges in your context.
- ❖ Building a racial equity community of practice.

Organization of the Activities

- We are going to work in small groups and dyads during this morning.
- All tables have equal numbers of participants and that dyads can be created within the tables.
- Constructivist listening.

Commitments for Challenging Conversations

- Stay engaged
- Experience discomfort
- Speak your truth
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Assume positive intent
- Own your own learning
- We are responsible for each other
- Understand that multiple means of interaction requires respecting others “methods”
- *Other commitments?*

Adapted From: “Courageous Conversations About Race: A Field Guide for Achieving Equity in Schools” (Chapter 4 pp. 58-65); Glenn Singleton and Curtis Linton. Corwin Press, 2006

Activity 1: What is Racial Equity?

Based on your survey results there are in this room different definitions of racial equity.

- How do you define racial equity? (one minute to write some ideas)
- Turn to your neighbor and share your definition of racial equity (each person talks for 2 minutes then your partner shares for 2 minutes)
- All group brief discussion.

Why Does Racial Equity Matter in Early Childhood Systems Development?

In Search of ...Equity

HISTORY

INTERNAL

Bias
Privilege
Internalized
Racism

EXTERNAL

Interpersonal
Institutional
Structural

**POWER
AND
ECONOMICS**

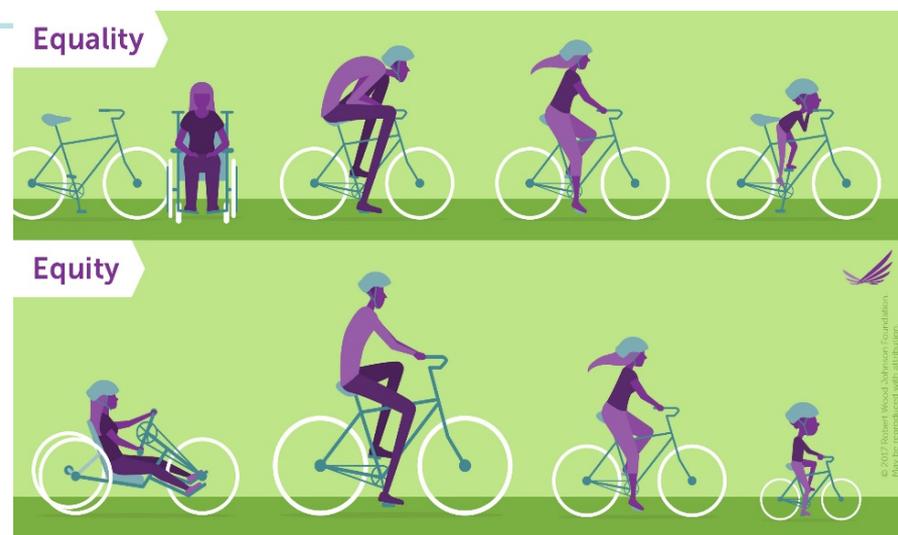
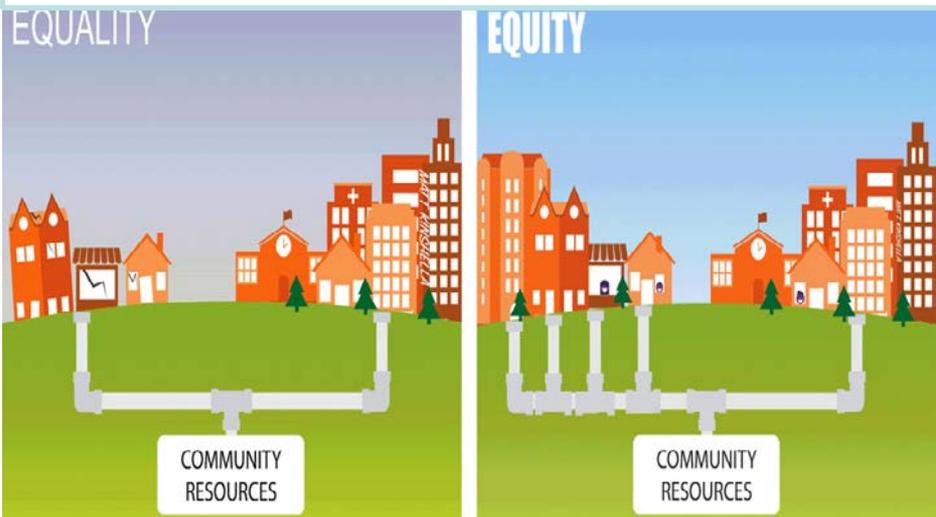
CULTURE

IDENTITY

Activity 2: Equity vs. Equality

Here are 2 popular images in which equity and equality are contrasted. Turn to your neighbor and discuss for 3 minutes each of your responses to these images.

