Advancing Equity in Child Support

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NCSEA
Celebrating 50 Years

Leading with Heart & Soul

LEADERSHIP SYMPOSIUM

August 4-7, 2024 | DETROIT

Overview

- Introduction
- Acknowledgements
- Why interest in equity?
- Advancing Equity in Child Support Overview
- DEI in Michigan
- DEI in California
- Q & A

Acknowledgements

Land

We collectively acknowledge that we are located on the contemporary and ancestral homelands of three Anishinaabe nations of the Council of Three Fires: Ojibwe, Ottawa, and Potawatomi. We acknowledge that these nations, along with the Wyandot nation, were colonized via the Treaty of Detroit in 1807. These lands hold great historical, spiritual, cultural and personal significance for these Native Nations. We recognize, support and advocate for the sovereignty of these nations in this territory and beyond. By offering this land acknowledgment, we affirm tribal sovereignty of these nations and will hold ourselves accountable to the American Indian people and nations.

Trauma

We acknowledge that the United States emerged out of great historical, spiritual, and personal trauma for indigenous and minoritized communities in the United States and welcome people from around the world emigrating from often traumatic situations. We hold this moment to remember the generations of people from all over the world who have migrated to the United States by force or by choice. We recognize and continually support the need for community specific reparations or healing processes needed for healing to take place for violation of systemic policies against people. By offering this acknowledgement of trauma, we affirm the right of people to bring their whole selves and stories into this space or aim to use our resources and time to arrive at a more connected and respectful place in the world.

Why Interest in Equity?

- President's Executive Orders on advancing racial equity
- Agency-wide commitment to equity
- Gaps in child support and other social services
- Goals:
  - Formalize equity work
  - Make equity work replicable
  - Develop resources

Our Stories



Dr. Shaneen Moore
MN DCYF Assistant Commissioner
Family Well-being Administration



Erin Frisch
IV-D Director and
Director, MI Office of Child Support

michigan child support



David Kilgore
Director
CA Dept. of Child Support Services

CALIFORNIA ALL

Advancing Equity in Child Support Overview

Dr. Shaneen Moore, MBA
Assistant Commissioner
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Advancing Equity in Child Support Overview

- Conceptualization of Equity
- Project Outcomes
- Plan & Approach, including sustainability planning
- Involvement & Role of Partners





Conceptualization of Equity (1/2)

Conceptualization of equity (2/2)



Visual Timeline: Systemic Racism in TANF & Child Support Programs



The Child Support System creates conditions for Black Family Separation

African American Family Exclusion

African Americans in the TANF and Child Support

Plantation System as the foundation of forced and intentional Black family separation

Building of Social Safety Net System: Black children and families typically were excluded from receiving or deemed ineligible to receive services.

Overrepresentation of Black families in social safety net programs including TANF and Child Support systems.

Eliminating family ties essential to maintaining the Social Isolation needed to perpetuate the institution of slavery.

DEHUMANIZATION OF SLAVES

- Sexual exploitation and abuse of for breeding purposes
- Child exploitation
- Emasculation of men

1865-1870
Civil War Amendments, 13th, 14th, and 15th designed to ensure equality for recently emancipated slaves. Establishes family integrity as a fundamental right.

*1896: Plessy v. Ferguson - Separate but equal doctrine, Supreme Court – two-track delivery system for families

*1910: Mothers' Pension programs begin

*1912: Children's Bureau created

*1935: Social Security Act

*1935: ADC Benefits in Social Security Act

*1962: ADC becomes AFDC program

*1964: Flemming Rule implemented

*1975: Child Support Enforcement program enacted federally

*1984 to 1988: Child Support Enforcement Amendments

*1988: U.S. Commission on Child Support

*1996: Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act (PRWORA)

*1998: Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act and the Child Support Performance and Incentive Act

*2006: Deficit Reduction Act of 2005

Overseer Function for Surveillance of Slaves

Social Isolation of slavery perpetuated to maintain white power hierarchy. Dehumanization perpetuation through discrimination.

