

**IMPLEMENTING RACE EQUITY STRATEGY STANDARDS TO ADDRESS THE
OVERREPRESENTATION OF AFRICAN AMERICANS IN CHILD WELFARE**

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DEDICATION

God brought me to this place to fulfill His purpose for me as a believer, a servant, social worker, scholar, and teacher. I am so grateful for my family and my village. To my wonderful husband Dave, who supports me fully, I am blessed to be your wife. Thank you for the sacrifices you have made and continue to make. To my children, David, and Gabriele, I am on this journey as a testament to my God and my ancestors that Black people are scholars. I am grateful that you are living in a time when you can do what your heart desires because others have paid a great price for you to do so. To my parents, thank you for the foundation that you laid for me to build upon. Thank you for being there every time I called, for blessing me, and praying for me. To my bestie, you are a gift from God, and you are my friend. To my Faithful Central Bible Church family, thank you for all your prayers, love, and support. Dr. Lee-Johnson, you are a visionary activist for Jesus. Thank you. Keep blazing a trail for His glory. Dr. Hays, you embody Godly Black excellence, thank you for your example. To my CBU CBSS Social Work family, your prayers, encouragement, support, and guidance are God-sent. Dr. Choi, I appreciate your scholarly insight and guidance. Your contributions to this journey are both spiritual and scholarly, and I am grateful. Your prayers, discernment, and wisdom have guided me and helped me to walk out my calling. To my Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) elders and ancestors, you trained me to continue the struggle by telling the truth whether it is popular or not. I will continue to fight for freedom and push others to do the same. To the Black families and children in the child welfare system, God sees you, and He is raising up people to amplify your voice and partner with you to realize a better future.

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ABSTRACT**IMPLEMENTING RACE EQUITY STRATEGY STANDARDS TO ADDRESS THE
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Yakiciwey E. Washington Mitchell

Dr. Evan Choi

African American children have been overrepresented in the child welfare system since the 1960s. The problem currently exists at every decision point along the child protective services continuum. Numerous efforts have been made to address the problem, yet, in 13 states, the ratio of African Americans in the child welfare system is twice that of the general population. What is known about efforts to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the child welfare system? A literature review identified 43 efforts in nine categories, and 18 types of intervention at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. There are many efforts, yet not enough progress. One of the 43 efforts was published by the Black Administrators in Child Welfare and promotes comprehensive system reform through race equity practice standards. This comprehensive project is a formative process evaluation of the recently updated practice standards. The formative evaluation is a continuous quality improvement effort to implement and maximize the effectiveness of the race equity strategy areas.

Introduction

According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022), African American children and families are overrepresented at every decision point along the child protective services (CPS) and Child Welfare Services (CWS) continuum (Knott & Giwa, 2012). Scholars differ in their attributions of the causes of overrepresentation. Many scholars contend that systemic and institutional racism are the fundamental causes of the disproportionate representation of African Americans in the CWS (Dettlaff, 2021; Maguire-Jack et al., 2021; Krase, 2013). Additionally, these scholars identify issues such as the disparate needs of African American children and families, CWS issues, and mandated reporter bias as causal factors also rooted in racism. Other scholars identify some of the same causes of overrepresentation in child welfare; however, not all scholars agree that disparate needs and CWS issues are rooted in racism (Riley et al., 2021).

There is sufficient documentation supporting the overrepresentation of African American children in the child welfare system due in part to disproportionate need. Through the critical race theory (CRT) lens, disproportionate need is viewed as a product of centuries-old racist structures that marginalized African Americans during chattel slavery and after slavery was made illegal (Dettlaff et al., 2020). Given the scope and complexity of overrepresentation, theoretical application, and analysis are necessary at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. Although not considered a micro theory, the CRT perspective penetrates the structural and systemic levels that govern micro interventionists. Surveillance, separation, and policing are built into the child welfare system, with racism at its roots. Attempts to empower African American families in child welfare without a critical race lens are equivalent to ignoring the proverbial 'elephant in the room.'

The issue itself is a longstanding and highly sensitive one considering its nature, as well as its ties to historical injustices. Perhaps it is the very complexity of the matter that causes this perpetual state of irresolution. Despite decades of advocacy and efforts to eliminate the problem of African American overrepresentation, the issue remains a formidable reality in the CWS. African American children represent nearly 14% of the USA's general child population and 23% of the USA child welfare population (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2021). Citing racist foundations of the United States economy, social strata, and the CWS, Dettlaff & Boyd (2020) liken the disproportionate removal of African American children to the separation of Black families during slavery. These authors highlight the trauma that child removal and prolonged family separation cause and assert that,

...risks are heightened, resulting in a condition of compound disadvantage for youth who are already at increased vulnerability for negative outcomes. As such, for Black youth, foster care as an intervention becomes a source of their ongoing and continued oppression (A. J. Dettlaff & Boyd, 2020, p. 255).

The problem of African American overrepresentation is an unresolved and ongoing concern for the Black community, and the community at large. Scholars and lived experts validate the reality of overrepresentation in the CWS statistically and experientially as it continues to subject Black families to disturbing separation and trauma. The literature regarding this social problem paints an alarming picture.

A recent systematic review of 43 articles published between 2000 and 2022 (Mitchell, in preparation) was conducted to understand the scope of the literature concerning efforts, strategies, and interventions addressing African American overrepresentation in the CWS. This

review revealed that 75 percent of maltreatment cases in the US are due to poverty-related neglect; however, only a few of the efforts addressed poverty as a specific focus. Another key finding is that some child welfare associations address overrepresentation by providing expert guidance to the field. This guidance promotes systemwide reform by unpacking complex system components and offering solutions. These efforts instruct organizations on how to promote change and spread best practices. One of the efforts was the Black Administrators in Child Welfare's (BACW) Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) best practice standards guide published in 2011. The RESA best practice standards guide is exemplary because it comprehensively addresses African American overrepresentation at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels.

RESA outlines best practice standards in 10 strategy areas to influence systemwide reform. The standards prioritize intervention at multiple levels of child welfare and related systems. Systemic and institutional complexity are carefully examined to identify specific practices that address problems on multiple levels. RESA standards complement social service agency accreditation standards and are broadly applicable yet customizable to individual organizations. BACW updated RESA in 2021, asserting that RESA practice standards remained relevant and could influence equitable child welfare practice. The BACW Board of Directors appointed this author co-chairperson of the update team in 2021.

This social innovation project is a formative evaluation of the Black Administrators in Child Welfare's (BACW's) updated Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA). The author's role in this continuous quality improvement (CQI) effort is lead evaluator. The focus of the lead evaluator is to engage collaborators, manage the formative evaluation process, facilitate data collection

sessions, analyze the data, and report findings and implications from the formative evaluation (Devaney & Rossi, 1997; McClintock, 1984a). Since RESA 2.0 is in its pre-implementation stage, the formative process evaluation can inform short-term and mid-range goal setting. Formative evaluation can reveal the strengths and challenges of the RESA 2.0 implementation and provide insight into necessary adjustments to its implementation (Berkowitz et al., 2008; McClintock, 1984b).

The California Baptist University (CBU) College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (CBSS) of Social Work Division Doctor of Social Work (DSW) program employs the Community Engagement and Social Innovation (CESI) process model. The CESI model's steps are:

1. Observe
2. Identify
3. Integrate
4. Engage
5. Assess
6. Innovate
7. Evaluate
8. Disseminate

Steps one through eight are detailed in the following sections, compiled as the comprehensive project for the Doctor of Social Work program. This manuscript details progression through the CESI model culminating with the plan to disseminate project findings.

Section 1: Observe

Social Problem Observations

As an undergraduate, I studied welfare policy in an upper-division Political Science course. My extended family lived in the inner-city of south Los Angeles, and I saw a disconnect between the stated intent and the actual impact of welfare policy. Despite decades of reforms, Poverty persisted in South Los Angeles and similar communities. I am one of a few college graduates in my family, and I sought to use my education to improve the lives of impoverished people in South Los Angeles. My first job after college was with a community-based organization (CBO) in Watts, CA. This agency partnered with other service agencies to advocate for marginalized ethnic groups in welfare systems. My work with this group exposed me to child welfare data and lived experts who advocated for vulnerable populations. I learned that some groups were disproportionately represented in the child welfare system (CWS) and had consistently disparate outcomes compared to children of other ethnicities. I later learned that African Americans were consistently overrepresented nationally in child welfare systems. I believed African American overrepresentation in the CWS was linked to pervasive impoverishment. I also believed that disproportionality and disparities were caused by systemic and institutional racism.

The overrepresentation of African American children in the child welfare system has existed for 60 years (Giovanonni & Billingsley, 1972). According to Denby & Curtis (2013), “African American children hold a unique and uncontested disproportional position in the out-of-home care system” (p. 1). This social problem is of great concern to me, and I believe it should be more of a concern for Social Workers in general, especially Christian Social Workers. The history of African Americans in the CWS mirrors the phenomenon of black-white racism in

the United States (Curtis & Denby, 2011; A. J. Dettlaff & Boyd, 2020; Pryce & Yelick, 2021). Christian Social Workers have made little effort to change conditions for Black children and families.

“1 in 5 black children...are documented as victims of maltreatment before age 18, compared to 1 in 10 white children...”(Wildeman et al., 2014, cited in Maloney et al., 2017, p. 415). According to the Child Welfare Information Gateway (2022), African American families are overrepresented in child maltreatment reports, child maltreatment investigations, and child protective services compared to other races/ethnicities. Giovanonni & Billingsley (1972) documented African American overrepresentation in 1970. In the decades since scholars have studied the CWS at every decision point and agree that disproportionality exists. However, scholars do not agree on *why* African American overrepresentation exists and persists.

The Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) was founded in 1971 to address African American disproportionality and disparities in child welfare that were not being addressed by the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA) (Black Administrators in Child Welfare, 2009). Courtney et al. (1996) determined that disproportionality and disparities were linked to “differences in the economic wellbeing of children and families” (p. 127). Bartholet et al. (2009) refuted researchers’ assertions that the racist origins and the structure of the child welfare system cause disproportionality and disparities. The Multi-Ethnic Placement Act (MEPA), the Inter-Ethnic Adoptions Provision (IEP), and the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) were enacted by Congress with the stated purposes of reducing lengths of stay in foster care (A. J. Dettlaff, 2021b). Critics of the US child welfare system purport that implementing

MEPA, IEP, and ASFA promoted black family separation (A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2020; Peyton Williams, 2022).

The efforts to support and facilitate the improvement of outcomes for African American children and families are not lacking. However, overrepresentation has remained a reality despite these efforts in the CWS. As troubling as the statistics are, there has been no sustained effort by Christian Social Workers to improve Black child wellbeing in child welfare. A review of the North American Association of Christian Social Workers (NACSW) concept papers, newsletters, and meeting documents revealed that the issue of racism has been raised and discussed. Still, there is no ongoing effort to address racism or its devastating social effects. To learn more about how best to approach NACSW, the author interviewed a scholar with over a decade of affiliation with NACSW, “Dr. B.”

The author hypothesized that if Christian Social Workers were aware of the causes of overrepresentation, the prevalence of disparities, and the higher likelihood of homelessness and incarceration, they would agree to take sustained action to improve conditions for African American children. The focus of this project is not to outline why the Social Work and Christian Social Work communities have been so slow to actively work for change. Rather, the focus here is to ‘start where the community is.’ Christian social workers are unique in our purpose and passion for the people we serve. Those who have joined NACSW affirmed the organization’s mission “to equip its members to integrate Christian faith and professional social work practice” (NACSW 2021). Christians who are social workers serve others as an act of serving God – a factor that sets NACSW apart from other affinity groups even from a worldly perspective. From a Biblical perspective, the Apostle Paul reminds believers that we “... have been called to

liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another” (Galatians 5:13 NKJV, Thomas Nelson, 1982).

Section 2: Identify

Social Problem Identification

As stated, African American children represent nearly 14% of the USA's general child population and 23% of the USA child welfare population. The racial upheaval in the United States in the 2000s prompted many scholars to study how racism impacts the most vulnerable social welfare populations. Scholars have highlighted the history of racist structures and their impact on African Americans in various welfare systems (Roberts, 2021a; Dettlaff & Boyd, 2020; Smith Brice, 2019). These scholars and others have outlined the proliferation of US racist structures by noting that African Americans were barred from acquiring wealth in the post-slavery era (Dettlaff & Boyd, 2021; Smith Brice, 2019; Coates, 2014). Many African Americans were relegated to impoverished circumstances and disparate conditions due to redlining and the inability to acquire wealth (Coates, 2014; Roberts, 2021b; Shapiro, 2013; White-Wolfe et al., 2021). Poverty and inability to afford housing outside of resource-poor communities caused African American families to be dependent on and overexposed to social welfare systems. Overexposure to social welfare systems coincided with the enactment of the Child Abuse Protection and Treatment Act (CAPTA) of 1974 to promote child removals aimed at rescuing poor Black children from the conditions in their families (A. J. Dettlaff & Boyd, 2020; Roberts, 2020, 2021b; Smith Brice, 2019).

In 2021, Grand Challenges for Social Work (GCSW) added "eliminate racism" as the 13th grand challenge under the umbrella of "just society" challenges (Teasley et al. 2021). This addition is a strong and unprecedented acknowledgment within the field of social work that:

The United States is built on a legacy of racism and white supremacy that has consistently and significantly impacted the daily lives of millions of people. Today, racist

policies, bias, and discriminatory practices continue to promote racial inequality in myriad ways. Social work has provided considerable leadership in the civil rights and race equity movements, but has much more work to do, internal to the profession, as well as within the larger scope of society. We propose to develop a model for eliminating racism by identifying evidence and practice-based interventions that will end racism and ameliorate the negative outcomes of our history of racism (Teasley et al., 2021).

African American disproportionality in the CWS is directly tied to the racist systems that this country was built upon (Dettlaff & Boyd, 2019; Gourdine, 2019). Gourdine (2019) refers to African American children's present-day involvement in the CWS as "calamitous" due to higher rates of entry and longer stays in foster care than other racial groups. Dettlaff & Boyd's (2020) interpretation is that the CWS causes extensive trauma to African American children and youth, which is risky and leads to negative outcomes (p. 255).

Theoretical Framework

Given the scope and complexity of the social problem, theoretical application and analysis are necessary at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. Cénat et al.'s (2021) systematic literature review of child welfare disproportionality confirms that there is no systemwide agreement on the relationship between the founding of the United States economy and social strata and present-day African American disproportionality across helping systems and criminal systems.

Critical race theory highlights the basis and causes of social problems. Critical race theory's (CRT's) pronouncement is attributed to Crenshaw, Bell, and other scholars. CRT is

influenced and informed by the anti-racism and equity discourse of scholars such as Frederick Douglass, Ida B. Wells Barnett, W.E.B. Dubois, and E. Franklin Frazier (Zuberi, 2011, pp. 1578 and 1580). CRT was formally introduced in the legal field in the 1990s, and there has been spirited debate regarding its merits and applicability in the decades since. CRT is controversial because of its assertion that various social problems are rooted in the United States' history of slavery, dehumanization, and subjugation of African Americans. CRT scholars clarify that racism and racist acts are not anomalies because "racism is ordinary" in the United States, and "color-blindness" is an unacceptable approach to overrepresentation intervention (Kolivoski et al., 2014, p. 270)."

Scholars agree that African Americans are overrepresented in the child welfare system due in part to disproportionate need. Through the CRT lens, disproportionate need is viewed as a product of centuries-old racist structures that marginalized African Americans during chattel slavery and after it was made illegal (Dettlaff et al., 2020). Hanna (2021) states that it is a mistake to "...attribute race and racism solely to the individual not fully understanding that racism is systemic, ingrained in the fabric of society; an everyday occurrence rooted in the codification of race in this country "(p. 178).

Critical race theorists refute the belief that transformative change can happen in child welfare without addressing racism and racist structures. Many child welfare jurisdictions have implemented system-level reform efforts to address the underrepresentation of child welfare administrators, family policing, and power imbalances that hinder family engagement (upEND, 2021). Interventions to counteract disproportionality are readily introduced, but there is little evidence of sustained change in the child welfare system (Dettlaff et al., 2020).