- **What do they tell you about the differences between equity and equality?**
- **Which one best captures your view of equity and equality? Why?**



Racial Equity Defined

- Every early child and family regardless of race, ethnicity, and social circumstance has everything she/he/they need to develop optimally.
- Resources, opportunities, rewards and burdens are fairly distributed across groups and communities so that those with the greatest challenges are adequately supported and not further disadvantaged.
- Policies designed to support children and families are fair and just (Falk et al., 1993).
- The “race rules” (e.g., interlocking structures, policies, practices, customs) that undergird inequality in early childhood are identified, dismantled and rewritten so that race, ethnicity, language, place, gender and national origin do not negatively influence child and family outcomes (Flynn et al., 2016).

Interlocking Deep Structural Factors that Support Inequality in Early Childhood Systems

- **Wealth gap**
- **Segregated communities**
- **Segregated, poorly resourced educational systems**
- **Opportunity and achievement gaps; educational attainment**
- **Employment structures: gender inequality in wage structures**
- **Immigration policies and enforcement**
- **Health/mental health disparities**
- **Child welfare policies**
- **Housing policies and costs – eviction and homelessness**
- **Criminal justice: mass incarceration**
- **“Strategic racism”: strategic manipulation of racial animus**

Source – Roosevelt Institute, 2016

Why *racial* equity?

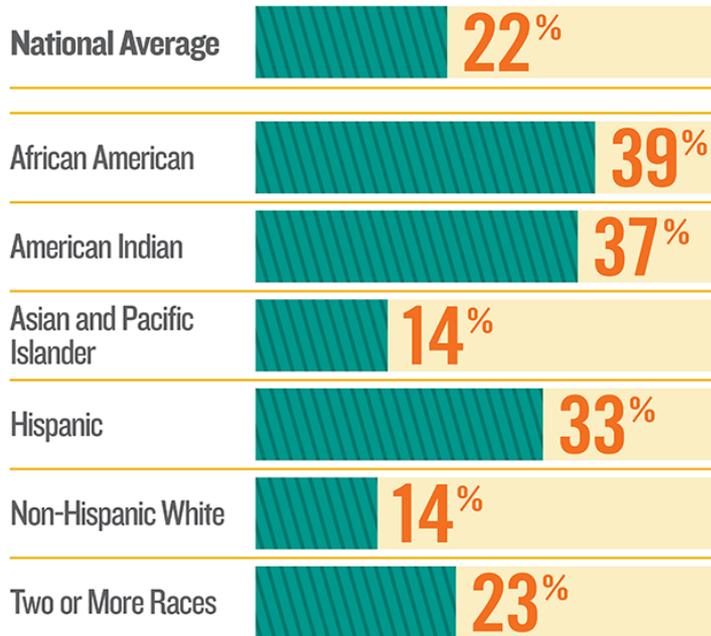
- Persistence of the association of *race and social class* with child outcomes (Race Matters, Annie E. Casey, 2006).
- Race as an independent factor in child and adult educational and health outcomes (Silverstein, 2013, The Atlantic).
- Endurance of structural racialization in the U.S. and its expression in early childhood systems (e.g., opportunity gaps, inequities in access, availability and affordability of high quality programs, workforce)

Race and Poverty Matter

2015 KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK

www.aacf.org

PERCENTAGE OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY BY RACE AND HISPANIC ORIGIN: 2013



SOURCE U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 American Community Survey.

