ONE VISION ONE VOICE

CHANGING THE ONTARIO CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM TO BETTER SERVE AFRICAN CANADIANS

PRACTICE FRAMEWORK PART 3:
Promising Practices and Implementation Toolkit

March 2020

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PART 01

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

In 2015, the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services funded the African Canadian community, through the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, to develop a practice framework that would support child welfare agencies to provide better service to African Canadian children, youth, and families.

The funding for this work was the result of decades of advocacy from African Canadians, service users, and community agencies that raised the issue of overrepresentation of African Canadian children and youth in Ontario's child welfare system. Studies by researchers as well as observations by service providers and advocates within Children's Aid Societies (CASs), family courts, group homes, and various family and youth events sponsored by CASs confirm the perception that African Canadians are overrepresented in the child welfare system.

In 2016, the Ontario Human Rights Commission launched a public interest inquiry to examine the involvement of Black children and youth in the child welfare system. The Commission used its powers under the Ontario *Human Rights Code* to request data from CASs on their race-based data collection practices as well their data. The Commission concluded that, when considered together with the long-standing issues raised by Black communities, the disproportionalities found in the data raised serious concerns.[1]

In addition to disproportionality, African Canadians have also reported that they experience disparities when involved with the child welfare system. They are treated differently than their White counterparts, are criminalized, lack access to culturally appropriate services, and experience poorer outcomes than their White counterparts. Anti-Black racism operating both at the macro and micro levels is at the root of these experiences. At the micro level, anti-Black racism is embedded within society, operating within the policies and practices of child welfare agencies, between child welfare agencies, and within other systems such as education and police. At the micro level, anti-Black racism operates at the interpersonal level, through conscious and unconscious biases and microaggressions.

While the lack of province-wide and local data on the representation of African Canadians in the child welfare system suggests that more research is needed, there is an urgent call to action expressed by African Canadian children, youth, and families whose lives are impacted by the child welfare system today. Community members are concerned that as the issues are researched, families continue to be torn apart, children are growing up without their parents, and youth are transitioning into adulthood unprepared and more likely to face homelessness, low educational achievement, high unemployment rates, and increased involvement with the criminal justice system. The community has made it clear that the time to act is now.

[1] Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2018). Interrupted childhoods: Over-representation of Indigenous and Black children in Ontario child welfare. Retreived from http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/interrupted-childhoods

1.2 THIS TOOLKIT

The Practice Framework consists of two companion documents released in September 2016. Part 1, the Research Report, explores the experiences of Black families with the child welfare system and provides the context for the implementation of the Race Equity Practices contained in Part 2.[2]

This toolkit, the third in the series, is designed to support child welfare agencies to develop a plan to implement the 11 Race Equity Practices. It helps agencies assess their implementation of the Race Equity Practices to date, determine what more is needed, and develop a plan that provides a staged implementation of the work needed. While it is expected that those using this toolkit have read Parts 1 and 2, we understand that this document may be used on its own by CAS staff, committees, and members of the African Canadian community. We therefore have included a refresher on anti-Black racism to help guide those using this toolkit. We encourage readers to use the sections of this toolkit that they need to fully understand how anti-Black racism is fostered within the child welfare system and to develop an Implementation Plan that addresses all 11 Race Equity Practices.

One of the great opportunities built into this planning cycle is the ability for CASs to reassess their implementation of the Race Equity Practices and build on this work—not in a disjointed way, but in an intentional and iterative way. This toolkit walks organizations through various phases to conduct an assessment of where they are at and to chart a course forward. It then provides a draft Implementation Plan to allow CASs to document and publicly share their plan for activities consistent with each of the 11 Race Equity Practices. The Implementation Plan template, included in Appendix A, allows for:

- The identification of specific and measurable objectives
- The identification of specific action steps with accountabilities, deadlines, and resources needed, and
- Linkage to be made to other strategies at the agency.

The Implementation Plan template will help the agency create a plan that is focused and, if used well, can help the agency stay on track. However, while an Implementation Plan can take a considerable amount of time and can help ensure that the work gets done, the plan does not represent the actual work of organizational change. Nothing replaces well-planned, continued action that is boldly led by an agency leader.

[2] Reports 1 and 2 can be accessed here: http://www.oacas.org/what-we-do/onevisiononevoice/

Throughout this toolkit, promising and emerging practices are shared to provide examples of what other organizations are doing, both within and outside the child welfare sector. Tools and resources are also shared to support the implementation of the 11 Race Equity Practices.

The framework used in this toolkit urges agencies to continue to monitor their progress and update their Implementation Plan after a period of analysis and reflection. This means that agencies should not rest on their laurels. A few well-implemented activities will not create or sustain the change needed if the child welfare system is to better serve African Canadian families. The 11 Race Equity Practices were designed to create agency-wide change. As such, not only should all Race Equity Practices be implemented in one form or another, every agency should engage in a continuous cycle of planning, doing, and reviewing. After all, when addressing anti-Black racism, there is no end—only new ways to grow.

This toolkit also recognizes that the Black population varies greatly across the province. As such, the disproportionality and need for change will vary from agency to agency. This toolkit allows agencies to create an Implementation Plan that suits their particular situation. Regardless of their starting point, it is time for child welfare agencies across Ontario to take action to address the disproportionalities and disparities faced by African Canadian children and youth. Some agencies may need to make slight adjustments to their ongoing equity work. Other agencies may need to initiate significant and sustained activity that focuses on understanding and addressing the experiences of African Canadians who come into contact with the agency.

To enhance the effectiveness of an agency's efforts, each agency should fully engage stakeholders, including staff, African Canadian service users, and the broader African Canadian community at every stage of the assessment, plan development, and implementation process. The involvement of stakeholders will help to ensure that the activities in the Implementation Plan will lead to change and that any unintended consequences of these actions are identified and addressed. The involvement of stakeholders will also help to leverage their ongoing support of the activities in the Implementation Plan.

PART 2

UNDERSTANDING ANTI-BLACK RACISM IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

2.1 DEFINING ANTI-BLACK RACISM

The term "anti-Black racism" was first expressed by Ryerson University social work professor Dr. Akua Benjamin to highlight the unique nature of systemic racism on Black Canadians and the history as well as experiences of slavery and colonization of people of African descent in Canada.[3]

Anti-Black racism was officially recognized by the provincial government in 1992, when Stephen Lewis was asked to explore race relations in Ontario after the "Yonge Street Riot" in Toronto. His report to the premier catalogued the various ways that systemic racism affects the Black community, noting:

> First, what we are dealing with, at root, and fundamentally, is anti-Black racism. While it is obviously true that every visible minority community experiences the indignities and wounds of systemic discrimination throughout Southern Ontario, it is the Black community which is the focus.[4]

Anti-Black racism is defined by the Black Legal Action Centre as prejudice, attitudes, beliefs, stereotyping, and discrimination directed at people of African descent.[5] Anti-Black racism is deeply entrenched in Canadian institutions, policies, and practices and manifested in the current social, economic, and political marginalization of African Canadians. This marginalization is evident in the lack of opportunities, lower socioeconomic status, higher unemployment rates, higher poverty rates, and overrepresentation in the child welfare and criminal justice systems. Being so deeply entrenched, anti-Black racism has become normalized and made invisible. As such, the poor outcomes for African Canadians are seen by many as the personal failings of Black people and their culture rather evidence of the anti-Black racism they experience.

Like an iceberg, 90% of oppression, including racism, is hidden beneath the water. As Figure 1 shows, above the waterline are the overt behaviours that would be labelled as racist, including racist jokes, use of the N-word, and hate crimes. Canada has become more diverse over the past decades and more welcoming and inclusive of this diversity. Along with this movement of multiculturalism has been the increasing unacceptability of overt racism, including overt anti-Black racism.

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3 Black Health Alliance. (2018). *Anti-Black racism.* Retrieved from http://blackhealthalliance.ca/home/antiblack-racism/

4 Lewis, S. (1992). *Stephen Lewis report on race relations in Ontario.* Toronto, ON: Government of Ontario.

5 Black Legal Action Centre. (2015). About BLAC. Retrieved from https://www.blacklegalactioncentre.ca/about/about-blac/

Beneath the waterline are covert behaviours that may contribute greatly to the marginalization of African Canadians but are considered socially acceptable. In fact, Canadians may see the outcomes of anti-Black racism and blame Black Canadians for their own marginalization. For example, Canadians may see the high proportion of Black people who experience poverty and blame it on Black people's lack of ambition and work ethic. They may not consider the anti-Black racism embedded within Ontario's public school system, which results in Black Canadians' lower levels of educational attainment, including high dropout rates and low graduation rates.[6]

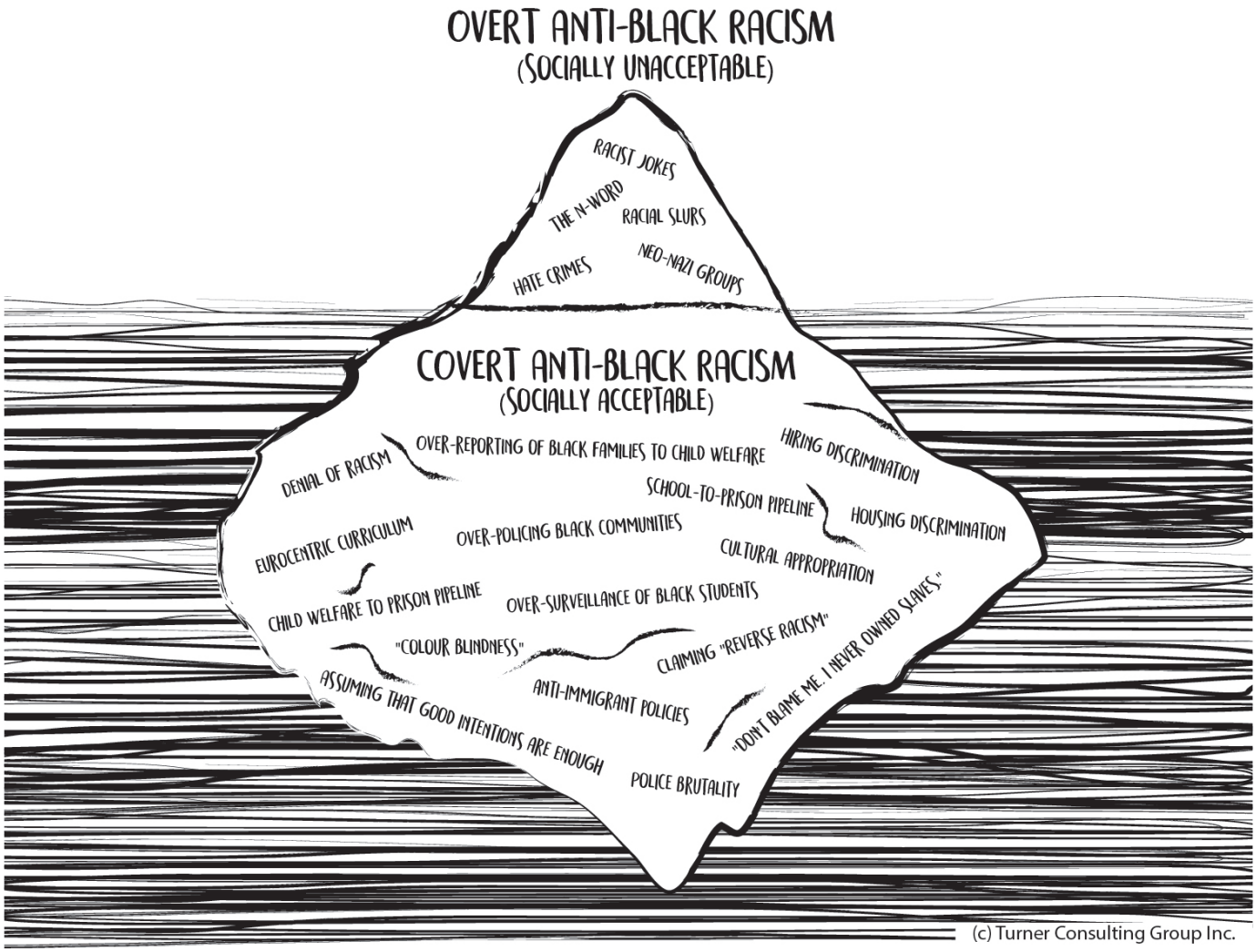

Figure 1. Anti-Black Racism Iceberg

[6] James, C. E., & Turner, T. (2017). Towards race equity in education: The schooling of Black students in the Greater Toronto Area. Toronto: York University.

