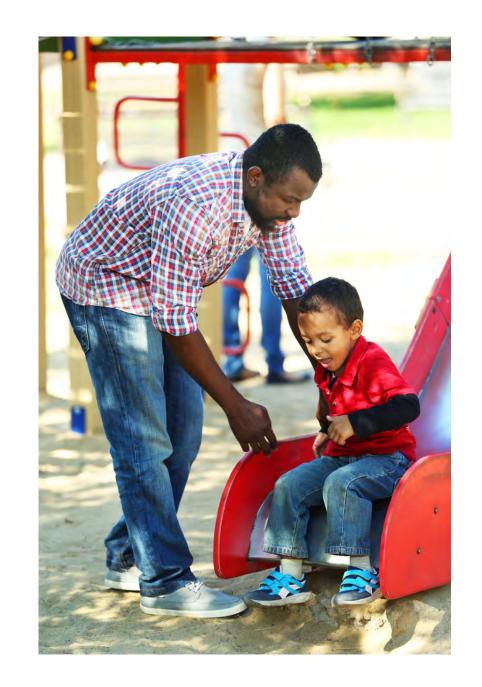


Metropolitan Sate University of Denver nstitute for Racial Equity and Excellence Or. Rosemarie Allen

# Culturally Responsive Family Engagement

To fully engage families, we must suspend judgement and be aware of our own biases





Impact of Implicit Bias

# IMPLICIT BIAS

Implicit bias is the mental process resulting in feelings and attitudes about people we view as different.

It is an unconscious process and we are not consciously aware of the negative racial biases that develop over the course of our lifetime.





Makes the process of thinking visible.

<u>High</u> <u>Level</u> <u>Inference</u>

A process by which we determine meaning about what is occurring around us.

This process takes milliseconds to complete and we are often unaware that it is happening.

Low Level Inference

I draw conclusions and take action based on my beliefs. ►

High Level Inference This family won't listen to what I suggest and probably can't afford to buy quality foods.

I make assumptions. ▶

The drink is probably a sugary beverage not good for the child.

I add meanings and labels. ► (Personal/Cultural)

The parents are uneducated.

I select data. ► (Conscious/Unconscious)

Low Level Inference

The child is too big for a bottle.

Directly Observable Data
The toddler in the family has a bottle filled with red liquid.

I draw conclusions and take action based on my beliefs. ►

High Level Inference They will probably not listen to what I say and continue to do things as their culture dictates so why bother?

I make assumptions. ▶

I am going to have to spend a lot of time educating this family.

I add meanings and labels. ► (Personal/Cultural)

They could be here illegally & don't understand how things work in America.

I select data. ► (Conscious/Unconscious)

<u>Low Level</u> <u>Inference</u>

They are immigrants.

Directly Observable Data
The child and his family self-identify as Mexican and speak Spanish as their first language.

I draw conclusions and take action based on my beliefs. ►

High Level Inference

There's no reason to discuss saving or investing with them.

I make assumptions. ▶

I bet they have a lot of debt and won't know how to budget.

I add meanings and labels. ► (Personal/Cultural)

How can they afford that?

I select data. ► (Conscious/Unconscious)

Low Level Inference

They have a lot of kids.

Directly Observable Data
This family has six children and only one partner is employed.

### **YOUR** Ladder of Inference

I draw conclusions and take action based on my beliefs. ►

High Level Inference

I make assumptions. ▶

I add meanings and labels. ► (Personal/Cultural)

I select data. ► (Conscious/Unconscious)

Low Level Inference



Implicit Bias: Aware is Halfway There

Adorable moment of father and toddler having a conversation! Watch Video



#### **Fathers' Involvement**

Involvement of fathers with activities of their children under age 5.