Policing for surveillance of Black communities

Black Codes, The New Deal, GI Bill, Nixon Campaign, Welfare Queen, War on Poverty, Law and Order, 1994 Crime Bill, Crack Epidemic, Bush/NAACP, Hurricane Katrina

Slavery (Free labor building the Nation) 246 years | Reconstruction | **Jim Crow/Segregation** 89 years | **Mass Incarceration** 61+ years

1619 | 1700 | 1800 | 1865 | 1900 | 1965 | 1996 | 2023

*1597: English Poor Laws require parents to support children
*1601: Common Law established decentralized structure for welfare programs
*1619: Arrival of enslaved people to Jamestown
*1789: Judiciary Act establishes federal court system, including Supreme Court

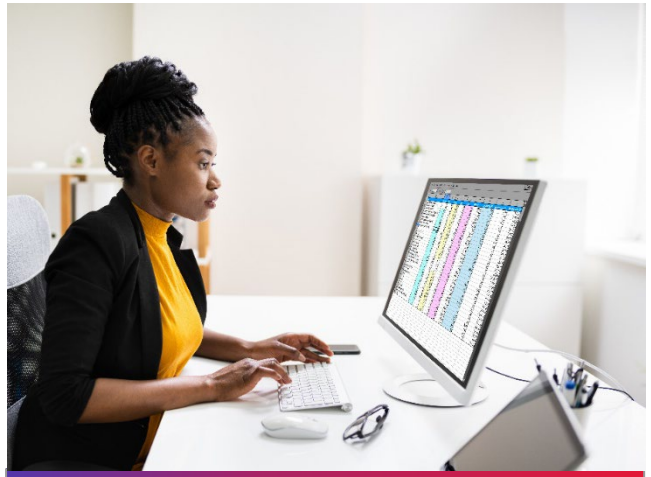
*1857: Dred Scott v. John F.A. Sanford
*1865: End of Civil War
*1865: KKK Founded
*1882: KKK ruled unconstitutional
*1896: Plessy v. Ferguson (colorblindness- separate but equal)
*1910: Mothers' Pension programs begin
*1912: Children's Bureau created

*1935: Social Security Act enacted
*1935: ADC benefits established
*1962: ADC becomes AFDC program
*1964: Flemming Rule implemented
*1964: Civil Rights Act enacted
*1968: King v. Smith
*1970: Goldberg v. Kelly, Dandridge v. Williams
*1971: Wyman v. James

*1975: Child Support Enforcement program enacted federally
*1984 to 1988: Child Support Amendments - program expansion and establishment of enforcement provisions
*1996: PRWORA enacted - establishing TANF block grant, AFDC eliminated, punitive non-compliance measures
*1998: Deadbeat Parents Punishment Act and the Child Support Performance and Incentive Act
*2006: Deficit Reduction Act of 2005

*2012: Trayvon Martin's Murder
*2013: Black Lives Matter
*2020: George Floyd's Murder

Project Outcomes



Data

The grant outcome will demonstrate how to **strategically capture and examine data** regarding program impact on historically adversely affected populations and inequality.