Ecology of disparities experienced by children of color and those in poverty are shaped by 3 unique systemic and structural factors

- ***Social stratification*** by race, ethnicity, class, gender and other socially constructed factors
- ***Ideologies***, such as racism, xenophobia, misogyny, bias against those in poverty, that justify social stratification
- ***Segregation*** so that resources (e.g., housing, good schools) are unevenly distributed and unavailable or less available to some compared to others

– (Source: Garcia-Coll et al., 2001)



Children in poverty and children of color are more likely than other groups of children to face significant developmental and educational challenges

- **Deep poverty** for the first 18 years of their lives; “**mass incarceration communities**” (account for disproportionate **percentage of children in foster care**, children with incarcerated parents)
- **Apartheid schools in poor communities**--Under resourced and more likely to have **teachers without successful records of educating** children of color and in poverty *for excellence*
- **Families who are highly stressed** and challenged to consistently support optimal child outcomes
- **Poor housing, transportation**, under resourced social services and health services; **poorer health status** compared to other groups of children
- **Exposure to toxic factors** early in life that jeopardize their development, such as high levels of community violence, lead, and trauma

Assumptions

- Inequalities/disparities (e.g., race and social class) in the larger society are **reflected in the early childhood systems (ECS) at all levels** (city, county, state, federal)
- Inequalities/disparities in ECS can be **observed in many factors** (e.g., availability of programs, program quality, workforce preparation)

Assumptions

- Early childhood system inequalities can **directly and indirectly shape child outcomes**
- As early childhood leaders in early learning, health, child welfare, family engagement, and other areas have a responsibility to improve child outcomes and remove the factors that threaten development.

Assumptions

- Racial equity is an outcome of **intentional efforts to dismantle white supremacy and structural inequalities** that hold our society back.
- **Changing negative narratives** about children, families and communities (e.g., people in poverty, people of color, women, LBGTQ individuals, immigrants and refugees, and others) who experience systemic inequality is necessary for systemic change.

Activity 3: Reflections

- 5 minutes--In small groups discuss:
 - What did you learn or what struck you?
 - What are your emerging questions or what are you still wondering about?
- 5 minutes—full group share



Leading for Racial Equity

Leading with Race Requires Systems Leadership 1

- While many have a vision for equitable systems or equity in their own work efforts, achieving these goals requires
 - Deep commitment to the work of racial equity
 - Strong communication skills
 - Recognizing that problems are both “out there” and “in here”—self awareness of being part of the solution and the problem
 - Building and sustaining relationships, allowing collective work and wisdom to blossom, attention to process

Source: Senge et al., 2015; Powell, 2010.

Leading with Race Requires Systems Leadership 2

- While many have a vision for equitable systems or equity in their own work efforts, achieving these goals requires
 - Practice, practice, fail, reassess, practice, practice....learn
 - Use of tools, e.g., systems mapping, inquiry, consultancy, etc.
 - Open boundaries, tables and spaces to “outsiders”—open dialogue and work collectively
 - Build networks
 - Think and act strategically
 - Recognize that “good” policies can reinforce inequalities—targeted universalism

Source: Senge et al., 2015; powell, 2010.

Shifting Discourse

Discourse I	Discourse II
Single truths	Multiple Stories
Improving what exist	Addressing root causes
Answers and technical fixes	Inquiry and adaptive challenges
Externalization/blame “look out the window”	Internal reflection “look in the mirror”
Limited time and ability	Getting Started anyway

Activity 4: Leading For Racial Equity

- Turn to your neighbor.
- Each person takes a 2-minute turn to answer while the other person listens.

What does it mean to be a leader for racial equity in early childhood systems?

Debrief as a group.

Racial Equity Tools: Does Your State Have...

- A written position statement on racial equity (RE) related to achieving its goals for children, families, and communities?
- Leadership *visibly* committed to achieving racial equity?
- On-going training for all staff in racial equity practice?
- Accountability structures to ensure RE work is advancing state goals?
- Data disaggregated by race that guides RE work?
- Mandates that require cross agency/department alignment to achieve racial equity benchmarks and goals?
- On-going involvement of those communities most impacted by racial inequities?
- Other tools...?

Are you responsible or accountable for, or consulted or informed about...

- **Designing and developing:**
 - initiatives and programs
 - policies, regulations, and protocols for program management and delivery
 - mechanisms to determine success or benefit of services
- **Determining how resources are distributed at the: program, local, state level**
- **Analyzing and monitoring data, utilization of programs, services or initiatives**
- **Assessing the impact of service design, delivery and impact on related departments or divisions**

Are you responsible or accountable for, or consulted or informed about...

