An Anti-Racist Blueprint for Early Childhood Well-Being and Child Welfare Prevention

Center *for the* Study *of* Social Policy
Ideas into Action

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CSSP Team

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Welcome and Introductions

In the Chat Box:

1. What is your name (include pronouns)?
2. What is your role and where are you from?
3. Where does your work fit on the prevention continuum (primary, secondary, tertiary)?

Housekeeping

Please mute when not speaking.

If possible, keep cameras on.

Raise hands if you have questions.

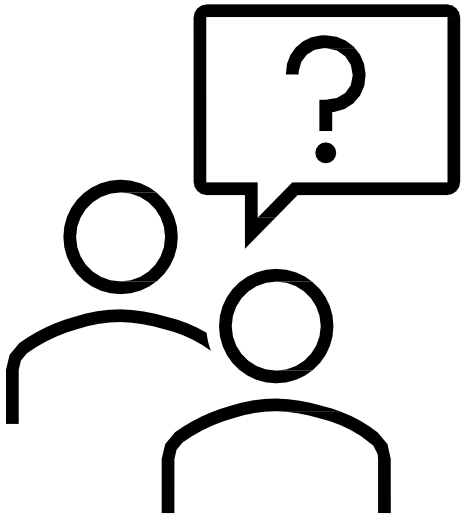
We want to keep the conversation going. Use the chat!

Learning Objectives

- Understand why and how taking an anti-racist approach to developing a continuum of supports is central to promoting the health and well-being for children prenatal to three and their families.
- Gain knowledge of strategies and continuum-building efforts that are happening in states across the country.
- Share opportunities to leverage the ITCP to advance an anti-racist continuum of support.

Guiding Questions

- Where is your jurisdiction in the process of building a comprehensive continuum?
- How can you promote anti-racist strategies in building/enhancing the continuum in your community?



Poll Question

A Blueprint for a Continuum of Supports

Context for Developing the Blueprint

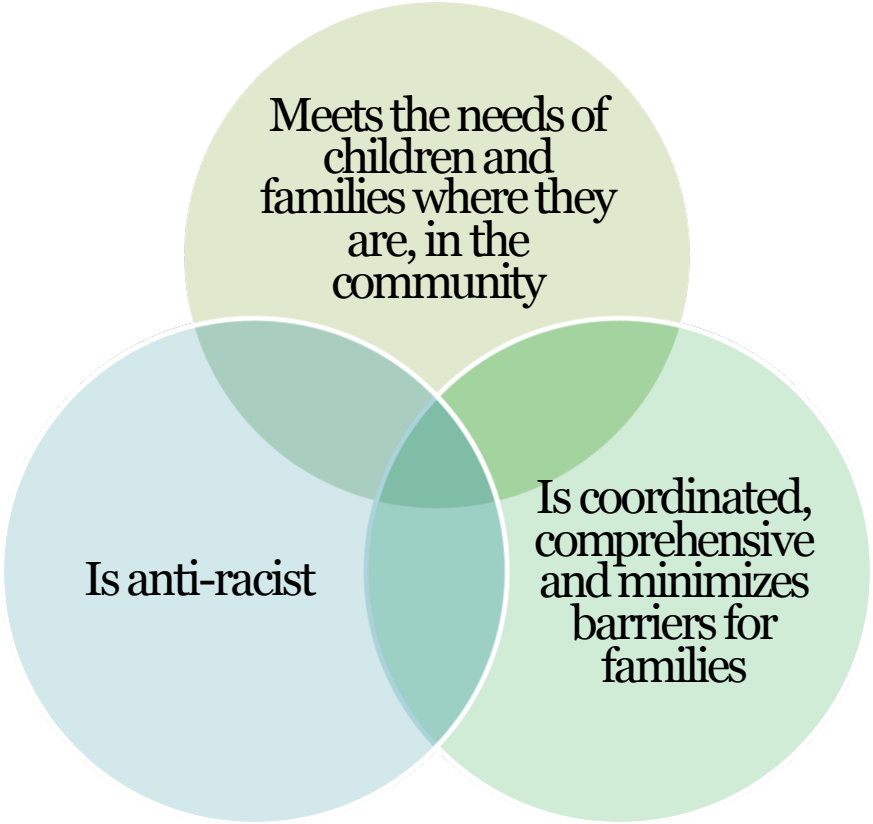
- Financing shifts in child welfare create an opportunity to bring cross-system and community stakeholders together to address the entire continuum
- Research and practice tell us children and families are best served in their communities, *before* and *outside* of child welfare
- Increasing emphasis on addressing inequities and racism across and within all of our systems
- States and communities are building and enhancing their continuums, creating an opportunity for peer-to-peer learning around strategies