Yet, despite the challenges faced in Ontario's public education system, Black youth place a high value on post-secondary education. The 2016 data shows that 94% of Black youth between 15 and 25 years of age desired a bachelor's degree or higher. However, only 60% of Black youth thought that a university degree was attainable; far more pessimistic than the rest of the population, about 80%, who thought a university degree was attainable for them.[7] Low levels of education result in limited access to jobs that pay a decent wage, resulting in higher rates of unemployment, precarious work, and higher rates of poverty.

Canadians may also fail to recognize the reality of employment discrimination. Such discrimination means that, even with the same levels of education, Black Canadians experience higher rates of unemployment and lower wages than their White counterparts.

Similarly, Canadians may see the overrepresentation of Black Canadians in the prison system and blame it on Black Canadians' higher involvement in crime. What they may not see is the over-policing that Black youth experience, which contributes to this over-incarceration. Two decades of surveys show that Black people are more likely than people from other racial groups to be stopped, searched, and questioned by police. One-third of Black male respondents in a 1994 survey of Toronto residents reported being stopped and questioned by police on two or more occasions within the previous 2 years, while only 12% of White males and 7% of Asian males reported the same experiences.[8]

Within the child welfare system, people may attribute the overrepresentation of African Canadian children in care to poor parenting skills while ignoring how the child welfare system, like the education and criminal justice systems, have "re-created forms of racialized surveillance, captivity and familial dislocation that originated under slavery." [9] In essence, within a system tasked with ensuring the safety and well-being of children, the child welfare system continues Canada's long history of destroying Black family bonds.

[7] Metcalf Foundation. (2019). *The working poor in the Toronto region: A closer look at the increasing numbers.* Retrieved from https://metcalffoundation.com/publication/the-working-poor-in-the-toronto-region-a-closer-look-at-the-increasing-numbers/

[8] Wortley, S., & Tanner, J. (2003). Data, denials, and confusion: The racial profiling debate in Toronto. *Canadian Journal of Criminology and Criminal Justice,* 45(3), 367–390.

[9] Maynard, R. (2017). *Policing Black lives: State violence in Canada from slavery to present*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

2.2 UNDERSTANDING MICRO-LEVEL ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Above the waterline are overt, or micro-level, behaviours that occur at a specific moment in time through interpersonal interactions. For the most part, overt expressions of anti-Black racism are socially unacceptable in Canada.

Below the waterline is the ideology of White supremacy, which impacts the culture within which we live as well as our attitudes and behaviours toward Black people. White supremacy is the ideology that White people, White culture, and everything associated with whiteness is superior to racialized people, their cultures, and everything associated with being racialized.[10] In this context, White supremacy represents an overarching political, economic, and social system of domination rather than the individual actions of White people.[11] This ideology has been infused within Canada's economic, education, child welfare, health care, criminal justice, and political systems and works to maintain the dominant and relative superior position of White people and the marginalization of Black people.

If we live in a society that is inherently anti-Black, regardless of our own racial identity, we cannot help but be anti-Black ourselves because no one is immune to the strong forces of socialization. Our attitudes and beliefs about Black people come from what we learn from the news and entertainment media; what we learn in school, even through the omission of the long history of people of African descent in Canada; what we learn through our religious institutions; and what we learn in our culture, communities, and families of origin.

Also below the waterline are more covert expressions of micro-level anti-Black racism, including interpersonal racism, conscious and unconscious bias, and internalized racism.

2.2.A CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Bias is prejudice in favour of or against one thing, person, or group compared with another, usually in a way considered to be unfair. Our biases can affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in a conscious or unconscious manner. The result is that we can hold negative attitudes about Black people, both consciously and unconsciously, and may then be acting on these beliefs without even knowing it.

[10] Showing Up for Racial Justice. (n.d.). White supremacy culture. Retrieved from http://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/white-supremacy-culture.html

[11] DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism* (p. 28). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

These biases may be expressed unconsciously. For example, a woman may hold on tightly to her purse when a Black man enters the elevator. These biases may also be expressed consciously through the pictures shared by email or the jokes made in casual conversation. Within organizations, conscious and unconscious anti-Blackness are also evident in hiring and advancement practices, including how Black job candidates are treated in the hiring process and who is mentored and supported to advance within the organization.

What might this look like in the child welfare system?

- Black people may be hired into frontline positions but do not advance into supervisory positions because of biases about their ability to effectively lead.
- Teachers may over-report Black families to the child welfare system based on their own biases. For example, a teacher may call the CAS when a Black mother is late to pick up her child but patiently wait for a White mother to pick up her child.
- A child welfare professional may contact police to accompany her to contact an investigation of a Black family because of biases that the Black family will be aggressive and that she may be harmed.
- A child welfare professional may feel physically unsafe when a Black father gets emotional, but may feel physically safe when an Italian father gets emotional.

2.2.B INTERPERSONAL OPPRESSION

Oppression also occurs at the interpersonal level and include actions, behaviours, and language, including jokes, harassment, threats, physical violence, and the full range of personal acts of discrimination. This can include both more obvious forms of anti-Black racism (e.g., calling someone the N-word) and more subtle forms such as the four types of microaggressions. Dr. Derald Wing Sue has identified four types of microaggressions.[12] They are described in the chart below, with examples. For those who have not yet explored racial microaggressions, the chart also allows you to reflect on how these microaggressions are manifested within the child welfare sector.

[12] Sue, D. W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

1. MICROINSULTS **Behavioural actions or verbal remarks that convey rudeness or insensitivity or demean a person's racial identity or heritage.**		
a. Ascription of intelligence This microinsult promotes the notion that cognitive abilities are based on race.	**For example** A child welfare professional does not offer supports to ensure that a Black child is doing well in school because of assumptions that the child lacks the ambition and capacity to pursue postsecondary education.	**Your example**
b. Pathologizing cultural values and communication styles This microinsult suggests that the culture and communication styles of Black people are abnormal or undesirable. It also sends the message that White culture is the ideal to aspire to or emulate.	**For example** A Black mother is labelled as loud, emotional, and confrontational when she advocates for her child.	**Your example**
c. Ascription of criminality This microinsult suggests that racialized people, particularly Black people and Indigenous Peoples, are prone to criminality or are dangerous because of their race.	**For example** When a Black youth shares that he was accused of stealing at school, the child welfare professional encourages the student to explore how he might have contributed to the teacher's mistrust of him.	**Your example**

d. Second-class status This microinsult occurs when White people are given preferential treatment over Black people.	For example The Black staff are asked for their credentials when they enter the building, but the White staff are not.	Your example
2. MICROINVALIDATIONS **Dismissal, exclusion, or negation of the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of marginalized people.**		
a. Alien in own land This microinvalidation assumes that all Black people are foreign-born and are not Canadian.	For example When a Black mother tells a child welfare professional that she is Canadian, the Black mother is asked, "Where are you really, really from?"	Your example
b. Denial of oppression This occurs when a Black person's reality of racism is dismissed, rejected, or invalidated.	For example When a Black child tells a child welfare professional that the foster mother treats her differently from the White children, the Black child is told, "You're overreacting."	Your example
c. Colour blindness This microinvalidation suggests that the person doesn't see race and doesn't want to acknowledge another person's race or other identity, thus negating the cultural values, norms, and life experiences of Black people. It also implies that acknowledging race or other identity is divisive.	For example A child welfare professional tells a Black youth, "I don't see you as Black."	Your example

d. Myth of meritocracy	For example	Your example
The myth of meritocracy suggests that oppression doesn't exist and that everyone has an equal chance of success if they try hard enough. It also suggests that if Black people aren't successful, it is because they are not as smart or hard working as their counterparts who benefit from societal privilege.	A Black youth tells a child welfare professional about not receiving the same mark on a group project as others in their group. The child welfare professional responds, "Maybe if you work harder you can get the same grades as the others."	
3. MICROASSAULTS		
Microassaults are sometimes referred to as "old-fashioned," explicit forms of discrimination. It includes name-calling, avoidant behaviour, or deliberate acts of discrimination.	**For example** The foster mother's biological child repeatedly calls the Black foster child the N-word.	**Your example**
4. ENVIRONMENTAL MICROAGGRESSIONS		
Environmental microaggressions can reside in the climate of an organization or even in broader society. The messages in the environment create a sense of validation for one group but invalidation for another group.	**For example** The books and toys in the foster home do not depict any positive images of Black people.	**Your example**

PAUSE AND REFLECT: THE IMPACT OF MICROAGGRESSIONS

1. Reflecting on the everyday racial microaggressions that Black children, youth, and families are exposed to within the child welfare system, how can child welfare agencies help staff identify, understand, and stop these comments and behaviours?

2. It is often not the blatant forms of racism that are most harmful to Black children and youth. Microaggressions can be even more harmful to their psyche. These can manifest as anger, low self-esteem, and defiance. What behaviours might you see from Black children and youth in response to the daily microaggressions they experience?

2.2.C INTERNALIZED ANTI-BLACK RACISM

Any group that is systematically targeted, discriminated against, or oppressed over a long period of time can internalize that oppression. The members of that group begin to believe the myths and misinformation that society communicates to them about their group, making these lies a part of their self-image. Studies show that Black children pick up on and can internalize these messages at a very young age. Internalized oppression can be expressed in a number of different ways. For example, Black teenagers may believe the messages that they get from teachers and society that they cannot achieve academically, and may therefore give up on studying. Similarly, a Black teen may internalize the messages that he is a threat and to be feared, and may begin to behave in threatening ways.

Because racial microaggressions are so subtle, Black children and youth who experience them might need what Dr. Sue and his colleagues refer to as a "sanity check."[13] Think about a young child who is experiencing microaggressions in their foster home, at school, and in the community, with no one to help them understand or validate what they are experiencing. Having someone to talk to who has an understanding of anti-Black racism and microaggressions can help the child process, make sense of, and learn how to manage their experiences.[14]

[13] Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., & Holder, A. M. B. (2008). Racial microaggressions in the life experience of Black Americans. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice,* 39, 329–336.
[14] Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The impact of racial microaggressions on mental health: Counseling implications for clients of color. *Journal of Counseling & Development,* 92, 57–66.

PAUSE AND REFLECT: COUNTERING INTERNALIZED ANTI-BLACK RACISM

1. How can child welfare professionals help build positive self-esteem within Black children and youth in care? What impact might higher self-esteem have on their ability to cope with stressors and the anti-Black racism they may experience?

2. How can child welfare professionals and foster parents be supported to understand the microaggressions that Black children and youth experience?

2.3 UNDERSTANDING MACRO-LEVEL ANTI-BLACK RACISM

> Racism is a structure, not an event.
>
> ~ J. Kehaulani Kauanui

While the expression of anti-Black racism is often more evident at the micro level (above the waterline), what happens below the waterline, at the macro level, is more pervasive and powerful. While the behaviours above the waterline are individual acts, what occurs below the waterline creates "a network of social relations at social, political, economic, and ideological levels that shapes the life chances of [people of African descent]."[15] Anti-Black racism, therefore, is a structure that operates independently of the intentions of individuals.