- Engaging beneficiaries in developing, delivering and evaluating program policies and practices
- Oversight of organizational policies and practices
- Preparing communications (orally, written, electronically) to program staff and recipient
- Responding to questions, critiques about policies, communications regarding program practices, policies and procedures
- Evaluating program staff
- Evaluating program operations, budget, outcomes

Racial Equity in Early Childhood Systems

Four Levels of Change



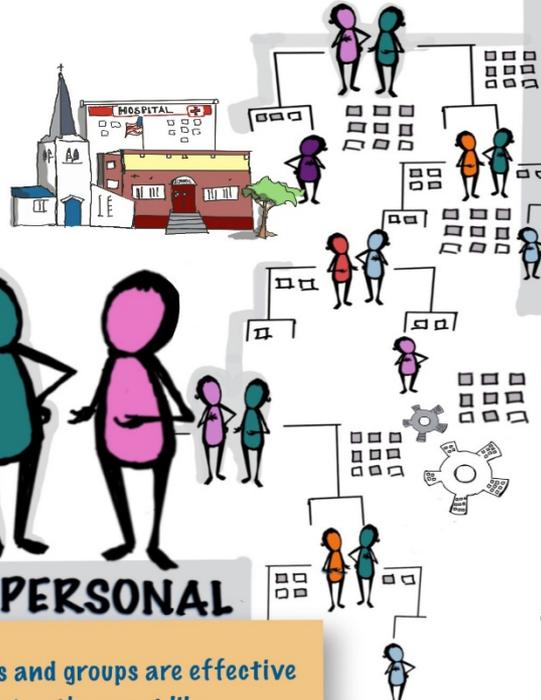
PERSONAL

The individual consistently works alone and with others, to understand their own values, beliefs, implicit biases, unconscious racism, actions and relative privileges that contribute to racial inequities and equity; the individual acts to advance racial equity.



INSTITUTIONAL

Apply a racial equity/economic justice lens to their policies, practices, regulations and work culture to dismantle policies that perpetuate inequality and design/develop policies and practices that advance opportunities, fairness, access to resources, and other factors for those most effected by racial inequality.



INTERPERSONAL

Individuals and groups are effective in relating to others not like themselves, actively include those typically excluded, share power, surface issues of racial inequality in interpersonal relationships, act to support positive change, and work to reduce interpersonal conflict.



STRUCTURAL

Individuals and groups recognize that structural arrangements are interconnected and resist change; they develop approaches to advance equity that offer new or reconstituted structural arrangements; they build shared leadership and collective power that leads to change.



Model adapted from Kirwan Institute. Illustration design by Chrissie Bonner and Montréal Morant. c 2017

Racial equity and early childhood: Focus on 4 levels of leadership

Personal – *individual beliefs that undergird practice -- implicit bias; internalized oppression*

Interpersonal – *the animus or comity between groups*

Institutional – *policies, culture, and practices that support inequity*

Structural – *The multilayered interconnected structures that perpetuate inequality in outcomes*

The Personal Level: Examining Implicit Racial Bias

Unconscious attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding actions and decisions

- Pervasive
- Distinct mental models
- Not aligned with declared beliefs
- Favors the in group
- Malleable

Activity 5: The Lunch Date

Lunch Date: 10:22

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=eputZigxUY8&t=9s>

Lunch Date: Three Questions

- What judgments were you making about the lead characters?
- What moments in the story made you question your own assumptions and judgments?
- What assumptions did you make about the motivations of the three characters—why did they act as they did?



Racial Equity is “Whole Systems” Work

Racial Equity is a “Whole System” Issue

- Racial **equity is an issue throughout** early childhood systems
- Systems-change to address inequities requires attending to all **the interdependent elements** of the system that may contribute to the inequity
- Improvement to **parts of the system may not improve the entire system**
- Equity **benchmarks and data can help mark progress**