Blueprint Overview

- Grounded in anti-racist principles for policymaking
- Organized into sections
  - Guiding Principles for Building a Comprehensive Continuum of Supports
  - Universal Supports for all children and families
  - Specific Supports for children and families who experience additional risk factors
  - Targeted Supports for children who become known to deeper end public systems
  - Guiding Questions to develop and enhance state and local continuums of support

Defining the Continuum

Core to a Continuum of Supports



Guiding Principles

- Establish a shared anti-racist vision and clear goals
- Partner across systems to break down silos
- Promote community-driven strategies through meaningful engagement of families and communities
- Recognize that children are part of a family
- Utilize data and continuous quality improvement processes to guide equity-driven decision-making about service development and implementation
- Be strategic in the integration of equity-driven approaches
- Establish a space for ongoing communication and idea generation
- Implement multiple approaches and recognize this work requires a long-term commitment

Moving from Equity to Anti-Racist

Advancing Racial Equity

- Efforts are focused on providing different levels of support based on an individual's or group's needs in order to achieve fairness in outcomes.
- Acknowledges unequal starting places and the need to correct the imbalance and getting to a point where race is no longer a predictor of outcomes, leading to more just outcomes in policies, practices, attitudes, and cultural messages

Taking An Anti-Racist Approach

- An active process of identifying and challenging racism by changing systems, organizational structures, policies and practices, and attitudes, to redistribute power in an equitable manner.
- Focused on removing harmful policies that perpetuate inequities and are ground in principles for anti-racist policymaking: *redress past injustices; meet the needs of children and families of color; support the whole family;* and *serve all children and families in need.*

Sources: Minoff, Elisa et al. "Principles for Anti-Racist Policymaking." Center for the Study of Social Policy, December 2020. Available here: http://bit.ly/Anti-Racist-Policymaking.; "Key Equity Terms and Concepts: A Glossary for Shared Understanding." Center for the Study of Social Policy, 2019. Available at: https://cssp.org/resource/key-equity-terms-and-concepts-a-glossary-for-shared-understanding/.

Experiences of Children and Families of Color

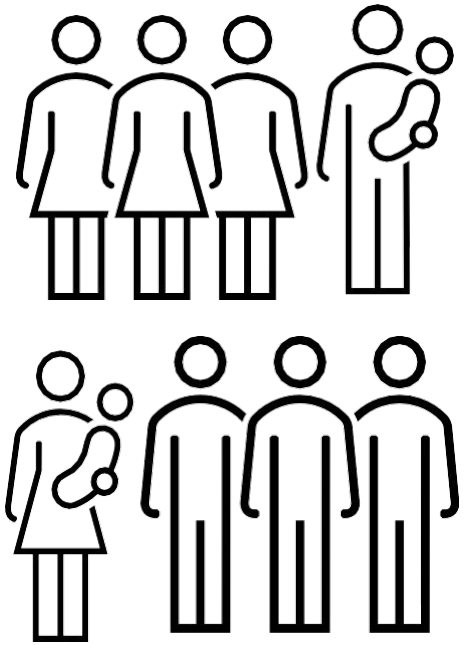
- Mortality rates for Black and Native women and their children three to four times those of White women and their children.
- More than 10 million children—including one in four Black children and one in five Latinx children—are growing up in families with incomes so low that they fall below the official poverty line.
- Black children are overrepresented in foster care at almost twice their rate in the general population and Native children are overrepresented in foster care at twice their rate in the general population, and in some communities, over 10 times their rate in the population.
- Children three and under represent nearly one-third of children in foster care. A Black infant's risk of placement in foster care is nearly three times that of a White infant.
- COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted families and communities of color with limited access to health care and differences in treatment and quality of care, loss in income and employment, and increased food insecurity.

Universal Supports: *Primary Prevention*

Why Universal Supports are Critical

- Lack of meaningful universal supports for families, systemic racism, and failures of many child- and family-serving systems actively brings Black, Native, Latinx, and immigrant families to the attention of child welfare for what all too often becomes classified as "neglect."