#### **FATHERS LIVING WITH CHILDREN**

	Hisp.	White	Black
Fed or ate	(Percentages)		
meals with children daily	63.9	73.9	78.2
Bathed, diapered or dressed children daily	45.0	60	70.4
Played with children daily	74.1	82.7	82.2
Read to children daily	21.9	30.2	34.9
Source: Los Angeles Times National Center for Health Statistics			

# FATHERS NOT LIVING WITH CHILDREN

	Hisp.	White	Black
Fed or ate meals with children daily	8.6	*	12.6
Bathed, diapered or dressed children daily	7.3	6.6	12.7
Played with children daily	10.0	6.6	16.5
Read to children daily	*	3.2	7.8

Source: Los Angeles Times National Center for Health Statistics





While there are inequities throughout our society. Today's conversation is about RACE.



# Why Should We address Racial Equity?

•On every single indicator of child well—being, Black and Brown children are at the bottom (Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2016).



Children of Color are less likely to be referred to gifted programs, even when they excel academically.



The graduation rate for White students is 80%, compared to 69% for Blacks and 73% for Hispanics.

(National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.)



Boys of color born in poverty have an 8% chance of becoming affluent or upper-middle-class, compared to 26% of white boys who are born poor.

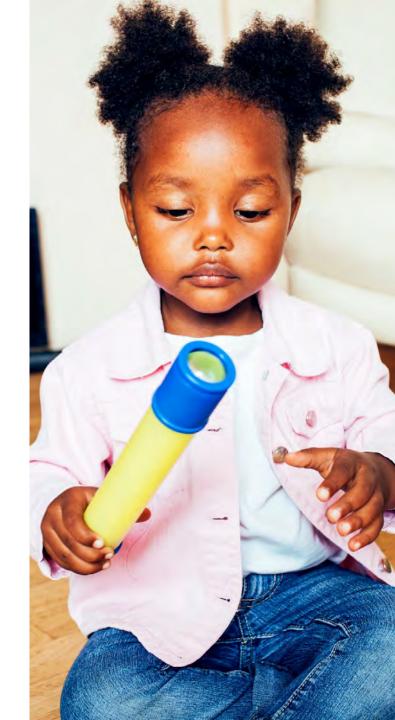


African American children are nearly **four times** more likely to be suspended and expelled from school

# What is Racial Equity?

- The condition that would be achieved if race no longer predicted, in a statistical sense, how one fares.
- It is a part of racial justice that includes work to address root causes of inequities, not just their manifestation
- It includes the elimination of policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages that reinforce differential outcomes by race.

(Center for Assessment and Policy Development; Frank Porter Graham Race, Culture, and Ethnicity Committee)







What stories haven't you considered?



Historical Trauma



Not ACES, Not Toxic Stress, but Historical Trauma

# Historical Trauma

 Historical trauma is a form of trauma that impacts entire communities.

 It refers to cumulative emotional and psychological wounding, as a result of group traumatic experiences, transmitted across generations within a community



(Ford & Courtois, 2009).

The long-lasting impacts of trauma stemming from slavery, racism, and discrimination, in addition to the cultural, historical, and intergenerational trauma



((Franklin-Jackson & Carter, 2007; D. R. Williams & Mohammed, 2009).

- The legacies from enslavement of African Americans,
- displacement and murder of Indigenous people,
- Jews who endured the Holocaust
- Disenfranchisement of Mexicans after the Mexican-American War

have been transferred to current descendants of these groups and others.

The result of these events is traumatic stress experienced across generations by individual members of targeted communities

The impacts have resulted in mental and social scars including feelings of inferiority, paranoia of government systems, powerlessness, and problems with self-identity (Carter, 2007).





This type of trauma is often associated with racial and ethnic groups in the US who have suffered major intergenerational losses and assaults on their culture and well-being.

(Ford & Courtois, 2009).

 The impact is not only about what has happened in the past, but also about what is still happening in the present to target a group of people or actions by others that serve as reminders of historical targeting (Evans-Campbell, 2008).





Research shows that services should be offered that: "acknowledges and incorporates, at all levels, the importance of culture, assessment of cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge and adaptation of services that meet cultural needs".

Betancourt, Green, Carrillo, and Ananeh-Firempong, 2002, p. 294



Think about the role of historical trauma and racism on today's communities...