Complex Systems



1-6

A UNIFYING FOUNDATION TO TRANSFORM THE WORKFORCE

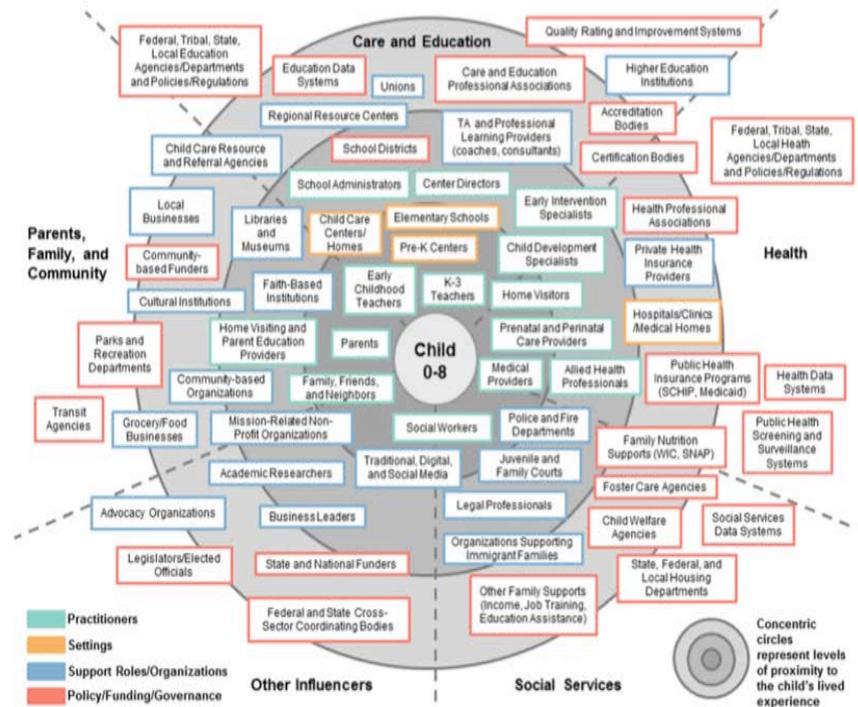


FIGURE 1-1 The complex landscape that affects children ages 0-8.

Create an Institutional Culture That Intentionally Supports Equity

- **Leadership models commitment to equity**
- **Shared definition of equity**
- **Equity is a central to the mission**
- **Robust accountability processes**
- **Data/Benchmarks and data competence**
- **Education, training, supervision**
- **Inclusion and transparency**
- **Intentional processes are used (e.g., Equity Action Framework)**

Activity 6: In your state...

Whole group share. 10 minutes

- In your state is racial equity a part of your early childhood systems change work?
 - If not, should it be?
 - If it is, briefly describe what your state is doing with our group.

Lessons from Oregon

Racial Equity Tools: Does Your State Have...

- A written position statement on racial equity (RE) related to achieving its goals for children, families, and communities?
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- On-going involvement of those communities most impacted by racial inequities?
- Other tools...?

Equity Challenges in Your Context

Making Inequity in Early Childhood Systems Visible: Start an Intentional Process



Actions to Tackle a Racial Equity Problem

- Understand the problem's ecology and the system in which it lives
- Focus on *system components and their interactions*
- Focus on aspects of the *opportunity structure, participation, and access* to reduce disparities
- Inclusion of partners and stakeholders—not only the usual partners
- Planning and implementation processes occur with all stakeholders
- Assessment, reframing and reform processes involve stakeholders

Use Data and Benchmarks to Help Address Inequities in Your State

- Demographics
- Child outcomes
- Family engagement and partnership
- Community Conditions
- Sectors (e.g., child care)
- Workforce professional development
- Others???



Indicators by State & for the U.S.

1. Children ages 0-4 by race and ethnicity	9. Children ages 0-5 without health insurance
2. Children ages 0-5 in 100% poverty by race and ethnicity	10. Children under age 18 without health insurance by race and ethnicity
3. Children under the age of 18 in 100% poverty	11. Low-birthweight babies by race and ethnicity
4. Young children (ages 3-4) living below 200% poverty, NOT in school	12. Infant mortality by race and ethnicity
5. Percent of Children under age 18 in single-parent families	13. Percent of fourth-grade public school students who scored below proficient reading level by race
6. Children under the age of 18 whose parents lack secure employment	14. Percent of fourth graders who scored below proficient reading level by family income
7. Children under age 18 with no parent in the labor force	15. Percent of children ages 1 – 17 with one or more oral health problems in the last year by race and ethnicity
8. Children under age 6 in low-income working families	16. Prevalence of current asthma for children ages 0-17 by race and ethnicity