Community engagement

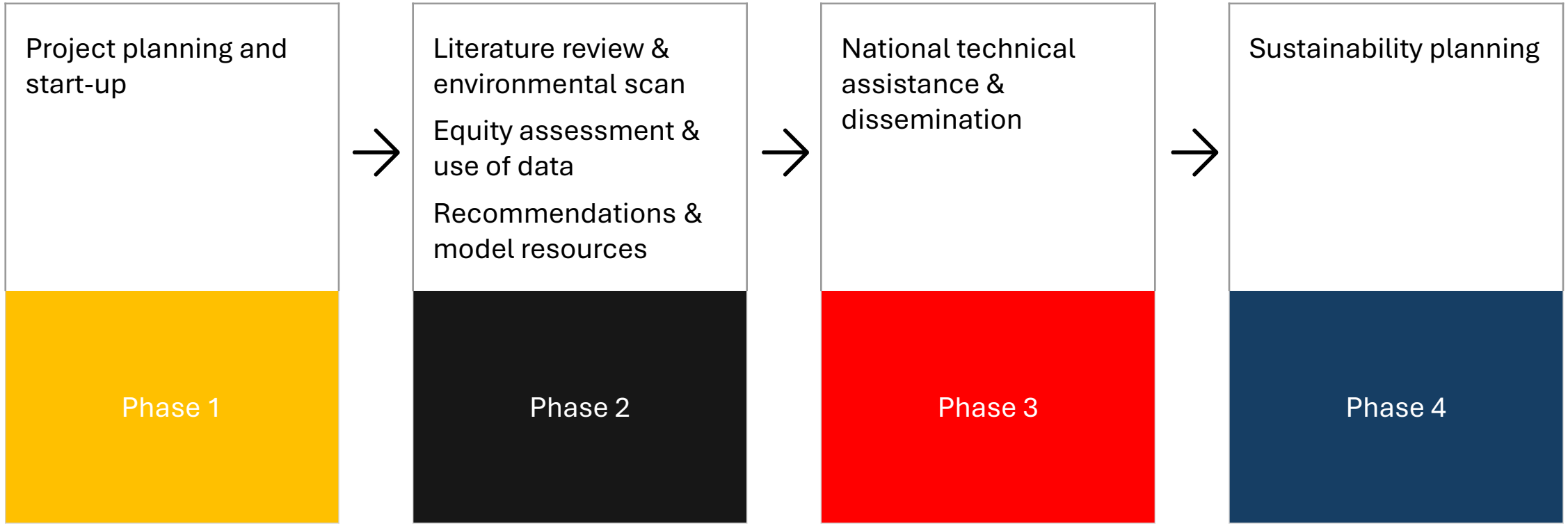
The grant outcome will show how to **effectively engage** with community partners so that the parents impacted by the program have **a voice** in program policies and practices



Equity assessment

The grant outcome will **instruct states on what is involved with an equity assessment** so that more research can be done and published and further DEI initiatives and policies in the future.

Plan & Approach



Involvement & Role of Partners (1/3)

CGI	Center for Policy Research	Child Trends	Research in Action	National Fatherhood Initiative
Project Manager	Environmental scan & literature review, data compilation	Equity assessment & final evaluation	Parent Advisory Council & statewide survey	Consultant to Parent Advisory Council & statewide survey

Vendor partners

Involvement & Role of Partners (2/3)

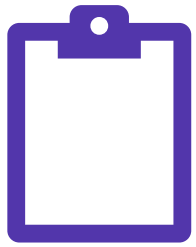
Colorado	Georgia	Illinois	Kansas	Maryland
North Carolina	Oregon	Washington	White Earth Nation	Wisconsin

Consortium

Involvement & Role Partners (3/3)



Parent Advisory Council
Provide lived experience



Survey takers
Provide lived experience



Other key stakeholders
As identified during research

Community partners

What We've Accomplished – PRISM Enhancements (1/3)

1. Expanded the options for race and ethnicity from 7 to 23.

2. Can now select more than one race or ethnicity.

3. Addressed issues with interfaces with other program systems.

Completed work on 7/31/2024.

What We've Accomplished – Literature Review (2/3)

1. Identified 200+ articles.
2. Will summarize the literature including populations considered, identified inequities by child support function, and the underlying basis of the inequities
3. Have started to identify some themes

Due for publication this fall.

What We've Accomplished – Equity Assessment Tool (3/3)

1. Initial Tool Approved by all lead states.
2. Includes two steps: Identity level of policy/practice and the assessment activities
3. Lead states selecting their topics for assessment

Assessment will be updated throughout the process.

What We've Learned So Far

Equity can be defined differently.

1

Child support agencies have varying levels of interest in an equity journey. For those with interest, they are in various stages.

2

There must be an initial foundation for this work if this work if it is going to be successful.

3

Perseverance is key!