The connection between substantiated neglect-only allegations and poverty is well documented (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2019; NCJFCJ, 2021). Federal and state child welfare policy prohibits removing children due to poverty, yet the connection between poverty and neglect is undeniable (NCJFCJ, 2021). According to the Administration for Children and Families (2020), 65% (rounded) of child maltreatment incidences are due to neglect, which is closely linked to poverty. “The poverty rate among African American and American Indian children (33 percent for both) was three times the rate for white and Asian and Pacific Islander children (11 percent for both) in 2017” (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2019, p. 24). Poverty is related to lack of wealth, earning, housing, and educational opportunities. “If average black family wealth continues to grow at the same pace it has over the past three decades, it would take black families 228 years to amass the same amount of wealth white families have today” (Inequality.org, 2016). The centuries-old systems of oppression and disparate treatment in the United States formed the foundation for inequity in the child welfare system as it exists today.

Gentles-Gibbs (2016) combined empowerment theory definitions from Curtis & Singh (1996), Lord & Hutchison (1993), Nachshen (2005), and Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) to advance Family Empowerment as a transformational approach to child welfare. Gentles-Gibbs suggests that systems have conflict about emphasizing child safety or family empowerment in child welfare – it is difficult to prioritize both. African Americans living in poverty are subjected to surveillance by multiple helping systems, a phenomenon that some scholars call “over-surveillance” (Dettlaff, 2021a). Dettlaff et al. (2020) contend that over-surveillance leads to “over-reporting” child maltreatment. When maltreatment allegations are substantiated, and children are removed, parents must meet agency and court requirements to reunify with their

children. This process involves required meetings, court dates, and appointments that are often difficult to keep, putting parents at risk of 'non-compliance,' which threatens reunification efforts. These conditions disempower families who are already vulnerable.

Family Empowerment is rooted in social work values; however, applying the theory to African American child welfare disproportionality has limitations. For example, Gentles-Gibbs (2016) highlights the disconnect between the expressed purposes of Federal legislation and the actual impact, citing challenges with state-level enactment of legislation. According to Gentles-Gibbs,

[a]lthough federal policy in the United States has historically favoured family preservation over separation and institutionalisation of children, this preference has not always translated into successful implementation of efforts to empower and keep families intact at the state level" (p. 390).

As it relates to African Americans in child welfare, Gentles-Gibbs' analysis is accurate yet inadequate. The basis for empowerment is helping individuals and groups overcome systemic or societal challenges. Examining overrepresentation through the family empowerment lens alone does not capture the impact of racist structures that disempower African Americans.

Though not considered a micro theory, the CRT lens penetrates the structural and systemic levels that govern micro interventionists. Ecological theory has been applied to micro and mezzo attempts to address overrepresentation. Although ecological theory acknowledges that racism profoundly impacts the systems, its emphasis is on individual functioning within their ecological sphere. The lens of ecological theory is inadequate to address the transformation of the structures and systems that maintain individual disadvantage.

Empowerment theory is an excellent approach to addressing the problem, given its focus on helping “individuals achieve increasing control of various aspects of their lives and participate in the community with dignity” (Lord & Hutchison, 1993, p. 4). However, surveillance, separation, and policing are built into the child welfare system, which has origins in racial inequity.

Attempts to empower African American families in child welfare without a critical race lens are equivalent to ignoring the proverbial ‘elephant in the room.’ Family empowerment for African Americans must include truth-telling about why the system operates oppressively. CRT is polarizing; however, its multi-layered application can affect the most transformative systemic change for system-involved children and families.

Section 3: Integrate

Integrating Christian Principles and Engagement Efforts

Christ taught and demonstrated compassion and action on behalf of marginalized people and children (Bible NKJV, Matthew 25:37-40, Matthew 19:13-15, 1982). According to Ulmer (2019), “Black theology grew out of the marginalization of African Americans” (p. 57). Ulmer further describes black theology as addressing the “cultural, sociological position of African Americans [which] emerged from the state-sanctioned marginality of their culture” (Ulmer, 2020, p. 59).

To align our Christian worldview with Christ, we must see *all* people as He sees them and act courageously on behalf of marginalized people. Our responsibility as Christ-following Social Workers is to know who we are and who we are in relation to our neighbors and be open to learning how we are similar and different. Loving our neighbors as ourselves should motivate us to learn how best to support them. When we know that a group of people is suffering due to discriminatory systems, it is sinful to do nothing.

“Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?” Jesus said to him, “‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets” (Bible NKJV, Matthew 22:36-40, 1982).

Abiding by these two commandments requires that we seek for others what we would want for ourselves and our loved ones. Racism in the United States was established and continues to flourish on the notion that Black people are subhuman and not worthy of care.

In their review of the psychology of dehumanization, Bustamante et al. (2019) posit that:

...implicit racial bias leads to the persistent and widespread dehumanization of people of color, and more specifically, Black people. This dehumanization happens repeatedly, at numerous points in time and in a variety of places throughout one's life and is thus not fully captured by previous psychological methods examining dehumanization as a one-time event in a singular location (p. 308)."

Systemic and institutional racism are unjust and cause many social problems, including overrepresentation in the CWS and other helping systems. God is not pleased with injustice. To date, no Christian social welfare organization has articulated a plan or taken action to address overrepresentation. As Christ-following Social Workers, we are responsible for attending to the wellbeing of *all* children, which means we cannot ignore the detrimental effects of the CWS on Black children and families.

The transformative potential (TP) model combines transformative consciousness (TC) with transformative action (TA) (Jemal et al., 2019). In the TP model, the potential for social change requires examining and *acting* on inequities within socio-ecosystems. To act, one must be conscious of inequity and acknowledge that transformative action is necessary. TC and TA each have three levels. The three levels of TC are "denial, blame, and critical." The three levels of TA are "destructive, avoidant, and critical (Jemal et al., 2019)." The Social Work Grand Challenge to Eliminate Racism requires both TC and TA. Even for Christians, denial of the causal impact of racist structures and blaming marginalized people thwart efforts to eliminate the problem.

Section 4: Engage

Engaging Christian Social Workers to Take Sustained Action to Address Overrepresentation

The divide between black and white, and liberal and conservative, has grown exponentially – even among Christians (Tisby, 2019; Ulmer, 2019). Christ desires that we be one, not divided. The body of Christ has the power, through Christ, to change the trajectory of racism in the United States and its impact on marginalized groups. Christ-following social workers are uniquely positioned to address the social problems wrought upon children due to racism because social work for the Christian should be recognized as service on behalf of God. Unfortunately, there has been little to no sustained engagement of Christian social workers on this issue. A review of NACSW literature and proceedings documents revealed that NACSW has not made any public statements about racism, although small groups of members have consistently raised the need for action.

Two scholars gave the Alan Keith-Lucas lecture at the NACSW conference in 2018 and 2019, respectively, which are summarized in the articles. I requested an interview with each of the authors to discuss their purposes for giving the lecture, their experiences giving the lecture, and the responses within NACSW to the lectures. One scholar, Dr. H., stated that she did not believe she was the most appropriate person to interview and suggested I contact the NACSW Board of Directors President. Dr. H. also stated that NACSW is not an advocacy organization but focused more on education. I responded that member education can take many forms. She said she agreed with me and recommended that I also contact other NACSW scholars who had addressed the topic.

The second scholar, Dr. B., responded almost immediately and scheduled an interview via videoconference. We discussed the field of social work and some opportunities for educating

social work students about racism and its effect on marginalized groups. She and I agree that social work education in race equity is critical to changing conditions in social welfare systems. I wanted to understand the organization's historical and current work around racism and learn about Dr. B's work around the racism issue inside and outside of NACSW. Dr. B. has been a NACSW member for 15 years and is a former board member. Dr. B. stated that NACSW has done very little to address racism. She cautioned me to manage my expectations around engaging and mobilizing NACSW around racism.

I reviewed the NACSW diversity statement and determined that it was not focused enough on the issue of racism. The diversity statement references Dr. Martin Luther King's concept of 'beloved community.' The statement is neither strong enough regarding injustice nor specific regarding systemic/structural racism. Dr. B told me that her view of the statement is like mine. When asked about how she, as an African American woman saw the culture of NACSW, she likened the organization to the Evangelical church, which has not taken sustained action against racism. Dr. B. stated that there had been discussions about racism within NACSW, but the organization demonstrates no intention to address racism. Dr. B. described the NACSW racial demographic as primarily white, which does not automatically mean that racism is not now or cannot be a focus. However, in Dr. B's assessment, the organization's members do not have the will to confront the issues of white privilege and thereby passively comply with racist practices.

Dr. B. encouraged me to reach out to the outgoing NACSW Board President because he has made efforts to address race equity within the organization. When I stated that I believed that through the power of Christ, believers can end racism, she said that as a Christian, she believes that Evangelical Christians won't address racism because racism is what the American empire

was built upon. She stated that the real issue is whether Evangelical Christians will choose to respond in ways that preserve the empire or build God's Kingdom according to Christ's example. Dr. B. reminded me that Christ was vilified by religious leaders who felt threatened by His challenges to their emphasis on the letter of the law as opposed to the Spirit of the law. Dr. B described how the American church supported slavery and how black people were dehumanized to create the financial base in this country, which she views as 'the empire.' The empire could only be sustained by ensuring that white people believed they were better than black people so that the inhumane atrocities could be justified. This dehumanization is systemic and is ingrained in the psyche of all Americans, not just White Americans.

Black families were initially excluded from welfare systems. When they were permitted to receive support from American welfare systems, Black people became subject to state-sanctioned moral judgment. Dr. B. believes that Black people are still viewed as lazy, dumb, and immoral because of centuries of pernicious dehumanization. The dehumanization of African Americans is relevant to the discussion about the Evangelical church and NACSW's stance on racism because there is still a fundamental, hidden belief that Black people do not deserve the same care and consideration as other racial/ethnic groups.

Dr. B. and I agree that a function of systemic racism is that privileged people deny that it exists and question those who challenge racist behaviors. Denial of racism makes it difficult to have earnest conversations about racism's effects and how to counteract them. I asked Dr. B. about approaching NACSW about the wellbeing of Black children in foster care and the reasons for overrepresentation. Dr. B. responded that my approach assumes that NACSW is unaware that overrepresentation exists. She stated that she believes NACSW members know about

African American disproportionality and disparate outcomes in the child welfare and other systems. Dr. B. talked about her experiences raising the issue of racism with NACSW. She stated that the board of directors had appointed her and other African Americans to the board rather than being elected like White board members. When issues about addressing racism were brought to the membership, there was no forward movement because the members did not have the will to take meaningful, sustained action.

There was also a recounting of the experiences of her and others raising the issue of racism with NACSW, and she suggested that I attend a conference to get a better sense of the culture and climate. Dr. B. also encouraged me to read about Dietrich Bonhoeffer and how his experience with African Americans prompted him to denounce racism and oppose the German genocide of Jewish people. Dr. B. stated that fighting racism within the body of Christ requires courage and resolve, and it is very difficult work.

Dr. B. recommended that I consider promoting the enactment of a government policy rather than focusing on engaging NACSW around racism and overrepresentation. I told Dr. B. that I was a Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) member and that we were involved in advocating for the 2007 General Accounting Office (GAO) committee report on African American children in child welfare. Congressman Charles Rangel chaired the committee, and the report highlighted disproportionality and disparities and made recommendations on policy and practice. In 2011, BACW published the Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA), partnered with the Council on Accreditation (COA) to implement the strategies in child welfare agencies, and cited the 2007 GAO report heavily. In 2021, I was appointed co-chair of a committee to update the strategy areas and publish RESA 2.0. Dr. B. said that the RESA 2.0 effort could be used in my

Doctoral studies and possibly be a capstone project. I told her I would consider her recommendations.

Dr. B. also noted that many others in the past have and are currently studying the issue of African American overrepresentation and disparate outcomes in child welfare. She suggested I research some other scholarly work in this area. Dr. B's perspective provided insight into the dynamics of NACSW and the challenges of my efforts to engage Christian social workers. I left the interview thinking critically about my chosen social problem and the different communities that I can engage. I remain committed to addressing the role and responsibility of the church and Christian service organizations in addressing child welfare disproportionality and disparities.

Social Movements

According to Almeida (2019), the stages of movement development are mobilizing, strategy, coalitions, and framing. The *Reimagine Child Safety Coalition* (RCSC) is a reformative movement that "aims to 'break down the family regulation policies in Los Angeles that target and harm Black and Indigenous families...'" (Loudenback, 2022). RCSC is a coalition of 35 organizations that presented a letter to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors demanding changes within the county's Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). RCSC mobilized agencies and activists who sought change in system practices and outcomes. The coalition developed a strategy to engage local elected officials and framed the issue as "breaking down the family regulation policies" that harm families of color.

The upEND movement was created by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and the former Dean of the University of Houston Graduate College of Social Work (Dettlaff et

al., 2020; Peyton Williams, 2022). upEND is a national coalition of scholars and activists focused on dismantling the child welfare system. The upEND collaborative believes that the “[a]bolition [of surveillance, separation, and family policing] requires ending this oppressive system AND imagining and recreating the ways in which society supports children, families, and communities in being safe and thriving” (upEND, 2023, p. 1). upEND articulates seven demands:

1. End the Involuntary Separation of Children from Parents
2. Reunite Children Currently in Care with Their Families and Communities
3. End Surveillance of Families
4. Prioritize Care over Punishment
5. Transform Societal Conditions So Families and Communities Can Thrive
6. Reimagine Care for Children, Youth, and Families
7. Shift Power and Support Communities as First Responders (Dettlaff et al., 2021)

The upEND movement is reformative in its advocacy and publishes scholarly research for the field, which addresses the causes of disproportionality and provides guidance for practitioners and family advocates.

Activism

Bent-Goodley (2015) states that “[s]ocial worker activism creates space for the voices of those most often left out of the larger political process” (p. 102). Activism related to African American overrepresentation has been driven by coalition-building, as outlined by Shaw in the *Activist’s Handbook* (2013). Coalitions are challenging because, at each stage, members must determine whether to continue activist efforts with the coalition or pursue their goals in other

ways. Shaw acknowledges that activists must often respond to issues but contends that the mark of an influential activist is organizing and implementing a proactive agenda.

Susan Burton is not a social worker but a formerly incarcerated activist with lived child welfare system experience and the founder of A New Way of Life (ANWL), a nonprofit reentry service and advocacy agency. Ms. Burton and her team of advocates assist formerly incarcerated parents separated from their children in petitioning for reunification. ANWL trains program participants to share their stories with elected officials and community members to garner support for ending forced family separation. Ms. Burton was instrumental in planning and executing a protest that renewed awareness of forced family separation.

In January 2022, Ms. Burton and a group of formerly incarcerated parents rallied at the California State Capitol to demand the repeal of the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA). ASFA was enacted to keep children from languishing in foster care by shortening adoption timeframes and providing monetary incentives to States to complete adoptions.

Instead of supportive services, states focused on swifter removal, quicker decisions to sever parental rights, and expedited adoptions (Patton, 2002). ASFA essentially moved the balance from empowering parents to a stronger focus on the child's right to protection (Mangold, 2001). (Gentles-Gibbs, 2016. p. 390).

Susan Burton's coalition contends that many parents who were incarcerated or in substance abuse recovery had their parental rights terminated due to ASFA timeframes. ASFA requires that jurisdictions make 'reasonable efforts' to notify parents of proceedings and deadlines for response. Many formerly incarcerated parents state that they were never informed that their parental rights were terminated. Since people of color are overrepresented

in criminal systems, the legislation deleteriously affected families of color. Ms. Burton says the child welfare system should be abolished for these reasons. The upEND movement literature addresses the causes, dimensions, and complexity of overrepresentation and sees abolition and rebuilding as the best ways to remedy the problem. Activist Susan Burton also frames the issue as forced family separation and recommends abolishing the system. Abolition and rebuilding are radical solutions to a problem that few scholars acknowledge as being rooted in racism.

Section 5: Assess

Literature Review

Scoping reviews are useful when an issue is broad and the available studies are numerous and diverse (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). One strength of scoping literature reviews is the ability to determine inclusion and exclusion criteria after the review has begun. In this review, other inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed after the scoping review began based on the search results and the appropriateness and applicability of the articles. Given the short timeframe for this project, a scoping review was best suited to what Arksey & O'Malley (2005) call a 'rapid review' of the literature.