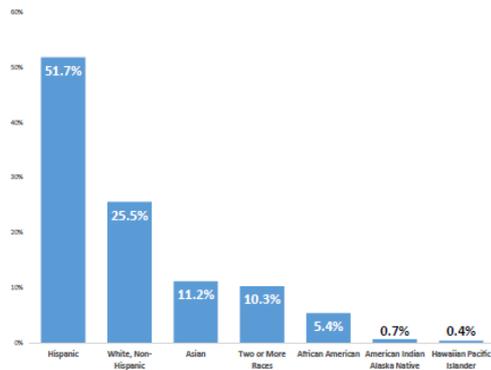
Data Booklets

Data snapshot of young children in California

In 2016, 2,935,163 children under age 6 lived in the state

Percent of children 0-4 by race and ethnicity

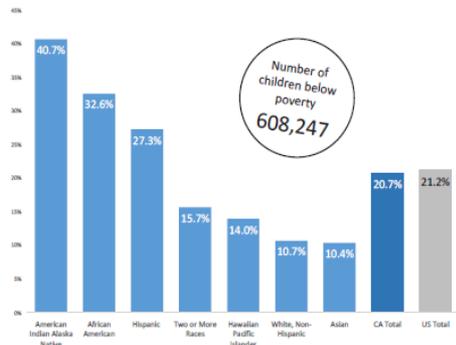
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016.



Children 0-5 below poverty by race/ ethnicity

Children growing up in poverty are much more likely to experience stress and deprivation that hinders development and readiness for school and life.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2016.



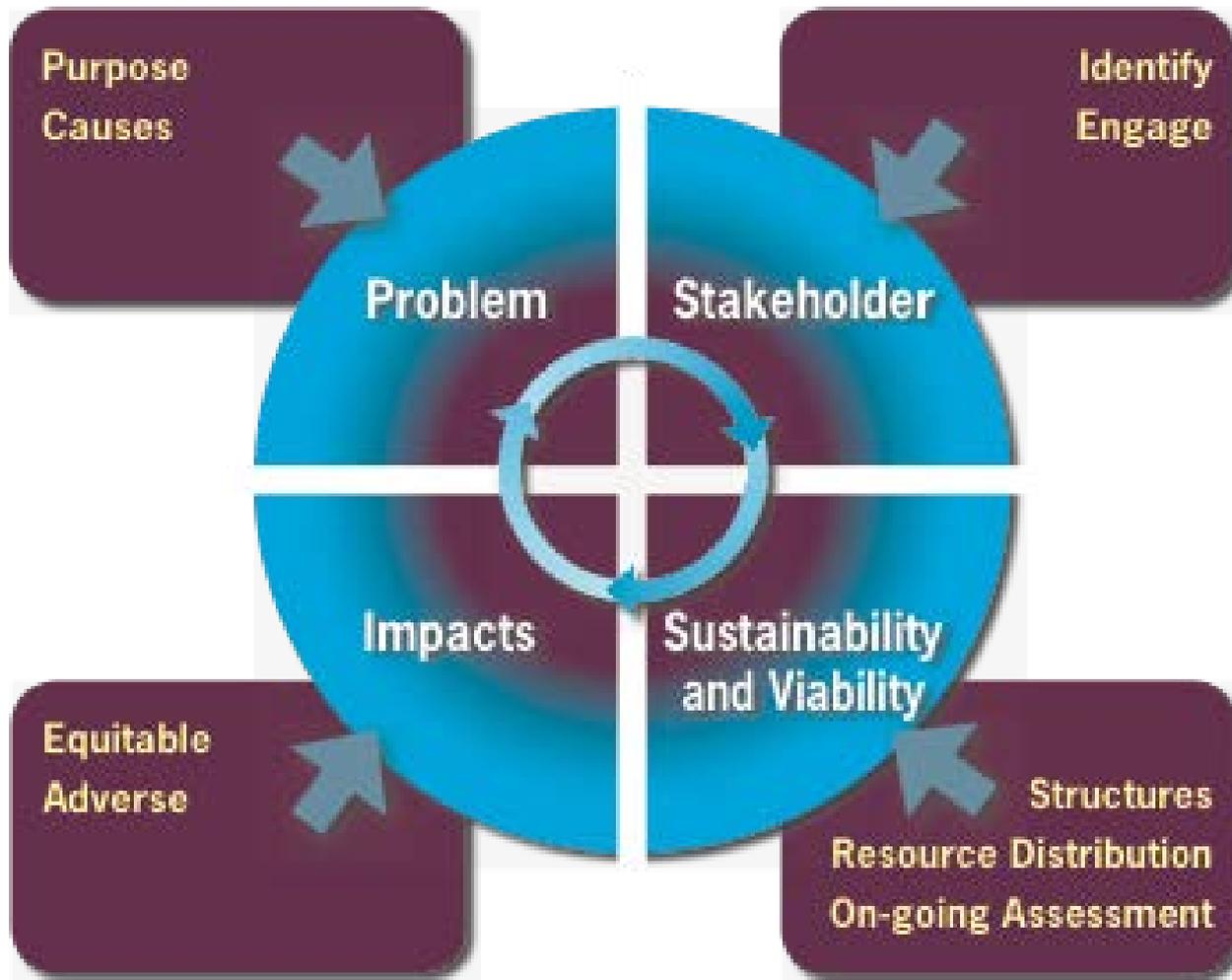
- Children 0-4
- Children 0-5 below poverty
- Teen births
- Low Birthweight
- 4th grade reading proficiency
- Chronic absence
- Race for Results
- Children are flourishing
- Safe Neighborhoods
- Developmental screening