DEI in Michigan

Erin Frisch

IV-D Director and

Director, MI Office of Child Support

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What is Michigan doing?

- Framing our work around racial equity.
- Building our capacity to address equity and inclusion in child support.
- Reckoning with the ways this program has helped and harmed families throughout its history.
- Envisioning new ways of being human-centered.



Why is it important to us?

- Child Support (like all human services programs) is an institution that contributes to the marginalization of certain people groups by controlling access to resources based on dominant culture values.
- We have a responsibility to recognize how child support has helped or harmed those in our program and work to repair harm.
- The quality of our work is better when everyone can be their full selves.



Our Perspective

- We are uniquely situated to help families.
- We want children and their families to thrive and be well.
- We want to provide supports to parents regardless of their custodial status.
- We need to do better to address poor outcomes for families of color.



Institutional Change Trajectory

Compliance: "check-box" strategy; response to mandates

Assimilation: inclusion contingent on conformity; minimization of human difference

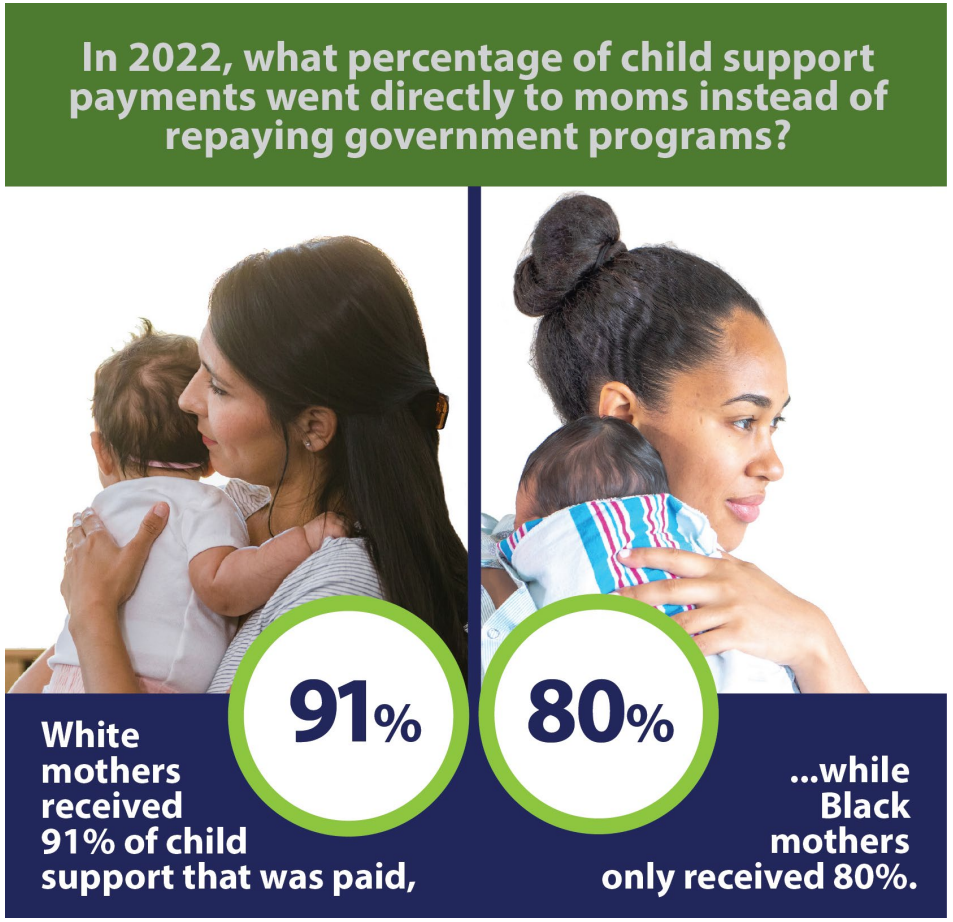
Integration: incorporate and align human difference with business goals

Anti-Racism: social justice-driven strategy for institutional and systemic change; challenges power differentials and taken-for-granted assumptions

Anand, Rohini, and Mary-Frances Winters. 2008. "A Retrospective View of Corporate Diversity Training from 1964 to the Present." Academy of Management Learning & Education 7(3):356–72.

