Dismantling Racial Inequity Through Child Welfare Systems Change
SESSION 3: A DATA-DRIVEN APPROACH TO IMPROVING OUTCOMES FOR BLACK GIRLS IN CHILD WELFARE

Presenters

Kathi Elliott
Executive Director, Gwen’s Girls, Inc.

Angela Y. Steele
Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Allegheny County Children, Youth, and Family Services

Facilitator

Carole Wilcox
Butler Institute, University of Denver
As seen in “Black Magic: An Exploration of Black Hair” as part of the Women’s Freedom Conference 2015
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCtzU5320K8m8lweOhdmp9Q
THE STATE OF BLACK GIRLS IN CHILD WELFARE

Black girls account for 8.3% of Allegheny County’s child population.* Yet, in 2016, they accounted for:

- 21% of referrals to OCYF
- 22% of investigations
- 23% of accepted cases
- 22% of removals from the home

Meaning black girls are represented at each decision point at almost 2.5 times their representation in the general child population.

DARE supports

• Policy development
• Quality improvement
• Planning
• Decision-making

through research, analysis, and engagement.

https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/
CHILD WELFARE LEADERSHIP FELLOWS

• Allegheny County’s Leadership Fellows program was launched in the spring of 2014
• Funded by Casey Family Programs and The Heinz Endowments, with trainings conducted by Public Catalyst Group, which also provided ongoing technical assistance and support
• Modeled after “Managing by Data,” a data-focused professional development program implemented by the New Jersey Department of Children and Families
• Desired outcome is a workplace culture that wholeheartedly embraces creative, data-driven decisions, which will improve best practices
Based on the research, if we improve best practice, we improve outcomes.

**Best Practice 1:** Question Short Stays

**Best Practice 2:** Maximize Kinship & Reduce Congregate Care

**Best Practice 3:** Place Siblings Together

**Best Practice 4:** Reduce Re-Entries
BEST PRACTICE 1: QUESTION SHORT STAYS

Children with Short Stay, First Entry Placements by Percentage
OCYF CY2012

\[ n = 165 \]

- Did we need to place at all?
- Should we have discharged?
- Could we have prevented re-entry?
WHO EXPERIENCES SHORT STAYS?

Short Stay Children by Race and Gender
OCYF CY 2012
n = 160

- White Females: 19%
- White Males: 21%
- Black Males: 23%
- Black Females: 31%

31% 23% 21% 19% 0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35%
BEST PRACTICE 2: MAXIMIZE KIN AND REDUCE CONGREGATE CARE

Percentage of Children Ages 12-17 in Congregate Care by Race and Gender

\( n = 331 \)

Source: ACDHS Leadership Fellows 2012 Unduplicated Entry Cohort

African Americans account for more than 60% of children in congregate care—boys and girls.
BEST PRACTICE 3: PLACE SIBLINGS TOGETHER

2012 Sibling groups of two
Percent of race group placed together
Source: DHS KIDS, n=263 removals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race Group</th>
<th>Percent Placed Together</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White (n=96)</td>
<td>78%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (n=16)</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 or More Races (n=13)</td>
<td>69%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BEST PRACTICE 4: REDUCE RE-ENTRIES

Re-Entries By Race Percentage
Sources: ACDHS Fellows Cohort by Child Updated Sept 11, 2014, and Fellows Reentry Sub Cohort Updated Sept 11, 2014

Single Entry
- African American: 46%
- White: 42%

Re-entries
- African American: 66%
- White: 25%

Re-entries 15-17 y.o.
- African American: 72%
- White: 23%

Sources: ACDHS Fellows Cohort by Child Updated Sept 11, 2014, and Fellows Reentry Sub Cohort Updated Sept 11, 2014
WHAT TYPES OF SOLUTIONS DO WE NEED?