This review aimed to determine the type and "breadth" of existing studies rather than analyzing the depth of the studies (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Scoping literature reviews are helpful in "mapping out" existing research on strategies to mitigate African American disproportionality in child welfare (Peters et al., 2015). The research question was specific, but numerous articles detailed strategies and interventions employed, and these efforts crossed multiple categories. A scoping review was appropriate because it is "not restricted to quantitative studies (or any other study design) alone" (Peters et al., 2015, p. 8). Scoping reviews are less restrictive than systematic reviews, which is preferred because various study designs were employed to analyze the strategies to eliminate overrepresentation.

Inclusion Criteria

This review included literature focused on African American overrepresentation or disproportionality in the CWS, CPS, or foster care system in the United States. The review included research on strategies, interventions, legal analyses, legislation, trainings, and systems improvement efforts to eliminate the overrepresentation or disproportionality of African

American children and families in the United States CWS, CPS, or foster care system. Data show that ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the CWS, and literature about minority overrepresentation is plentiful. This review only included efforts to address the population of African American children and families. The concept of the review was to map the literature about strategies and interventions to mitigate African American overrepresentation in the CWS at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. The review included primary research studies, systematic reviews, grey literature, scans of strategies, and meta-analyses, as Peters et al. (2015) recommended.

Exclusion Criteria

Studies conducted outside of the United States and those published in languages other than English were excluded from this review. Reviews of publications were excluded from this scoping review. Issues such as poverty, oppression, and disparate need have been linked to African American overrepresentation in the CWS. The same problems have been linked to African American overrepresentation in other helping systems, which is often the subject of scholarly research. Articles that analyze issues other than CWS African American overrepresentation were excluded from this review.

Research Question

A search for scholarly articles published in the past 20 years related to African American overrepresentation in the CWS yields well over 150 unduplicated results, indicating that this problem has been studied extensively. Therefore, asking why the strategies have not eliminated the problem is logical. One way to understand why overrepresentation persists is to study the impact of strategies to reduce disproportionality. The research question for this scoping review

was: what is known about efforts, strategies, and interventions to eliminate African American overrepresentation in child welfare?

Study Design

A scoping review was the chosen design tool. A scoping review aims to understand the type and breadth of existing studies. A scoping literature review facilitated the mapping of existing research on strategies to mitigate African American disproportionality in child welfare.

Methods

The ONEsearch database was queried for this review. ONEsearch includes the following databases:

Academic Search Premier, APA PsychInfo, Education Research Complete, Social Science Full Text (H.W. Wilson), CINAHL Complete, Criminal Justice Abstracts, MEDLINE, Complementary Index, Health Source: Nursing/Academic Edition, ScienceDirect, JSTOR Journals, ERIC, Scopus®, British Library Document Supply Centre Inside Serials & Conference Proceedings, Business Source Premier, Supplemental Index, Directory of Open Access Journals, APA PsycArticles, MAS Ultra – School Edition, Health Source – Consumer Edition, Communication & Mass Media Complete, SPORTDiscus with Full Text, Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints, HeinOnline, Airiti Library eBooks & Journals, and Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard (DASH) databases.

A separate search of SCOPUS, Medline/OVID, Social Services Full Text, Criminal justice abstracts, and PUBMED databases was done to ensure that the results from ONEsearch included all literature available within those subject-matter databases. CBU library staff supported search efforts by acquiring articles unavailable through student CBU permissions.

Data Extraction

After completing the database searches, a title review was conducted to eliminate duplicates. The next step in the titles review excluded articles with titles and subjects outside the scope of this review. If the article's title did not identify appropriateness, the abstract was

examined to determine its suitability. The abstract review phase eliminated articles that did not meet the inclusion criteria. When abstracts met inclusion criteria, the full article was reviewed to determine its appropriateness for inclusion. The remaining articles were reviewed and mapped to organize the literature by category and type of effort. The data extraction process is documented in Figure 1, the PRISMA-ScR chart, and in Table 1, the data extraction tracking table.

A systematic approach was used to understand the scope of the literature about efforts to address African American overrepresentation in the CWS. First, online databases were searched for scholarly work to understand the range of research on this social problem. Primary keywords and alternative words cast a wide net for online database searches. The primary keywords were disproportionality OR overrepresentation AND child welfare AND African American OR Black. The following alternative terms expanded the online database searches beyond child welfare to related fields such as law, medicine, justice, and poverty amelioration:

Racial justice; Removal; Poverty; Child maltreatment; Child welfare Racialization; Children court; Family court; Drug courts; Child and family services; Child welfare family surveillance; Child wellbeing; Family policing; Family surveillance; Family Control; Child welfare system improvement; Child welfare system improvement program; Child welfare system improvement intervention; Child welfare system improvement training; Child welfare system improvement strategies; Child welfare system improvement reform; Child welfare system reform; Abolish child welfare; Child welfare race equity; Child welfare intersectionality; Child welfare equity programs; Child welfare race disparities programs

The search concluded with searches of websites, organizations, and citation lists to identify studies not identified during the database search phase.

Inclusion Criteria

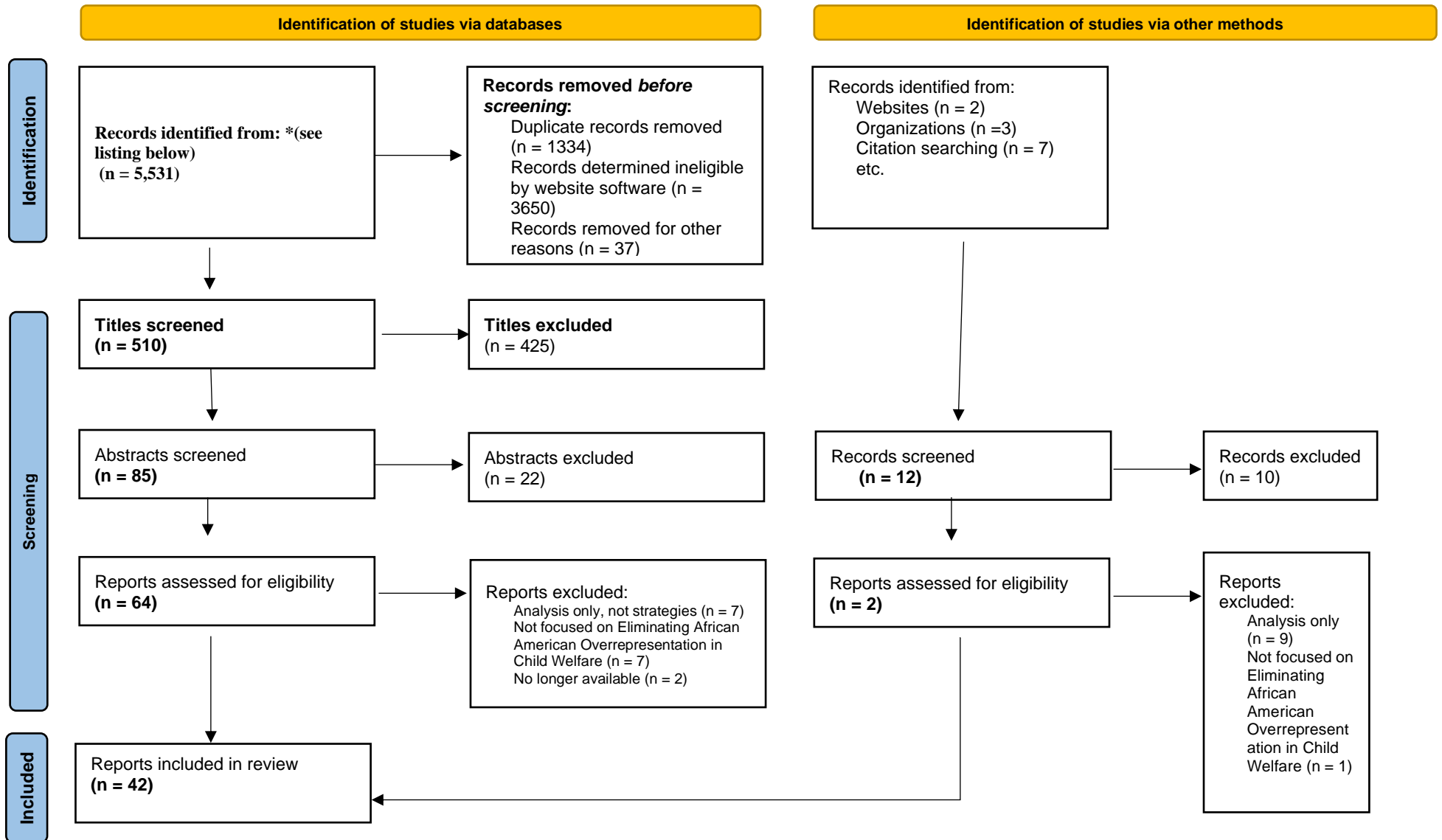
This review included literature focused on African American overrepresentation or disproportionality in the CWS, CPS, or foster care system in the United States. The review included research on strategies, interventions, legal analyses, legislation, trainings, and systems improvement efforts to eliminate the overrepresentation or disproportionality of African American children and families in the United States CWS, CPS, or foster care system. Data show that ethnic minorities are overrepresented in the CWS, and literature about minority overrepresentation is plentiful. This review only included efforts to address the population of African American children and families. The concept of the review was to map the literature about strategies and interventions to mitigate African American overrepresentation in the CWS at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. The review included primary research studies, systematic reviews, grey literature, scans of strategies, and meta-analyses, as Peters et al. (2015) recommended.

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Figure 1

PRISMA-ScR



***Listing of Databases Searched:** Academic Search Premier, APA PsychInfo, Education Research Complete, Social Science Full Text (H.W. Wilson), CINAHL Criminal Justice Abstracts, MEDLINE, Complementary Index, Health Source: Nursing/Academic ScienceDirect, JSTOR Journals, ERIC, Scopus®, British Library Document Supply Centre Inside Serials & Conference Proceedings, Business Source Premier, Supplemental Index, Directory of Open Access Journals, APA PsycArticles, MAS Ultra – School Edition, Health Source – Consumer Edition, Communication & MassMedia Complete, SPORTDiscus with Full Text, Gale In Opposing Viewpoints, HeinOnline, Airiti Library eBooks & Journals, and Digital Access to Scholarship at Harvard (DASH), Google Scholar

Table 1*Data Extraction*

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Carolyne Rodriguez, Joyce James, Ratonia C. Runnels, and Rowena Fong	2014	A Cross-Systems Approach to Racial Disproportionality and Disparities	Systemic approach to address disproportionality	14	Describes phases and elements of cross-systems strategies to address disproportionality
RISE Magazine	2020	'Abolition Is the Only Answer'_ A Conversation with Dorothy Roberts	Social Action and Scholarly Work	9	Roberts outlines how she moved from a social justice and reform approach to demanding abolition of the CWS.
Dettlaff, Alan; Fong, Rowena; James, Joyce; Rodriguez, Carolyne;	2014	A Case Study: The Texas Story	Systemwide reform	25	Outlines process and details of disproportionality in Texas, beginning in one region and expanding statewide
Kelly L; Guggenheim A; Manheim P; Nicholas S; Trivedi Z; Said AO'B	2021	Abolition or Reform: Confronting the Symbiotic Relationship between" Child Welfare" and the Carceral State	Legal Argument/Justification	66	Advocates for abolition of family policing. Likens family policing to criminal policing and calls to abolish the erroneously named CW system. Argues that reform and abolition are not mutually exclusive. Also argues that the system harms children and families and that the harm outweighs any good that the system can do for black families due to racist structures.
Martin, Megan; Connelly, Dana Dean; Center for the Study of Social Policy	2015	Achieving Racial Equity: Child Welfare Policy Strategies to Improve Outcomes for Children of Color	Policy Report	45	Reports on and advocates for nuanced data. Supporting Families with Appropriate Services and Resources; Ensuring Policy Implementation Is Supportive of Family Well-Being
Johnson, Lisa M; Antle, Becky F; Barbee, Anita P;	2008-2009	Addressing disproportionality and disparity in child welfare: Evaluation of an anti-racism training for community service providers	Evaluation Report	9	Cultural competence/anti-racism training may be utilized to respond to the problems of disproportionality and disparity in the child welfare system.
James, Joyce; Green, Deborah; Rodriguez, Carolyne; Fong, Rowena	2008	Addressing Disproportionality through Undoing Racism, Leadership Development, and Community Engagement	Macro Agency Culture Change	18	The core of addressing disparities within the child welfare system is developing a cultural change that embraces the principles of anti-racism in everyday practices.
Busch M; Wall JR; Koch SM; Anderson C	2004	Addressing the disproportionate representation of children of color: a collaborative community approach.	Commission Report	24	"...[T]o train all public and private professionals that work with children and families on this issue; to promote a service delivery agenda that addresses dis-proportional issues; and to promote public policies in the state that address disproportionality in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems."

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Denby, Ramona; Curtis, Carla M;	2013	African American children and families in child welfare: Cultural adaptation of services	Influence child welfare practitioners to adapt services to African American families to improve practice to African American children and families.	246	Textbook to educate social work students and child welfare practitioners to improve practice and reduce disproportionality.
General Accountability Office	2007	African American Children in Foster Care: Additional HHS Assistance Needed to Help States Reduce the Proportion in Care	Government Report	85	"GAO was asked to analyze the (1) major factors influencing the proportion of African American children in foster care, (2) extent that states and localities have implemented promising strategies, and (3) ways in which federal policies may have influenced African American representation in foster care."
Curtis, Carla M.; Denby, Ramona W.	2011	African American Children in the Child Welfare System: Requiem or Reform	Training for social workers to address disproportionality	28	"The authors present major components of a preferred reform approach and discuss them relative to implications for social work education and practice. Recommendations for reform."
Best, Corey; Cooley, Morgan E.; Colvin, Marianna L.; Crichlow, Vaughn	2021	Authentic Family Engagement and Strengthening: A Promising Family-Centered Approach for Advancing Racial Justice with Families Involved with the Child Protection System.	Anti-racist and anti-oppressive investigative practices	22	Describes the importance of anti-racism and anti-oppressive practices in child maltreatment and presents an approach for engaging in anti-racist and anti-oppressive child protective investigative practices with families of color. The program uses an approach that includes a variation of behavioral child management skills such as effective praising, effective verbal confrontation, family rule guidelines, the thinking parent's approach, and so on through sequenced training approaches and is the first parenting skill-building program created specifically for parents of African American children (Alvy, n.d.).
Bullock, Kharmynn M;	2020	Child Welfare Workers' Perceptions of the Effective Black Parenting Program	Culturally adapted Black parenting program	205	Conclusion names practices designed to combat disproportionality.
Corbin, Aimee	2015	Decreasing disproportionality through kinship care	Law Review Article	35	"The NAPCWA workgroup developed a Disproportionality Diagnostic Tool (Diagnostic Tool) designed to assess current conditions that affect the organization's ability to achieve positive outcomes for children."
Fabella, Danna; Sandra Slappey, Brad Richardson, Anita Light, and Susan Christie	2007	Disproportionality: Developing a Public Agency Strategy	Macro Agency Diagnostic Tool	13	"...[D]iscusses the major features of public child welfare systems that must be addressed in order to effectively reduce and ultimately eliminate racial disparities in child welfare service delivery and decision making."
Miller, Oronde A.; Ward, Kristin J.	2015	Emerging Strategies for Reducing Racial Disproportionality and Disparate Outcomes in Child Welfare: The Results of a National Breakthrough Series Collaborative.	Breakthrough Series Collaborative Macro Intervention	31	