Consequently, to properly understand the issues and challenges facing African Canadians involved with the child welfare system, their experiences need to be understood within the context of the four dimensions of anti-Black racism at the macro, or system, level: ideological, cultural, systemic, and structural oppression.

IDEOLOGICAL OPPRESSION

Any oppressive system has at its core the idea that one group is better than another, and has the right to control others.

(Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training)

Any oppressive system has at its core the idea that one group is better than another and has the right to control others. Oppressive ideologies describe the dominant group as more intelligent, harder working, more capable, more deserving, superior, and so on, with the opposite qualities attributed to marginalized groups.[16] This ideology is held by the dominant group and is communicated through the dominant culture, including through the news and entertainment media, books, religion, as well as the education, child welfare, criminal justice, and health care systems. It therefore impacts how and which laws, policies, and funding decisions are made by all orders of government, as well as the policies and procedures within individual organizations. The ideology that one group is better than other groups, and therefore more deserving of being in power and accumulating resources, is used to justify the creation and maintenance of oppressive systems that not only discriminate against people, but subject them to physical and psychological violence.

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[15] Bonilla-Silva, E. (2017). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America* (p. 18). Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

[16] Grassroots Institute for Fundraising Training. (n.d.). *Four I's of oppression.* Retrieved from http://www.grassrootsfundraising.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/10/THE-FOUR-IS-OF-OPPRESSION-1.pdf

White supremacy is the ideology that supports anti-Black racism. It was born out of the transatlantic slave trade to justify the enslavement of African people and to make the colonization of regions throughout the world seem like a "natural" process, wherein "superior" White races would dominate "inferior" African people.[17] A separate and inferior Black race was created to dehumanize African people and justify the enslavement of African people for over 400 years. At the same time that a separate and inferior Black race was constructed, a separate and superior White was also created.[18] As author and journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates has stated, "Race is the child of racism, not the father." By that he means that Europeans created the ideology of unequal races to justify the exploitation of racialized people.[19]

Similarly, historian Ibram Kendi explains that "The beneficiaries of slavery, segregation, and mass incarceration have produced racist ideas of Black people being best suited for or deserving of slavery, segregation, or the jail cell. Consumers of these racist ideas have been led to believe there is something wrong with Black people, and not the policies that have enslaved, oppressed, and confined so many Black people."[20] Kendi argues that if we believed that all humans are equal, then we would attribute racial inequality to anti-Black racism, not to Black people themselves.

Cultural oppression comes about when the experiences of the dominant group are taken to be universal and a baseline against which others are evaluated.[21] The dominant culture is normalized and communicated through language, the news and entertainment media, books, toys, and religion. It is also communicated through the education, health care, child welfare, and criminal justice systems. The dominant culture sends strong messages about who belongs, who is important, and who is not.

CULTURAL OPPRESSION

Cultural oppression comes about when the experiences of the dominant group are taken to be universal and a baseline against which others are evaluated.

(Mullaly & West, 2018)

When Black people from Canadian and world history are erased, it also makes invisible not only Canada's history of anti-Black racism but also the contributions of African peoples to this country and the world. This rewritten narrative then reinforces anti-Black racism and further justifies racial inequality.

[17] DeVega, C. (2014, April 23). *10 things everyone should know about white supremacy.* Alternet. Retrieved from https://www.alternet.org/2014/04/10-things-everyone-should-know-about-white-supremacy/

[18] DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism* (p. 91). Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

[19] DiAngelo, R. (2018). *White fragility: Why it's so hard for white people to talk about racism.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

[20] Kendi, I. X. (2016). *Stamped from the beginning*. New York, NY: Nation Books.

Systemic oppression occurs when systems, policies, practices, or procedures within organizations result in some individuals (more often those from marginalized groups) receiving unequal access or being excluded from participation (e.g., within employment, services, or programs). Systemic oppression creates different outcomes for various groups of people, such as women versus men, racialized people versus White people, Indigenous Peoples versus non-Indigenous people, as well as those who identify as LGBTQ2S+ versus those who are cisgender and heterosexual.

SYSTEMIC OPPRESSION

Systems, policies, practices, or procedures within organizations result in some individuals (more often those from marginalized groups) receiving unequal access or being excluded from participation (e.g., within employment, services, or programs).

Systemic (or institutional) oppression occurs when a dominant ideology becomes embedded within the systems and structures of organizations, including educational institutions, the criminal justice system, and the child welfare system, to produce discriminatory treatment, unfair policies, and inequitable opportunities and outcomes. Despite claims that they are colour blind, or race-neutral, these policies have become an effective tool for maintaining and recreating racial inequities without specifically targeting racialized people. Systemic racism maintains, reproduces, and deepens racial inequality even as Canadian society is becoming increasingly diverse, welcoming, and inclusive. Sociologist Eduardo Bonilla-Silva refers to this phenomenon as "racism without racists," or colour-blind racism, which "aids in the maintenance of white privilege without fanfare, without naming those who it subjects and those who it rewards." [22]

While systemic oppression occurs within organizations, structural oppression refers to the ways in which institutions interact and work across society to produce and maintain inequality, even in the absence of oppressive intent by individuals who work in these systems. Structural oppression occurs across multiple institutions and systems, systematically creating and maintaining advantage for the dominant group and disadvantage for oppressed groups. Structural oppression includes the history of inequality that provides the foundation for present-day inequality. It also includes the interconnected institutions and policies, key relationships, and rules across society that legitimize, reinforce, and perpetuate oppression.

STRUCTURAL OPPRESSION

Structural oppression refers to the ways in which institutions interact and work across society to produce and maintain social inequality, even in the absence of oppressive intent.

[21] Mullaly, B., & West, J. (2018). *Challenging oppression and confronting privilege* (3rd ed). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
[22] Bonilla-Silva, E. (2017). *Racism without racists: Color-blind racism and the persistence of racial inequality in America.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Figure 2 depicts the various ways in which structural anti-Black racism impacts Black children and youth in the child welfare system. Anti-Black racism increases the likelihood that Black children and youth will become involved with the child welfare system and experience poor outcomes when in care.

The descriptions that follow identify some of the ways in which structural anti-Black racism serves to produce disproportionality and disparities for African Canadians in the child welfare sector.

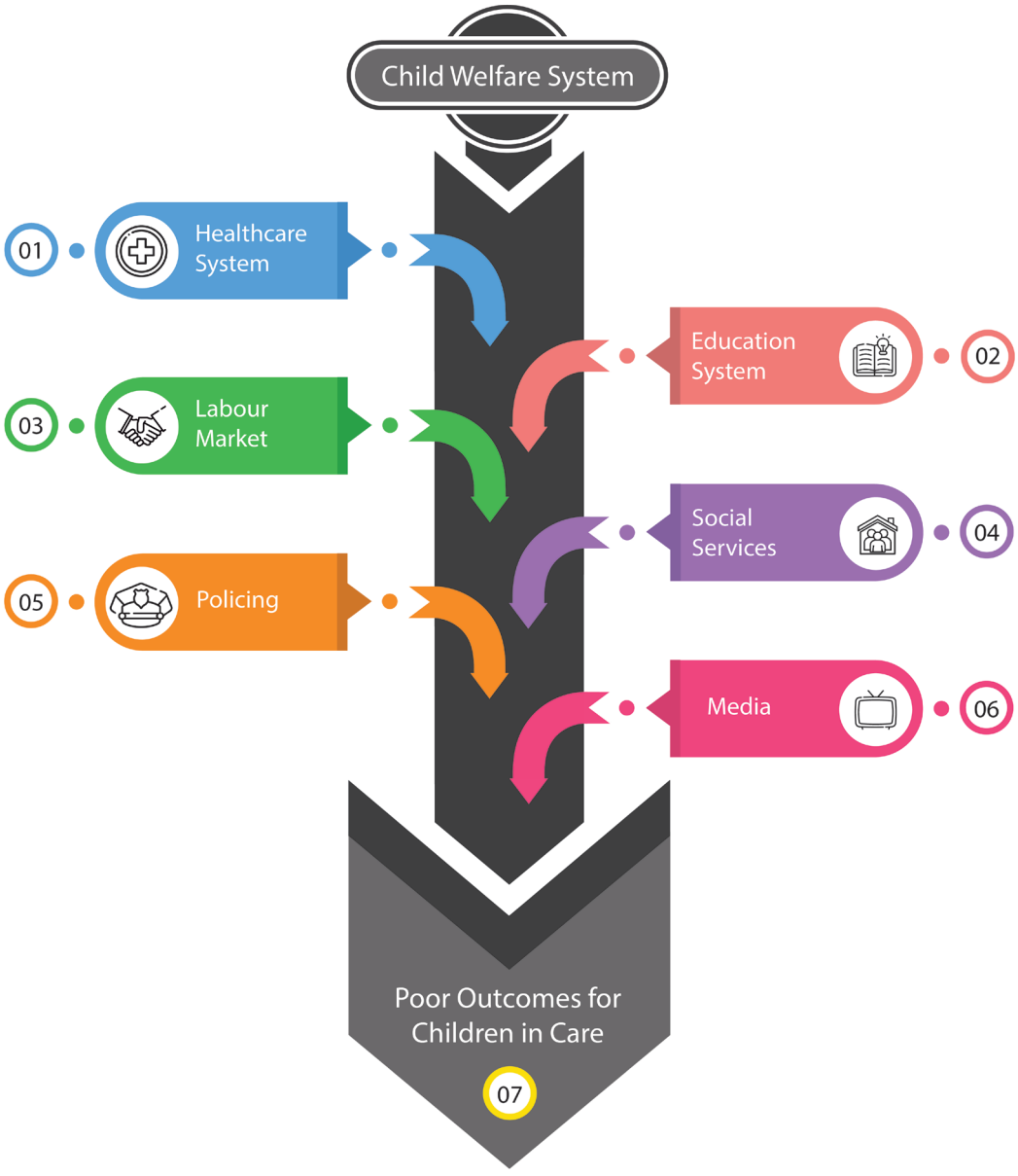

Figure 2. Structural Anti-Black Racism and the Child Welfare System

01

Medical professionals refer Black parents to child welfare for situations that they would likely not refer White parents for. For example, a medical professional is more likely to involve child welfare when they see a Black child with an injury, a Black mother who is HIV positive, or a Black mother with a mental health issue.

02

Teachers over-report Black children to CAS not for suspected abuse, but often for reasons they deem to be neglect, such as what they consider to be an inappropriate lunch or hearing that a Black girl gets her hair washed once a week.

03

Discrimination in the labour market maintains a racial income gap and keeps many Black people in poverty and living in inadequate housing conditions. This can increase their exposure to CAS through other systems. Once a family is investigated, it increases the risk of child apprehension because of living conditions.

04

Lack of culturally appropriate social services such as mental health services means that Black people are less likely to receive much-needed and appropriate services when issues do occur.

05

Black and low-income communities are over-policed and experience over-incarceration. Black children may be taken into care when the parent is incarcerated. Police may involve the child welfare system when Black children and youth appear to be unsupervised.

06

The entertainment and news media serve to reinforce negative images about Black people, which reinforces anti-Black racism among those in the child welfare system as well as those working in health care, education, and policing. The narrative maintained by the media fuels the poor outcomes for African Canadians in all these systems. These poor outcomes are then used as evidence to confirm the original anti-Black racism, creating a self-reinforcing cycle of oppression.

07

The experience of Black children once they are in the care of CAS—including placements in homes that lack cultural knowledge, being placed in multiple homes, changing homes often, aging out of the system, and lack of appropriate supports—contributes to poor outcomes for Black children in care.

PAUSE AND REFLECT: WORKING WITH SYSTEMS THAT OPPRESS

1. In your agency, what are some of the main reasons why Black families are referred to the child welfare system? Who are the main referral sources? Which of these are not reasons you tend to see White families referred for?

2. Reflecting on the relationship between the Black community and the education, policing, child welfare, and health care systems, how do you think African Canadians are seen by those who work in these systems?