If we improve practice for kids, we will improve our outcomes:

- Fewer short stays
- More kinship placement
- Less congregate care
- More siblings placed together
- Fewer re-entries

MORE STABILITY & happier, safer, healthier kids
FELLOWS SOLUTIONS

- Change in the language of delinquency court orders and practice around children being released from Shuman Juvenile Detention Center
- Diversion program for the private filing of dependency petitions
- Provide individual support to our youth in kinship care and their caregivers
- Joint effort with OCYF leadership to create Behavioral Specialists in regional offices
Brought together data from:

- Child welfare
- Juvenile justice system
- Education system
- Health care
- Surveys of youth

Gave a comprehensive look at the racial and gender inequities black girls in Allegheny County face.

This report was presented at the first Gwen’s Girls Equity Summit in 2016, leading to the formation of the Black Girls Equity Alliance.

Gwen’s Girls
Dr. Kathi Elliott
Executive Director
GWEN’S GIRLS – THE ORGANIZATION

Mission:
To empower girls and young women to have productive lives through holistic, gender specific programs, education, and experiences

Founded in 2002 by the late Commander Gwen Elliott, retired from the Pittsburgh Police Department
WHY GIRLS / WHY GENDER-RESPONSIVE SERVICES

• Gwen’s Girls was founded on and continues to operate by a gender-responsive service delivery model. Simply put, we serve girls and young women, and do so in a way that is specific and intentional to the physical and psychosocial needs of those girls and women.

• Being gender-responsive means creating an environment through site selection, staff selection, program development, content, and material that reflects an understanding of the lives of women and girls and responds to their strengths and challenges.
**Programs and Services**

- After school
- Community based
- Residential group home
- Gwendolyn J. Elliott Institute (GJEI)

### KEY ELEMENTS OF GENDER-SPECIFIC PROGRAMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAFE ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>HOLISTIC PROGRAMMING</th>
<th>RELATIONSHIP BASED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical safety</td>
<td>Addressing the whole girl in her environments individually, among family, school, and community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>Relationships at care of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surroundings that value females</td>
<td></td>
<td>Understanding girls’ need for relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCES</th>
<th>HEALTH-BASED PROGRAMMING</th>
<th>OTHER CRITICAL AREAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teach new skills based on strengths</td>
<td>Address physical, sexual, emotional, spiritual, and mental health</td>
<td>Address victimization and trauma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach personal respect</td>
<td>Alcohol-, tobacco-, and drug-free health</td>
<td>Media literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Give girls a voice</td>
<td></td>
<td>Empowering girls to be forces for social change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support leadership</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cultural connections</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIFE DOMAINS CRITICAL TO GIRLS CURRICULUM

- Education
- Health and Wellness
- Leadership Development
- Life Skills
- Family Life
- Community Service
- Female Awareness
- Cultural Enrichment
- Spirituality
- Recreation
The Gwendolyn J. Elliott Institute was founded in 2015 to support research, provide training, and serve as a clearinghouse for best practices in research and programming that empowers young girls and women.

**Mission:** To provide expertise in the fields of research and training for individuals and organizations working with girls.
ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS
Kimberly Booth, Allegheny County Juvenile Probation
Betty Braxter, PhD, CNM, University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing
Britney Brinkman, PhD, Chatham University
Amanda Cross, PhD, University of Pittsburgh, Office of Child Development
Willa Doswell, RN, PhD, FAAN, University of Pittsburgh School of Nursing
Ebony English, PhD, Community College of Allegheny County
Sara Goodkind, PhD, MSW, University of Pittsburgh
Nancy Hubley, Esq., Education Law Center
Lynn Knezevich, Gwen’s Girls volunteer and past executive director
Temple Lovelace, PhD, Duquesne University
Jessica Ruffin, MBA, Carlow University
Angela Steele, Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Melissa Swauger, PhD, Indiana University of Pennsylvania

RESEARCH COORDINATOR
Andrea Joseph, MSW, MA
GOALS & OBJECTIVES

1. Identify, plan, and implement new research projects.
2. Provide support for research, education, and outreach efforts.
3. Build partnerships with and among nonprofit, government, and research communities.
4. Develop training and education programs aimed at addressing knowledge gaps for black girls and young women.
GOALS & OBJECTIVES

5. Participate and organize local, state, regional, and national conferences.

6. Serve as a clearinghouse for documents, reports, and relevant educational materials for educators and professionals on the needs and strengths of black girls and young women.