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Brad Richardson, Ph.D., and Nancy McFall Jean, MSW	2005	Eradicating Disparities: Iowa Works to Eliminate Minority Overrepresentation in the Juvenile Justice, Child Welfare, and Education Systems	Cross Systems Approach	6	"The Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Resource Center aims to reduce the overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system through the Minority Youth and Families Initiative."
Coakley, Tanya M.	2008	Examining African American fathers' involvement in permanency planning: An effort to reduce racial disproportionality in the child welfare system	Father engagement to promote permanency and well-being	11	"The goal of GCDSS is to increase families' ability to keep their children safe and to promote permanent living arrangements for children with their own families."
Jones, Tiffany R;	2014	Exploring new practices of cultural competency within the Department of Children and Family Services, Los Angeles County	ERDD and Cultural Competency	156	"[F]ocus upon programs such as the 'Eliminating Racial Disproportionality and Disparity Program' (ERDD) and 'Cultural Brokers' that are aimed at promoting cultural competency (and are attempting to close the disproportional and disparate gap of African American / Black children in the child welfare system)."
McDaniel, Sharon L; Dyer, Ervin;	2020	Family First: A Descriptive Analysis of ASCI's Practice for Permanence, Kinship Navigation, and Supportive Services to the Triad	Mezzo - Macro agency culture and micro practice - Kinship Support	21	Model "remove[s] and challenge[s] the barriers families in the system often face when securing licensure and certification of kinship care homes, which are the basic requirements they must meet before stepping into their new role as caregivers."
Allan, Heather; Rauktis, Mary Elizabeth; Pennell, Joan; Merkel-Holguin, Lisa; Crampton, David;	2021	Family Meetings as a System Reform to Address Racial Disproportionality and Disparities	Family Meetings	30	"...[F]amily meetings may aid in reducing disproportionality and disparities in child welfare systems, but careful attention is needed to understand the organizational and policy contexts that facilitate those positive outcomes."
Jones, Annette Semanchin;	2013	From Investigating to Engaging Families: Examining the Impact and Implementation of Family Assessment Response on Racial Equity in Child Welfare	Differential response	336	"What impact, if any," has "differential response had on a racial equity outcome in child welfare, focusing on the state of Minnesota, which has been implementing differential response for over a decade."
López-Zerón, Gabriela; Parra-Cardona, Jose Rubén; Muñoz, Alexandria; Sullivan, Cris M.	2021	From Theory to Practice: On the Ground Cultural Adaption of a Parenting Intervention for Ethnic Minority Families Involved in the Child Welfare System.	Report	17	"Results confirm the need to recognize that culture and context, rather than being considered complementary variables to refine interventions, are key determinants for the overall relevance of the interventions for families, particularly if target families are mandated to participate in mental health services. Results from this study also underscore the multifaceted needs of underserved populations involved in child welfare services."
Ketteringham, Emma S; Cremer, Sarah; Becker, Caitlin;	2016	Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies: A Reproductive Justice Response to the "Womb-to-Foster-Care Pipeline"	Legal analysis	50	"Rooted in contemporary reproductive justice ideology, HMHB seeks to disrupt the womb-to-foster-care pipeline..."
Champe, John;	2009	History of the Vento Village Partnership & Community-Based Participatory Evaluation Model for the Vento Village Partnership	Community-based family support	83	"To tackle the specific problem of disproportionality head-on, a partnership of various professionals, community members, and agencies in St. Paul [was developed]."

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Joan R. Rycraft & Alan J. Dettlaff	2009	Hurdling the Artificial Fence Between Child Welfare and the Community: Engaging Community Partners to Address Disproportionality	Macro community engagement reform efforts	19	Evaluation of a reform effort to address disproportionality - child welfare agency to engage communities
Sturdivant, Marcia M	2011	Inua Ubuntu: A Community Response to Disproportionality Rates of African American Male Children in Child Welfare	Community-based prevention	32	Evaluation of culturally responsive family support and mentoring to prevent entry into the CWS. Cultural consultants act as navigators to support families.
Baynes-Dunning, Karen;	2012	Is Child Welfare Class Action Litigation a Viable Tool to Achieve Race Equity?	Civil lawsuits over disproportionality	12	Reviews class action suits and drills down on the two that address race. Analyzes class action suits overall, with specific focus on the Georgia and Tennessee
Dettlaff, Alan J.; Weber, Kristen; Pendleton, Maya; Boyd, Reiko; Bettencourt, Bill; Burton, Leonard	2020	It is not a broken system; it is a system that needs to be broken: The upEND movement to abolish the child welfare system.	Social movement using multiple strategies to promote abolition	19	Discusses "why, after decades of attempts to reform the child welfare system, it is time to acknowledge that reforms cannot right a fundamental wrong. The harm perpetrated on Black children and families by the child welfare system will only end when we can envision a society where families are strengthened and supported, rather than surveilled and separated."
Lee, Daniel Hyung Jik; Huerta, Christina; Farmer, Elizabeth M.Z.	2021	Kinship navigation: Facilitating permanency and equity for youth in child welfare.	Micro - Kinship Navigator	7	Evaluates the ASCI Kinship Navigator program. ASCI's service model was developed to address overrepresentation
NAACP	2003	NAACP RESOLUTION	Organizational appeal to legislators	9	That the NAACP expresses its concern about the over-representation of African Americans in the child welfare and foster care systems and call upon the Congressional Black Caucus and the Legislative Black Caucus in every State to review the over-representation issue and express similar concerns;
The Center for Community Partnership in Child Welfare of the Center for the Study of Social Policy	2006	Places to Watch: Promising Practices to Reduce Disproportionality in Child Welfare	Scan of Strategies	102	Case studies of 10 jurisdictions using promising practices to address disproportionality.
Harden, Brenda Jones; Parra, Laura Jimenez; Duchene-Kelly, Melissa;	2021	Preventive Intervention: A Key Strategy for Addressing Child Welfare Disparities and Disproportionality for African American Families	Macro	30	"Delineates programs that have been empirically documented to positively impact African American families...Although few, there are evidence-based prevention programs that explicitly address race/ethnicity and target African American families."

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Reddy, Julia; Williams-Isom, Anne; Putnam-Hornstein, Emily;	2022	Racial sensitivity training: An inadequate solution to systemic racial disparities in child protection systems	Commentary	4	Argues that "While a well-trained and representative workforce is important in all human service agencies, provider behavior modification should not be portrayed as capable of addressing dynamics that are inherently structural. Initiatives must focus on substantive policy changes."
Jackson, Sondra; Jones, Ernestine; Danzy, Julia	2011	Reducing Disparities: 10 Racial Equity Strategy Areas	Macro practice guide	16	The Black Administrators in Child Welfare's 10 Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) to positively influence healthy outcomes for African American children and families.
Lorthridge, Jaymie; McCroskey, Jacquelyn; Pecora, Peter J.; Chambers, Ruth; Fatemi, Maryam	2012	Strategies for improving child welfare services for families of color: First findings of a community-based initiative in Los Angeles	Mezzo strategy to reduce entries and expedite permanency by engaging families and community	10	Disproportionality mitigation model created by a Los Angeles County community in partnership with their local child welfare agency utilizes strategies targeting risk factors at multiple levels
Miller, Oronde; Esenstad, Amelia; Center for the Study of Social Policy	2015	Strategies to Reduce Racially Disparate Outcomes in Child Welfare: A National Scan	Survey of strategies	76	Alliance for Race Equity report of strategies to promote racial equity among children and families involved with the child welfare system.
Chambers, Jaclyn E; Ratliff, G Allen;	2019	Structural competency in child welfare: Opportunities and applications for addressing disparities and stigma	Macro - conceptual guidance for applying structural competency principles in child welfare.	27	Practice recommendations
Dixon, Jessica	2008	The African American Child Welfare Act: A Legal Redress for African American Disproportionality in Child Protection Cases	Recommendation for legislative change	38	"The African American Child Welfare Act (AACWA2) ...is narrowly tailored to address the remedial purpose of reducing the proportion of African American children that enter and remain in foster care. AACWA2 provides a distinct due process procedure to eliminate the disparate treatment that African American children and families encounter in the child welfare system."
Silverman, Tessa;	2019	The Right to Family: Bringing Human Rights to Bear on Racial and Socioeconomic Discrimination in the US Child Welfare System		56	Advocates for designation of racist treatment of families as international human rights violations.
Inguanta, Gemma; Sciolla, Catharine;	2021	Time Doesn't Heal All Wounds: A Call to End Mandated Reporting Laws	Recommendation for legislative change	11	Demand to end mandated reporting based on the harm done to families of color. Joins scholars like Joyce McMillan in calling to end the practice.

Author	Year	Title	Intervention	Page Count	Description
Burton, Angela Olivia; Montauban, Angeline;	2021	Toward Community Control of Child Welfare Funding: Repeal the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and Delink Child Protection from Family Well-Being	Social movement for legislative change	43	Speaking from the perspective of a parent with lived experience in the system... (Ms. Montauban) maintain[s] that CPS comes into the lives of children after alleged abuse or neglect has occurred, so it has never been able to prevent abuse or to protect children."
Siegel, Dolores; Jackson, Margaret; Montana, Salvador; Hernandez, Virginia Rondero;	2011	Use of Cultural Brokers as an Approach to Community Engagement with African American Families in Child Welfare	Evaluation report	135	This empirically based curriculum addresses issues related to disparity and disproportionality experienced by African American families involved with child welfare. It is based on findings from a Community-Based Participatory Research Project that brought together African American community leaders and university faculty to research cultural brokering in the Fresno County child welfare system.

Results

Nine categories and 18 types of efforts to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the US CWS were identified in this review (see Table 2).

Categories and Types of Efforts

Efforts were categorized as macro, micro, and mezzo. Types of efforts are on a continuum from data analysis; to reform strategies; to calls to abolish the CWS. The efforts, strategies, and interventions were outlined in the 43 articles that were reviewed were grouped into 18 types (see Table 2).

Table 2

Categories and Types of Efforts

Macro Efforts	Mezzo Efforts	Micro Efforts
<p>State or County systemwide reform; n = 11</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Types of Interventions</i> • Data Analysis and Data-Driven Decision-Making • Cultural Competency • Anti-Racism Training • Disproportionality offices, commissions, committees • Differential Response <p>Expert system guidance; n = 6</p> <p><i>Types of Interventions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency disproportionality diagnostic tool (Fabella et al., 2007) • Expert Guidance <p>Social justice/Legal Redress and Advocacy for Legislative Action; n = 8</p> <p><i>Types of Interventions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Congressional Committee Report and Recommendations</i> • Advocacy organization resolution and recommendations • African American Child Welfare Act • Social justice approaches <p>Abolition of the child welfare system; n = 3</p> <p>Scan of strategies; n = 2</p>	<p>Community engagement; n = 6</p> <p><i>Types of Interventions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural brokers 	<p>Culturally adapted practice; n = 7</p> <p><i>Types of Interventions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parenting classes for black parents • Kinship care and Kinship navigators • Family meetings • Father engagement

This review sought to understand strategies to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the CWS. Nearly one-quarter of the children in the CWS are African American, and the average rate of African Americans in the US CWS is 1.5. It is imperative to understand why the interventions have not resulted in widespread and sustained success in eliminating African American overrepresentation (Puzzanchera et al., 2022). A final focus of this review was to learn and document how the impact of strategies informs discourse about how to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the CWS.

This review revealed that strategies to address the problem had been implemented and tested at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels. Some efforts are designed to legislate equitable treatment, and others to eliminate bias. Some efforts deal with racist structures, while others emphasize micro-level family empowerment.

Macro Efforts

State or County Systemwide Reform. Systemwide efforts are documented in Texas, Iowa, North Carolina, California, Washington, Indiana, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, and New York (Dettlaff et al., 2021; Chambers & Ratliff, 2019; Dettlaff et al., 2014; Fabella et al., 2007; James et al., 2008; A. S. Jones, 2013; T. R. Jones, 2014; Lorthridge et al., 2012; O. A. Miller & Ward, 2015; Richardson & Jean, 2005; Rodriguez et al., 2014). The Texas Case Study chronicled the reform implementation process and initial outcomes (Dettlaff et al., 2014). One article outlined Casey Family Programs' (CFP) Breakthrough Series Collaborative (BSC) work in 13 child welfare jurisdictions (Miller & Ward, 2015). According to Miller & Ward (2015), the BSC is a methodology developed in 1995 by the Institute for Health Improvement (IHI) and the Association for Process Improvement (API). CFP worked with IHI and API to adapt the approach

in 2000. The BSC was a collaborative process involving a core team comprised of child welfare jurisdiction leaders, mid-level managers/supervisors, child welfare workers, birth parents, foster youth, and community organization representatives. The model also had a senior leadership team and an expert faculty for each site. The CFP BSC model used a structural racism lens to develop this racial disproportionality framework for change (Miller & Ward, 2015).

Data Analysis and Data-Driven Decision-Making. Data analysis was the foundation of the first efforts to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the CWS (Giovanonni & Billingsley, 1972; Hill, 2004). The literature demonstrates that all systemwide reform efforts began and were driven by analyzing the data and developing strategies informed by the data. Public child welfare agencies disaggregated data by race to analyze child characteristics at each decision point. Using this data, agencies focused interventions on improving outcomes for children of color (Dettlaff et al., 2014; Martin & Connelly, 2015; Miller & Ward, 2015).

Disproportionality Offices, Commissions, Committees. Disproportionality offices, commissions, and committees are public child welfare agency-sanctioned groups that address the issue of disproportionality. The literature describes the work of these groups in King County, Washington; Texas; Los Angeles and Fresno Counties in California; Indiana; Broward County, Florida; Ramsey County, Minnesota; Illinois; Connecticut; Idaho; Kentucky; Iowa; and Oregon (Miller & Esenstad, 2015; The Center for Community Partnership in Child Welfare of the Center for the Study of Social Policy & Jones, 2006).

Cultural Competency. Cultural competency efforts aimed to change agency culture and improve practice by educating leaders and practitioners about cultures other than white majority culture. Advocates of this approach purport that that one must understand their own

culture and the culture of those they serve to be effective (Jones, 2014). The field of social work has embraced cultural competency and has laid the foundation for interventions to address practitioner bias by developing awareness of the tendency to discriminate against African Americans (Feize & Gonzalez, 2018; Jones, 2014; McPhatter & Wilson, 2015).

Anti-Racism Training. Anti-Racism training by the People's Institute for Survival and Beyond (PISB) was part of systemwide reform efforts in Texas, California, and an unnamed State in the Midwest United States (Dettlaff et al., 2014; James et al., 2008; Rodriguez et al., 2014; Johnson et al., 2009). The PISB "Undoing Racism Community Organizing Workshop (Undoing Racism)...is designed to help participants understand the following: the foundations of race and racism, participants' connections to racism, the impact of racism on participants' work, and approaches to community organizing to combat racism" (Johnson et al., 2009, p. 690). Child welfare leaders, practitioners, and partners were trained to promote an understanding of the relationship between racism, overrepresentation, and disparate outcomes.

Differential Response. Differential response (DR) is used in several public child welfare agencies to prevent unnecessary entries into foster care. It is a tertiary approach to support families safely caring for their children by linking them to community-based supports without opening a CWS case. The model was not developed to address African American disproportionality but was tested in one study to determine its impact on preventing African American entries into the CWS (A. S. Jones, 2013).

Social Justice/Legal Redress and Advocacy for Legislative Action. Activists seek to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the CWS by suing government entities for their treatment of system-involved children and families.

Social Justice Approaches. Silverman (2019) analyzed civil rights violation suits alleging racist treatment of families in the CWS and concluded that it is difficult to prove racist treatment by US government entities. In 1994, The United Nations (UN) Committee to End Racial Discrimination (CERD) determined that a government's action will be determined to be contrary to the Convention if its effect has "an unjustifiable disparate impact" on a group distinguished by race (Silverman, 2019 p. 34). Silverman recommends pursuing justice by asserting that the US violates the international human rights of African American children and families in the CWS (Silverman, 2019).

Scholars contend that some Federal legislation intended to improve conditions for children harmed African American children and families (Fitzgerald & Gonzales, 2022; White, 2006). The Child Abuse Prevention Act (CAPTA) of 1974 established mandated reporting requirements, thereby empowering educational, medical, and social service professionals to report suspected child maltreatment (Burton & Montauban, 2021; Dettlaff et al., 2020). Iguanta & Sciolia (2022) advocate ending mandated reporting of child maltreatment due to its disproportionate impact on African American children and families who are overrepresented in substantiated reports of abuse and neglect.

Congressional Committee Report and Recommendations. The US Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported on the work of a congressional committee that studied African American overrepresentation in the CWS. The report outlines the extent of the problem as of 2007. This effort aimed to educate legislators on the issue, drive practice change in public child welfare, and secure more adequate federal funding for kinship caregivers (Government Accountability Office, 2007).

