



NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

# 2020-2024 Chafee Plan Philosophy



*DCF recognizes that racial bias impacts families' circumstances and the ways in which public systems - such as those operated by the Department - interact with families. In consultation with a national expert, DCF has created a **Race Equity Steering Committee** to attend to race equity in all areas of the Department, with the ultimate goal of promoting equitable treatment for all NJ constituents, and equitable outcomes for DCF services.*

## Race Equity Steering Committee Charges

- 1 Reduce racial disparities in use of short stays in foster care
- 2 Reduce racial disparities in time to permanency and in re-entries
- 3 Prevent maltreatment and family separation
- 4 Create a decision-point analysis for Children's System of Care

*Nationally - and in NJ - children of color are disproportionately placed in out-of-home care through child welfare and behavioral health systems. They also stay longer in out-of-home placement than their white and Latinx peers. As a result, race equity was included as a transformational goal in the 2019-2021 DCF Strategic Plan.*

# What is Racial Equity?

The distribution of resources and opportunities is neither determined nor predicted by race, racial bias or racial ideology.

The structures, systems, practices and cultural narratives in society provide true situational fairness and equal opportunity.

There is a democratic commitment to dismantle the false narrative of white supremacy and address the legal, political, social, cultural and historical contributors to inequity.

Families and individuals are able to thrive and flourish in the intersections of all aspects of their identity, including race, religion, gender, orientation, ability, and socioeconomic background.

The most vulnerable communities in society have access to mechanisms to achieve social mobility and voice in naming their reality, describing how these systems of oppression play out, and developing solutions which draw upon their assets.

All people, cultures and identities are equally valued and recognized under the belief that strength comes through the diversity and expression of our shared humanity.



*"Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full, healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things in order to enjoy full, healthy lives. Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things."*

*(Equity vs. Equality and Other Racial Justice Definitions (2020). Annie E. Casey Foundation)*


# The Mindsets of Race


Segregationist	Assimilationist	Anti-racist (Abolitionist)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These people...cannot be helped.</li><li>• We must save them...from themselves.</li><li>• Punitive.</li><li>• Blames</li></ul> <p>"Permanently inferior"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These people... can be helped.</li><li>• We can help them become more civilized and educated.</li><li>• Standard of whiteness that we all need to reach.</li><li>• Saves</li></ul> <p>"Temporarily inferior"</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• These people are...people. They are already civilized. They are inherently valuable.</li><li>• Focus on reducing inequity and creating equal opportunities</li><li>• Liberates</li></ul> <p>"Never Inferior"</p>


*\*\*Information adapted from 10/22/2020 presentation: NJTFCAN Conversations about Race and Racism in Child Welfare: Part 2 by Dr. Jessica Pryce*

## RESOURCES

 DCF Updates and Resources: (<https://www.nj.gov/dcf/equity.html>)

 Conversations on Race and Racism in Child Welfare – Dr. Carol Spigner: ([https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/QW9vesGCoSGu2rjnOcyoccMSuLriQORIBht6jwzztVYW7PrCH-7ZrSbu3W\\_1XCu.uZdswmL-dBIPSNwj](https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/QW9vesGCoSGu2rjnOcyoccMSuLriQORIBht6jwzztVYW7PrCH-7ZrSbu3W_1XCu.uZdswmL-dBIPSNwj))

 Conversations on Race and Racism in Child Welfare – Dr. Jessica Pryce: ([https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/dAD-RfeuuCUtwkjNdP83WJx22ORUqBMRgT5C7X6KUOt1BjoHt4Z-BKhjwA-j\\_qJL.oiaoTILYxReQrsRG](https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/dAD-RfeuuCUtwkjNdP83WJx22ORUqBMRgT5C7X6KUOt1BjoHt4Z-BKhjwA-j_qJL.oiaoTILYxReQrsRG))

 Conversations on Race and Racism in Child Welfare – Dr. Pat Reid-Merritt: ([https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/APScNdTv6L8SD2eFWaG1oIH52K5NR8k-l7NfdX57cXXRIP2KvF4kHoMOrpR5oU\\_o.PoC\\_bSl3Ge7LpZJM](https://stockton.zoom.us/rec/share/APScNdTv6L8SD2eFWaG1oIH52K5NR8k-l7NfdX57cXXRIP2KvF4kHoMOrpR5oU_o.PoC_bSl3Ge7LpZJM))

 DCF Strategic Plan: ([https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/DCF-strategic-plan-narrative\\_2019-2020.pdf](https://www.nj.gov/dcf/about/DCF-strategic-plan-narrative_2019-2020.pdf))



# KEY QUESTIONS

- What are some of the barriers to achieving equitable treatment and outcomes for adolescents involved with DCF? What strengths do we have as an organization that will be helpful? What opportunities already exist for us to move this work forward? What are our ultimate aspirations? (SOAR/SWOT analysis)
- What will racial equity look like for youth in DCF? What will it look like for the professionals and systems that serve them? How will we measure success?
- What supports/resources will we need to develop, implement and sustain these changes?
- What power dynamics may come into play during this work and how can we overcome these challenges? In what ways can we share power and engage youth as partners in this work?
- How can we best meet the needs of youth who may be experiencing the impact of inequity for multiple reasons (i.e. belonging to/identifying with more than one marginalized group)?