7. Advocate for policy changes and improved practices within organizations that serve or otherwise engage with African American girls.
GJEI, in collaboration with the University of Pittsburgh
First Annual Equity Summit in October 2016

See the Best in Me: Equity Through the Lens of Resilience
Convening Practitioners, Researchers, Policy Makers, & Community Members

- Child Welfare
- Health & Wellness
- Education
- Juvenile Justice
BLACK GIRL EQUITY ALLIANCE WORKGROUPS

Child Welfare
- Accountability in hiring practices and training (for both OCYF and contracted providers)
- Lack of community involvement
- System-involvement because of truancy
- Addressing the needs of multi-system involved youth
- Addressing the needs of LGBTQ youth within OCYF

Health & Wellness
- Provision of safety, violence prevention
- Provision of trauma-informed care
- Awareness of the needs of LGBTQ youth
- Need for comprehensive sex education
BLACK GIRL EQUITY ALLIANCE WORKGROUPS

Education
Lack of trauma-informed approaches
Push-out of black girls / disparate discipline policies
Lack of communication between agencies, school administrators, teachers, and parents
Lack of parent engagement
Lack of consistency in implementation of code of conduct

Juvenile Justice
Disproportionate rate of black girls being referred to the juvenile justice system
Lack of diversion options
Limited community involvement
Lack of collaboration with referring police departments
Lack of awareness of the data
CHILD WELFARE WORKGROUP

Subcommittees:
1) Truancy
2) Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression Training (SOGIE)

Goals / Intended Outcomes:
• Increased awareness of new legislation and resources through DHS
  Focus on Attendance
• SOGIE training with the specific focus on the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality and the impact on black cis/trans girls in child welfare
• SOGIE training provided to BGEA & local organizations/contracted DHS providers
• SOGIE for the faith community in development
HEALTH & WELLNESS WORKGROUP

Subcommittees:
1) Comprehensive Sex Education
2) Trauma-Informed Care Training for Service Providers

Goals / Intended Outcomes:
• Conduct a comprehensive sex education needs assessment, which is being collaboratively developed
• Develop a trauma-informed training that is specific to black girls; pilot was presented at the Second Annual Equity Summit
EDUCATION WORKGROUP

Subcommittees:
1) Addressing Sexual Harassment and Assault of Black Girls in School
2) Black Girls Engagement and Inclusion
3) Teacher/Administrator/Parent Engagement and Inclusion

Goal / Intended Outcomes:
• Engage and empower black girls to share their experiences
• Create a leadership/advocacy board
• Advocate with the girls for alternatives to suspension
Mission:

The Juvenile Justice Workgroup is comprised of stakeholders concerned with improving community and law enforcement relationships. Ultimately the workgroup seek to reduce the detention rates of girls.

Goals / Intended Outcomes:

• Identify communities with the highest referral rates for girls
• Identify the charges/reasons for referral and sources of referrals (police, magistrate, schools)
• Increase awareness of the data
• Identify and collaborate with local diversion programs, community members, and policy makers that want to reduce rates of referral
GJEI/BGEA Accomplishments

- Second Annual Equity Summit, October 2017: *An Intersectional Approach: Systems Working Together to Advance Equity for Black Girls*
- September 2017 – Received Accelerating Change Award- The Center for the Study of Social Policy
- September 2017 – Panelist on “Addressing the Needs of Women and Girls of Color” for the Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare in Washington, DC
- August 2017 – Received a Robert Wood Johnson Fellowship (Dr. Elliott, Dr. Goodkind, & Dr. Brinkman)
- August 2017 – Panelist at the 40th National Child Welfare, Juvenile, & Family Law Conference in New Orleans, LA
RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY’S CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM
Disproportionality in Allegheny County Child Welfare