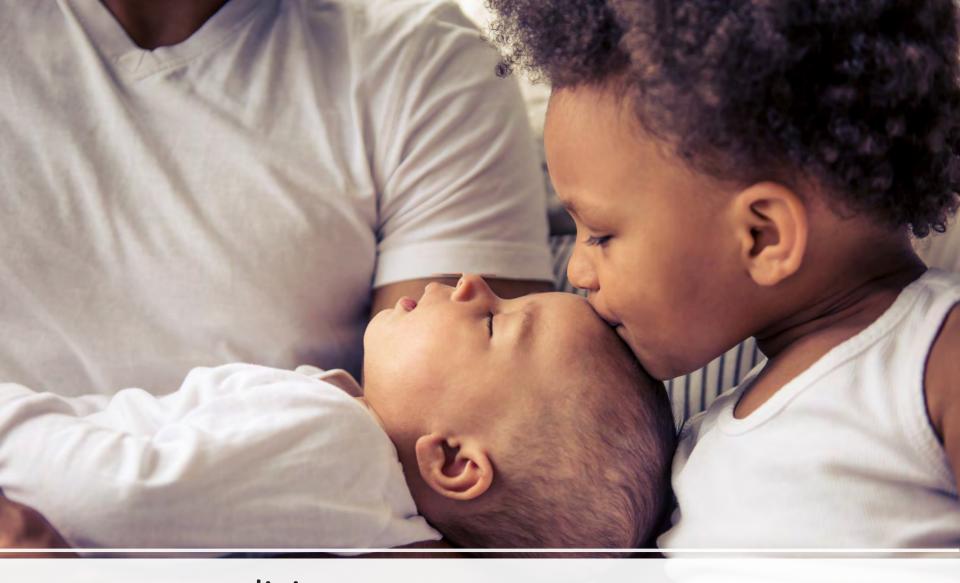
This is a BIG problem. What can we do about it?



# First, take the blinders off

# Aware is Halfway There!





Consider the **policies** that are in place that reinforce inequities...



What **practices** are in place that reinforce inequities?



What **resources** are lacking that promote inequities?

How can you use the information related to historical trauma to connect with families?



Caution!!!



Engage families and communities as equals

#### **Avoid Savior Mentality**



## Trauma is not the new BLAGK





Trauma is NOT the New Poverty



Trauma is NOT a Stereotype



Must Be Strength-Based



"Hard to Reach Families"



Who Are We Talking About?

- It is critical that we have an understanding of the families are we are trying to reach.
- To support and engage these families we must be able to identify, target, and interact with them.



#### The Under-Represented

Marginalized, economically disadvantaged, socially excluded

- Families who are un-housed (experiencing homelessness)
- Refugee and asylum-seeking families
- Undocumented families
- Families of Color
- Families involved with the Justice system
- Parents of disabled children
- Parents with disabilities
- Parents with learning difficulties
- Non-English speaking families



### Overlooked Families

Slip through the net, may have difficulty articulating needs

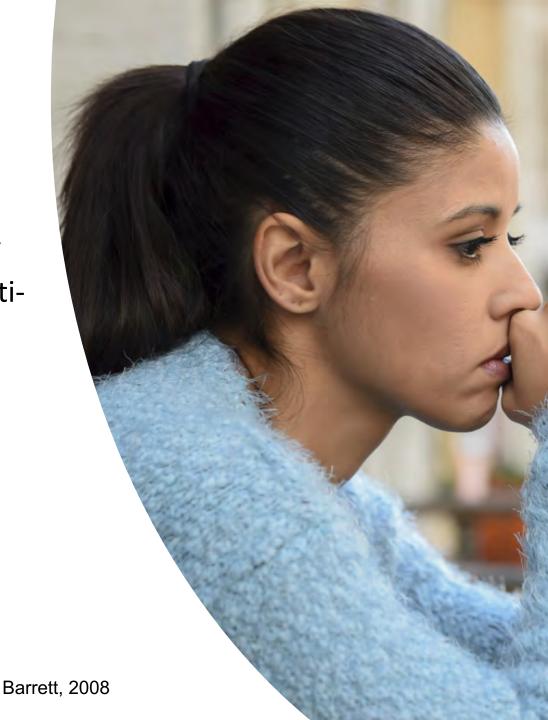
- Young parents
- Fathers
- Parents with mental health issues
- Domestic violence/abuse victim/perpetrator
- Gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered parents
- Socially isolated parents
- Refused-asylum-seeking families



#### The 'Service-Avoidant'

Unwilling to engage? Suspicious of services? Suspicious of providers?, Disengage from opportunities? Over-targeted?