- Research has shown that nearly half of families (47 percent) who have their children removed from their homes have trouble paying for basic necessities including food or rent.



Anti-Racist Strategies that Promote Universal Supports

Expand access to health care for young children and parents.

Invest in strategies to advance health equity.

Implement and expand universal home visiting as part of a broader system of support.

Implement strategies to address infant mortality.

Promote early learning opportunities for young children of color.

Expand access and financing for community-based support centers that can support families in meeting their diverse needs.

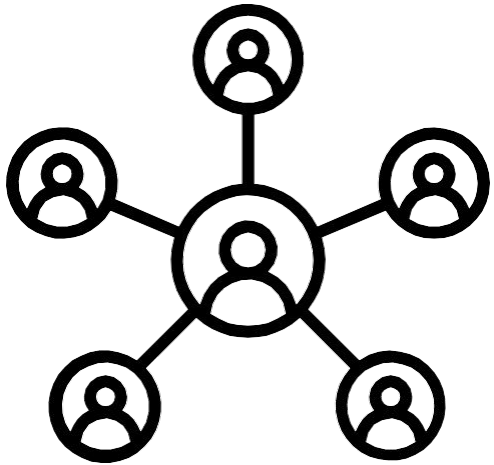
Remove barriers for families seeking access to community-based resources.

Specific Supports: *Secondary Prevention*

Why Specific Supports are Critical

- Poverty is the greatest threat to child well-being and a predictor of involvement with child welfare.

- Immigrant children and families are excluded from many public benefit programs which makes it difficult for immigrant families of all races and ethnicities to access the supports they need.



Anti-Racist Strategies that Promote Specific Supports

Support families in accessing concrete supports and services.

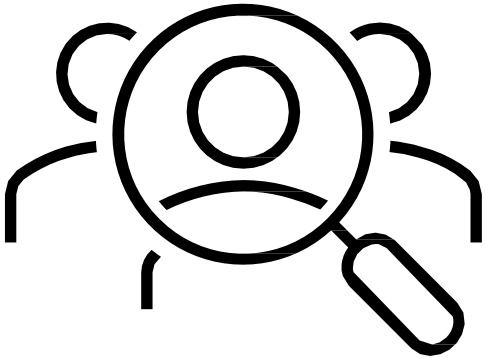
Increase access to quality child care and early learning centers for low-income young children.

Promote continuous Medicaid coverage.

Targeted Supports: *Tertiary Prevention*

Why Targeted Supports are Critical

- Families' unmet needs can lead to a substantiation of neglect and family separation through child welfare.
- Black and American Indian/Alaska Native children are overrepresented in foster care today, at rates of 1.64 times their rate in the national population and 2 times their rate in the national population respectively.
- 4.9 percent of White children will experience foster care placement before their eighteenth birthday, compared to 15.4 percent of Native American children and 11 percent of Black children.



Anti-Racist Strategies that Promote Targeted Supports

Provide targeted, community-based supports to families at higher risk of child welfare involvement.

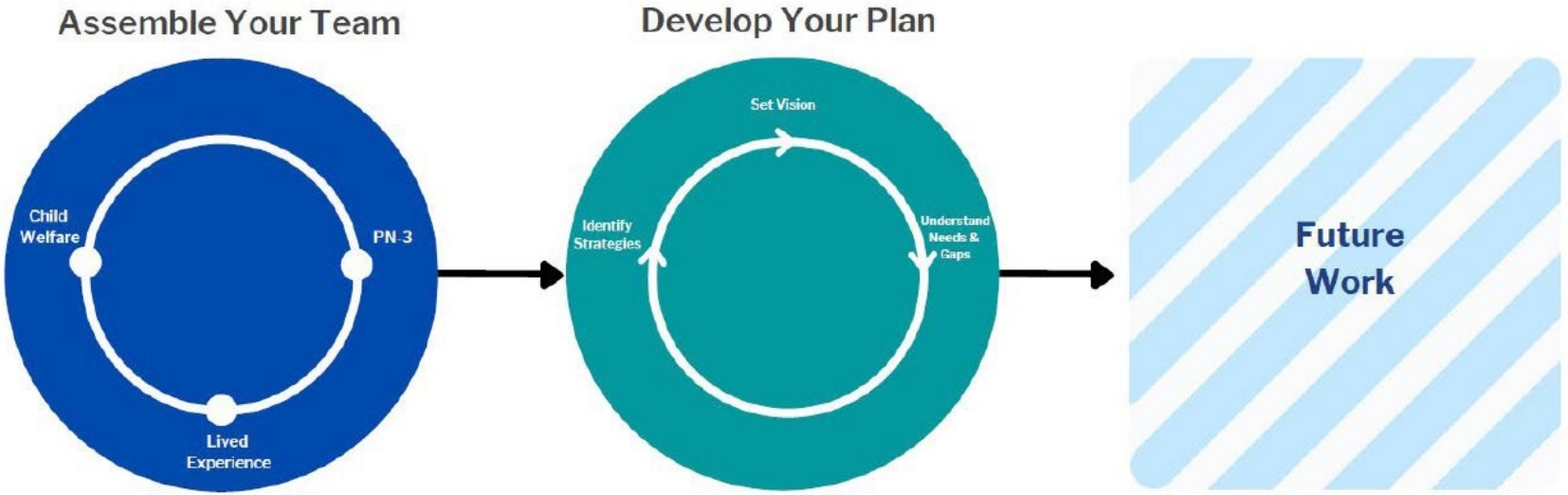
Utilize flexible child welfare financing dollars to implement services and supports grounded in cultural values.

