Dismantling Institutional Racism

Brick by Brick: Our Journey

(Race Equity Practice)
Whole Population Results Statement

All 2,897,185 youth in Illinois will have loving forever families

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois
Our Beginnings

• Lutheran Child and Family Services’ Inclusion Council
  – Continuously functioning for over 30 years
  – Consists of staff members from various regions, programs and levels of the organization
Our Beginnings

• Mission:
  – To support LCFS in becoming a Welcoming, Inclusive, Diverse, and Equitable (WIDE) organization.

• Activities:
  – Training (including Crossroads)
  – Promotes equity in our work
  – Provides leadership and advocacy
Our Beginnings

In recent years, the Inclusion Council’s focus has been the impact of race and SOGIE on outcomes.
Our Beginnings

• Areas to discuss and plan action:
  – Importance of a safe environment in our organization where ALL staff can engage in discussions about racism in respectful and open ways.
  – Current barriers to an organizational environment that is affirming and welcoming.
  – Recognition that events/conversations have occurred that have not been welcoming or affirming.
  – Recognition that silence contributes to these events happening and resolve to make inroads into the culture of silence.
Second Chapter: Movement to Action

- **The Color Bind** – Mandatory reading for all LCFS leadership personnel (corporate officers, directors, managers, & supervisors).

- **LCFS’ Organizational Commitment Statement**: adopted and posted in all of our offices.
LCFS’ Commitment

We expect the LCFS organizational culture to be color cognizant, believing in the importance of racial and ethnic differences because of their profound impact on individuals, groups, communities and society, as well as acknowledging the accompanying widespread racism and discrimination in our broader society. We expect that within the organization there be explicit, productive conversations about the role of race and culture in the work we do, as well as advocacy for addressing the social injustices that result from systemic racism.

Lutheran Child and Family Services of Illinois
800-363-LCFS (5237) | www.lcfs.org | www.facebook.com/LCFSIL
• WIDE is included in new employee orientation.
• Build color cognizance into our Agency’s annual personnel evaluations.
• Incorporate WIDE and color cognizant language into the Agency’s 5-year strategic plan.
• Include discussion of color cognizance into job interviews with prospective employees.
Second Chapter (Cont’d)

- Executive Director of Camp Wartburg request for assistance and support re: racial and cultural diversity.
- Membership on DCFS’ Anti-Racism Transformation Teams.
- Participation in quality review process in our offices re: race equity issues.
- All leadership staff attend Crossroads Training.
Third Chapter: Now What?

- Lutheran Services in America (LSA): Population result: “...dramatically change the trajectory of 20,000 vulnerable children by 2024 and empower them to become healthy, productive and successful adults.

- LCFS became a member of the 2018 Results Leadership Lab with the focus on disparate outcomes.
• Disparate outcomes: Imaginary or real?
  
  – **Question #1**: What does our data tell us regarding disparate outcomes and racial equity practice?

  – **Question #2**: If disparity exists, what are we going to do?
% African-American Youth Achieving Permanency
(Target = 5% Increase, Achievement = 25% Increase)

Increase Rate of African American Youth Achieving Permanency from September 2018 to September 2019

All 2,897,185 youth in Illinois will have safe and loving forever families
Median Days of Care Between African - American Youth Intake at LCFS and Achievement of Permanency

Days to Permanency –
Goal – 5% Decrease
Success – 14% Decrease

Sept 2018: 840
 Sept 2019: 724
% LatinX Youth Achieving Permanency
(Target = 5% Increase, Achievement = 15% Increase)

Increase Rate of LatinX Youth Achieving Permanency from September 2018 to September 2019

- Permanencies Achieved
- Baseline #
- Sep 18 - Baseline #
- Mar 19
- Jun 19
- Sep 19
- 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14
- 4% Increase
- 3% Increase
- 4% Increase
- 5% Increase
- 12% Increase
- Actual
- Goal
Median Days of Care Between LatinX Youth Intake at LCFS and Achievement of Permanency

Days to Permanency Goal –
5% Decrease
Success – 40% Decrease

Sept 2018: 1979
Sept 2019: 1183
Most Permanencies for Youth of Color are Returned to Birth Families

- Adoption, 68, 34%
- Guardianship, 15, 8%
- Return Home, 116, 58%
What are the Difference Makers?

- LCFS became strategic and focused with utilization of timely and accurate data as a tool.
- Bi-weekly meetings with senior leadership staff to discuss the data, sharing of ideas, and learnings.
- Statewide Practice Forums with focus on family engagement and family-centered practice.
- Child & Family Team Meetings – Frequency, attendees, location, scheduled times.
What are the Difference Makers?

• Strong advocacy by line staff (child welfare specialists and supervisors) with other systems.

• Language (verbal and written) documents written consistently from a strengths based perspective.

• Celebrate the small and big progress AND accept/embrace the need to continue.
Where do we go from here?

• Stability of reunified families.

• Strengthen our work as it relates to the achievement of permanency for adolescents. How and why is independent living a permanency goal?

• Evidence (research) needed to delineate what strategies are the different makers.

• COMMITMENT AND PRESERVERANCE!
CALL to Action

Critical question for all of us to answer:
Are we comfortable with disparate outcomes?

For LCFS, the answer is NO!
CALL to Action

Join us in addressing the issue of systemic racism and its impact on children and families we serve in the child welfare system.

Don’t wait – take action today!
Working together, systemic racism can be dismantled brick by brick.

Thank You!
Questions and Comments