- Long-term, complex, multileveled needs
- Legal barriers
- Domestic violence/abuse
- Culture of privacy
- Substance dependent





Families experience difficulties that prevent them from accessing resources and opportunities.

# Extending Dignity





#### **Extending Dignity**

"Dignity is the desire to be treated well. It is an unspoken human yearning that is at the heart of all conflicts, yet no one is paying attention to it", what we must do so that others feel their dignity is recognized.

(Donna Hicks)

Adapted by R. Allen from The White Ally Toolkit by D. Campt

### Acceptance of Identity

Approach families as neither inferior nor superior to you; assume they have integrity.





#### **Acknowledgment**

Give families your full attention by listening, hearing, validating and responding to their concerns and what they have been through.



#### Inclusion

Make families feel that they belong at all levels of relationship (community, organization, nation).

#### Safety

Put families at ease at two levels: physically, where they feel free of bodily harm; and psychologically, where they feel free of concern about being shamed or humiliated, that they feel free to speak without fear of retribution.



By Donna Hicks,
Adapted by R. Allen from The White Ally Toolkit by D. Campt



#### **Fairness**

Treat families justly, with equity, and in an even-handed way, according to agreed-upon laws and rules.



#### Independence

Empower families to act on their own behalf so that they feel in control of their lives and experience a sense of hope and possibility.



#### **Understanding**

Believe that what others think matters; give families opportunities to explain their perspectives, and express their points of view; actively listen in order to understand them.



### Benefit of the Doubt

Treat families as trustworthy; start with the premise that they have good motives and are acting with integrity



#### **Accountability**

Take responsibility for your actions; if you have violated the dignity of a parent, apologize; make a commitment to change hurtful behaviors.



#### Recognition

Validate their talents, hard work, thoughtfulness, and help; give credit for their contributions, ideas and experience.



Cultural Humility

Challenges us to become the student, learning about those with whom we interact more personally, within a cultural context, suspending judgment.

Thew how much I miss My DOD because he got DePorted to mexcio Yuhen I was 3 years old and I haven't seen him in 6 years. I wish MY transair



What Do Your Families Wish You Knew?

It is challenging to engage some families.

Rather than viewing families as 'hard to reach', think about services as 'hard to reach' (McDonald, 2010).



## Challenges Families Face Accessing Services

- Location of services/transportation issues
- Negative experiences with similar services
- Intimidating personnel or practices
- Lack of knowledge about availability
- Lack of knowledge about eligibility





Methods for Engaging Families

- One method will not meet the needs of all families
- Methods must be varied, flexible, customized, and ongoing

(Katz, Spooner, & Valentine, 2006).



## Strategies for Engaging Families

(McDonald, 2010)

https://aifs.gov.au/cfca/publications/are-disadvantaged-families-hard-reach-engaging-disadva Built on the work *Engaging Hard to Reach Families and Children study* (Cortis, Katz, & Patulny, 2009)

# Go to Where the Families Are

- Families may not seek services in unfamiliar places.
- Rather than waiting for families to show up, go to where they are:
  - Parks
  - Shopping Centers
  - Places of worship
  - Shelters



# Why Meet Families Where They Are?

- Develop relationships, communicate, and build trust.
- Provide families with information about a service.
- Promote a service in the community.
- Provide resources (e.g., information about child development, children's books, information about other services in the local community).
- Deliver services (e.g., playgroups).



