Addressing Implicit Bias in the Child Welfare System

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A Special Two-Day Juvenile Defense Seminar
Friday & Saturday, January 20 & 21, 2017

Presented by The California Public Defenders Association
Introduction

- Disproportionality within the Child Welfare System
- Disparity throughout the Process
  - Referral & Investigation
  - Substantiation
  - Removal & Out-of-Home Placement
- Impact of Implicit Bias
Objective

- Increase Awareness of Disparities
- Understand and Recognize Bias
- Reduce Disparity within Child Welfare
Are you Biased?

- Bias is Everywhere
- Explicit Bias Vs Implicit Bias
- Ice Breaker Activity
Implicit Bias

- Unconscious attitudes and stereotypes
- Automatic and Involuntary
- Unknown and unintentional
- Affect our decisions and reactions
- Are both positive and negative
Impact of Implicit Bias on Daily Life

- Prejudice
- Emotions
- Reactions
- Associations
Implicit Bias Impact on Child Welfare

- Referrals
- Language
- Assessment
- Recommendations
- Judgment
## Racial Disproportionality and Disparity

### Racial Disproportionality

**Formula:**
\[
\frac{\text{# of } x \text{ children in foster care}}{\text{# of } x \text{ children in the population}}
\]

### Racial Disparity

**Formula:**
\[
\frac{\text{# experiencing the event}}{\text{# in the population}} \text{ Compared to } \frac{\text{# of } y \text{ children in foster care}}{\text{# of } y \text{ children in the population}}
\]
Nationally, African-American children are about 3.5 times as likely as white children to be in state protective custody.¹

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>In out-of-home care</th>
<th>In general population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Am. Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian/Pacific Islander (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ Child Welfare League of America - National Data Analysis System
http://ndas.cwla.org/research_info/specialtopic1a.asp
² Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS)
## Racial Entries into Foster Care

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Entries(1)</th>
<th>Census Numbers</th>
<th>Rate per 1,000</th>
<th>DM(2)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>n</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>977</td>
<td>358,510</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td>474</td>
<td>51,533</td>
<td>9.20</td>
<td>3.375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>White</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>81,839</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>111,884</td>
<td>1.81</td>
<td>0.663</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>90,494</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td>0.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2,670</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>1.237</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceptions

- First Impressions
- Halo/D devil Effect
- Stereotypes
  - Group Activity
  - Cracking the Code
White Privilege

- Professor Peggy McIntosh (1988)
- Societal Advantage
- Heated Topic
Colorblindness vs Multiculturalism

- **Colorblindness**
  - “Melting pot”
- **Multiculturalism**
  - “Salad Bowl”
Colorblindness in Child Welfare

- Contributes to Racism
  - Denies whole identity
  - Denies racist experiences
  - Denies there is a problem
  - Denies reality
Multiculturalism in Child Welfare

- Improved Services
  - Recognizes differences
  - Include natural helpers
  - Respect traditions
  - Include appropriate resources
How to Move Beyond?

Five Ways to Reduce Disparity in Child Welfare

1. Increase Awareness about Biases
2. Attending Cultural Trainings and Functions
3. Participate in Work Groups
4. Gain Knowledge
5. Critical Thinking
Commit Today!

• Take the Implicit Bias Test
  https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html

• Stay Abreast of Findings

• Read or take a Workshop
  http://biasproject.org/

• Start a Work Group
  Orange County ERDD (Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity Advisory Group)
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mR8u-iMB8I8&feature=youtu.be
Questions and Answers
References


References (cont.)


References (cont.)

Unknown Author. Recognizing & Understanding Stereotypes and Bias. [PDF document]. Retrieved from Lecture Notes Online Web site:
http://www.cptc.edu/stereotype/bias/lessonbuilder_files/Stereotypes_and_Bias_print.html
