From the Annie E. Casey Foundation

**Presenters**

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  Senior Associate

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  Senior Associate

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  Program Associate
Questions?

• **Technical difficulties?** Visit [www.aecf.org/webex](http://www.aecf.org/webex). Or use the chat or Q&A window. Or contact WebEx technical support at 1-866-229-3239

• **No Q&A window?** If the Q&A icon at the top of that column is not blue (like image at top left), click the icon, and the window should appear

• **Questions?** Type questions for presenters in Q&A window at any time

• **We’re recording!** The webinar is being recorded and will be available after the presentation
Poll: Audience

What is your role in the child welfare field?

A. Administrator
B. Supervisor
C. Caseworker
D. Advocate
E. Foster parent
F. Service provider
G. Other
Casey’s desk guide: A key tool for agency improvement

- Two-volume *Child Welfare Leader’s Desk Guide* describes 10 practices for building a high-performing agency
- Practice #4: Measure and address racial and other disparities
This webinar is for administrators, community members, data analysts and others. We will discuss:

• How agencies can address unequal outcomes for children of different races and ethnicities in their care
• Scholarship on race, poverty and maltreatment
• Disparity measures and formulas
Casey recommends: An overview

• Collect data on race and ethnicity from hotline to case closing and for re-entry cases

• Share results of data collection in user-friendly reports and dashboards

• **Use data to describe the experiences of all kids served**, using the Disparity Index and Relative Rate Index (described later)

• Translate lessons learned from data analysis into policy and practice changes, regularly testing solutions, measuring results, improving outcomes and addressing disparities
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disproportionality</th>
<th>Disparity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exists when the representation of one group is <strong>larger</strong> or <strong>smaller</strong> than the same group’s representation in the general population</td>
<td>is <strong>the difference in outcomes</strong> that children experience based on race</td>
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</table>
Comparing two terms

**Equality**
The quality or state of being equal.
Having the same rights, social status, etc.

**Equity**
Fairness or justice in the way people are treated based on needs
### Dimensions of Racism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions of Racism*</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Internalized</strong></td>
<td>Private, individual beliefs about race that are subconscious and may result in bias, prejudice, oppression and privilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interpersonal</strong></td>
<td>Public expressions of racial prejudice, hate, bias between individuals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional</strong></td>
<td>Institutions use discriminatory practices and adopt policies and practices that result in inequitable opportunities and outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structural</strong></td>
<td>Racial bias across institutions and society that has systemically privileged one group and disadvantaged another group</td>
</tr>
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</table>
It is possible to measure and address unequal child outcomes

- Kids of color are disproportionately represented in many systems and agencies must address unequal child outcomes. To do so:
  - Use the most up-to-date quantitative methods
  - Analyze data
  - **Develop local, specific solutions** with measureable results
  - Use common language
  - Focus on institutional levers
Analyzing contributing factors

- Decision points
  How did the initial purpose of the decision process lead to the unintentional consequence of disparity?

- Policies and practices
  What practices or policies contribute to this problem?

- Organizational structures
  What organizational norms or myths justify or maintain the disparity?

- Solution development
  How can solutions address the disparity’s cause and advance systemic change?
Moving from recommendations to results

- **Define terms** such as equality, equity, disparity, disproportionality, institutional racism
- **Share data** with clear explanations about what it does and doesn’t mean
- **Define the strategy** to address disparity, including what outcome you are aiming to improve
- **Identify each staff member’s role** in moving the agency’s equity work forward
- **Measure**, then measure again

Sample tool: Casey’s Racial Equity Impact Analysis

What is the area of greatest racial/ethnic disparity in your jurisdiction’s child welfare system?

A. Removal from home
B. Group vs. family placement
C. Length of stay in care
D. Reunification
E. Reentry
F. Don’t know
Does poverty drive disproportionality and disparity?