3. What can your child welfare agency do to educate mandated referrers when they appear to be over-referring Black families to your agency?

4. What are the experiences of Black staff in your agency? Are they well-represented among child welfare professionals and other frontline workers compared with the proportion of Black children in care? Are Black staff well represented among supervisors and managers? Do they experience a sense of belonging within the agency?

PART 3

ORGANIZING THE WORK

3.1 IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

The Implementation Framework includes three layers: the outside layer represents the work needed to prepare to develop the Implementation Plan; the next layer in consists of the phases needed to develop the Implementation Plan; the innermost layer represents the key stakeholders that should be involved at all stages of the process—your agency's stakeholders. It is important to consider and pay attention to all three.

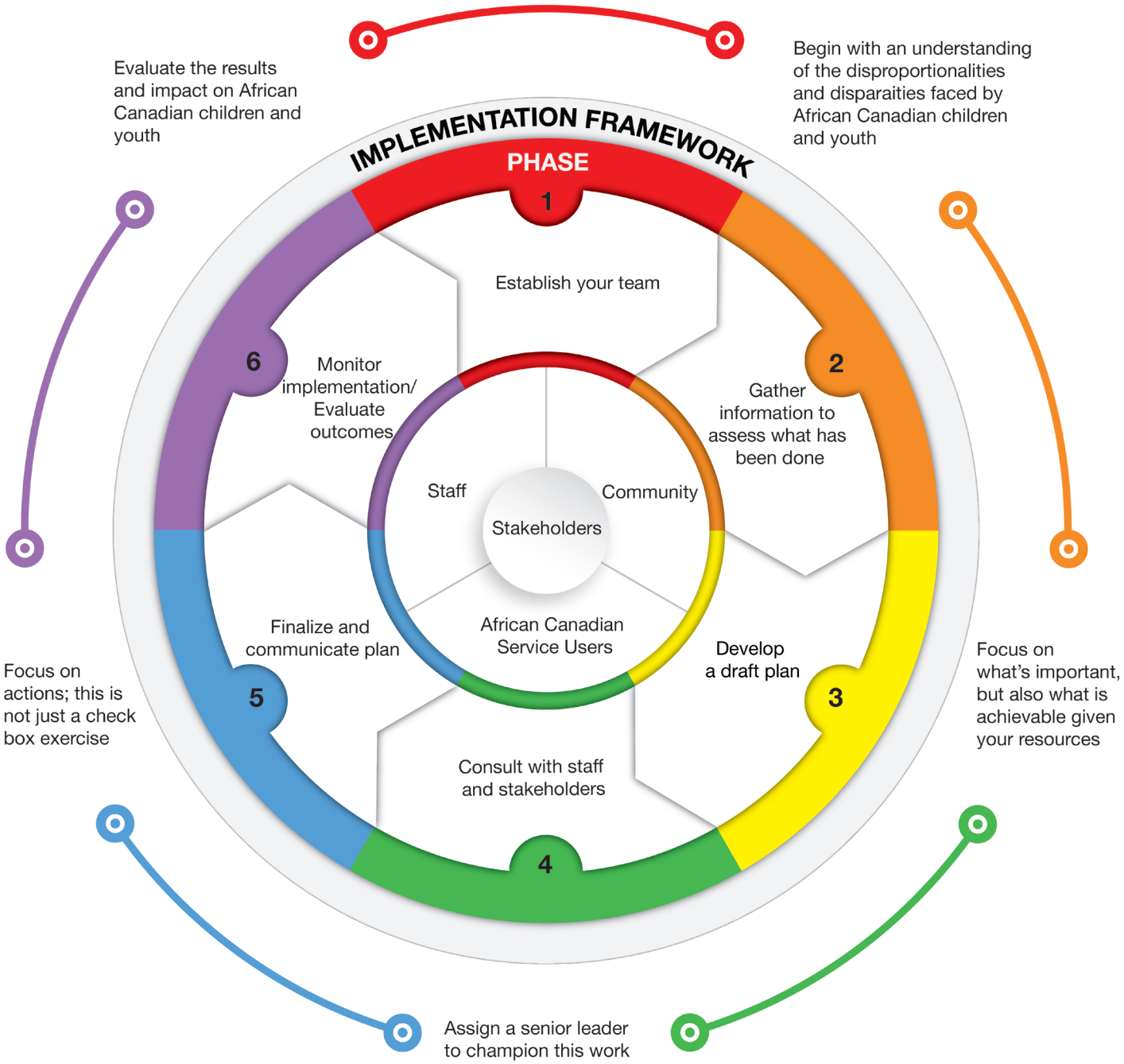

Figure 3. Implementation Framework

3.2 PREPARING TO DEVELOP THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

BEGIN WITH AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE DISPROPORTIONALITIES AND DISPARITIES FACED BY AFRICAN CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Better serving your African Canadian service users begins with an understanding of the disproportionalities and disparities they experience.

ASSESSING DISPROPORTIONALITY

Disproportionality is evident when the percentage of a certain group within any system, including the child welfare system, is higher than its representation in the general population.[23]

The racial disproportionality rate is calculated by dividing the representation of Black children in foster care by their representation in the population. The Center for the Study of Social Policy classifies the racial disproportionality rate as follows:[24]

- Comparable representation occurs when rates are under 1.50
- Moderate disproportionality occurs when rates are between 1.50 and 2.49
- High disproportionality occurs when rates are between 2.50 and 3.49
- Extreme disproportionality occurs when rates are 3.50 and over.

While the *absolute number* of African Canadian children and youth in care is important, it is the *proportion* in care relative to the population in the community that is critical. As Table 1 shows, both Agency A and Agency B have 55 Black children and youth in care. However, Agency A has a total of 300 children and youth in care, so the 55 Black children and youth constitute 18% of all the children and youth in care. The Black population constitutes 4% of the community served by this agency. When we divide column B by column D, we obtain a racial disproportionality rate of 4.4. This means that the proportion of Black children and youth in care is almost four and a half times that of their representation in the community. According to the Center for the Study of Social Policy, this indicates extreme disproportionality.

[23] Harris, M.S. (2014). *Racial disproportionality in child welfare.* New York, NY: Columbia University Press.
[24] The Center for Community Partnerships in Child Welfare of the Center for the Study of Social Policy (2006)

TABLE 1. Calculating the Racial Disproportionality Rate of Black Children and Youth in Care.

	CHILDREN & YOUTH IN CARE		YOUR COMMUNITY (CENSUS DATA)		RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY RATE
	COLUMN A	COLUMN B	COLUMN C	COLUMN D	COLUMN B % COLUMN D
	#	%	#	%	
AGENCY A					
TOTAL	300	—	250,223	—	—
AFRICAN CANADIAN	55	18.3%	10,456	4.2%	4.4
AGENCY B					
TOTAL	559	—	1,234,876	—	—
AFRICAN CANADIAN	55	9.8%	96,789	7.8%	1.3
YOUR AGENCY					
TOTAL		—		—	—
AFRICAN CANADIAN					

While Agency B also has 55 Black children and youth in care, it has more than double the total number of children and youth in care—559. Black children and youth therefore represent 9.8% of all children and youth in care. The Black population also represents almost 8% of the community served. As such, the racial disproportionality rate is 1.3, meaning that Black children and youth are slightly underrepresented compared with their representation in the community. No disproportionality exists for African Canadian children and youth at this agency.

The same analysis should be conducted for your agency to determine the rate of racial disproportionality. Where disproportionality exists, your agency can explore what is happening at the referral and investigation stages and address issues that arise. At this point, Agency A should be asking questions such as:

- Who are the main sources of referrals to the agency?
- For what reasons are Black families being referred to the agency? How do these referrals differ from those for White families?
- How are the screeners questioning referrers, professionals in particular, when they are referring Black families for what appear to be minor issues?
- Does the rate of investigation differ for Black and White families? What are the outcomes of these investigations?

ASSESSING DISPARITIES

Disparity occurs when outcomes for one group differs from those of a comparison group.[25] This includes, but is not limited to the following:

- The rate at which Black families versus White families receive in-home services
- The rate at which Black children versus White children are removed from their families
- The rate at which Black children are placed in homes with Black foster parents versus the rate at which White children are placed in homes with White foster parents
- The rate at which Black children and youth versus White children and youth are returned to their homes, and
- The rate at which Black youth versus White youth age out of the child welfare system.

A thorough analysis of this data will help you to identify what the issues are and focus your efforts on closing these gaps.

FOCUS ON WHAT'S IMPORTANT, BUT ALSO WHAT IS ACHIEVABLE GIVEN YOUR RESOURCES

Understanding what is important for your organization and the best place to begin this work will strongly impact your success. There are multiple entry points to this work. An organization may prefer to begin with particular activities that builds on work currently underway. Another agency may choose to focus on a particular issue. Agencies are able to decide what will work best for them.

We recommend that you take the time to reflect on the best place for your agency to begin or build on this work. The use of this guide will help you to identify a number of areas requiring action. Agencies can also refer to the ABR Needs Assessment completed through the OVOV Program to explore the issues within their agencies. You may need to balance the need to spend a little effort on multiple activities and consider focusing your attention on a few key areas to start. Depending on where the agency is in exploring and addressing issues of anti-Black racism, it may be more effective if limited time and resources are allocated to fewer activities. Doing these initial activities well could help propel the organization forward with the confidence and commitment to undertake tougher activities.

[25] Harris, M.S. (2014). *Racial disproportionality in child welfare*. New York, NY: Columbia University Press.

ASSIGN A SENIOR LEADER TO CHAMPION THIS WORK

There is no quick answer to achieving racial equity in the child welfare system. It is a journey without a fixed end point. Given the extent of change needed within child welfare agencies, a champion could be an important resource to help guide this work and could help ensure that:

- This work remains a focus for senior leaders
- Challenges are tackled head on and equity work continues despite roadblocks
- Appropriate resources are allocated to this work, and
- This work is integrated into other plans and priorities of the agency.

FOCUS ON ACTIONS; THIS IS NOT A "CHECK-BOX EXERCISE"

This toolkit helps agencies focus on actions that lead to change, not simply the implementation of actions.

While the activities included within each Race Equity Practice are meant to drive change, they do not guarantee the creation of race equity. What is implemented is just as important as how it is implemented. One agency could implement a number of activities, but focus on the activity rather than the change that should result. Such a focus is likely to result in little change within the organization and little change in outcomes for African Canadian families involved with the agency. Conversely, another agency may focus on fewer activities, but make more significant change within the organization because of how the activities are implemented.

As you think about what lies ahead, remember that:

- Change is fluid and constant
- Change can be achieved from multiple entry points
- Tensions are not always negative—it is the push and pull between forces that creates change
- Identities and issues are complex and dynamic, so listen to, and work with, African Canadian communities
- Every municipality has its own unique story, and
- African Canadian residents and community organizations are eager to help find solutions.

EVALUATE THE RESULTS AND IMPACT ON AFRICAN CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Agencies are encouraged to use this tool to develop and implement a plan. But they also need to reflect on what they have done and the impact these activities have had. Evaluating your progress at the end of the 3-year Implementation Plan will help you to stay on track with your progress and identify any gaps or areas where you need to do more work. In doing so, agencies learn to take initiative, solve problems, engage stakeholders, and assess what worked and where additional work is needed. This reflection and self-assessment will allow your agency to create an Implementation Plan that is more purposeful and focused.

Agencies should also remember that a critical component of the evaluation process should include community stakeholder engagement to help the organization critically assess the impacts of its work on African Canadian children, youth, and families.

3.3 Developing the Implementation Plan

PHASE 1: ESTABLISH YOUR TEAM

The first phase of this process is establishing your team. Ideally, you should establish an Advisory Committee made up of staff from all levels of the organization, African Canadian service users, and African Canadian community members. The Advisory Committee will bring a broad range of perspectives and knowledge to effectively guide the organization in the development of the OVOV Implementation Plan. Some child welfare agencies may have already established Local Advisory Committees (LACs), which could become part of your work to establish an agency team to support your Implementation Plan.