Advocacy Organization Resolution and Recommendations. The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) is a civil rights organization founded in 1909 to "secure for all people the rights guaranteed in the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments to the United States Constitution" (NAACP, 2022, p. 2). The NAACP uses a variety of strategies to promote justice for minorities. At its National Convention in 2003, the NAACP adopted a resolution condemning the overrepresentation of African American children and families in the CWS. The NAACP called on the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC) and the Legislative Black Caucus in every State to review the issue and condemn overrepresentation. NAACP charged its Political Action Committee (PAC) with monitoring all legislation related to the issue to raise objections to anything contributing to the problem (NAACP, 2003).

African American Child Welfare Act. Dixon (2008) published a call for legal redress to address the issues of African American disproportionality and disparities in the CWS. Dixon argued that no civil rights gains were made without the demand for legal and legislative action. Dixon reviewed the process for developing and enacting the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) as a point of reference and model for a similar act for African American children (Dixon, 2008).

Abolition of the Child Welfare System. After decades of reform efforts, many who implemented and studied reforms demand that the system is mis-named and would more aptly be called the family surveillance and policing system. These advocates call for an end to family policing amid calls to defund the police for discrimination against black and brown people (Waxman, 2019). The Alliance for Race Equity in CW, CSSP, and the UpEND movement emerged as leaders in the quest to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the US CWS.

Scans of Strategies. Two national scans of strategies to address racial disproportionality in the CWS by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) (Miller et al., 2015). These scans revealed strategies throughout the US that address inequities experienced by children and families of color. Although the general focus was on children of color, African Americans emerged as the racial group overrepresented in 43 of the 50 states (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2022). The CSSP has demonstrated great commitment to addressing disproportionality in the CWS and has unapologetically worked to eliminate inequity.

The scans identified where and how the efforts were implemented to educate practitioners, legislators, and scholars on best and promising practices. Published in 2006, the first scan studied efforts in 10 child welfare jurisdictions: San Francisco, California; Connecticut; Illinois; Sioux City, Iowa; Michigan, Ramsey County; Minnesota; Guilford and Wake Counties, North Carolina; San Antonio, Texas; and King County, Washington.

The second scan revisited some of the jurisdictions from the first. The second scan was conducted by the Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare (ARECW), which was a "cross-sectional group" of professionals and people with lived experience in the child welfare space (O. Miller & Esenstad, 2015). The ARECW was housed at the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF). This scan analyzed efforts to address African American and American Indian disproportionality in Connecticut, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota (Statewide and Ramsey County), New York, Oregon, Pennsylvania (Allegheny County), Texas, and Utah.

Expert System Guidance. There is a body of work by child welfare associations to address overrepresentation by providing instruction on how to effect change. The guidance reviewed were a diagnostic tool and race equity strategies.

Agency Disproportionality Diagnostic Tool. The National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA), a workgroup of the Association of Public Human Service Agencies (APHSA), developed a tool:

[t]o assess current conditions that affect the organization's ability to achieve positive outcomes for children. This tool enables organizations to understand the underlying issues of disproportionality more fully, and subsequently, further engage the organization as it explores the contributing factors of this issue" (Fabella et al., 2007, p 2).

Expert Guidance. The Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) published 10 Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA). RESA was developed in 2011 to fill a gap in the field of Child Welfare relative to race equity. RESA moves beyond conversations about culture and bias to achieving Race Equity. Emphasizing one race is frowned upon; however, focusing on children of any race is typically acceptable. Black families are rarely emphasized, and BACW places unapologetic emphasis on the Black family (as opposed to children only). The child welfare system was not designed for Black children and families, and the outcomes reflect its racist origins and practices. BACW asserts that system transformation is not only possible – it is required. Flexibility is built into RESA because each jurisdiction differs and starts the journey at a different place. Strategy areas can be implemented collectively or stand-alone based on the jurisdiction's need and willingness.

Mezzo Efforts

Community Engagement. Community engagement is a practice used in macro systemwide reform efforts. The systemwide efforts and the efforts highlighted in the scans of strategies all had community engagement components, using community members and agencies as partners and decision-makers. Community engagement at the mezzo level describes public agency interventions that work with community members to engage families more effectively in the CWS.

Cultural Brokers. Two California counties used community members with lived experience as liaisons between child welfare representatives and biological family members. This practice has been used in child welfare systems nationwide to improve family engagement and case outcomes. As liaisons, cultural brokers are a bridge between public child welfare agency representatives and birth families. Cultural brokers educate agency representatives on the culture of families to improve family engagement and promote equitable casework practice (T. R. Jones, 2014; Montana & Hernandez, 2011).

Micro Efforts

Culturally Adapted Practice. Denby & Curtis (2013) published a guide for child welfare professionals to improve outcomes for African American children and families. The text outlined a framework for culturally adapted "policies, research, and practice so that the system is more responsive to the particular needs of African American children and families (p 1)." Several publications reviewed addressed specific adaptations to parenting class curricula, family meetings, services for kinship caregivers, and father engagement.

Parenting Classes Specifically for Black Parents. Harden et al. (2021) studied prevention efforts that have empirically been proven effective. Specifically, the authors focus on efforts that have been implemented and evaluated with African American families. The authors highlight Pride in Parenting, Strong African American Families, and The Chicago Parent Program as the few prevention efforts specifically for African American families (Harden et al., 2021, p 269-270). Harden et al. (2021) note that Intensive Family Preservation services are not viewed as prevention efforts, but there is a tertiary prevention focus. Intensive Family Preservation was not explicitly designed for African American families, but there is evidence that African American families have better outcomes when provided with Intensive Family Preservation services (Harden et al., 2021, p 270).

Family Meetings. Allan et al. (2021) studied the impact of family meetings on work with African American families. The authors use Family Group Decision Making (FGDM) as a point of reference for family meetings to address disproportionality. FGDM was developed in New Zealand to address the disproportionate number of Indigenous children in out-of-home care. Child welfare systems nationwide have implemented various types of family team meetings. Power is the critical issue. Child protection agencies and juvenile courts are responsible for ensuring children's safety in the CWS. Federal mandates determine timeframes for service delivery, permanency, and starting and stopping services. CWS representatives are compliance-centric and often limit power-sharing with parents and stakeholders in the name of compliance with policy. According to Allan et al. (2021), the most impactful elements of family meetings are "1. Family groups assume leadership in decision-making; and 2. Implementing the plans from family meetings yields beneficial outcomes for the children and their families (p. 16)."

Kinship Care and Kinship Navigators. A Second Chance, Inc. (ASCI) is a Kinship Care agency based in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania. ASCI is a child welfare provider agency that developed a model to support relative caregivers. The model is rooted in a fundamental value for the family; engaging caregivers, children, and birth families as a "triad;" and an understanding of cultural and racial competencies (McDaniel & Dyer, 2020). Qualitative studies of culturally adapted practice and family engagement efforts outline the lived experience of African American families. Families reported more positive CWS experiences when practice was adapted to engage them more effectively (López-Zerón et al., 2021; Montana & Hernandez, 2011; Sturdivant, 2011).

ASCI actualizes the model by having case workers focus on reducing "the stress of unplanned placements and helping them manage the emotions associated with becoming emergency caregivers (McDaniel & Dyer, 2020, p 13)." Practically, this means adjusting "their schedules to accommodate families, including arranging convenient home visits, and work to obtain and provide approved items that fill immediate family needs..." (McDaniel & Dyer, 2020, p 13). The ASCI community-based kinship care model impacts African American disproportionality by expediting permanency, reducing reentries into foster care, and reducing the trauma caused by family separation (McDaniel & Dyer, 2020).

Building on the ASCI's kinship model, the agency partnered with Allegheny County child welfare to co-locate Kinship Navigators in county offices. Placing Navigators within public child welfare offices enables families to be assigned immediately. Navigators shadow caseworkers and provide intensive services to Kinship families (Lee et al., 2021). African American families served by Kinship Navigators used permanent legal conservatorship at greater rates than those

not served by Kinship Navigators. This outcome is consistent with ASCI's culture and race competency approach, emphasizing permanency options that honor family integrity (Lee et al., 2021). Adoptions for children not served by Kinship Navigators were higher. According to Lee et al. (2021),

"Adoption requires parents to give up their legal relationship formally and permanently with their children and, in kinship situations, often strains already complicated relationships among extended family members. PLC allows a child's kinship caregiver to assume all legal responsibilities and authority without forcing termination of parental rights and youth being permanently separated from their parents" (p. 6).

Father Engagement. CFP partnered with the CSSP ARECW to implement efforts to mitigate African American disproportionality. One such effort in Guilford County, North Carolina, emphasized fathers' involvement in permanency planning (Coakley, 2008). The study of this effort analyzed secondary data on father engagement through team decision-making (TDM) permanency planning. An outcome of this effort was that "[w]hen fathers were adequately involved with their children during foster care, children were placed with fathers in 17.5% of cases, versus never when the father was not involved" (Coakley, 2008, p. 412).

Discussion

Overall Observations

The research question for this review focused on *eliminating* overrepresentation, yet nearly all the literature reviewed focused on *addressing* disproportionality. An article that chronicled Iowa's disproportionality efforts was the only one of 43 articles that referred to "eliminating" overrepresentation (Richardson & Jean, 2005). A growing group of scholars and

activists insist that the only way to *eliminate* overrepresentation is to abolish the child welfare system (Chance & Roberts, 2022; A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2020). Most interventions in the literature focused on children of color or minority children. 12 of the 43 publication titles explicitly identified African Americans as the focus of the efforts. The remaining 31 articles identified minorities and children of color as their focus in titles and abstracts. Whether the stated focus was minorities, children of color, or African Americans, the data demonstrated that African Americans' representation rate was consistently higher than those of other races, except for American Indians. African Americans and American Indians are the two racial/ethnic groups that consistently have the highest disproportionality rates across the country (Child Welfare Information Gateway, 2022).

Three articles exclusively described aspects of system reform efforts in the State of Texas. Texas' approach was unique in its focus on African American children based on data showing African Americans were overrepresented in maltreatment allegations, maltreatment investigations, removals, and numbers in foster care (A. Dettlaff et al., 2014). Further, Texas data showed that "African American children were removed from their homes at a rate more than double that of White and Latino children, who were both underrepresented at each stage of the system(Dettlaff et al., 2014, p. 348)." Eight of the 11 publications describing state or county systemwide reform focused on efforts in Texas, Minnesota, Indiana, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Iowa, and Los Angeles. The interventions studied were implemented by public child welfare agencies, with only Texas naming African Americans as the focus of efforts to address disproportionality.

Outcomes

Assessing the effectiveness of the efforts was beyond the scope of this review. However, it is logical to ask about the outcomes of efforts reviewed. Of the 43 publications reviewed, 13 reported on outcomes of the respective disproportionality elimination efforts. Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, implemented the Authentic Family Engagement and Strengthening (AFES). The "initial examination descriptive and inferential data show lower percentages of children being removed by the specialized investigators compared to other investigators in the same zip code" (Best et al., 2021, p. 97).

Compared to national outcome data for foster youth, youth served by the A Second Chance, Inc. (ASCI) Kinship Navigator program are reunified 1.5 months sooner, adopted eight months sooner, and achieve guardianship six months sooner. 0% of ASCI Kinship Navigator program youth experience substantiated maltreatment in care compared to .34% of children in foster care; 95% complete high school compared to 50% of youth in foster care; 95% of ASCI youth do not change schools, compared to 56% of youth in foster care; and only 1% of ASCI youth become pregnant as teens compared to 33% of youth in foster care (McDaniel & Dyer, 2020, p. 17).

Qualitative studies of culturally adapted practice and family engagement efforts documented the lived experience of African American families. Families reported more positive CWS experiences when practice was adapted to engage them more effectively (López-Zerón et al., 2021; Montana & Hernandez, 2011; Sturdivant, 2011).

Publishing Literature About Efforts is an Effort in Itself

Scholars have studied, analyzed, and published literature on the problem of African American overrepresentation in the CWS since the 1970s (Giovanonni & Billingsley, 1972; Hill, 2004; D. E. Roberts, 2014). Literature outlining data analysis on the issue was the first intervention to address African American disproportionality. No effort can effectively address the issue without data analysis at the beginning, during, and at the end (Jackson et al., 2011). Literature analyzing African American child welfare data aimed to inform leaders, practitioners, scholars, and advocates to catalyze change. Authors added to the body of literature on addressing African American disproportionality in the CWS by publishing evaluation reports, expert guidance, and scans of strategies. Some publications had at least one explicit goal of making practitioners aware of the problem. Awareness may catalyze action or the beginning of systemwide culture change efforts. Other publications chronicled steps jurisdictions took to address the problem, including overcoming barriers.

Reformation or Abolition

The question of whether the CWS can be reformed or should be abolished emerged as a critical one for those who seek to eliminate overrepresentation. The upEND CWS abolition movement involves a core group of scholars, leaders, and activists who have worked toward reform. This effort is unique in its focus on the intersectionality of inherent institutional racism; poverty; child neglect; and the carceral system. This movement envisions a reality where vulnerable groups are not over-surveilled and disparately treated. upEND's leaders assert that CWS is more harmful than helpful. As such, if the CWS were abolished, children and families would experience less trauma (Dettlaff et al., 2020). Given this argument, the logical question

is, how can we ensure a transition from the CWS that does not harm vulnerable children and families? Another question is, what are the implications of reform efforts running parallel with abolition efforts? Some scholars who work within the system advocate for transformation as opposed to reformation or abolition (Jackson et al., 2011). The questions about reform versus abolition should be addressed in future literature.

The upEND movement is a coalition of activists and scholars who advocate for the abolition of the child welfare system, which they call the 'family policing system.' The problem of African American overrepresentation is multilayered and complex. upEND purports that "...reforms that focus solely on racial disproportionality and disparities obscure how the system functions as intended and absolves us from the larger societal changes required. The family policing system was built to separate children from their families, and as such, reforms cannot fix a system that is functioning as intended (A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2020, p. 4)."

What was different in Texas?

A review of the literature shows that the largest government-led systemwide reform efforts were documented in Texas and California (Dettlaff et al., 2014; James et al., 2021; T. R. Jones, 2014; Miller & Ward, 2015; Montana & Hernandez, 2011). Texas implemented the most coordinated effort to eliminate disproportionality with micro, mezzo, and macro interventions. The distinguishing characteristic of the Texas story is that data-driven efforts began at the regional office level, but state legislation galvanized statewide change. Legislative mandates required the state child welfare system to measure the extent of the problem and develop and implement plans to address the problem. Although reductions occurred because of the

implementation, the percentage of African American children in foster care in Texas as of 2020 has decreased by 2% since the reforms were implemented (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2022a).

One question to consider in future research is, what can be done to ensure that efforts continue when administrations and political will change? Another question is, what are the reasons that extensive efforts do not result in the elimination of disproportionality? This question is relevant because disproportionality rates are still significant in most states. Texas' practice of disaggregating data by race and region enabled leadership to devise region-specific strategies for greater impact through comprehensive system reform (Dettlaff et al., 2014).

Poverty, Neglect, and Racism

76% of confirmed cases of child maltreatment in 2020 were due to neglect (Annie E Casey Foundation, 2022). Kim & Drake (2018) found positive associations between official child maltreatment and environmental poverty in all race/ethnicity groups. They concluded that the gap between black and white CWS involvement is "largely driven by Black/White differences in poverty" (Kim & Drake, 2018, p. 780). More than three-quarters of maltreatment cases in the US are due to neglect, which is tied to poverty, yet only a few of the 43 efforts addressed poverty as a specific focus. Cross-system systemwide efforts should include concrete strategies to address poverty.

Limitations

This review used a systematic approach to rapidly review the scope of efforts to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the child welfare system. One challenge of rapidly reviewing an extensive topic is the possibility of missing some relevant literature. Another limitation of this review is its specificity focus. The limited scope excluded much

research on addressing the disproportionality of children of color in child welfare. Finally, this review did not assess the effectiveness of the efforts. An analysis of the effectiveness of efforts would be useful.

Subsequent Literature on Race Equity Organization Change

During the social innovation phase of this project, the author began a formative evaluation of an update of one of the efforts 43 efforts identified in the literature review. The effort is a set of race equity practice standards in its pre-implementation phase developed by the Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW). The race equity practice standards were completed in 2022 and have not yet been implemented by any organization. The implementation team hypothesized that a literature scan would provide insight into the strengths and challenges of race equity organization change efforts.