### Considerations:

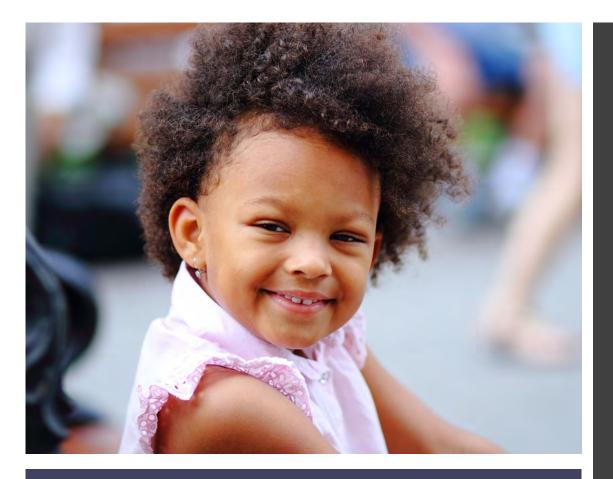
- Where do families with young children gather?
- When are they most likely to be there?
- Where do local dads gather?
- Is there a business in the area that employs a large number of local parents?
- Is it possible to engage with parents through that business?
- Is a mobile service, such as a mobile playgroup, mobile library or mobile storytelling service, viable and/or appropriate?





Promote and deliver services in a non-stigmatizing and non-threatening way

- Avoid negative labeling of families
- Deliver services in a universal venue to reduce the potential for stigma
- Consider casual, informal and social interactions
- Provide activities that are free or low cost



### Considerations

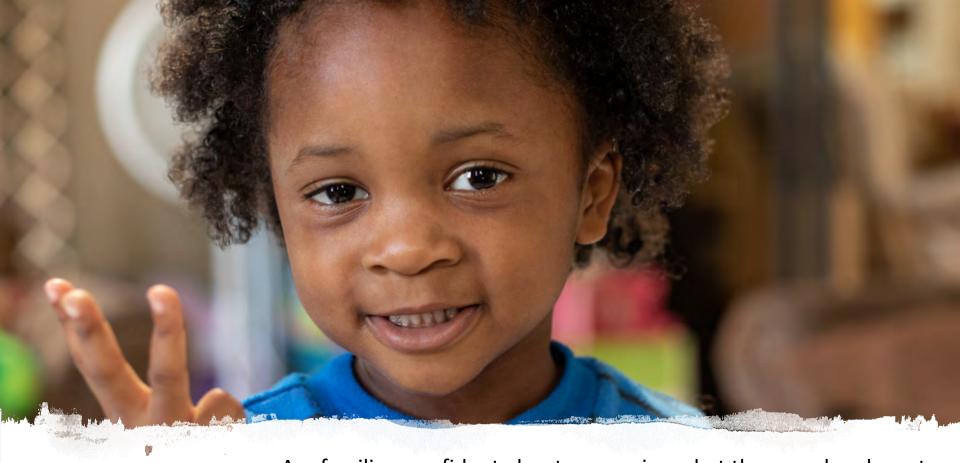
- Is it possible to hold the program in a venue that is more "neutral" in the minds of the local community?
- How are you promoting your service?
- What message are the images in your promotion materials conveying?
- Could the setting/format be intimidating to the families you are trying to reach?



# Employ Strategies That Empower Families

- Empowerment involves enhancing families' ability to solve problems for themselves.
- Listening to families about what they need and implementing their suggestions.
- Adopting a strengths-based approach to families, that focuses on the skills and abilities of families.
- Encouraging participants to take a facilitation or leadership role in a group

(McDonald, 2010)



#### Considerations

- Are families confident about expressing what they need and want from a program or activity?
- Are families actively participating in decisions about the planning and/or delivery of services?
- Are families encouraged to take on facilitation and/or leadership roles?
- Does your program adopt a strengths-based approach with families?

(McDonald, 2010)

## Develop Relationships

- Relationships with families
- Relationships with communities
- Relationships with other services/agencies



# Relationships with Families

- Non—judgmental
- Respectful
- Encouraging
- Empowering
- Authentic





# Relationships with Communities

- Attend a service
- Get recommendations from key groups.
- Respect the local values, norms, and rules of the community.
- Always remember you are a guest, an outsider, until the community says otherwise.

### Relationships with Other Service Providers

- Assists in reaching families
- Provides access to a wide range of services
- Builds the capacity of local services





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