The work of the Advisory Committee could be supported by the creation of an internal Working Group consisting of staff from all levels and departments of the organization. This group will gather information, assess what has been done, and propose recommendations for additional work needed to effect change. The Working Group will also help to prioritize activities, identify financial needs and resources, and propose partnerships to ensure effective implementation and monitoring over time. Some agencies may not have the resources to form a Working Group and may instead assign this work to a few individuals.

It is recommended that terms of reference be developed for each team, along with an estimate of the time commitment.

The agency may also wish to assign a project lead to manage the work.

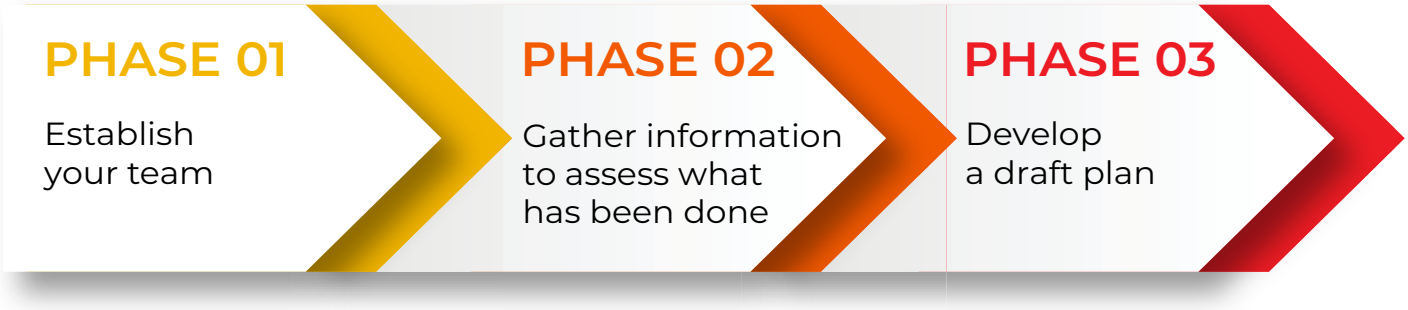

Figure 4. Developing the Implementation Plan

CASE STUDY

AGENCY A

This is the first time that Agency A has examined its numbers, and its analysis has determined that disproportionality does exist for African Canadians. This agency has never engaged with the Black community it serves. This agency decides to spend the first 4 months engaging with the Black community and recruiting members for its OVOV Implementation Plan Advisory Committee. The agency has also decided to use this time to educate staff about the disproportionality experienced by Black children and youth and to identify staff interested in joining the Working Group. Once members of the OVOV Implementation Plan Advisory Committee have been established, the agency plans to take 6 months to complete the additional phases of developing the Implementation Plan.

AGENCY B

This agency has a long history of working with the Black community and has implemented a number of strategies to reduce the disproportionality experienced. These efforts, however, tend to be ad hoc and the result of the attention to these issues by the Director of Service. These activities have also not been documented or communicated to the board or the public.

The agency's Executive Director has sent out an email to the Black-led organizations the agency had been working with and the staff involved in this work to ask for volunteers for the OVOV Implementation Plan Advisory Committee. The Executive Director has decided that to demonstrate the importance of this work, they will co-chair the committee with the Executive Director from a community agency. The Advisory Committee members are identified in the first month, and the first meeting of the committee is held in the second month.

PHASE 2: GATHER INFORMATION TO ASSESS WHAT HAS BEEN DONE

Once the Advisory Committee and Working Groups have been established, the Working Group should begin the process of gathering information to assess what work has been conducted on the 11 Race Equity Practices and what other work is needed. The worksheets provided in this toolkit can be used to gather this information and determine what action needs to be included in the Implementation Plan.

The input of the Advisory Committee is important during this phase. Given the large scope of work, we recommend that at each of about four meetings, the information gathered be presented along with the proposed action to be included in the Implementation Plan. Depending on the size of your agency, the extent of the disproportionality and disparities, and the size of the African Canadian community in the community served, this process could take 4 to 6 months.

It is best to take your time at this stage, as it helps members of the Advisory Committee to understand the role of child welfare agencies and your particular agency in order to make informed recommendations for change.

CASE STUDY

AGENCY A

This agency has spent the first few meetings educating community members of the Advisory Committee about how the child welfare agency works and the legal framework within which it operates. In these meetings, members of the Black community have shared their experiences with the agency, how and where discretion is used by staff, and the impact of the agency on families and the community.

Because this agency has not yet begun to undertake any work to address disproportionality and disparity, the data gathering phase has been short. The committee has decided to use the time to review the 11 Race Equity Practices and the results of the completed Anti-Black Racism Needs Assessment. They have used the Working Group to consult with staff about their proposed activities in order to focus on some key activities in the first year of the plan.

AGENCY B

This agency has been implementing a number of activities to address anti-Black racism. These efforts have documented and presented to the Advisory Committee. The Working Group has reviewed the worksheets from this toolkit to identify the changes needed and additional activities to undertake. The committee has reviewed the 11 Race Equity Practices and Anti-Black Racism Needs Assessment results, and has also considered the input from staff.

PHASE 3: DEVELOP A DRAFT IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Once all the worksheets are completed, the proposed activities to be included in the Implementation Plan should be reviewed by the Working Group and a draft Implementation Plan developed. This draft will consider the available resources, other strategies being implemented within the agency, and competing priorities. The Working Group will also identify what will be implemented in the short term (i.e., within the next 3 years) and the long term (i.e., 3 to 5 years).

CASE STUDY

AGENCY A

The Working Group has used the input from the Advisory Committee to develop a draft Implementation Plan.

AGENCY B

The Working Group has used the input from the Advisory Committee to develop a draft Implementation Plan.

PHASE 4: CONSULT WITH STAFF AND STAKEHOLDERS

This draft Implementation Plan should be shared with the Advisory Committee for their review and input. The agency may also wish to engage in broader consultation with staff and stakeholders by seeking their input before the Implementation Plan is finalized.

CASE STUDY

AGENCY A

Because this agency has not previously engaged with the Black community, it has decided to hold a series of consultation sessions to gather community input on the Implementation Plan. The individuals and groups identified in Phase 1 are again invited to attend one of two sessions to review and provide input into the Implementation Plan.

AGENCY B

This agency has a long-established relationship with the Black community. As such, the Executive Director has emailed the draft Implementation Plan to everyone on the agency's mailing list and invited their comments. This agency has also invited these individuals to attend a meeting to share their comments with the Executive Director and the Advisory Committee.

PHASE 5: FINALIZE AND COMMUNICATE PLAN

Once the input of staff and stakeholders has been considered, the Implementation Plan should be finalized and communicated both internally and externally.

CASE STUDY

AGENCIES A AND B

Both agencies have finalized their OVOV Implementation Plan and posted it on their websites. In the plan itself, the agency has also documented the process of developing the plan and thanked those who participated on the Advisory Committee. It has also documented the ongoing involvement of the Advisory Committee in monitoring the plan's implementation.

PHASE 6: MONITOR IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATE OUTCOMES

Once the Implementation Plan has been created and approved, the work of the Advisory Committee and Working Group is not finished. They still have an important role to play: they may be able to provide input into the completion of particular activities and will be critically important to monitoring implementation and evaluating outcomes.

As such, the Advisory Committee can meet twice a year to receive updates from the agency and provide additional input. The Working Group should be meeting more often, as they are critical to the coordinated implementation of the plan and will need to share information throughout the year.

Agencies should also develop an evaluation framework to ensure that they are able to evaluate the outcomes of the plan for African Canadian children, youth, and families.

CASE STUDY

AGENCIES A AND B

Both agencies have established an evaluation framework and developed a meeting schedule for the Advisory Committee. At these meetings, the Advisory Committee will review not only the activities identified in the plan, but also the disproportionality and disparities experienced by Black children, youth, and families.

PART 4

ASSESSING THE CURRENT STATUS

PART A

SETTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

PRACTICE 1: COMMIT TO COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP

While all employees are able to influence organizational change, it is the responsibility of the organization's board, Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer, and senior management team to set the direction, specify organizational expectations, and allocate resources. These senior leaders also need to boldly lead conversations on anti-Black racism, spearhead anti-racism organizational change efforts, and engage the organization in courageous conversations if racial disproportionality and disparities are to be identified and addressed.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Child welfare agencies are run by a board of directors made up of volunteers from the community. This model of governance puts the onus on the board for the functioning and financial well-being of the agency as well as ensuring the agency meets the needs of the local community by providing services that most benefit children, youth, and families. Executive Directors / Chief Executives Officers are hired by and report to their local boards, which in turn provide strategic direction for the agency.

ACTIVITY:

1.1 Ensure the organization has a stated commitment to equity and addressing anti-Black racism, that is reflected in its strategic plan and other organizational documents, which will be achieved by reducing disproportionality and disparities through an anti-Black racism lens.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the wording from the strategic plan and other organizational documents below. Reflect on whether the wording is sufficiently strong to drive change. If not, add a review of this wording to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.2 Ensure the Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer's performance plan reflects their responsibility to create an equitable and anti-racist, anti-oppressive organizational culture and includes benchmarks to reduce the disproportionality and disparities experienced by African Canadians.

☐ **COMPLETED**	☐ **IN PROGRESS**	☐ **HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS**
Document the wording from the Executive Director's / Chief Executive Officer's performance plan below along with the benchmarks.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.3 Report annually to the public on plans, activities, and outcomes from implementing these Race Equity Practices.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's plans to report annually to the public on plans, activities, and outcomes from implementing these Race Equity Practices. Include plans and/or efforts to disseminate this information to community partners and stakeholders. Consider whether these plans are sufficient. If not, add this to the Implementation Plan. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.4 Receive regular updates of the key performance indicators disaggregated by race, set goals for the reduction of disproportionality and disparities, and assess progress made in achieving these goals.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when the board regularly receives updates of the key performance indicators disaggregated by race, how it sets goals for the reduction of disproportionality and disparities, and how progress is assessed. Consider whether these plans are sufficient. If not, add this work to the Implementation Plan. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.5 Ensure the composition of the board reflects the diversity of service users.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when a census of the board was conducted and what the results were compared with the diversity of service users and/or the community served. Document the actions that the agency has committed to as a result of the findings. Consider whether these plans are sufficient. If not, add this work to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Diversity on Nonprofit Boards, National Council of Nonprofits
https://www.councilofnonprofits.org/tools-resources/diversity-nonprofit-boards

This webpage discusses the benefits of diversity on non-profit boards and some pointers on how to achieve this diversity. A list of resources is also provided.

Beyond Political Correctness: Building a Diverse and Inclusive Board, BoardSource
https://boardsource.org/resources/building-diverse-inclusive-board/

This webpage provides information on the importance of diversity to non-profit boards and provides three strategies to assist boards in embracing and integrating diversity and creating an inclusive environment.

A Fresh Look at Diversity and Boards, Blue Avocado
https://blueavocado.org/board-of-directors/a-fresh-look-at-diversity-and-boards/

This webpage provides some approaches to thinking about diversity on nonprofit boards and sample policies that can act as a starting point for agencies.