- Correlation is not causation
- As the poverty rate goes up, so do victimization rates — but race matters (Wulczyn, 2011)
Wulczyn’s two findings: One that was expected — and one that seems counterintuitive

Overall, maltreatment rates increased with poverty rates

SOURCE: Wulczyn, 2011
For white kids, as poverty rates increase, so do victimization rates

SOURCE: Wulczyn, 2011
For black kids, higher black child poverty rates were tied — even if weakly — to lower maltreatment rates.
Key lesson: Keep asking, “What’s the story?”

- Whether you are an administrator, a caseworker or a data specialist, **be open** to factors other than poverty.
- Avoid overgeneralizing. **Don’t assume** poverty is the sole explanation for differences.
- **Race and specific location matter.** The effect of poverty and race often varies considerably within jurisdictions.
Measuring race and ethnicity is complex

Critical considerations

• Adoption & Foster Care Analysis & Reporting System (AFCARS) reporting rules

• Race is a social construct

• Ask the question: Disparate compared to whom?
It is possible to manage this complexity

• Be clear in how you define groups
• Look at all geographic levels
• Examine ethnic groups that make sense for your location

**Numbers alone are not enough!**
We will review four measures:

- Disproportionality
- Disproportionality Metric (DM)
- Disparity Index (DI)
- Relative Rate Index (RRI)
Disproportionality answers the question: Are groups represented at the same rate in both populations?

- Proportional means percentages on left and right would match
- Measure can be sensitive to population changes

NOTE: Fictional data. Illustrative only.
Disproportionality Metric examines just one racial group in comparison to itself

- Disproportionality compares the ratio of the foster care population to that of the general population for the same racial group — it is not a comparison of two racial groups
- Underrepresented < 1 < Overrepresented

NOTE: Fictional data. Illustrative only.
Calculating the Disproportionality Metric

\[
\frac{\text{# group In Care} \div \text{# total In Care}}{\text{# group Gen Pop} \div \text{# total Gen Pop}} = \frac{\% \text{ of group In Care}}{\% \text{ of group Gen Pop}}
\]

Fictional data from Shaw et al. (2008). Illustrative only.
Calculating the Disproportionality Metric

\[
\frac{\text{# group In Care} \div \text{# total In Care}}{\text{# group Gen Pop} \div \text{# total Gen Pop}} = \frac{\% \text{ of group In Care}}{\% \text{ of group Gen Pop}}
\]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In Care (%)</th>
<th>Gen Pop (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>75 (13.6%)</td>
<td>25,000 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-black</td>
<td>475 (86.4%)</td>
<td>475,000 (95%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>550 (100%)</td>
<td>500,000 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[
\frac{75 \div 550}{25,000 \div 500,000} = \frac{13.6\%}{5\%} = 2.728
\]

Fictional data from Shaw et al. (2008). Illustrative only.
Calculating the Disproportionality Metric

\[
\frac{\text{# group In Care} \div \text{# total In Care}}{\text{# group Gen Pop} \div \text{# total Gen Pop}} = \frac{\% \text{ of group In Care}}{\% \text{ of group Gen Pop}}
\]

In Care (%)  Gen Pop (%)
Black  75 (13.6%)  25,000 (5%)
Non-black  475 (86.4%)  475,000 (95%)
Total  550 (100%)  500,000 (100%)

\[
\frac{75 \div 550}{25,000 \div 500,000} = \frac{13.6\%}{5\%} = 2.728
\]

Finding: The proportion of black kids in care is 2.7 times greater than their proportion in the general population

Fictional data from Shaw et al. (2008). Illustrative only.
Theoretical Ceiling Effect means the maximum DM result is determined by the make up of the general population. Changes in measure may reflect changes in general population, not practice. This is a point-in-time measure.