Much of the literature highlighted practices included in the race equity practice standards, which was affirming. The literature identifies optimal conditions for organizations to advance race equity efforts. Organizational leadership is the foundation on which all efforts are built. The literature on race equity in organizations identifies top leaders' commitment to race equity as a critical program component. This insight can inform program implementation efforts by identifying questions to ask agency leaders during engagement:

- Describe your agency's level of commitment to race equity efforts.
- Does commitment exist on multiple levels? If so, identify the levels.
- Has the organization designated resources for race equity work? If so, please identify the resources.

Race Equity Organization Change Research Questions

The literature scan focused on national and international race equity program implementation and evaluation methods. The research question was, 'What is known about implementing race equity organizational change programs? Other questions considered were:

- What are the characteristics of organizations that address challenges in implementing race equity programs?
- What is known about how long race equity organization change lasts?
- What behaviors and processes lead to the organization's implementation of race equity programs?

The keywords used for the search were: race equity organization change. This scan aimed to identify race equity programs in public and human service organizations. Racial *equality* literature, opinion literature, primary and secondary education system efforts, editorials, and descriptions of efforts were excluded from the scan.

Race equity guidance literature did not address will-building among leadership to commit to the work in organizations. Will-building is essential to the success of race equity work, and more research is needed in this area. None of the articles documented sustained race equity organization change after two years. More scholarship is necessary to identify long-term ways to sustain race equity work. Implementation of race equity initiatives resulted from individual and small-group activism, especially in education settings (Diem et al., 2022). Intentionality is critical, and unless leadership requires an ongoing specific focus on race equity, race equity efforts are diluted, and their impact is diminished (Ching et al., 2020).

Organizational leadership commitment to race equity is critical to successful implementation. Literature indicates that successful race equity program implementation requires existing internal structure and leadership (Kurzawa et al., 2022). Organizational leadership commitment to race equity efforts is also needed for resource allocation to do race equity work (Kurzawa et al., 2022). The racial/ethnic diversity of organization staff also impacts the success of effort implementation. Racially diverse representation in leadership teams is associated with more equity initiatives, demonstrating leadership commitment and greater attention to the perspectives that racialized persons bring to the table.

Ongoing race equity training contributed to the continuity of race equity efforts among staff and managers. "The presence of a shared understanding among staff through training activities on anti-racism, anti-oppression, and trauma-informed approaches was considered a critical and ongoing process rather than a one-time event "(Kurzawa et al., 2022, p. 506).

Section 6: Innovate

Implementing and Maximizing the Effectiveness of Race Equity Strategy Areas 2.0

The social innovation is a formative evaluation of the Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) 's process to update and implement its Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA). The author's role in this continuous quality improvement (CQI) effort is lead evaluator. The focus of the lead evaluator is to engage collaborators, manage the formative evaluation process, facilitate data collection sessions, analyze the data, and report formative evaluation data (Devaney & Rossi, 1997; McClintock, 1984a). The final product of this social innovation will be a manuscript for journal submission to report formative evaluation findings. This innovation is an effort to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the child welfare system by disseminating best practice guidance to the field (Cénat et al., 2021; Denby & Curtis, 2013a; A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2015; Jackson et al., 2011; McPhatter & Wilson, 2015).

Background

As described in the previous chapters, a recent literature review identified 43 policy and practice efforts to eliminate African American overrepresentation categorized into macro, mezzo, and micro efforts (Mitchell, in preparation). Of the 43 efforts identified, 11 were systemwide reform efforts. Systemwide efforts intervened at multiple levels of child welfare systems to address African American overrepresentation. Systemwide reform efforts were rooted in anti-racism and race equity at the county and state levels. This type of systemwide work in Texas was characterized as "comprehensive" reform (James et al., 2021).

There is also a body of work in the macro category by child welfare associations to address overrepresentation by providing expert guidance to the field. The guidance promotes systemwide reform by unpacking complex system components and emphasizing solutions.

These efforts instruct organizations on how to effect change and spread best practice - two of the 43 efforts met these criteria. One of the efforts was the Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) best practice standards guide published in 2011. The RESA best practice standards guide is exemplary because it comprehensively addresses African American overrepresentation at the macro, mezzo, and micro levels.

RESA outlines best practice standards in 10 strategy areas to influence systemwide reform. The standards prioritize intervention at multiple levels of child welfare and related systems. RESA parses out systemic and institutional complexity to identify specific practices that address problems on multiple levels. RESA standards complement social service agency accreditation standards and are broadly applicable yet customizable to single organizations. RESA was funded by the Kellogg Foundation and implemented in partnership with the Council on Accreditation.

The launch of the 2011 version of RESA coincided with substantial scholarship on efforts to address African American overrepresentation (Chibnall et al., 2003; Dettlaff et al., 2014; Government Accountability Office, 2007; Jackson et al., 2011). By 2021, the literature addressing African American disproportionality in child welfare and related systems had grown exponentially. Overrepresentation remains a problem despite increased scholarship and intervention over several decades.

In 2011, BACW partnered with the Council on Accreditation (COA) to integrate RESA standards into COA practice standards (Gourdine et al., 2014). The integrated standards were implemented by two organizations in the Race Equity Strategy Standards Integration Project (RESSIP). A 2014 evaluation of the effort documented the impact of its implementation. Gourdine et al. (2014) noted that no one in the organizations could provide outcome data for a

summative evaluation and recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted to evaluate RESA outcomes. BACW did not conduct a longitudinal study because none of the project participants could be located to discuss RESA's impact and outcomes.

BACW updated RESA in 2021, asserting that RESA practice standards remained relevant and could influence equitable child welfare practice. The BACW Board of Directors appointed this author co-chairperson of the update team in 2021. Casey Family Programs funded the RESA update and implementation work for three years. BACW's 2011 partnership with the Council on Accreditation facilitated entry to the agencies that implemented RESA; however, no such partnership exists for RESA 2.0. Both versions of the RESA practice standards are intended for public and private child welfare and related organizations. RESA was updated to address the most prevalent issues, drive practice improvements, and ensure the efficacy of strategies to eliminate African American overrepresentation in the child welfare system. Table 3 is a comparison of RESA 1.0 and 2.0 strategy areas.

Table 3*Race Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) Version Comparison*

RESA 1.0 2011	RESA 2.0 2022 <i>*Note: Underlined text indicates updated wording</i>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data: Innovative 2. Finance: Creative and Flexible 3. Engagement: Parent and Community 4. Kinship Services: Effective and Appropriate Use 5. Youth: Informed Practice 6. Education: Collaboration and Partnerships 7. Health: Thriving Children, Youth, and Families 8. Legal Services: Culturally Informed and Competent 9. Leadership: Culturally Competent 10. Program: Policies, Practice, Review, and Analysis 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Data: <u>Dis-aggregated to Inform and Drive Practice</u> 2. Finance: Creative and Flexible 3. <u>Child Neglect Intervention</u> 4. Kinship Services: <u>Early</u>, Effective, and Appropriate Use 5. <u>Parent Engagement and Support</u> 6. <u>Community Engagement for Family Support</u> 7. Youth: Informed Practice 8. Education: Collaboration and Partnership 9. <u>Health and Mental Health</u>: Thriving Children, Youth, and Families 10. Legal Services: <u>'Family-Centered Practice' Anti-racist and Culturally Informed</u> 11. Leadership, Management and Supervision: <u>Cultural Humility</u>, 'Family-Centered Practice and Institutional Accountability 12. Program: Laws, Policies, Practice Review and Analysis

Race Equity Strategy Areas 2.0 Implementation

BACW completed the Race Equity Strategy Areas 2.0 standards guide in 2022 and introduced it to organizations in several states. Despite numerous presentations and engagement efforts, no organization has implemented RESA 2.0. Organizations have expressed interest in the RESA 2.0 practice standards and inquired about the process but have not taken the next steps toward implementation. A review of the literature on organizational implementation of race equity efforts revealed challenges with organizational capacity, resources, and commitment as reasons race equity efforts are unsuccessful (Abramovitz & Blitz, 2015; Dettlaff (Ed), 2021; Hill & Curry-Stevens, 2017). Short-lived organizational impact, an

issue identified in the evaluation of the first version of RESA, is a challenge to the effectiveness of many race equity efforts (Abramovitz & Blitz, 2015; C. Hill & Curry-Stevens, 2017).

It is well documented that racism and race equity are controversial and polarizing concepts in general and in child welfare specifically (Bartholet et al., 2009; A. J. Dettlaff & Boyd, 2020; Smith Brice, 2019). Therefore, agencies seeking to implement race equity programs must thoughtfully and strategically prepare their teams for the work (Abramovitz & Blitz, 2015; C. Hill & Curry-Stevens, 2017). It is probable that organizations are hesitant to implement RESA 2.0 because they do not have the will to commit to complex and difficult race equity work (Jezouit, 2021; Redwood & King, 2014). The formative evaluation should assess the impact of organizational readiness on the RESA 2.0 implementation process.

It has been challenging for BACW to engage agencies absent a partnership with the Council on Accreditation or other accrediting bodies. Since RESA 2.0 is in its pre-implementation stage, a formative process evaluation can inform short-term and midrange goal setting. A formative evaluation can reveal the strengths and challenges of the RESA 2.0 implementation and provide insight into necessary adjustments to its implementation (Berkowitz et al., 2008; McClintock, 1984b).

Study Design: Why Formative Evaluation?

A process evaluation of RESA's first version was completed after implementation and published in 2014. The evaluators recommended a longitudinal study to evaluate the program's impact. No summative evaluation or longitudinal study was conducted because neither of the implementing agencies had maintained data on the project (Gourdine et al., 2014). Formative evaluation is a process-based approach to assess RESA 2.0 before and during implementation.

Formative evaluation originated in education and improved learning outcomes earlier in learning interventions (Bennett, 2011; Scriven, 1991). Formative evaluation, or formative assessment, provides “qualitative insight” to evaluators (Bennett, 2011). Through the formative evaluation, BACW will engage RESA collaborators to advise the implementation and spread of RESA 2.0 in its pre-implementation and implementation stages.

Using formative evaluation to understand the implementation process can inform project goal setting and iteratively provide data to feed into the implementation process (Devaney & Rossi, 1997; Karachi et al., 1999; Saunders et al., 2005). Formative evaluation is a systematic process that uses empirical procedures to analyze programs and inform decision-making (McClintock, 1984a). Another benefit of formative assessment is that the process can diagnose issues in an intervention and make necessary improvements in iterative cycles (Bennett, 2011).

Formative Evaluation Framework

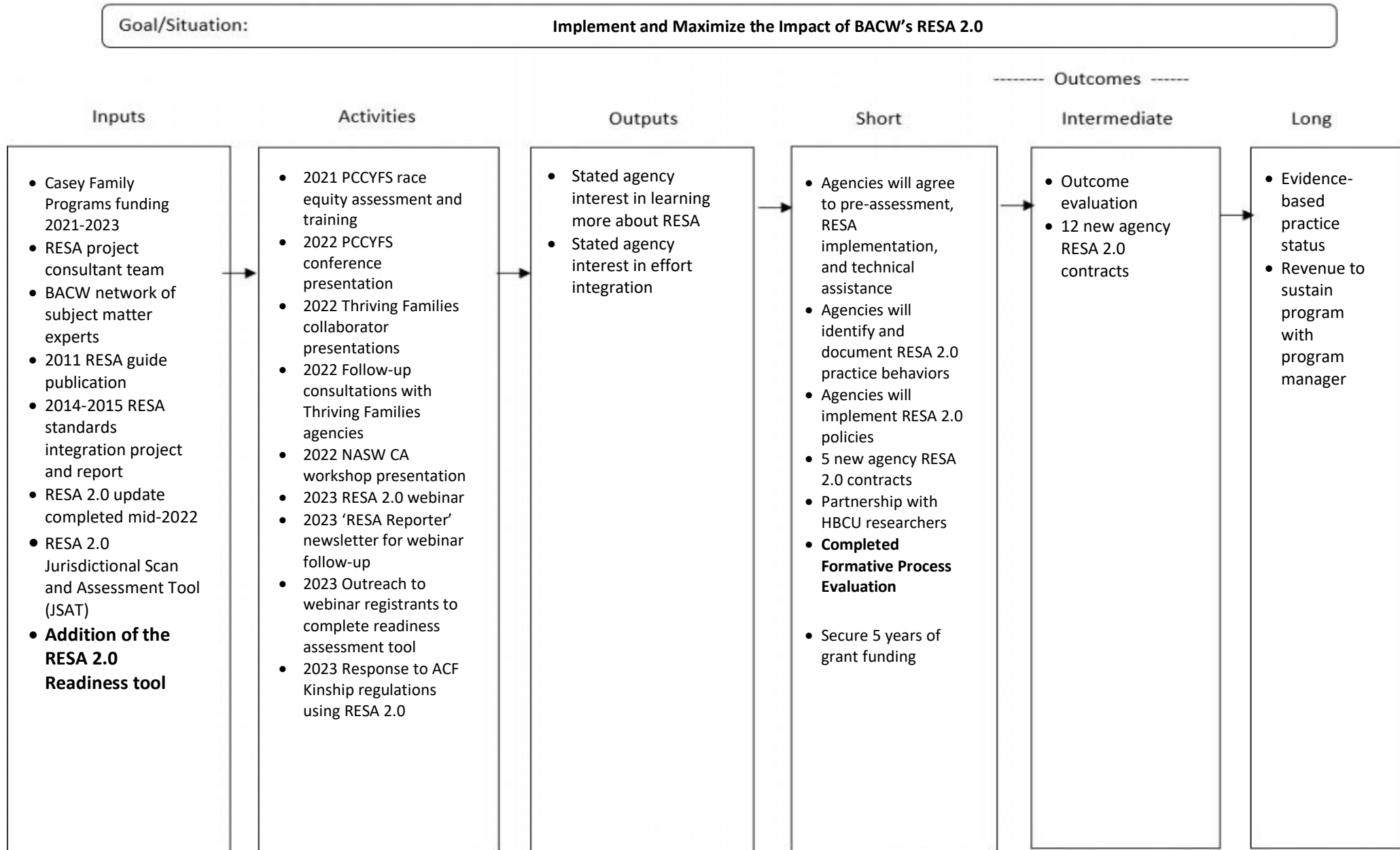
Formative evaluation complements the Community Engagement and Social Innovation (CESI) model because it is interactive, iterative, and responsive (Hall et al., 2014). The formative evaluation framework is flexible, and quality improvement data can be incorporated during program implementation (Hall et al., 2014; McClintock, 1984a; Saunders et al., 2005). RESA 2.0 implementation requires community participation, and scholars see formative evaluation as an intersection of participatory, responsive, educative, and qualitative evaluation methodologies (Hall et al., 2014). Formative evaluation findings can be used to “fine-tune” the RESA 2.0 program in its early implementation stages (Devaney & Rossi, 1997). African American overrepresentation is a complex problem, and efforts to eliminate the problem must address the problem’s many facets and layers. RESA 2.0 is a comprehensive effort that addresses 12

strategic aspects of overrepresentation, and formative evaluation can improve implementation to maximize impact (Dettlaff et al., 2014; James et al., 2021).

The formative evaluation process can incorporate complimentary evaluation and planning tools to enhance effectiveness (Berkowitz et al., 2008; Hall et al., 2014; McClintock, 1984b). The formative evaluation can identify the need for and incorporate other tools to assess and improve specific program components. One such tool is the logic model. Logic models measure the quality of implementation and hone outcome measures for future evaluation efforts (McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999). Logic models specify a project's theory of change, inputs, activities, and outputs. Logic models also outline short, midrange, and long-term goals to facilitate learning whether and how interventions are effective (Corporation for National and Community Service, 2004; W. K. Kellogg Foundation, 2017). Figure 2 is a logic model for the RESA 2.0 formative evaluation.

Figure 2

Logic model



Using the Context, Inputs, Process, and Product (CIPP) Model in Formative Evaluation

The logic model is a starting point for this formative evaluation. The formative evaluation will measure the impact of the logic model's inputs, activities, and outputs to inform program goals (Baranowski & Stables, 2000; McLaughlin & Jordan, 1999). The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model is a tool that will structure the formative evaluation work. Stufflebeam (2007) developed the CIPP foundational concept in 1966 and has published four updates to the model since then. Stufflebeam's research demonstrated that formative and summative evaluations are essential to program quality improvement (Halpin, 2021; Stufflebeam, 2007). CIPP promotes "long-term, sustainable improvements," which could facilitate RESA 2.0's intended impact as an effort to eliminate disproportionality.