ACTIVITY:

1.6 Receive mandatory and ongoing training and education on equity, disproportionality and disparities, anti-Black racism, and anti-oppression.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when the agency delivers mandatory, ongoing training and education to the board on equity, disproportionality and disparities, anti-Black racism, and anti-oppression. Consider whether these plans are sufficient. If not, consider adding changes to the Implementation Plan. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.7 Receive regular updates on racial disproportionality and disparities, the changing demographics of the community served, and projections of further demographic changes to inform community engagement and service delivery strategies.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when the board regularly receives updates on racial disproportionality and disparities, the changing demographics of the community served, and projections of further demographic changes to inform community engagement and service delivery strategies. Consider whether these plans are sufficient. If not, add any revisions to the Implementation Plan. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.8 Establish an African Canadian Advisory Committee that includes African Canadian former youth in care, other service users, and community partners to advise the board, identify issues, and provide insights into opportunities to reduce disproportionalities and better serve African Canadian children, youth and families.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when the African Canadian Advisory Committee was formed and whether it includes former youth in care, other service users, and community partners. State the goals and objectives of the committee and how it communicates information to the board. Consider whether this is sufficient to identify and address the concerns of the Black community. If not, add this work to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	If the agency feels that such an advisory committee is unnecessary given the size of the Black community in the community served or the number of Black children and youth in care, document this. If such a committee is needed, add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PROMISING & EMERGING PRACTICES

City of Toronto
Partnership & Accountability Circle

As part of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, the City is engaging with 12 Black Torontonians as part of the Partnership & Accountability Circle to guide and support the full implementation of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism.

https://www.toronto.ca/community-people/get-involved/community/confronting-anti-black-racism/partnership-accountability-circle/

Children's Aid Society of Toronto
Community Advisory Committee (CAC) Services with Black African Caribbean Canadian Families, Children, Youth

The Community Advisory Committee provides perspective, knowledge, expertise, and advice to the Children's Aid Society of Toronto regarding services provided to the Black African Caribbean Canadian children, youth, families, caregivers, and communities to assist the CAS of Toronto with achieving the best possible and timely outcomes in a discrimination-free and safe environment for Black children in care.

https://torontocas.ca/community-advisory-committee-cac-services-black-african-caribbean-canadian-families-children-youth

Peel Children's Aid Society & Black Community Action Network of Peel (BCAN)
Pulling Together Partnership

Peel CAS and BCAN have formed an alliance to lead the development of an anti-racism, community capacity-building, and systems change initiative with African Canadian families, the organizations that serve them, and community leaders. The goal of this partnership is to build regional capacity in Peel so that African Canadian families receive relevant, meaningful, and appropriate services and supports while promoting greater systemic equity.

http://www.bcanpeel.com/events/pulling-together-partnership/

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR / CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

The Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the agency, which includes setting direction for the agency, managing staff, as well as developing service plans in collaboration with the board.

ACTIVITY:

1.9 Ensure the organization recognizes, in internal documents and communications with the public, the existence and impact of anti-Black racism in society, in the local community, and within the organization.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and in which documents the agency recognizes the existence and impact of anti-Black racism in society, in the local community, and within the organization. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.10 Ensure the organization's stated commitment to equity, which will be achieved by reducing disproportionality and disparities within an anti-racism / anti-oppressive framework, is reflected throughout the work of the organization.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the agency's stated commitment to equity is reflected in the work of the organization. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.10 Using the key performance indicators, report on the agency's efforts to reduce disproportionality and disparities for African Canadian children, youth and families and the outcomes achieved.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the agency reports on its efforts to reduce disproportionality and disparities for African Canadian children, youth, and families and the outcomes achieved. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.11 Receive mandatory and ongoing training and education on equity, disproportionality and disparities, anti-Black racism, and anti-oppression.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when the Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer receives mandatory, ongoing training and education on equity, disproportionality and disparities, anti-Black racism, and anti-oppression. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.12 Ensure that senior leaders are regularly updated on racial disproportionality and disparities, the changing demographics of the community served, and projections of further demographic changes to inform community engagement and service delivery strategies.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when senior leaders are regularly updated on racial disproportionality and disparities, the changing demographics of the community served, and projections of further demographic changes to inform community engagement and service delivery strategies. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

1.13 Ensure that activities to reduce disproportionality and disparities and outcomes achieved are regularly discussed at leadership meetings.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when activities to reduce disproportionality and disparities and the outcomes achieved are regularly discussed at leadership meetings. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

The senior management team is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the agency under the direction of the Executive Director / Chief Executive Officer.

ACTIVITY:

1.14 Ensure all aspects of the organization's work is conducted using an equity lens to ensure that addressing disproportionality and disparities is not seen as an optional add-on, but is integrated into all aspects of the work of the organization.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the senior management team ensures that the agency applies an equity lens to its work such that addressing anti-Black racism is integrated into all aspects of the organization's work. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Equity and Empowerment Lens, Multnomah County
https://multco.us/diversity-equity/equity-and-empowerment-lens

This Equity and Empowerment Lens (with a racial justice focus) is designed to improve planning, decision making, and resource allocation, leading to more racially equitable policies and programs. At its core, it is a set of principles, reflective questions, and processes that focuses on the individual, institutional, and systemic levels by:

- Deconstructing what is not working around racial equity
- Reconstructing and supporting what is working
- Shifting the way we make decisions and think about this work, and
- Healing and transforming our structures, our environments, and ourselves.

Equity Lens Approach, Pennsylvania School Boards Association
https://www.psba.org/member-services/equity-services/tools-resources/equity-lens-approach/

This equity lens provides key questions that can be adopted by child welfare agencies to better recognize and mitigate inequities within their policies and practices.

PRACTICE 2: COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA TO MEASURE RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITIES

The collection and analysis of data is critical to informing policy and practice to improve outcomes for African Canadian children, youth, and families. Through the use of data, child welfare agencies are able to assess the extent of racial disproportionality and disparities, identify the underlying causes, as well as measure progress toward improving service outcomes.

ACTIVITY:

2.1 Collect disaggregated race-based data for each family and child and input this information into CPIN or the organization's legacy system for data collection and case management.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's efforts to collect race-based data routinely and accurately for each family and child, and ensure that this information is accurately entered into CPIN. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

2.2 Regularly analyze and report on this data to identify disproportionality and disparities at each decision point on the child welfare continuum and to monitor change. For example, compare the proportion of African Canadian families reported to CAS in relation to their composition of the community, the proportion for which investigations are conducted as compared to their White and other racialized counterparts, the proportion of African Canadian children and youth apprehended as compared to their White and other racialized counterpart, etc. Such an analysis will help identify the points at which issues occur and will help the agency target change efforts.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the agency regularly analyzes and reports on the data collected to identify disproportionality and disparities at each decision point on the child welfare continuum and to monitor change. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

2.3 Ensure staff have the knowledge and skills to gather race-based data from service users.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the training and education that staff receive to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to gather race-based data from service users. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 3: EVALUATE PROGRAMS AND MONITOR PERFORMANCE

Ongoing program evaluation and performance monitoring allows organizations to understand which programs, services, and practices are working; the impact they have on African Canadian children, youth, and families; and where changes are needed to achieve the desired outcomes. As such, ongoing program evaluation and performance monitoring are needed to assess the effectiveness of services, practice models, and tools provided to and used with African Canadian children, youth, and families.

ACTIVITY:

3.1 Regularly conduct research and reviews on the services, practice models, and tools, provided to and used with African Canadian children, youth and families to assess their effectiveness, ensure they don't create or maintain disparities, and ensure that they recognize and respect the culture of African Canadian children, youth and families.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the research and reviews that are conducted and planned on the services, practice models, and tools provided to and used with African Canadian service users. Document the findings of this research and the plans for change or further analysis. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 4: ALLOCATE APPROPRIATE AND DEDICATED RESOURCES

While the Ministry of Children and Youth Services determines the annual budget allocation for each CAS, each agency has the flexibility to determine how resources will be allocated to support service delivery priorities, including the achievement of better outcomes for African Canadian, children, youth, and families. Further, when procuring services (e.g., group homes, outside paid resources, mental health beds, etc.), each agency should include an assessment of the service provider's ability to reflect and appropriately serve African Canadian children and youth in care and their complex needs.

ACTIVITY:

4.1 In the organization's service plan, establish specific goals to reduce the disproportionality and disparities identified and ensure the activities to achieve these goals are appropriately funded.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the disproportionality and disparities and the specific goals in the service plan to reduce them. Document the funding applied to these activities. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.2 Use disaggregated race-based data to ensure the equitable allocation of resources.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how disaggregated race-based data is used to ensure the equitable allocation of resources. Consider whether these plans are adequate. If not, add this work to the Implementation plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.3 Allocate appropriate funding to ensure that preventative services that are culturally appropriate are provided, including those that focus on decreasing apprehensions, strengthening families, and keeping families together.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the funding allocated to ensure that preventative services are culturally appropriate. Document how this level of funding was (or will be) determined to be adequate. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.4 Allocate appropriate funding to ensure that foster parents, group homes, and therapeutic residential programs are able to appropriately meet the daily needs of African Canadian children and youth in care, including providing culturally appropriate foods, skin care products, hair care products and services, books, toys, and other resources.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the funding allocated to ensure that foster parents, group homes, and therapeutic residential programs are able to appropriately meet the daily needs of African Canadian children and youth in care. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.5 Ensure the allocation of Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent (OCBE) funds to support resilience, smoother transition to adulthood, and better educational outcomes for African Canadian children and youth. This should include using funds to meet the cultural requirements of children and youth and addressing the impact of systemic racism.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how Ontario Child Benefit Equivalent (OCBE) funds are used to support resilience, smoother transition to adulthood, and better educational outcomes for African Canadian children and youth. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.6 Purchase culturally appropriate services from African Canadian community organizations and service providers to keep children safely in their homes and reduce the number of African Canadian children and youth apprehended.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's efforts to purchase culturally appropriate services from African Canadian community organizations and service providers to keep children safely in their homes and reduce the number of African Canadian children and youth apprehended. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

4.7 Ensure procurement policies and practices include an assessment of: suppliers' ability to meet the needs of African Canadian children and youth in care; the extent to which their policies and approaches to serve delivery align with anti-racism / anti-oppression practices; their organizational values; and, the diversity of their workforce.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's efforts to ensure that its procurement policies and practices include an assessment of: suppliers' ability to meet the needs of African Canadian children and youth in care; the extent to which their policies and approaches to service delivery align with anti-racism / anti-oppressive practices; their organizational values; and the diversity of their workforce. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 5: ENGAGE AFRICAN CANADIAN PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES

Engaging parents and community members effectively in the child welfare system is both complex and vital to the outcomes for African Canadian children, youth, and families. Given this challenge and imperative, child welfare agencies must develop ways of engaging parents and community members not only in the short term, but also with the goal of developing and maintaining relationships over the long term.

ACTIVITY:

5.1 Engage in regular outreach to the African Canadian community to continue to get input into the development of service protocols.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's outreach strategy to the African Canadian community to get input into the development of service protocols. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

5.2 Educate African Canadian communities about the role of Ontario's child welfare agencies, the rights of children, youth and parents when engaging with the child welfare system, the role and expectations of parenting in Canada, and how parents can advocate for themselves.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's efforts to educate African Canadian communities about the role of Ontario's child welfare agencies; the rights of children, youth, and parents when engaging with the child welfare system; the role and expectations of parenting in Canada; and how parents can advocate for themselves. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

5.3 Engage in regular outreach to the African Canadian community to recruit staff, volunteers, board members, as well as foster and adoptive parents. Ensure outreach is conducted to the various African Canadian communities, including LGBTQ2S+ and the various cultural communities.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the agency's efforts to conduct outreach to the African Canadian community to recruit staff, volunteers, board members, as well as foster and adoptive parents. Document how outreach is conducted to the various African Canadian communities, including LGBTQ2S+ and the various cultural communities. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 6: ENGAGE AND EDUCATE MANDATED REFERRERS

Mandated referrers are important partners in protecting children and youth from maltreatment. However, as the first stage in the child welfare continuum, they can contribute to the overrepresentation of African Canadians in the child welfare system. As such, it is important that child welfare agencies analyze referral data and provide critical feedback and additional training to referral organizations and professionals as needed.