Leverage cross-system partnerships to increase access to home visiting that is culturally and linguistically relevant and appropriate.

Invest in targeted supports that are culturally responsive and meet the needs of young children and families of color.

Developing and Implementing Strategies

Beginning the Journey



Beginning the Journey

- Create a Shared Vision
- Ensure Equity in Representation and Family and Community Engagement in Decision-Making
- Understand the Needs of Young Children and Families of Color
- Identify and Develop Anti-Racist Strategies
- Ensure Accountability to Young Children, Families, and Communities

Guiding Questions

Assemble Your Team

- What system and community-based organizations are at the table to inform and guide decision-making? Who is missing?
- Beyond being invited to the table, are families being engaged in a meaningful way? How are families involved in gathering information, developing solutions, and making decisions about investments?

Guiding Questions

Setting a shared vision

- How does the vision advance anti-racist policy and practice?
- Does the vision explicitly call out addressing systemic inequities?
- Do cross-system and community-based partners have a shared understanding of overarching goals?
- How do the identified goals support the health and well-being of Black, Native, Latinx, and immigrant children and families?

Guiding Questions

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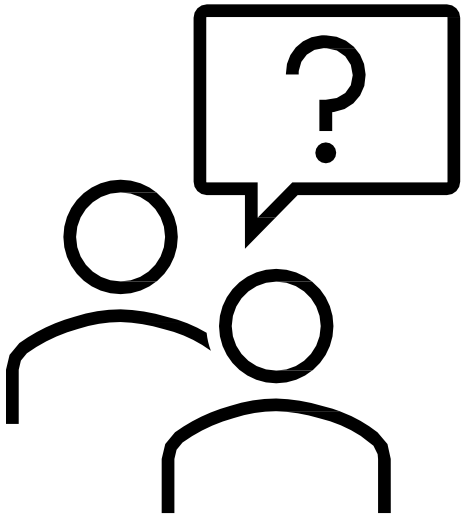
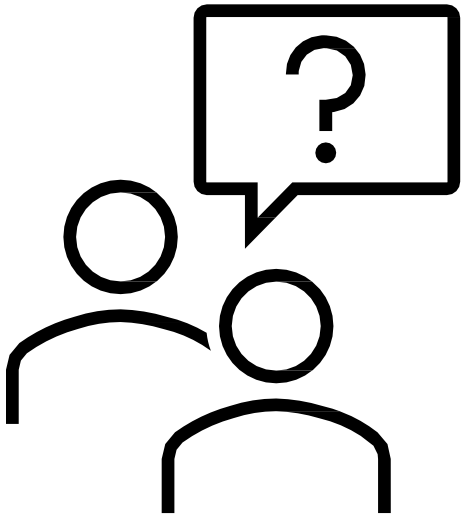


Opportunities within the ITCP

- Active Court Team: What are the connections to upstream prevention?
- Data and CQI: How is data gathered through the ITCP used to inform upstream strategies?
- Parent Engagement: How are those with lived experience engaged in the development and implementation of strategies?



Questions?

Thank You

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