Limitations of the Disproportionality Metric

When one racial group makes up a large percentage of the general population, the DM is biased toward being a smaller number.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In Care (%)</th>
<th>Gen Pop (%)</th>
<th>Rate/1000</th>
<th>Disp. Metric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blacks County A</td>
<td>75 (100%)</td>
<td>25,000 (5%)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>(\frac{100%}{5%} = 20.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blacks County B</td>
<td>750 (100%)</td>
<td>250,000 (50%)</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>(\frac{100%}{50%} = 2.0)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fictional data from Shaw et al. (2008). Illustrative only.
The DM cannot reliably be used to compare jurisdictions because of its extreme sensitivity to population size.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native American Representation</th>
<th>In Care (%)</th>
<th>Gen Pop (%)</th>
<th>Disproportionality Metric</th>
<th>Rate/1000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>713 (7.5%)</td>
<td>23,828 (1.5%)</td>
<td>(\frac{7.5%}{1.5%} = 5.0)</td>
<td>29.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>934 (51%)</td>
<td>32,674 (17.3%)</td>
<td>(\frac{51%}{17.3%} = 2.9)</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOURCE: AFCARS 2011
Disparity Index compares the likelihood that two groups will experience the same event

- DI compares ratio of rate in one group to rate of a different group — in this example, the likelihood of being in foster care
- The DI is not affected by population changes

![Diagram showing Foster Care Population and General Child Population with ratios and percentages of Black and White populations.](image-url)
Calculating the Disparity Index

\[
\frac{Rate\ Group\ 1}{Rate\ Group\ 2}
\]
Calculated the Disparity Index

\[
\frac{\text{Rate Group 1}}{\text{Rate Group 2}}
\]

Entry rate per 1,000 in general population:

White 3.8  Black 10.6

\[
\frac{10.6}{3.8} = 2.79
\]
Calculating the Disparity Index

\[
\frac{Rate \ Group \ 1}{Rate \ Group \ 2}
\]

Entry rate per 1,000 in general population:

- **White**: 3.8
- **Black**: 10.6

\[
\frac{10.6}{3.8} = 2.79
\]

**Finding**: Black children are 2.79 times more likely than white children to enter foster care in this state.
A limitation of the Disparity Index

The Disparity Index can obscure which decision points in a system are contributing the most to disparities

## A State’s 2004 Entry Cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Indian</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referrals</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepted Referrals</td>
<td>3.05</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.51</td>
<td>1.44</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Initial High Risk</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removed From Home</td>
<td>4.56</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>1.48</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placements Over 60 Days</td>
<td>4.96</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placements Over Two Years</td>
<td>6.29</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Relative Rate Index answers the question: Where in the system does disparity occur?

• The RRI (also known as decision point analysis) uses the same formula as Disparity Index but **focuses on one specific decision point**, indicating disparities only for that one decision point

• Make sure you **carefully specify** which sub-population you are studying
An advantage of the Relative Rate Index

RRI can help identify disparities at specific decision points

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Point</th>
<th>Disparity Index</th>
<th>Relative Rate Index</th>
<th>Disproportionality Metric*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Child Population</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>1.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abuse Hotline Report</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>1.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screened-In for Investigation</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enter Foster Care</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>1.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60+ Days in Care</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Compares percent of black children at each point with percent of black children in general population. Does not rate for black children to white children.
As you change practice and policy to address unequal outcomes for children, measure as you go.

Learn from what does and doesn’t work.
Poll: What action will you take?

**What actions will you take first** after today’s webinar?

A. Use the RRI to determine which decision points in my system may contribute to disparities

B. Learn more about the racial/ethnic composition of my area and clients

C. Bring together stakeholders to discuss how to address disparities in my system
At the end of this presentation, find links to:

- Casey’s desk guide,
- Measuring Disparity,
- Primer on Entry Cohort Longitudinal Data, and
- **Materials on addressing racial inequities**
Endnotes and additional resources

• Resources on measuring disparity
  – Measuring disparity: The need to adjust for Relative Risk (2015)
  – Primer on Entry Cohort Longitudinal Data (2015)

• Resources on addressing disparity
  – Race Matters Toolkit, the Annie E. Casey Foundation
Next steps

• For print copies of the desk guide, please email: dortiz@aecf.org

• Next desk guide webinar:
  
  June 23: Getting to Permanence

Please share your ideas and promising practices

Casey will update the desk guide in 2017. What should be included? Do you have a promising practice to share with the field? Please email your feedback and ideas to Morgan Cole at mcole@aecf.org.