Race for Results

The Annie E. Casey Foundation has developed the Race for Results Index, which compares how children and their families are progressing on key milestones across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state levels. The index is based on 12 indicators that measure a child's success in each stage of life, from birth to adulthood. The values go from 0 to 1,000, with the higher numbers indicating better results.

- Babies born at normal birthweight
- Children ages 3 to 5 enrolled in nursery school, preschool or kindergarten
- Fourth graders who scored at or above proficient in reading
- Eighth graders who scored at or above proficient in math
- Females ages 15 to 19 who delay childbearing until adulthood
- High school students graduating on time
- Young adults ages 19 to 26 who are in school or working
- Young adults ages 25 to 29 who have completed an associate's degree or higher
- Children birth to 17 who live with a householder who has at least a high school diploma
- Children birth to 17 who live in two-parent families
- Children birth to 17 who live in families with incomes at or above 200 percent of poverty
- Children birth to 17 who live in low-poverty areas (poverty <20 percent)

Equity Framework



Equity Action Framework: The Inequity Problem

- **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE – IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM:** What **problem related to disparities and inequality** in early childhood does this work (e.g., project, proposal, working group) address? **What is the *problem's ecology*** (e.g., health disparities and obesity in early childhood)— especially its root causes? Who benefits and who does not? What do you hope to accomplish? Will it reduce disparities or discrimination?
- **IDENTIFY AND DOCUMENT RACIAL INEQUITIES:** Which racial/ethnic groups are **currently most advantaged and most disadvantaged** by the issues this work seeks to address? How are they **affected differently**? What quantitative and qualitative **evidence of inequality exists**? What evidence is missing or needed?
- **EXAMINE THE CAUSES:** What factors may be **producing and perpetuating racial inequities associated with this issue**? How did the inequities arise? Are they expanding or narrowing? Does the work (e.g., proposal, project, working group) **address root causes**? If not, how could it?

Equity Action Framework: Stakeholders

- **IDENTIFY STAKEHOLDERS:** Identify stakeholders associated with your equity problem. Think about the entire “universe” of stakeholders—go beyond the “usual suspects.” Which racial/ethnic groups have and which do not have access to the resources, programs, and services you are responsible for designing, regulating, or distributing?
- **ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS:** Have stakeholders from different racial/ethnic groups—especially those most adversely affected—been informed, meaningfully involved, and authentically represented in the development of programs, policies, and initiatives related to your equity problem? Who’s missing and how can they be engaged?

Equity Action Framework: Impacts

- **ADVANCE EQUITABLE IMPACTS:** What **positive impacts on equity and inclusion**, if any, could result from this work (e.g., project, proposal, working group)? Which racial/ethnic groups could benefit? Are there further ways to maximize equitable opportunities and impacts?
- **CONSIDER ADVERSE IMPACTS:** What **adverse impacts or unintended consequences could result** from this work (e.g., policy, program)? Which racial/ethnic groups could be negatively affected? How could adverse impacts be prevented or minimized?
- **EXAMINE OPPORTUNITY STRUCTURES AND RESOURCE DISTRIBUTION:** What are the **opportunity structures and patterns of resource distribution** (e.g., barriers, pathways, resources) that need to be understood and addressed if this work is to succeed? How can universal goals be supported through targeting resources and supports?