Hiranandani, Vanmala. 2012. "Diversity Management in the Canadian Workplace: Towards an Antiracism Approach." Urban Studies Research 2012:1–13.

How We Use Our Data

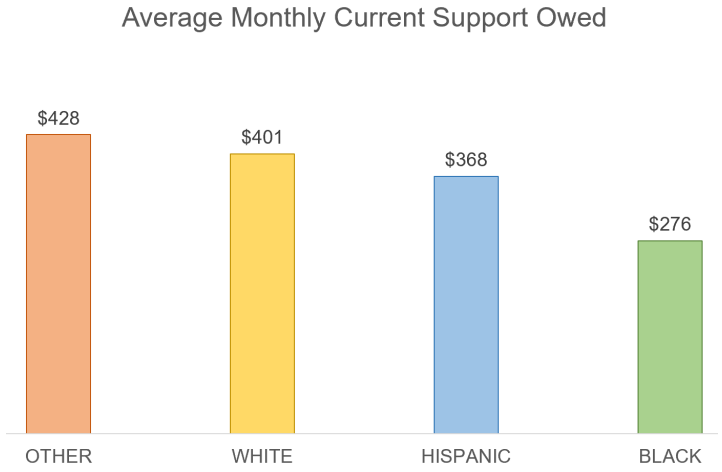


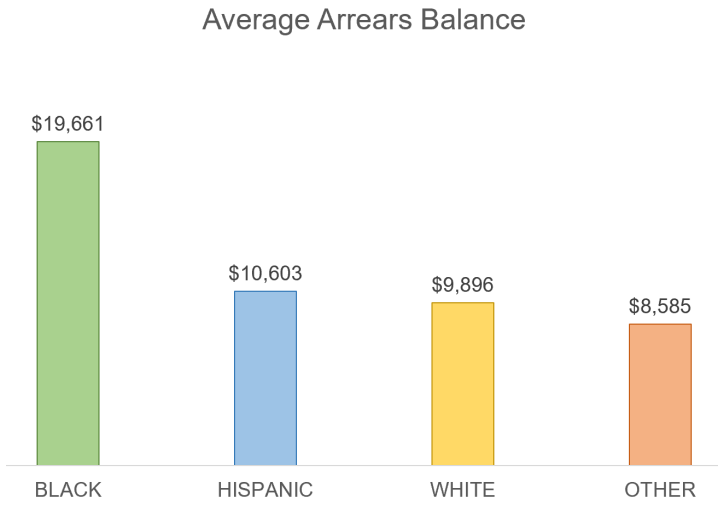
2023:
Full pass-through of current support on current assistance cases.

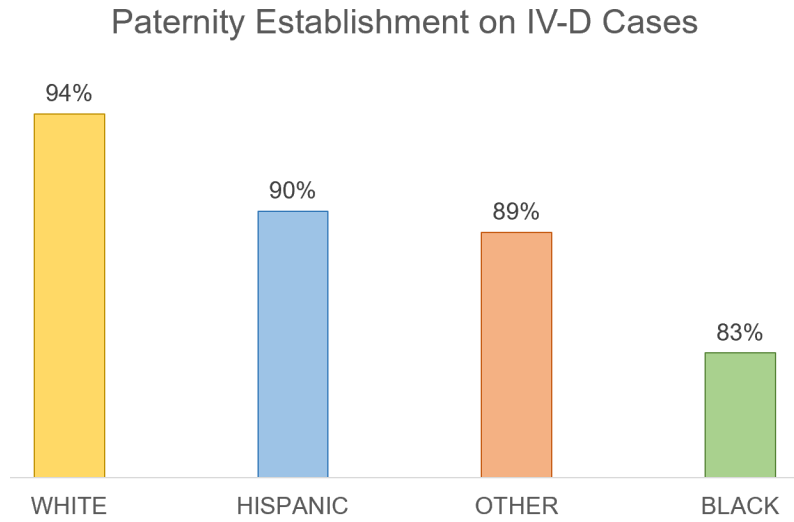
2024:
Elimination of recovery for Medicaid-paid birth expenses from single fathers.