ACTIVITY:

6.1 Collect and analyze data on the referral source, race of the children, youth and families referred, the grounds for referral (e.g., abuse, neglect), and the outcomes of the referral (e.g., not investigated, investigated but not substantiated, investigated and substantiated) to identify whether additional education and training is needed for mandated referrers.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the agency collects and analyzes data on the referral source, race of the children, youth, and families referred, the grounds for referral (e.g., abuse, neglect), and the outcomes of the referral. Document the findings of this analysis and the assessment of the extent to which additional education and training is needed for mandated referrers. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

6.2 Provide critical feedback, engage in ongoing discussions, and provide training to mandated referrers when the analysis of data indicates racial disproportionality in referrals. Work with mandated referral sources to ensure their staff have a more nuanced understanding of child abuse and maltreatment, an understanding of poverty and the impact on parenting, and an understanding of how their biases can contribute to disproportionality in the child welfare system.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the critical feedback, ongoing discussions, and training provided to mandated referrers when the analysis of data indicates racial disproportionality in referrals. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

6.3 Educate and support screeners to ensure they respond appropriately to referrers who are expressing racism when reporting a concern of child maltreatment.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the education and supports provided to screeners to ensure they respond appropriately to referrers who express racism when reporting a concern of child maltreatment. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

CASE STUDY

AGENCY A

After speaking with screeners and reviewing its data, this agency recognizes that a large proportion of Black families are referred to their agency by teachers. Further exploration finds that four schools in particular have provided 25% of all referrals to the agency. These referrals include a call about a child who didn't bring lunch for 3 days (when the child was interviewed, it was determined that his parents had given him lunch money, which he decided not to spend in order to buy a new video game); a call about a child who missed 4 school days in each of the past 3 months (the investigation found that the family was receiving Ontario Works and often ran out of money at the end of the month; hence they could not afford the bus fare for their children to go to school); and calls when Black parents were late picking up their child from school.

Screeners receive training and resources to support structured questioning of all callers in order to determine whether there is actually a child protection issue. The questions include asking about the race of the child, whether the teacher had had a conversation with the child or the parent, and more in-depth conversation about why the caller thought this was a child protection issue.

The agency also partners with school principals to jointly develop and deliver Duty to Report training at these schools. They also further educate the school on the "duty to support" African Canadian children and families and avoid reporting families for frivolous issues that do not concern a child's safety.

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Single Black Mom Battles School Over Calls to CAS
https://www.thestar.com/news/insight/2017/02/25/single-black-mom-battles-school-over-calls-to-cas.html

When Schools Use Child Protective Services As A Weapon Against Parents
https://www.huffingtonpost.ca/entry/child-protective-services-schools_n_5beee8aee4b0860184a7f61c

ACTIVITY:

6.4 Provide screeners and investigators with a list of culturally specific community agencies and resources they can refer clients to address a variety of issues, including poverty.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the list of culturally specific community agencies and resources provided to screeners and investigators to which they can refer clients to address a variety of issues, including poverty. Complete community mapping of African Canadian service providers in the local community and surrounding areas. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 7: ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMPLAINT MECHANISMS

Each child welfare agency has an internal complaints process through which families can have their concerns investigated and addressed. Families can also make a complaint to the Child and Family Services Review Board. However, these two review processes do not consider matters currently before the courts or that the courts have already decided. Nor do these two review processes consider matters that fall under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017. In order to be served by these review processes, African Canadians involved with the child welfare system need to be informed of the complaints mechanisms available to them. Further, these mechanisms should be assessed to determine how well they serve the needs of and address the issues raised by African Canadians.

ACTIVITY:

7.1 Ensure all African Canadian children, youth and families who come into contact with the child welfare agency are made aware of how to make a complaint, including external and internal complaints mechanisms, should they have concerns of unfair treatment or racial discrimination.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how African Canadian children, youth, and families who come into contact with the agency are made aware of how to make a complaint, including external and internal complaints mechanisms, should they have concerns about unfair treatment or racial discrimination. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

AGENCY B

When consulting with the African Canadian Advisory Committee, this agency realizes that while many Black children, youth, and families have had complaints about how they were treated, these complaints were taken to community agencies and service providers and not reported to the child welfare agency itself. Because the Executive Director has believed that there were no complaints, he has interpreted this to mean that the agency was doing a good job of serving the African Canadian community.

Recognizing that the lack of complaints does not mean a lack of issues, the Executive Director ensures that activities 7.1, 7.2, and 7.3 are included in the Implementation Plan. He wants all families who have and will come into contact with the agency, as well as children and youth in care, understand their rights and the internal and external avenues for complaints should anyone feel that their rights have been violated.

The Executive Director has also ensured that these complaints will be tabulated at the end of the year and reported to the board.

ACTIVITY:

7.2 Annually analyze and report complaint data to the board.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when complaint data is analyzed and reported to the board. Document the topics and analyses included in the report, along with the findings. This work should be ongoing and should be added to the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

7.3 Ensure there is a process in place for youth in care to make complaints and have their issues addressed.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the process in place for youth in care to make complaints and have their concerns addressed. This work should be ongoing. If this mechanism is already in place, document how complaints by African Canadian youth are analyzed annually and reported to the board.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 8: ENHANCE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Critical to delivering culturally appropriate and culturally safe services to African Canadian children, youth, and families is ensuring that the staff delivering those services and making policy and program decisions reflect the diversity of service users and understand the issues faced by service users. Within the agency, there is also a need to ensure that African Canadian staff, and indeed all staff, are able to raise concerns as needed and advocate for changes to better serve African Canadians without fear of reprisal.

ACTIVITY:

8.1 Implement an Employment Equity Program that is consistent with the requirements of the federal *Employment Equity Act*, to ensure that the organization is reflective of the diversity of service users and that barriers to their hiring, advancement, and full participation in the agency are identified and removed.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the development of the agency's Employment Equity Program and where its Employment Equity Plan can be found. This work should be ongoing, and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Employment Equity Tools, Resources, and Publications, Government of Canada
https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/services/employment-equity/tools.html

Employment Equity: A Tool Kit for PSAC Members, Public Service Alliance of Canada
http://psacunion.ca/employment-equity-tool-kit-psac-members

ACTIVITY:

8.2 Conduct an assessment of the organizational culture, by an external, independent third party, that allows staff to provide perspectives about the organizational culture, their work environment, and whether they feel they are able to advocate for change without fear of reprisal. Use the findings of this assessment to create a plan to address the issues identified and support change in the organizational culture.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document the process to conduct the assessment, the findings of the assessment, and the plan to address the issues identified. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

8.3 Support African Canadian staff to organize and participate in African Canadian staff groups and province-wide initiatives to reduce disproportionality and disparities experienced by African Canadians in the child welfare system.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document how African Canadian staff are supported to organize and participate in affinity groups and province-wide initiatives. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

TOOLS & RESOURCES

Durham Black Educators' Network (DBEN)
https://www.dben.org/

DBEN's mission is to enhance the engagement and empowerment of youth, parents, staff, and community members. Through its various activities such as student conferences, student leadership programs, student scholarship awards, educator awards, and parent workshops, DBEN supports student well-being and the pursuit of excellence while interrupting damaging narratives about Black youth and Black culture.

Employee Resource Groups: Terms of Reference and Funding Guidelines, Queen's University
https://www.queensu.ca/inclusive/content/employee-resource-groups

Queen's University has a number of Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) that help to create an inclusive workplace by giving equity-seeking groups a formal structure to support their unique needs. ERGs provide opportunities for community building within organizations. The Deputy Provost, in partnership with Human Resources and the Human Rights and Equity Office, provides support for ERGs working to build and support communities for equity-seeking groups on campus.

Affinity Groups, Amazon
Amazon has 12 affinity groups that bring staff together across businesses and locations around the world. Some examples are the Black Employee Network, Amazon Women in Engineering, and Indigenous@Amazon.
https://www.aboutamazon.com/working-at-amazon/diversity-and-inclusion/affinity-groups

ACTIVITY:

8.4 Incorporate equity and anti-racism competencies into job descriptions and staff performance appraisals.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document how equity and anti-racism competencies have been incorporated into job descriptions and staff performance appraisals. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

PROMISING AND EMERGING PRACTICES

Toronto Region Immigrant Employment Council (TRIEC)
https://triec.ca/wp-content/plugins/competency/TRIEC-Inclusive-Workplace-Competencies.pdf

TRIEC developed a competency framework that identifies the competencies underlying diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The competencies are split into three "spheres of influence":

- The personal ("within myself")
- Groups ("within my team"), and
- More widely ("within my organization, workplace, and community").

Toronto District School Board: Equity as a Leadership Competency
https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Portals/0/docs/Equity%20Leadership%20Competencies_12_02_V1.pdf

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) has recognized that the work to achieve equity and close gaps required them to approach equity as a leadership competency. As such, competencies were developed to clearly explain the TDSB's expectations from an equity perspective for everyone in a leadership role or anyone who aspires to be a leader in their organization.

ACTIVITY:

8.5 Provide mandatory and ongoing anti-racism training, which focuses on an understanding of anti-Black racism, to all staff, volunteers, and caregivers relevant to their roles.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document how and when mandatory, ongoing anti-racism training is provided to all staff, volunteers, and caregivers, relevant to their roles. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

8.6 Ensure trainers who deliver the OACAS-designed new worker training are well versed and have proven competence in anti-racism / anti-oppressive practice and an understanding of anti-Black racism.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document the process by which the agency selects trainers to deliver new worker training and ensures that trainers have proven competence in anti-racism / anti-oppressive practice, including an understanding of anti-Black racism. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

8.7 Support mentorship of staff by supervisors through critical reflective practice. Use supervision meetings to increase staff understanding of disproportionality and disparities as well as anti-racism / anti-oppressive practice, with a focus on anti-Black racism.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ INCORPORATED INTO THE AGENCY'S EMPLOYMENT EQUITY PLAN
Document the process by which staff are mentored through critical reflective practice. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan and/or the agency's Employment Equity Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

PRACTICE 9: PROVIDE DAILY SUPERVISION, ONGOING TRAINING, AND SUPPORTS FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND CAREGIVERS

Ensure that agency staff, volunteers, and caregivers are well trained in anti-racism, with a focus on anti-Black racism, and that they receive daily supervision that supports the application of this knowledge to support better outcomes for African Canadian children, youth, and families.

ACTIVITY:

9.1 Through the process of day-to-day supervision of staff, utilize an anti-Black racism lens that supports staff to reflect on their own biases, ask the right questions, assess systemic issues and the impact on families, and assess the language they use to document conversations and interactions with African Canadian families.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how supervisors are educated and supported to use daily supervision to support staff to reflect on their own biases. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

AGENCY A

Agency A has recognized the need for supervisors to incorporate an anti-Black racism lens to support staff to reflect on their own biases, ask the right questions, and assess systemic issues and the impact on families. As such, the agency has identified the need to provide supervisors with tools and resources that will guide child welfare professionals to:

- Identify the strengths of the African Canadian families they are working with
- Increase their understanding of how racism, culture, and their socioeconomic status impacts their clients' lives and how child welfare professionals perceive the family
- Analyze the language they use in case files for African Canadian versus White families, and
- Assess the assumptions made about African Canadian families in the absence of supporting evidence.

ACTIVITY:

9.2 In collaboration with the African Canadian community, develop a resource and reference manual for child welfare workers, volunteers, and caregivers to support them in engaging with and effectively delivering services to African Canadian families to improve child safety, well-being, and permanency outcomes for African Canadian children and youth.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ CONSIDERED, BUT NOT NEED
Document how the agency has worked with the African Canadian community to develop a resource and reference manual for child welfare staff. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

9.3 Establish mechanisms to gather feedback from staff, volunteers and caregivers about their concerns with respect to policies and practices that may lead to disproportionality and disparities.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the mechanisms in place to gather feedback from staff, volunteers, and caregivers about their concerns with respect to policies and practices that may lead to disproportionality and disparities. Summarize the learnings from this feedback and the plans in place to address them. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

9.4 Support all staff, volunteers and caregivers to advocate for the organizational changes needed to provide better service to African Canadians.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the mechanisms and processes in place to support staff, volunteers, and caregivers to advocate for the organizational changes needed to provide better service to African Canadians. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 10: ESTABLISH COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Ensure ongoing engagement of African Canadian parents and the local African Canadian community to support the work of the agency and the success of African Canadian children, youth, and families.