The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) checklist outlines step-by-step tasks for evaluators and collaborators to employ CIPP (Aziz et al., 2018; Stufflebeam, 2007). The CIPP checklist is divided into ten sections. Four of the ten CIPP sections will be completed by the end phase of the formative evaluation. The checklist is organized in sections extending beyond the formative evaluation stage, making it useful for subsequent evaluations of RESA 2.0's midrange and long-term impact. CIPP originated in the field of education and has been successfully applied in educational and social program settings (Aziz et al., 2018; Stufflebeam, 2007). Table 4 lists the checklist sections and identifies the corresponding types of evaluation:

Table 4*Using CIPP in Evaluations*

Evaluation	CIPP Checklist Section
Formative Process Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contractual Agreements 2. Context Evaluation 3. Input Evaluation 4. Process Evaluation
<i>Tasks 5 through 10 are outside the scope of this project</i>	
Summative Evaluation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Impact Evaluation 6. Effectiveness Evaluation 7. Sustainability Evaluation 8. Transportability Evaluation 9. Meta-Evaluation 10. Final Synthesis Report

The Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) checklist is organized into sets of related tasks for the “evaluator” and for the “client” (Stufflebeam, 2007). This section focuses specifically on the tasks for the evaluator. The formative evaluation committee will represent the Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW) as “the client” in the CQI evaluation process. The committee will advise the lead evaluator on external partner engagement, data collection, analysis, and reporting. When other collaborators are identified, the committee will recommend the sequence of interviews and focus groups. Stufflebeam’s CIPP checklist will guide the process and set parameters for interviews and focus groups.

The CIPP checklist model does not require that tasks always be completed sequentially; some task completion will occur out of order and be revisited when changes are necessary. The lead evaluator and formative evaluation committee will follow checklist sections one through four and designate the phases in which tasks will be completed.

Table 5 details the tasks in each of the four sections applied to this formative evaluation. Three essential roles are identified in the CIPP model: the client, the beneficiaries, and the evaluator (Stufflebeam, 2007). The “client” is the Board of Directors of the Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW), represented by the formative evaluation committee. The “beneficiaries” are partners who will be identified and engaged in the middle and end phases of the formative evaluation. The “evaluator” is the lead evaluator of the formative evaluation and the author of this manuscript. Some section tasks are not yet complete; the status of tasks in each CIPP section is outlined in the following paragraphs.

CIPP Section 1: Contracting Agreements

Task 1A: Develop a clear understanding of the evaluation job to be done.

The innovation chapter of this manuscript delineates the purpose and approach of the formative evaluation. The innovation is a formative evaluation of the process of updating and BACW’s Racial Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) practice standards guide. The formative process evaluation will engage collaborators and advise the implementation and spread of RESA 2.0. The role of the lead evaluator is to engage collaborators, organize and manage the formative evaluation process, facilitate data collection sessions, and analyze and report formative evaluation data. The final product of formative evaluation is a manuscript for journal submission findings. The formative evaluation committee contributed to and understood the innovation plan development. This plan can be updated as needed.

Task 1B: Secure agreements needed to assure that the right information can be obtained.

The BACW Board President approved the innovation project in a letter dated February 5, 2023. The President’s letter authorizes the lead evaluator to conduct a formative evaluation and designate the formative evaluation committee members. The letter is included in the

approved project proposal.

Task 1C: Clarify for the client, in general, what quantitative and qualitative analyses will be needed to make a full assessment of the program.

The formative evaluation project is a continuous quality improvement (CQI) effort.

The evaluator will engage partners to assess implementation quality during the end phase of the project using the Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) model. The CIPP model has ten sections, four of which apply to the formative evaluation. Some tasks in the process and product sections require partner process evaluation interviews. Interviews and focus groups will be semi-structured. The CIPP tasks that apply to the formative evaluation are primarily qualitative. Data from interviews and focus groups will be compiled, organized into themes, and reported to the BACW Board of Directors. Some interview and focus group data can be used for process improvement and will be iteratively incorporated into implementation work.

When organizations implement RESA practice standards guidance, quantitative data on organizations, team composition, and ongoing race equity work will be collected, analyzed, and reported to the BACW Board of Directors. When the formative evaluation is completed, BACW can designate evaluators to apply the remaining CIPP sections for a summative assessment.

Task 1D: Clarify the nature, general contents, and approximate required timing of the final summative evaluation report.

Summative evaluation is beyond this project's scope, and this task does not apply. The final product of this effort is a formative evaluation report.

Task 1E: Clarify the nature, general contents, and timing of interim, formative evaluation reports and reporting sessions.

The lead evaluator makes monthly reports to the formative evaluation committee. The formative evaluation committee will report on the project development and status to the BACW Board of Directors at the annual BACW meeting in September 2023. Interim project reports will include explanations of the structure and status of the project, qualitative and quantitative data, and progress toward project goals. The formative evaluation report is the final report for this project which will be completed by December 31, 2023. The final report will describe the project's goals, design, activities, findings, recommendations, and conclusions.

Task 1F: Reach agreements to protect the integrity of the reporting process.

The lead evaluator will send report drafts to the formative evaluation committee for review and input before finalizing the reports. The RESA 2.0 funder requires quarterly reports completed by the RESA 2.0 consulting team. Funder reports will include relevant information from the formative evaluation. The lead evaluator will provide the requested information to the consulting team. This level of accountability will protect the integrity of the reporting process.

Task 1G: Clarify the needed channels for communication and assistance from the client and other stakeholders.

The BACW letter of support for the project authorizes the lead evaluator to communicate and request assistance from the BACW Board of Directors or their designees. The formative evaluation committee has agreed to share via email and telephone. Committee meetings are held virtually via Zoom monthly beginning in the middle phase of the project.

Task 1H: Secure agreements on the evaluation's timeline and who will carry out the evaluation responsibilities.

The formative evaluation committee contributed to and approved the formative

evaluation timeline. The client, represented by the formative evaluation committee, and the lead evaluator will complete tasks as specified in the CIPP. The lead evaluator is authorized to engage other BACW members as needed to complete project tasks.

Task 1I: Secure agreements on the evaluation budget and payment amounts and dates.

The 2023 RESA 2.0 project budget includes some funds for CQI activities. The lead evaluator will submit invoices to BACW for formative evaluation activities that inform RESA 2.0 implementation efforts immediately. BACW intends for RESA 2.0 to generate income through consulting contracts with implementing organizations. Improving RESA 2.0 implementation and spread through the iterative formative evaluation could promote future income generation.

CIPP Section 2: Context Evaluation

Task 2A: Compile and assess background information on the intended beneficiaries' needs and assets from such sources as minutes, outreach materials, funding proposals/reports, and archives.

The lead evaluator has compiled extensive information about the RESA 2.0 development process. The documents include the 2021 RESA 2.0 project plan, committee meeting minutes, and pertinent communications.

Task 2B: Interview program leaders to review and discuss their perspectives on beneficiaries' needs and to identify any problems (political or otherwise) the program will need to solve.

During the middle phase of the project, the lead evaluator interviewed the members of the formative evaluation committee to gain insight into the beneficiaries' needs and problems to solve. The committee members noted that RESA 2.0 has not yet been implemented despite the inputs and activities outlined in the logic model. The committee also pointed out that the implementation of RESA 2.0 differed from the 2011 version because there was no partnership

with an accrediting body to engage potential implementors. BACW's Board of Directors planned to leverage BACW's membership in the national Thriving Families Safer Children (TFSC) collaborative to implement RESA 2.0 guidance through this group. Thriving Families Safer Children presentations were a key activity identified in the RESA 2.0 logic model. Between 2021 and 2023, BACW made a series of presentations to TFSC collaborators to introduce RESA 2.0 and generate interest. As noted in the logic model outputs, organizations want to learn more about implementing RESA 2.0. Despite receiving several statements of interest, none of the organizations took next steps to implement RESA 2.0. The project committee determined that more information is needed to understand why organizations have not demonstrated urgency in pursuing RESA 2.0.

The committee recommended adding a readiness assessment tool to the RESA 2.0 implementation process. The tool aims to understand agency attitudes and practices regarding race equity. The tool is a 32-question survey with an introductory section to assess agency representatives' personal and professional beliefs about race equity. The introductory section questions were informed by scholarship on race equity leadership and practice (Edmonds et al., 2021; Gooden, 2015; Leder, 2022; Patel, 2022; Suarez, 2018; Tierney, 2022). The remaining 12 sections correspond to agency policy and practice in each of the RESA 2.0 strategy areas. The strategy area questions were developed using the RESA 2.0 jurisdictional scan and assessment tool (JSAT) rubric. The readiness tool will be made available by request to the author.

The readiness tool was developed as a formative evaluation task to provide additional information on organizations BACW engages in implementing RESA 2.0. The readiness tool introduces race equity values to organizations interested in RESA 2.0 implementation. The tool

can provide insight into optimal starting points for each organization's race equity work. The BACW team invited organization representatives who registered for the first RESA 2.0 webinar to complete the tool. The BACW team will compare data collected from pre-assessment responses to post-assessment data.

Task 2C: Interview other partners to gain further insight into the needs and assets of intended beneficiaries and potential problems for the program.

Preliminary activities to accomplish this task are described here. When organizations implement RESA 2.0, the BACW team will revisit this task. Interviews with other partners are community engagement activities critical to this project. The formative evaluation committee will advise the lead evaluator on which partners to interview and how to sequence the interviews. The committee will designate partners to interview during the project's end phase. Depending on partner availability and needs, interviews may be completed individually or in focus groups. Interviews will be semi-structured with a list of questions developed by the committee. The committee will conduct interviews, facilitate focus groups, and document partner responses. The lead evaluator will analyze response data and report findings to the committee and others designated by the BACW Board President.

Task 2D: Assess program goals in light of beneficiaries' assessed needs and potentially useful assets.

Descriptions of RESA 2.0 pre-implementation activities for this task are described here. This task will be revisited when organizations implement RESA 2.0. The formative evaluation committee determined that the goal identified in the RESA 2.0 logic model is appropriate at the pre-implementation stage of the formative evaluation. Formative evaluation is a "no-goal"

evaluation, meaning that desired outcomes do not determine the process but by goals identified during the process (Scriven, 1991).

Task 2E: Engage a data collection specialist to monitor and record data on the program's environment, including related programs, area resources, area needs and problems, and political dynamics.

BACW's Board of Directors intends to partner with evaluators at a historically black college/university (HBCU) as project data specialists. BACW's founders created the organization to do what mainstream institutions will not do for black children, families, and administrators. BACW's founders were administrators, scholars, advocates, and activists. BACW's leaders believe African Americans have created and sustained institutions that bear the standard for scholarly research and discourse. For African Americans, HBCUs were the only institutions of higher learning that consistently cared to invest in Black scholars and communities. Excellence is the standard of the HBCUs with which BACW partners. BACW has not yet identified the HBCU; consideration for determining HBCU data collection specialists is ongoing.

Task 2F: Request that program staff regularly make available to the evaluation team information they collect on the program's beneficiaries and environment.

Completing previous CIPP tasks has identified some conditions that differ between RESA 1.0 and 2.0 implementation. This iterative formative evaluation process will likely identify additional needs that differ between RESA's first and second versions that require action. In 2011, BACW had an Executive Director and a Project Director to manage and staff the project. BACW no longer employs an executive director or a project director. BACW consultants execute all project work. RESA 2.0 consultants provide project information for reports and formative evaluation activities. The BACW Executive team has requested funding from a foundation for an 'executive

on loan' to manage RESA 2.0 and other projects. The BACW Board of Directors is working to identify the resources to hire staff.

Task 2G: Annually, or as appropriate, prepare and deliver to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders a draft context evaluation report providing an update on program-related needs, assets, and problems, along with an assessment of the program's goals and priorities.

The project funder requires quarterly reports of project activities and milestones.

Designated BACW consultants prepare the reports. The lead evaluator and committee will also report on the project status and findings at BACW's annual meeting, the first of which is scheduled for September 2023.

Task 2H. Periodically, as appropriate, discuss context evaluation findings in feedback sessions presented to the client and designated audiences.

The formative evaluation committee or Board of Directors may request information sessions or focus groups to share findings with partners and collaborators. The committee will determine dates and formats for the sessions during the end phase of this project.

Task 2I: Finalize context evaluation reports and associated visual aids and provide them to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders.

In the end phase of this project, the lead evaluator will present the project to the California Baptist University (CBU) College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (CBSS) division of Social Work defense committee. Subsequently, the lead evaluator will develop customized presentations for BACW, its funders, and partners later in the end phase of the project.

CIPP Section 3: Input Evaluation

Task 3A: Identify and investigate existing programs that could serve as a model for the contemplated program.

The committee sought to understand whether RESA 2.0's slow implementation was due to organization leadership, attitudes, resources, or a combination of those factors. The

literature indicates that leadership, attitudes, and resources are critical to implementing and sustaining race equity efforts in organizations. Much of the literature on race equity organization change was focused on the field of education. Education entities have unique cultures, and social activism for equity in education has existed for decades. A study of race equity efforts in education could be beneficial in the later stages of the RESA 2.0 implementation work.

Some literature guides on implementing race equity programs. This author excluded program descriptions that had not been implemented or evaluated. Included were articles that outlined characteristics that facilitated race equity program implementation. There were very few articles that met these criteria. The review focused on literature published after the year 2010. The original authors reviewed race equity program literature through 2011, evidenced by the components included in the RESA and a review of the reference list for the original publication.

The author sought literature that went beyond theory articulation and into implementation and results. The review excluded literature about workforce strategies and strategies to improve organizational diversity and equity. RESA and RESA 2.0 are systemwide change efforts, and organization workforce is only one component of the efforts to improve organizational diversity.

Task 3B: Assess the program's proposed strategy for responsiveness to assessed needs and feasibility.

The formative evaluation committee added the readiness assessment to provide data on RESA 2.0's needs and feasibility. Formative evaluation is well suited to feed data into the program iteratively to enhance implementation (Halpin, 2021). The committee will identify

other data needs as the formative evaluation progresses.

Task 3C: Assess the program’s budget for its sufficiency to fund the needed work.

The current budget includes funds for consultant work on the RESA 2.0. The BACW Board of Directors must secure funding for ongoing program activities. The committee will advise the Board on project fundraising and budget development.

Task 3D: Assess the program’s strategy against pertinent research and development literature.

Much of the literature highlighted practices included in the RESA 2.0 standards, which was affirming. The literature identifies optimal conditions for organizations to advance race equity efforts. Race equity efforts are built on the foundation of organizational leadership. The literature on race equity in organizations identifies top leaders’ commitment to race equity as a critical program component. This insight can improve RESA 2.0 implementation efforts by identifying questions to ask agency leaders during engagement:

- Describe your agency’s level of commitment to race equity efforts.
- Does commitment exist on multiple levels? If so, identify the levels.
- Has the organization designated resources for race equity work? If so, please identify the resources.

Task 3E: Assess the merit of the program’s strategy compared with alternative strategies found in similar programs.

Organizational leadership commitment to race equity is critical to successful implementation. Literature indicates that successful race equity program implementation requires existing internal structure and leadership (Kurzawa et al., 2022). Organizational leadership commitment to race equity efforts is also needed for resource allocation to do race

equity work (Kurzawa et al., 2022). BACW should explore partnerships with organizations with dedicated race equity staff or managers. The same indicators that advance race equity work in some agencies are challenges to race equity work in other agencies (Diem et al., 2022; Kurzawa et al., 2022). RESA 2.0, the jurisdictional screening and assessment tool (JSAT), and pre-assessment surveys focus on the type of planning scholars identify as critical to successfully implementing race equity efforts. The racial/ethnic diversity of organization staff also impacts the success of effort implementation.

“Racially diverse representation in leadership teams is associated with more equity initiatives, demonstrating leadership commitment and greater attention to the perspectives that racialized persons bring to the table (Herrin et al., 2018).”

