



# Racial Disparity and Disproportionality

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A National and California  
Perspective



# Casey Alliance For Racial Equity in Child Welfare

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Annie E. Casey, Casey Family Programs,  
Marguerite Casey Foundation, Jim  
Casey Youth Opportunities Initiative and  
Center for the Study of Social Policy  
(Begun March 2004)



# Mission and Primary Goal

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Mission: To create a child welfare system that is free of structural racism and that benefits children, families and communities

- Long Term Goal: By 2015, to significantly reduce racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity in jurisdictions partnering with Alliance



# Work Groups and Dimensions

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- Legislation, Policy Change and Finance Reform
- Research, Evaluation and Data Based Decision Making
- Youth, Alumni, Parent and Community Partnership Development
- Public Will and Communications
- Human Service Workforce Development
- Practice Change (site based implementation)



# Alliance Representation

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- Casey Foundations
- Family Court Judges
- Youth
- Parents
- Advocates
- Civic Leaders
- Child Welfare Organizations
- Foundations



# Practice Change

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- Site Based Work/Breakthrough Series
- A continuous quality improvement method: uses small, rapid tests to create change
- Measures results ongoing
- A collaboration among committed teams from sites that generates new and better ideas quickly
- A Systems Improvement Method that grounds work in a specific structure (framework for change) to address all parts of a system



# Sites For BSC

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- States: Alaska, Arizona, Connecticut, Iowa, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Michigan, Texas, Washington
- Counties: Ramsey County (Minnesota), San Francisco, Wake County (North Carolina)



# Evolution of CA RDD Project

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- 2003 CALSWEC Symposiums on Fairness and Equity
- 2005 Family to Family Convenings/Site Work
- 2006 AECEF, CFP, CDSS, CALSWEC, Child and Family Policy Institute
- 2006 AECEF and CFP Proposal to Alliance
- 2006 CFP, AECEF, CDSS Fund California Disproportionality Project
- 2006 Co-Investment Partnership Prioritizes Project





# County Efforts

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- San Francisco
- Los Angeles
- Contra Costa
- Orange
- Riverside
- Fresno
- San Joaquin
- Santa Clara
- San Diego
- Sacramento
- San Bernardino



# Goals of CA RDD Project

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- Build on County Work
- Create Learning Environment
- Develop Peer to Peer Approach
- Further Develop Framework and Tools
- 2-3 Year Effort To Improve and Spread Practice; Improve Outcomes And Inform State System Improvement



# Project Planning To Date

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- Center for Social Services Research provides technical consultation (U.C. Berkeley)
- Align Work with State Interagency Team Work Plan and Disparities Work Group
- Framework Developed-Interviews, Focus Groups
- Framework Pilot Tested in Fresno County and Los Angeles County (Pomona Office)



# Framework/Assessment Tool

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## Strategic Elements:

- ❖ Building Authentic Tribal and Community Partnerships
- ❖ Collecting and Using Data
- ❖ Raising Awareness and Providing Training
- ❖ Leading By Example
- ❖ Engaging Birth Families and Youth as Authentic Partners
- ❖ Cross System Focus
- ❖ Preventing, Diverting and Ensuring Equity
- ❖ Achieving Practice and Decision Making That Does Not Result in Racial Disparities and Disproportionality
- ❖ Ensuring Least Restrictive, Appropriate and Supported Placements
- ❖ Hiring, Promoting Staff



# Awareness Building Models

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- Undoing Racism – People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond;
- *Race: The Power of an Illusion* – video and facilitated discussion guide;
- Race Matters Toolkit – AECF/Susan Batten and Dr. Paula Dressel, Doretha Carter, and
- Recovery from Racism – Institute for Recovery from Racism – Fr. Clarence Williams, C.P.P.S, PhD



# California RDD Project

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- Chair
- Project Management Staff
- Faculty---Team of Technical Assistants
- County Teams
- Site Based Technical Assistance
- Convenings/Learning Sessions
- Learning Environment Model



# Progress/Plans

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- State Contract To Begin May 1
- County Application and Selection Process  
May 2008--up to 12 Counties including Los Angeles and S.I.T. Work Group
- June to December--On Site County Technical Assistance
- December/January--First Convening/Learning Session