ACTIVITY:

10.1 Ensure parents are invited and supported to attend plan of care meetings. Allow parents to have input into the care of their child while they are in foster care to ensure that the foster family's parenting approach respects their parenting styles and values and that it supports reunification with the family.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the processes in place to ensure that parents are invited and supported to attend plan-of-care meetings. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.2 Promote a healthy relationship between the caregiver and the parents to ensure they understand their parenting styles, values, and care expectations.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the mechanisms and processes in place to promote a healthy relationship between the caregiver and the parents to ensure that they understand their parenting styles, values, and care expectations. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.3 Develop a resource directory for staff, volunteers, and caregivers that assists them to locate culturally appropriate products and services to meet the daily needs of African Canadian children and youth in care, including culturally appropriate foods, skin care products, hair care products and services, books, toys, and cultural events. Ensure that these products and services reflect the full diversity of children and youth in care, e.g. LGBTQ2S+ and culture.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how the resource directory was developed, how it will be shared with staff, and plans for keeping it up to date. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.4 Work with African Canadian community organizations and service providers to develop and provide culturally appropriate prevention services that strengthen families and ensures the safety and well-being of children and youth, such as family counselling, and counselling and supports for children and youth who come out as LGBTQ2S+, and their parents.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS	☐ CONSIDERED BUT NOT NEEDED IN THIS COMMUNITY
Document how the agency is working with African Canadian community organizations and service providers to develop and provide culturally appropriate prevention services that strengthen families and ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.5 Ensure reunification practices acknowledge the impact of being in care on African Canadian children and youth and provide culturally appropriate services to support successful reunification.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how reunification practices acknowledge the impact of being in care on African Canadian children and youth. Document the culturally appropriate services provided to support successful reunification. Document how these efforts are incorporated into the day-to-day practice of child welfare professionals.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.6 Develop protocols with local school boards to minimize lost school days for children and youth in care and support better educational outcomes for African Canadian children and youth in care.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the protocols in place with local school boards to minimize lost school days for children and youth in care. Document the supports in place to support better educational outcomes for African Canadian children and youth in care. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.7 Review existing protocols with other systems, such as education, police, and healthcare, to ensure that these agreements do not adversely affect African Canadian children, youth and families and result in disproportionality and disparities.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the process in place to regularly review protocols with other systems to ensure that these agreements do not adversely affect African Canadian children, youth, and families. Document the process in place to assess the outcomes of these agreements. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

10.8 Develop a policy that supports staff to advocate for African Canadian children and youth in care and interrupt systemic racism within other systems, e.g., education, policing, and healthcare.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the policy and procedures and how they will be reviewed to ensure that staff are able to advocate and interrupt systemic racism within other systems without fear of reprisal. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

PRACTICE 11: STRENGTHEN THE ABILITY OF CAREGIVERS TO SUPPORT AFRICAN CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Agencies can support positive outcomes for African Canadian children and youth in care by placing them with kin as the first option or another African Canadian family as the second option. Agencies can also ensure that caregivers are well trained, supported, and able to support the development of a strong and positive racial identity and the maintenance of cultural connections.

ACTIVITY:

11.1 Recognize that care by kin is preferred for African Canadian children and youth, and use kin when possible to ensure child safety and well-being, strengthen families, and support the best outcomes for African Canadian children and youth.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the procedures in place to ensure that kin placements are used as the preferred option for African Canadian children and youth. In the Implementation Plan, document the procedures in place to assess the extent to which kin placements are used for African Canadian children and youth.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.2 Support children and youth in the care of kin by providing or making available culturally appropriate services as needed, such as mental health treatment, counselling, and services for children and youth coming out as LGBTQ2S+.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the procedures in place to ensure that African Canadian children and youth in the care of kin are provided with culturally appropriate services as needed.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.3 Ensure that the kin parents are adequately supported and receive the supports needed, which may include training and access to funding, specialized treatment, parenting classes, and counselling to maintain the health and integrity of the placement.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the procedures in place to ensure that African Canadian kin parents are adequately supported and connected to the resources they need.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.4 Establish protocols to ensure racial, cultural, and religious matching of foster care placements and adoptions. This should specifically address strategies to ensure that African Canadian LGBTQ2S+ children and youth are placed in homes that support their racial, gender, and sexual identities.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the protocols in place to ensure the racial, cultural, and religious matching of foster placements and adoptions. In particular, the protocols should ensure that African Canadian LGBTQ2S+ children and youth are placed in homes that support their racial, gender, and sexual identities.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.5 Establish protocols to help ensure African Canadian children and youth in care can remain in the same school or community from which they were removed to ensure that they are not inaccessible to parents and to minimize potential harm caused by isolating them in communities with little racial diversity.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the procedures in place to ensure that African Canadian children and youth brought into care remain in the same school or community from which they were removed.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.6 Provide mandatory training and ongoing support for foster and adoptive parents who have or wish to have African Canadian children and/or youth placed in their care, to increase their awareness and understanding of racism and how it impacts African Canadians, racial profiling, and the additional dangers faced by African Canadian children and teens, as well as their skills and ability to address these issues and proactively support the well-being of African Canadian children and youth.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when mandatory training and ongoing support is provided to foster and adoptive parents who have or wish to have African Canadian children and/or youth placed in their care. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.7 Ensure that the mandatory training and ongoing support is also provided for foster and adoptive parents who have or wish to have African Canadian LGBTQ2S+ children and youth placed in their care.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how and when mandatory training and ongoing support is provided to foster and adoptive parents who have or wish to have African Canadian LGBTQ2S+ children and/or youth placed in their care. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.8 Ensure that each plan of care supports the needs of African Canadian and African Canadian LGBTQ2S+ children and youth and has elements that support the child's racial, gender, and sexual identities as well as their cultural, religious, and linguistic needs, and that these plans of care are implemented by the foster parents.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how child welfare professionals will be supported to ensure that each plan of care supports the needs of African Canadian children and youth of all sexual and gender identities, cultures, and religions. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.9 Ensure that all transracial foster and adoptive parents understand and are able to address the physical, emotional, and cultural needs of African Canadian children and youth and are able to identify, address, and mitigate the individual and systemic racism they will face.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document how transracial foster and adoptive parents will be educated to ensure they understand and are able to address the physical, emotional, and cultural needs of African Canadian children and youth and the systemic racism they will experience. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.10 Where psychological or parenting capacity assessments have been court-ordered or recommended, ensure that assessments are completed by an individual with a graduate or doctoral degree skilled in African Canadian cultural experiences and anti-oppressive and racism studies. The final report should also adequately examine systemic racism and allow for cultural differences in parenting styles and utilize evidence-based and/or supported assessment tools for African Canadians.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the policies and procedures in place to ensure that psychological or parenting capacity assessments will be completed by an individual skilled in African Canadian cultural experience and anti-oppressive and racism studies. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

ACTIVITY:

11.11 To minimize the over-diagnosis of African Canadian youth in care, ensure no diagnosis is formed unless the full psycho-social history of the child is included as part of the initial medical and clinical treatment. In addition, parents and caregivers should be part of the assessment and treatment process.

Ensure medical and clinical treatment providers are African Canadian or have an in-depth understanding of African Canadian cultures and anti-Black racism to ensure they are better able to serve these service users.

☐ COMPLETED	☐ IN PROGRESS	☐ HAVE NOT CONSIDERED THIS
Document the policies and procedures in place to minimize the overdiagnosis of African Canadian children and youth in care. This work should be ongoing and should be reflected in the Implementation Plan.	What more needs to be done to complete this activity? Add this work to the Implementation Plan.	Add this work to the Implementation Plan.

NOTES:

APPENDIX A:
IMPLEMENTATION PLAN TEMPLATE

Editable versions of the blank template are available at www.oacas.org

ABC Child Welfare Agency
One Vision One Voice Implementation Plan

Date Created: Date Reviewed/Updated:

PRIORITY AREA: SETTING THE ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT
Goal: ABC Child Welfare Agency will be an agency that promotes organizational change through a race equity lens.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES How We Will Know We Are Making a Difference		
Short-Term Indicators (1 to 3 years)	**Data Source**	**Assessment Frequency**
By DATE, the ABC Child Welfare Agency will analyze racial disproportionality and disparities experienced by Black children and youth.	CPIN	ANNUAL
By DATE, the agency will have a monitoring and evaluation plan in place.		

By DATE, the proportion of African Canadian staff who rate the agency as welcoming and inclusive will increase from x to y.	Employee Engagement Survey	Every 2 years
By DATE, the agency will have convened an African Canadian Advisory Committee.		Annual
Long-Term Indicators	**Data Source**	**Assessment Frequency**
By DATE, the representation of African Canadian child welfare professionals will increase from x to y.	Workforce Census	Every 5 years

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 1: COMMIT TO COURAGEOUS LEADERSHIP				
PRACTICE 2: COLLECT AND ANALYZE DATA TO MEASURE RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY AND DISPARITIES				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 3: EVALUATE PROGRAMS AND MONITOR PERFORMANCE				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 4: ALLOCATE APPROPRIATE AND DEDICATED RESOURCES				
PRACTICE 5: ENGAGE AFRICAN CANADIAN PARENTS AND COMMUNITIES				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 6: ENGAGE AND EDUCATE MANDATED REFERRERS				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 7: ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE INTERNAL COMPLAINT MECHANISMS				
PRACTICE 8: ENHANCE HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON

PRIORITY AREA: DIRECT SERVICE
Goal: ABC Child Welfare Agency will create an agency in which disproportionalities and disparities do not exist for African Canadian children, youth, and families.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES How We Will Know We Are Making a Difference		
Short-Term Indicators	**Data Source**	**Assessment Frequency**
By DATE, the disproportionality rate of African Canadian children and youth in care will decrease from x to y.		Annual
By DATE, the proportion of African Canadian youth aging out of care will decrease from x to y.		Annual
By DATE, the proportion of African Canadian youth returned to their families will increase from x to y.		Annual

Long-Term Indicators	Data Source	Assessment Frequency

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 9: PROVIDE DAILY SUPERVISION, ONGOING TRAINING, AND SUPPORTS FOR STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, AND CAREGIVERS				
PRACTICE 10: ESTABLISH COLLABORATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS				

RACE EQUITY ACTIVITY	AGENCY ACTIVITY / CONNECTION TO OTHER AGENCY PLAN OR PRIORITY	TARGET DATE	RESOURCES REQUIRED	LEAD PERSON
PRACTICE 11: STRENGTHEN THE ABILITY OF CAREGIVERS TO SUPPORT AFRICAN CANADIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH				

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Interrupted Childhoods: Over-representation of Indigenous and Black Children in Ontario Child Welfare
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/interrupted-childhoods

Under Suspicion: Concerns About Child Welfare
http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/under-suspicion-concerns-about-child-welfare

Black Parents Ask For a Second Look: Parenting Under 'White' Child Protection Rules in Canada
https://ideas.repec.org/a/eee/cysrev/v94y2018icp511-524.html

The "Fragility of Goodness": Black Parents' Perspective About Raising Children in Toronto, Winnipeg, and St. John's of Canada
https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/15548732.2017.1401575

How Canada's Child Welfare System Fails Refugees Like Abdoul Abdi
https://www.macleans.ca/opinion/how-canadas-child-welfare-system-fails-refugees-like-abdoul-abdi/