Equity Action Framework: Sustainability and Viability

- **EXAMINE ALTERNATIVES OR IMPROVEMENTS:** Are there better ways to reduce racial disparities and advance racial equity? What provisions could be changed or added to **ensure positive impacts on racial equity** and inclusion?
- **IDENTIFY SUCCESS INDICATORS AND USE ROBUST ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES:** What are the **success indicators and progress benchmarks**? How will impacts be documented and evaluated? How will the level, diversity and quality of ongoing stakeholder engagement be assessed? How will assessment **inform the on-going work**? How are all stakeholders engaged in assessment?

Activity 7

- Review the DATA on your table and the Equity Action Framework (EAF).
- In teams use the EAF to analyze the data related to racial disparities.
 - The problem
 - The stakeholders
 - The impact
 - Sustainability and viability
- Come back together for a **full Group Debrief**

Reflections

- What did you learn or what struck you?
- What are your emerging questions or what are you still wondering about?
- Could you use this tool in your state or community?



Build and Sustain An Equity-Focused Community of Practice

Goals Going Forward

- **Initiate a plan and identify next steps to apply methods and tools to lead for equity in your work.**
- **Determine the next steps to take as an individual and as a member of your work team.**



Summary of Key Ideas

- Racial equity matters in early childhood systems and child outcomes.
- Racial equity is a complex and multi-system issue.
- Start or join an intentional process in your state focused on racial equity to improve child outcomes.
- Be a leader for racial equity.
- Understand the levels of change -- personal, interpersonal, institutional and structural.

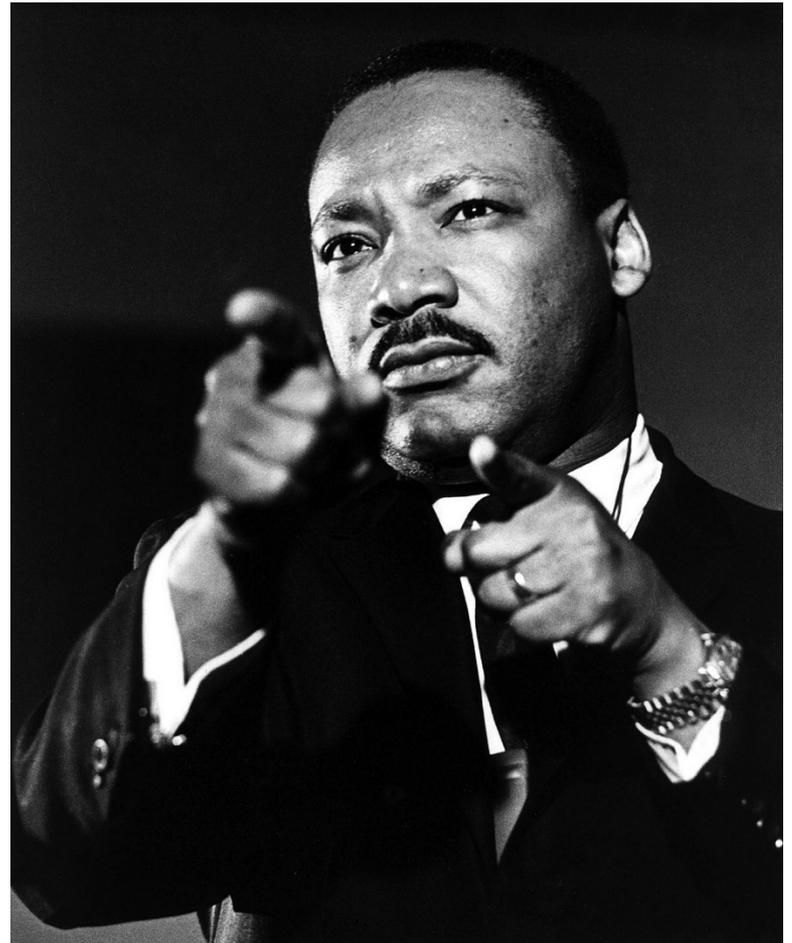
Activity 8: Reflections

- What did you learn or what struck you during this conversation?
- What are your emerging questions or what are you still wondering about?
- What actions can you take?



Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'



Contact information

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