Examples of Disparate Outcomes for Black Families

- Average obligation amount is $276 for Black family and $401 for white family
- Average arrears balance is $19,661 for a Black payer vs. $9,896 for a white payer
- Paternity is established for 83% of Black children and 94% of white children







Michigan Outreach vs. Engagement

Community Outreach	Community Engagement
Reach out	Work collaboratively
Self-interest: conduct qualitative study, gather information and leave	Reciprocal transfer of knowledge and skills among all collaborators and partners
Temporary relationship	Ongoing relationship
Extend assistance or services	Address issues affecting well-being
One-way approach	Two-way approach
Pros design programs, polices, processes, law	Community members are full partners in decision making

Community Advisory Council

"The work we started on behalf of child support payers and recipients has been amazing … all council members can say we appreciate the partnership and the opportunity to make the child support process more equitable for all families."

> "The existence of this council alone shows the system can and wants to do better for the many families involved. … We've created a safe space for people to share their experience … Each and every one of us is committed to making a change to benefit all Michigan families, regardless of race, educational attainment, sexual orientation, or economic status. We are real people looking to make real change!"

Working Across Boundaries

Michigan Action Plan for Father Involvement

[Michigan Action Plan For Father Involvement (map-fi.org)]

Michigan Child Support
Anti-Racism Transformation
Team

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF
LABOR & ECONOMIC
OPPORTUNITY

MICHIGAN COURTS
One Court of Justice

Lessons Learned

- Start **anywhere**. Follow it **everywhere**.
- Hurry Slowly.
- It’s about you and it’s not about you.
- Don’t take the accuracy or meaning of data for granted.
- Set your direction.

DEI in California

David Kilgore, Director
California Department of
Child Support Services

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What Have We Done?

- Created an Office of Equity
  - Three full time staff – the Chief Equity Officer, a Strategic Equity Manager and an Inclusion and Belonging Manager
  - Identified Three Key Priority Areas

- Identified Four Priority Areas
  - Workforce Capacity Building
  - Data Disaggregation
  - Community Inclusion and Empowerment
  - Transparent Communication

What Else Have We Done?

- Developed a Department DEI Plan
  - Outlines specific strategies and tactics to support the priority areas

- Hired and Deployed a Vendor
  - Carter Development Group has been retained, and is assisting with:
    - Awareness training for internal and LCSA Staff
    - Customer focus groups
    - Development of ongoing customer feedback strategies

What Have We Learned?

- It takes time to build the knowledge. Advancing equity is a process, not a test we take.

- It takes time to assess our actions. How have we been negatively impacting customers?

- It takes time to build relationships. Community-serving organizations and customers aren't used to us being in their space.

What Else Have We Learned?

- We have to fix our data. We must be more intentional about collecting demographic information.

- We have to ask the RIGHT questions. When we ask the right questions and look at accurate, disaggregated data, the disparities leap off the page.

- It's not just the Office of Equity's job – it's EVERYONE's job to advance equity in every aspect of our program, from policy and operations to outreach.

Where Are We Going?

- Creation of an Equity Impact Assessment process to be used across all programmatic areas.

- Establishment of a system to review and analyze these Assessment reports so we can develop action plans around identified exclusions, inequities and knowledge gaps.

- Development of a DEI Dashboard to arrange case and demographic data to highlight existing disparity.

Where Else Are We Going?

- Building the infrastructure to consistently engage customers and the public to get quantitative and qualitative data over time
  - Customer Advisory Body providing two-way input – from the community to us, and from us to the community
  - Survey Software
  - Language Access Expansion

- Developing a standardized child support DEI curriculum accessible statewide on our training platform

Questions



Thank you

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