Ongoing race equity training was highlighted as contributing to the continuity of race equity efforts among staff and managers. “The presence of a shared understanding among staff through training activities on anti-racism, anti-oppression, and trauma-informed approaches was considered a critical and ongoing process rather than a one-time event (Kurzawa et al., 2022).”

Task 3F: Assess the program’s work plan and schedule for sufficiency, feasibility, and political viability.

The committee reviewed and approved the formative evaluation innovation plan and timeline during the project’s middle phase. The CIPP framework outlines tasks for each section and drives the work plan. The committee will assess the plan for feasibility and political viability.

CIPP Section 4: Process Evaluation

Task 4A: Engage an evaluation team member to monitor, observe, maintain a photographic record of, and provide periodic progress reports on program implementation.

The lead evaluator will monitor, observe, maintain a photographic record of, and provide periodic progress reports on RESA 2.0 implementation. Photographic records and progress reports will be presented to the BACW Board of Directors, funders, partners, and organizations implementing RESA 2.0. BACW Board presentation reports are made at designated Board meetings, and BACW makes quarterly project reports to project funders. The formative evaluation committee and the RESA 2.0 consulting team will schedule presentations for project partners.

Task 4B: In collaboration with the program's staff, maintain a record of program events, problems, costs, and allocations.

Many of the CQI activities for this project are billable to BACW under the RESA 2.0. budget. Billable services and activities are documented on consultant invoices and maintained in BACW records. Billable and non-billable project activities are documented for formative evaluation project reports to clients, funders, and partners.

Tasks 4C to 4G

Tasks 4C to 4G are designated for the final stages of this formative evaluation. When RESA 2.0 is implemented, the process evaluation will commence. The timing of implementation could be eminent; however, the exact timing for implementation is unknown. Implementation could occur during or after the end phase of the project. Table 5 outlines the CIPP sections and tasks.

Table 5

Context, Input, Process, and Product (CIPP) Sections and Tasks

CIPP Section	Completed Tasks	Remaining Tasks
<p>1. Contract Agreement 9 of 9 tasks addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Develop a clear understanding of the evaluation job to be done. B. Secure agreements needed to assure that the right information can be obtained. C. Clarify for the client, in general, what quantitative and qualitative analyses will be needed to make a full assessment of the program. D. Clarify the nature, general contents, and approximate required timing of the final summative evaluation report. E. Clarify the nature, general contents, and timing of interim, formative evaluation reports and reporting sessions. F. Reach agreements to protect the integrity of the reporting process. G. Clarify the needed channels for communication and assistance from the client and other stakeholders. H. Secure agreements on the evaluation's timeline and who will carry out the evaluation responsibilities. I. Secure agreements on the evaluation budget and payment amounts and dates. 	
<p>2. Context Evaluation 10 of 10 tasks addressed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Compile and assess background information on the intended beneficiaries' needs and assets from such sources as minutes, outreach materials, funding proposals/reports, and archives. B. Interview program leaders to review and discuss their perspectives on beneficiaries' needs and to identify any problems (political or otherwise) the program will need to solve. C. Interview other partners to gain further insight into the needs and assets of intended beneficiaries and potential problems for the program D. Assess program goals considering beneficiaries' assessed needs and potentially useful assets. E. Engage a data collection specialist to monitor and record data on the program's environment, including related programs, area resources, area needs and problems, and political dynamics. F. Request that program staff regularly make available to the evaluation team information they collect on the program's beneficiaries and environment. G. Annually, or as appropriate, prepare and deliver to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders a draft context evaluation report providing an update on program-related needs, assets, and problems, along with an assessment of the program's goals and priorities. H. Periodically, as appropriate, discuss context evaluation findings in feedback sessions presented to the client and designated audiences. I. Finalize context evaluation reports and associated visual aids and provide them to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders. 	

CIPP Section	Completed Tasks	Remaining Tasks
<p>3. Input Evaluation 7 of 10 tasks addressed</p>	<p>A. Identify and investigate existing programs that could serve as a model for the contemplated program.</p> <p>B. Assess the program's proposed strategy for responsiveness to assessed needs and feasibility.</p> <p>C. Assess the program's budget for its sufficiency to fund the needed work.</p> <p>D. Assess the program's strategy against pertinent research and development literature.</p> <p>E. Assess the merit of the program's strategy compared with alternative strategies found in similar programs.</p> <p>F. Assess the program's work plan and schedule for sufficiency, feasibility, and political viability.</p>	<p>G. Compile a draft input evaluation report and send it to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders.</p> <p>H. Discuss input evaluation findings in feedback workshop</p> <p>I. Finalize the input evaluation report and associated visual aids and provide them to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders.</p>
<p>4. Process Evaluation 2 of 7 Questions/Tasks Addressed</p>	<p>A. Engage an evaluation team member to monitor, observe, maintain a photographic record of, and provide periodic progress reports on program implementation.</p> <p>B. In collaboration with the program's staff, maintain a record of program events, problems, costs, and allocations.</p>	<p>C. Periodically interview beneficiaries, program leaders, and staff to obtain their assessments of the program's progress.</p> <p>D. Maintain an up-to-date profile of the program.</p> <p>E. Periodically draft written reports on process evaluation findings and provide the draft reports to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders.</p> <p>F. Present and discuss process evaluation findings in feedback workshops.</p> <p>G. Finalize each process evaluation report (possibly incorporated into a larger report) and associated visual aids and provide them to the client and agreed-upon stakeholders.</p>

Formative Evaluation Timeline

Beginning Phase (January 30, 2023, to February 12, 2023)

- Engage the RESA 2.0 development participants to determine the best methods of information-gathering.
- Seek BACW leadership support
 - a. Identify committee members and roles
 - b. Request and obtain a letter of support - Requested January 29, 2023, received February 5, 2023.
- Quantify the effort by compiling all available process-related data for RESA 2.0 development.

Middle Phase (February 14, 2023, to June 30, 2023)

- Brief project committee on project purpose, goals, and methodology
 - Develop a list of collaborators to engage and interview
 - Develop a timeline for interviews and focus groups
- Obtain committee feedback and input on partner engagement
- Coordinate implementation testing with partners
- Coordinate interviews and focus groups

End Phase (July 1, 2023, to December 31, 2023)

- Conduct implementation testing with partners
- Conduct interviews and focus groups
- Analyze data
- Distribute data to RESA 2.0 participants and collaborators

- Iteratively use data to improve processes, procedures, and management

Formative Evaluation Committee

The formative evaluation model is a collaborative team-focused approach (Berkowitz et al., 2008; Hope Corbin et al., 2017; McClintock, 1984b). The letter of support from the BACW President for this project authorizes the lead evaluator to engage members and partners to conduct formative evaluation activities. The lead evaluator convened a committee to conduct the formative evaluation of RESA 2.0 development and implementation. The committee is comprised of seven subject matter experts with expertise in the areas shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Formative Evaluation Committee

Committee Member	Career Focus	Expertise
Oronde Miller	Foundation Executive	Disproportionality and Race Equity
Joyce James, MSW	Consultant	Disproportionality, Anti-racist Practice, and Race Equity
Dr. Sherri Simmons-Horton	University Assistant Professor	Evidence-based practice
Dr. James T. Freeman	University Associate Professor	Anti-racist practice and Organizational leadership
Dr. Alan-Michael Graves	Foundation Executive	Fatherhood Engagement
Keith Bostick, MSW	Child Welfare Administrator	Child Welfare Leadership
Dr. Evangela Williams	Senior Child Welfare Worker/University Faculty	Child Welfare

Limitations and Potential Challenges

The primary challenge at this evaluation stage is that RESA 2.0 has not been implemented. Another challenge is uncertainty about future funding. One goal of RESA 2.0 is that organizations implementing RESA 2.0 would contract with BACW for technical assistance, which could generate revenue to support sustainability. The literature shows that institutional racism, African American overrepresentation, and race equity are polarizing topics that generate significant debate. The polarity and debate have probably slowed RESA 2.0

implementation. The formative evaluation will clarify the impact that attitudes about the social problem may have on implementation. Any organizational effort to eliminate African American disproportionality in child welfare requires strategic leadership. According to Kotter (1995), successful organizational change efforts require leadership to complete eight steps:

1. Establish a sense of urgency
2. Form a powerful guiding coalition
3. Create a vision
4. Communicate the vision
5. Empower others to act on the vision
6. Plan for and create short-term wins
7. Consolidate improvements and produce more change
8. Institutionalize new approaches (p 61)

The organizations BACW has engaged in the RESA 2.0 pre-implementation efforts have not met Kotter's criteria for successful race equity change. Based on pre-implementation interviews, organizations have identified diversity, equity, and inclusion as priorities but have not explicitly declared race equity an actionable priority. de Souza Briggs & McGahey (2022) analyzed the impact of government racial equity policy proposals and documented the urgency that was created by the 2020 George Floyd murder. de Souza Briggs & McGahey noted that urgency around institutional racism has not historically led to sustained change. Their assessment is consistent with Kotter's organizational change theory, which delineates that urgency is a starting point that must intentionally be built upon. de Souza Briggs & McKinney (2022) asserts that amid urgent calls for reform, institutions profess their intent to make racial

equity change but do not follow through with the necessary actions (p 3). The RESA 2.0 pre-assessment is one tool to gauge an organization's commitment to race equity organization change. The BACW consultation team can use pre-assessment data to co-create an organizational change plan with the organization's leaders.

Ethical Considerations

The California Baptist University (CBU) Institutional Review Board (IRB) has determined that IRB oversight is not required for this Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) effort. All formative evaluation interviews and focus groups will include Black Administrators in Child Welfare (BACW's) network members. The lead evaluator and formative evaluation committee will analyze and report data gathered during interviews and focus groups to the BACW Board of Directors to improve program quality.

The author plays multiple roles in this effort, including BACW Board 1st Vice President, RESA 2.0 committee co-chairperson, RESA 2.0 project consultant, and lead evaluator. BACW's Board Member consultant contract policy requires a conflict-of-interest agreement to execute all contracts. This project is a partnership with BACW, and BACW's President or designees will provide organizational oversight of the author's activities. The formative evaluation committee advises the author and the BACW Board of Directors to help determine whether conflicts of interest exist and how to address ethical dilemmas.

Section 7: Evaluation

The social innovation is a formative evaluation of BACW's Race Equity Strategy Areas (RESA) 2.0 implementation. There are two goals for measuring the effectiveness of the social innovation:

1. Assess the iterative improvement of RESA 2.0 implementation.
2. Develop a manuscript to publish in a journal.

Goal 1: Assess Iterative Improvement of RESA 2.0 Implementation Process

Formative evaluation is goal-free because it is process-driven, iterative, and not summative. As an iterative process, goals are developed during the evaluation rather than created before project implementation (McClintock, 1984b). The key indicators of formative evaluation effectiveness are the quality and function of RESA 2.0 implementation goals. The formative evaluation committee will identify and track RESA 2.0 implementation goals. BACW's consulting team and formative evaluation committee can develop new RESA 2.0 goals. The BACW consulting team will capture and report the addition of implementation goals to the formative evaluation team monthly. The formative evaluation committee will report on new goals as they are developed. Goal progress will be captured in monthly and quarterly reports to BACW.

Data Collection Plan

The data collection plan was developed using the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Program Manager's Guide to Evaluation (ACF OPRE, 2010). The guide specifies objectives, data elements, data sources, and data collection. The evaluation objectives are: 1) Two organizations will implement practice standards from at least one strategy area by 12/31/23; and 2) Five to 12 organizations will implement one of the 12 strategy areas by 6/30/24.

Data Elements, Sources, and Collection

The BACW consultant team will capture data from organization implementation meeting key decision points and action items. When organizations prepare to implement RESA 2.0 practice standards, the consultant team will develop technical assistance plans. Representatives from each organization will complete a readiness pre-assessment. The consultant team will capture pre-assessment responses and formulate reports for each organization. Table 7 outlines the data collection plan.

Table 7

Data Collection Plan

Implementation Objectives	Data Elements	Data Sources	Data Collection	Instruments	When Collected
9. Two organizations will implement standards from at least one strategy area by 12/31/23 10. 5 to 12 organizations will implement one of the 12 strategy areas by 6/30/24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation meetings with organizations • Agency technical assistance plan • Consultant team implementation activities • Readiness pre-assessment • Jurisdictional Scan and Assessment Tool (JSAT) 	1. Meeting notes 2. Progress reports 3. Pre and post assessments	1. Consultants will detail decisions and action items in meeting notes. 2. Consultants will provide project status reports to BACW monthly and to the funder quarterly. 3. Consultants will archive pre and post-assessment responses and analysis reports.	1. Meeting summary format 2. Progress report templates 3. RESA 2.0 Pre-Assessment and JSAT	1. During meetings with organizations 2. Monthly and quarterly 3. Before RESA 2.0 implementation and after implementation

Goal 2: Manuscript Development and Submission

RESA 2.0 is a comprehensive strategy to eliminate African American overrepresentation. Documenting the formative evaluation process and outcomes will add to the research on implementing race equity organization change efforts. There is a shortage of literature on race equity organization change implementation. The lead evaluator and evaluation committee will

develop and submit a manuscript to a journal detailing the formative evaluation process and findings.

Section 8: Dissemination

There have been numerous attempts to solve the complex problem of African American overrepresentation in the child welfare system. Scholars attribute the pervasive problem to institutional and systemic racism (Crewe & Gourdine, 2019; Gourdine, 2019; Pryce & Yelick, 2021). Efforts to address African American disproportionality in child welfare begin with disaggregating data by race to determine the extent of disproportionality (A. J. Dettlaff, 2021b; A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2014). Proponents of race equity distinguish equity from equality because equality is focused on ensuring that people have equal access to resources (Colorado Office of Health Equity, 2023). Race equity is a desired outcome for over-represented child welfare populations – every racial group should have proportional and equitable representation in the system (Gourdine, 2019).

Some efforts to eliminate overrepresentation specify race equity as a desired outcome. Literature on race equity in child welfare demonstrates the effectiveness of this approach. Research shows that decreases in overrepresentation do occur but are difficult to sustain (A. J. Dettlaff et al., 2014; Gourdine et al., 2014; The Center for Community Partnership in Child Welfare of the Center for the Study of Social Policy & Jones, 2006). There is a shortage of research on race equity organization change implementation.

The manuscript on the formative evaluation of RESA 2.0 will add to the research on implementing race equity organization change in child welfare organizations. RESA 2.0 is a transformative approach to improving child welfare policy and practice. The update of the RESA practice standards is an opportunity to increase coverage to include additional organizations in the field. BACW's goal for the formative evaluation is to implement and maximize the impact of RESA 2.0. The manuscript will detail all pre-implementation activities for RESA 2.0 and report

on data from organizations that implemented the practice standards. The manuscript will chronicle the iterative cycles and process improvements.

Criteria for Journal Selection

The lead evaluator and the committee aim to disseminate formative evaluation results to educate the field and promote scholarly discourse to raise awareness of the problem and solutions. The lead evaluator will identify preferred journals for publication based on audience, discipline, and topics. The lead evaluator has reviewed the criteria for submission to social work journals at Hunter College, the University of Chicago School of Social Work, and the Columbia Social Work Review. The committee will consider submitting a manuscript to special editions or themed journals devoted to diversity and inclusion in social welfare; racism; anti-racism; anti-poverty; or race equity. The North American Association of Christian Social Workers, the National Association of Social Workers, and the Child Welfare League of America each have disciplinary journals and themed journals for Social Work that may be appropriate for submission. The committee will also consider invitations for submission to journals with a disciplinary or thematic focus on the social problem and solutions.

Conference Dissemination

The lead evaluator and the committee will submit proposals to present formative evaluation findings at professional conferences. The committee will consider invitations to present findings to trade groups and researchers. The lead evaluator will document presentations and proceedings for publication.

Dissemination Timeline

Belcher (2009) delineated a plan for systematically preparing a manuscript for journal submission. The manuscript writing and submission timeline will follow Belcher's 12-week structure.

January 1, 2024, to April 30, 2024

1. Identify preferred journal and research submission requirements
2. Compile project progress reports and extract data
3. Analyze data and draft results and discussion sections
4. Outline manuscript sections and compile material for each section
5. Ensure that sections are logically connected
6. Draft recommendations, conclusion, and abstract
7. Submit manuscript

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