Disproportionality is the level to which groups of children are present in the child welfare system at higher or lower percentage than their presence in the general population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Allegheny County Child Population</th>
<th>All</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Bi/Multiracial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population under 18</td>
<td>241663</td>
<td>174938</td>
<td>45552</td>
<td>11877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCYF Population</td>
<td>4,124</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>2,112</td>
<td>475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCYF Population %</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disproportionality Index</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
We found that a black child in Allegheny County was . . .

- 3.7 times more likely to be referred to OCYF
- 4.3 times more likely to be investigated
- 6.7 times more likely to have a case accepted for service
- 6 times more likely to be removed from their home

. . . than their white peer.

The rates for bi/multiracial children are nearly as high as for black children and follow the same pattern.
WHY DID WE REMOVE?

REMOVAL REASONS BY RACE, 2010 TO 2014
N=8111 REMOVAL REASONS

BLACK N=4295
- Mental/Physical/Sexual Abuse: 15%
- Parent's inability to cope due to illness or disability: 15%
- Neglect - No/Inadequate Housing: 14%
- Parent Unavailable: 14%
- Neglect - supervision and safety needs: 11%
- Caretaker Drug/Alcohol Use/Abuse: 9%
- Child Behaviors: 8%

WHITE N=2841
- Mental/Physical/Sexual Abuse: 12%
- Parent's inability to cope due to illness or disability: 12%
- Neglect - No/Inadequate Housing: 14%
- Parent Unavailable: 13%
- Neglect - supervision and safety needs: 26%
- Caretaker Drug/Alcohol Use/Abuse: 13%
- Child Behaviors: 13%

OTHER N=975
- Mental/Physical/Sexual Abuse: 8%
- Parent's inability to cope due to illness or disability: 11%
- Neglect - No/Inadequate Housing: 15%
- Parent Unavailable: 15%
- Neglect - supervision and safety needs: 20%
- Caretaker Drug/Alcohol Use/Abuse: 13%
- Child Behaviors: 13%
WHERE ARE CHILDREN PLACED?

First Placement by Race
2010 - 2014 placement entries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Kinship</th>
<th>Foster Care</th>
<th>Congregate Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dismantling Racial Inequity Through Child Welfare Systems Change
Session 3 | Dec 2017 | A Service of The Children’s Bureau
EFFORTS TO REDUCE DISPROPORTIONALITY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

The strategies we employ to address racial disproportionality are informed by data, research, and key stakeholder feedback.

These strategies include:

• Training and coaching
• Planning and coordination
• Data dissemination and outreach
WHERE IS ALLEGHENY COUNTY NOW?
WHAT’S HAPPENED OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS

• Commitment from DHS and OCYF leadership to examine our system and move forward with race equity efforts
• Establishment of a Diversity and Inclusion Officer to provide focus on equity in child welfare
• Data Dissemination to staff, system partners, and community partners
• Review and change in policy regarding emergency kinship placement policy
• System-wide implementation of Conferencing and Teaming (2014)
WHAT’S HAPPENED OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS

• Analysis of system data
• Child Welfare Leadership Fellows Program – Public Catalyst
• Leadership Fellows, Class One recommended interventions
• “A Groundwater Analysis of Racial Inequities” workshop – Joyce James Consulting
  • Starting with upper administration, regional office directors, supervisors, specialists, and all child welfare staff
WHAT’S HAPPENED OVER THE LAST THREE YEARS

• Foster Goodness Campaign - Diligent recruitment of foster home for teens
• Leadership Fellows, Class Two (2016)
  • Kinship Navigators
  • Automatic referral to Kinship Care Foster Care Agency for support
• Congregate Care Strike Team
RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY

- **Disproportionality** is the level to which groups of children are present in the child welfare system at higher or lower percentage than their presence in the general population.

