

Identifying Opportunities and Challenges: Local Implementation of the National Agenda to Reduce Racial Disproportionality and Disparities

* Refer to the National Agenda, *Courts Catalyzing Change: Achieving Equity and Fairness in Foster Care* for an overview of key components/strategies.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- **Purpose/goal for discussion: To share your experiences and engage in group BRAINSTORMING.**
 - **Identify and discuss CHALLENGES to implementation on key issues; share your challenges, concerns, barriers, etc.**
 - **Identify, generate, and discuss OPPORTUNITIES to address identified challenges – what can you learn from each other?**
 - **Discuss your strategies – What worked? What did not work?**
 - **Consider what challenges and opportunities are most relevant to your reform efforts and why?**
 - **Use the WORKSHEET attached to help organize your thoughts and keep a record of your group brainstorm.**
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FOCUS AREA 1. ENGAGE NATIONAL, STATE, LOCAL and TRIBAL STAKEHOLDERS, COMMUNITY PARTNERS and CHILDREN and FAMILIES

NCJFJC/PPCD Model Courts will...

- Engage local and state judicial leaders and court administrators to promote the reduction of disproportionality through action-oriented and solution-driven statewide advisory committees, task forces and educational forums.
- Lead their local community in developing a plan to reduce the disproportionality and disparate treatment of minority children and families in the child welfare system.
- Raise awareness about disproportionality and disparate treatment by communicating with national, state and local media about the pervasiveness of the problem as well as efforts and initiatives to reduce disproportionality and disparate treatment.

FOCUS AREA 2. TRANSFORM JUDICIAL PRACTICE

NCJFJC/PPCD Model Courts will...

- Examine personal bias and prejudice to understand and moderate its impact on judicial decision-making.
- Practice and promote principles of therapeutic jurisprudence through family engagement both in court and in the child welfare case planning process.
- Conduct thorough hearings and examine all decisions where disparate treatment may disadvantage children and families of color.
- Commit to training and education regarding disproportionality and disparate treatment for themselves and their colleagues who have jurisdiction over child protection matters.
- Promote the provision of culturally appropriate services.

FOCUS AREA 3. PARTICIPATE IN POLICY & LAW ADVOCACY

NCJFJC/PPCD Model Courts will...

- Seek the active participation of state and local lawmakers and relevant government agencies and departments to develop a cross-systems and collaborative approach to dismantling state and local laws and policies that perpetuate disproportionality and disparity for minority children and families.
- Seek statewide uniform ethical guidelines regarding the judiciary engaging in community advocacy to encourage the judiciary to fully participate as active members of systems and community reform and improvements efforts.
- Promote open child welfare hearings and encourage community members to become aware of the decision-making process.
- Work within their state and jurisdiction to promote retaining judges who have demonstrated expertise and/or who have been trained in disproportionality and disparities in juvenile court and advocate against policies that rotate judges through juvenile court.
- Promote the full scale (“hotline to permanency”) statewide implementation of Structured Decision Making processes and tools by sharing research that clearly shows the nexus between SDM and the reduction of disproportionality and disparities.

FOCUS AREA 4. EXAMINE & EMPLOY RESEARCH, DATA & PROMISING PRACTICES

NCJFJC/PPCD Model Courts will...

- Improve understanding of local child welfare system and court data around the issue of disproportionality and disparate treatment.
- Assess and improve local jurisdictions’ capacity to collect and analyze data related to disproportionality and disparate treatment within each child serving entity and within the court system.
- Collect and evaluate data at the case level, by judge and by jurisdiction.
- Create opportunities within own jurisdiction for discussing the meaning of the data and underlying causes of disproportionality and disparate treatment.
- Select outcome measures and develop strategies to improve permanency-related outcomes for children of color in the child welfare system.

FOCUS AREA 5. IMPACT SERVICE ARRAY & DELIVERY

NCJFJC/PPCD Model Courts will...

- Promote early intervention and prevention approach to service delivery in order to reduce removals and support timely reunification.
 - Require culturally competent, linguistically appropriate, effective, high-quality services for children and families of color involved with the child welfare system.
 - Encourage communities in their jurisdiction to develop community-based resources and information that are specific to their cultural and community needs.
 - Convene Community Forae that include community members, leaders and service providers to assess service gaps specific to that community and to build capacity among service providers.
 - Ensure that quality, appropriateness and effectiveness of services are objectively assessed.
 - Recommend termination of contracts that are not effective or are adding to the problem of disproportionate representation.
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Identifying Opportunities and Challenges: Local Implementation of the National Goal

Key Areas of Focus (1,2,3,4,5)	System Challenges. Try to be specific.	Opportunities and strategies to address challenges.

Focus Area 1: Engage National, State, Local and Tribal Stakeholders, Community Partners, and Children and Families

Focus Area 2: Transform Judicial Practice

Focus Area 3: Participate in Policy and Law Advocacy

Focus Area 4: Examine and Employ Research, Data, and Promising Practices

Focus Area 5: Impact Service Array and Delivery