



KNOWLEDGE IS POWER SUMMIT

USING DATA TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY
FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

ACTION LAB RESULTS

Systems Level Actions

What needs to happen at the systems level with respect to the following areas:

- Policies and laws that govern the system
- Structures, i.e. how the system is organized to impact individuals and communities
- Practices that contribute to the functioning of the system and its impact on individuals and communities

Policies/Laws

Legal-related

- Pay for all court-ordered services
 - Create a voucher system for parents to access services without creating additional barriers and the CSW having to get a court order.
- Changing the burden of proof ratio from the beginning and throughout the entire investigation - gather concrete proof, not just based off of feelings
- Stop automatic reporting to DCFS by law enforcement of domestic violence cases
- Guarantee pre-petition legal representation for all families under investigation
- Reassessing filing on parents who were former dependants. Former dependants should not become the new parents of dependency

General Neglect and Substance Use

- Redefine general neglect
- Stop detentions based on DV, general neglect, and substance use
- Don't drug test pregnant people unless medically necessary and with their consent and knowledge
- Don't take marijuana referrals if there are no children in the home under 5
- That the DCFS referral conclusion policy list the full language of the Penal Code that is to guide the conclusion of referral allegations (i.e., general neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, etc...).

Training and Assessment

- Community training on bias
- Overhaul of mandated reporter trainings and ensure all reporters are learning the same thing
- Add trauma to our assessment tools

- Beyond mandated reporter training, SDM resources and guidance in order to reduce room for bias in mandated reporter decision-making
- Incorporate Knowledge is Power data and historical perspective in training for new staff

FFPSA and Funding

- How can FFPSA be fully realized and Thriving Families, Safer Children help shape policy?
- Relax restrictions and requirements around county funding to support more community-based organizations
- Guaranteed basic income for all families
- Reallocation of money to strengthen services.
- FFPSA Evidence Based Practices need to be expanded innovative practices that achieve results/outcomes for our children and families in a CW context.

Other

- CASA/LA Is launching our prevention/intervention program to stop the intergenerational cycle of system involvement. Use us!
- Permit parents to record interactions with social workers for transparency and accountability

Structures

Data and Capacity-Building

- Data integration/data sharing, improving and empowering the workforce, capacity building for community-based organizations

Coordination

- Focus on primary prevention and incorporate other county agencies for support
- Accountability for all in the system.

Funding

- Sustainable funding for programs and agencies that work - community-based orgs
- Braided and blended funding opportunities for CBOs (i.e. DMH, DPH and DCFS having one contract for services)
- Re-structure and pay attention to redistribution of resources amongst different county agencies so it can get to families

DCFS Workforce

- Bring back intensive services workers (ISW) within the Regional Offices of DCFS. ISW's were able to intentionally work with our parents, children, the community, familial supports, service providers as well as the ER and Dependency Investigation CSWs very closely to ensure the linkages are made where needed.
- Emphasis on recruiting and retaining staff to areas with highest percentage of need. May involve stipends and paid expenses.

- Sustainability plans for leaders of color
- Stop putting new hires in ER... Start them in CS so they can experience what it is like to service kids and families. ER is a specialized function. How can CSW's assess whether to detain kids when they have no clue what happens afterwards?

Other

- Spend more energy, time, and resources on removing barriers instead of creating more systems... It's far easier to dismantle something than it is to renovate it on a faulty foundation...
- We need to do away with having a system that pays people to police families and foster conformity into a standard of whiteness built for the benefit of the idea of white privilege and the perception of white power.

Practices

Social Work and Engagement Best Practices

- Humanizing interactions with family and co-workers
- Be more conscious of how we talk and interact with people. As well as how we hear people, receive info and perceive info and lastly what we do with the info received.
- Treating families holistically and seeing parents as human beings
- Acknowledge differences in culture that have been historically viewed as non-compliance
- Listen not only to the families, but also the ground workers
- Treating families with dignity, respect, - doing real social work
- Cultural shift within DCFS
- Cultural shift in other areas outside of DCFS such as education, medicine etc.
- Consider the personal experiences of newly hired social workers and if they have raised children and how that impacts how they view clients
- Improve quality of services and staff
- Change the way we implement policies and do our day-to-day work within DCFS

Teaming

- Group supervision!! Learning from peers
- MDTs in hospitals and schools
- CFT's being run by peers (those with lived expertise) vs. DCFS SWs
- Warm Handoff, after checking out the services yourself.

Training

- Training staff on "Post Traumatic Street Disorder" (PTSD) that our families often face when dealing with poverty
- Directors need to participate in summits and trainings
- Peace4Kids is doing training with educators to mitigate bias and teaching them how to regulate their nervous systems when dealing with children of color.

- Trauma often looks like defiance, and systems treat it as such and write up in reports as such, and that needs to change.

Accountability

- Address power struggles of line staff
- Staff accountability - Policy of keeping staff who we know aren't engaging effectively
- Mandated Reporting should not be only about calling CPS on families but also holding co-workers accountable for being disrespectful to families and not following up.

Initiatives Already Underway

Legal

- Funding for all court-ordered services
- Pre-petition legal representation

Statute

- Mandated Reporting Reforms - [AB 2085](#)
- Blind Removal Pilots - [AB 2655](#)