- **Disparity** is a lack of equity between groups, measured by comparing the disproportionality of one group to the disproportionality of another.
**RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITY IN ALLEGHENY COUNTY**

**Black/White Disparity Index**
The rate of black representation in the child welfare system compared to white representation in the child welfare system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decision Points</th>
<th>2010-2014 Disparity Index</th>
<th>2016 Disparity Index</th>
<th>Change in disparity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Referral to the Agency</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>7% decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept for Service</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>33% decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal from Home</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>28% decrease</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
GIRLS OF COLOR REMOVAL FROM HOME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Girls Removed from Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>343</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>305</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Top Primary Removal Reasons 2017 (up to 10/17/17)
N=298 removals

1. Supervision Needs (20%)
2. Parental D/A (18%)
3. Physical/Sexual Abuse (16%)
4. Parent-Child Conflict (14%)
WHERE ARE BLACK GIRLS PLACED?

FIRST PLACEMENT 2010-2014
GIRLS OF COLOR

- Congregate Care: 35%
- Foster Care: 37%
- Kinship Care: 28%

FIRST PLACEMENT 2017
GIRLS OF COLOR
N=298, AS OF 10/17/17

- Congregate Care: 13%
- Foster Care: 21%
- Kinship Care: 65%
WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO

FIRST PLACEMENT 2017
AS OF 10/17/17

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BLACK GIRLS</th>
<th>WHITE GIRLS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congregate Care</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Care</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship Care</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
WE STILL HAVE WORK TO DO

CONGREGATE CARE POPULATION
10/31/17 D1101 PLACEMENT REPORT
N=127

- 69% African American
- 21% White
- 8% Multiracial
NEXT STEPS

• Regional Office Work
  • Data analysis at the Regional Office Level
  • Formulation of disproportionality impact strategies at Regional Office level
  • Establishment of Equity Champions within regional offices

• Formation of External County Equity Committee

• Review of Policy and Practice That May Impact Disproportionality

• “A Groundwater Analysis of Racial Inequities” Workshop – Joyce James Consulting
  • All child welfare staff, teen foster care providers, Community of Practice behavioral health providers, prevention services providers, courts – parent advocates, child advocates, CASA
HEY BLACK CHILD
By Countee Cullen

Video by KIPP Baltimore  http://kippbaltimore.org/
https://youtu.be/pa4s6d80dc4
FOR MORE INFORMATION

• Office of Data Analysis, Research, and Evaluation
  • http://www.alleghenycounty.us/Human-Services/About/Offices/Data-Analysis,-Research-and-Evaluation.aspx
  • https://www.alleghenycountyanalytics.us/

• Child Welfare Leadership Fellows

• Conferencing and Teaming

• Foster Goodness
  • http://fostergoodness.org/
FOR MORE INFORMATION

• Inequities Affecting Black Girls in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County

• Data Brief: Racial Disproportionality in Allegheny County’s Child Welfare System

• Public Catalyst
  • http://www.public-catalyst.com/

• Joyce James Consulting
  • http://www.joycejamesconsulting.com/
Questions?
JOIN US!

Learning Exchange
Tuesday, December 12, 2017
3:00–4:00 pm EST

Register here:
• http://bit.ly/REquityLEx3
DISMANTLING RACIAL INEQUITY THROUGH CHILD WELFARE SYSTEMS CHANGE

Webinar Topics:

1. Institutional Analysis
2. Cross-Systems & Tribal Partnerships
3. Data Collection & Analysis
4. Agency & Workforce Development
5. Agency-University Partnerships
6. Sustainability
PRESENTERS

Kathi Elliott
Executive Director of Gwen’s Girls, Inc.
• kelliott@gwensgirls.org

Angela Y. Steele
Diversity and Inclusion Officer, Allegheny County Children, Youth, and Family Services
• Angela.Steele@AlleghenyCounty.US
Thank You!