STRIVING FOR EQUITY IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

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NDM Conference

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think of us

i(cs)
INSTITUTE *for* CHILD SUCCESS

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A Mission Based in Equity

ICS advances human-focused and ***equity-centered policies****, partners, and practices to transform systems that impact young children and their families.*

Think of Us | Overview and Focus Areas

Think of Us operates as a R&D lab for child welfare, **transforming the system** so that **people with lived experience are at the center** of designing, imagining, and building an environment where they can **heal, develop, and thrive**.

MISSION

TOU works in partnership with and in support of the ecosystem – from on-the-ground practice to federal policy – to **revolutionize foster care to be a lived experience-centered system**, creating a model for how government, corresponding social services, and the ecosystem it touches can operate.

VISION

We will change how our government – and its corresponding social services – delivers on its promise to **create the conditions for humans to thrive**.

By **modeling a lived experience-centered approach in foster care** that is responsive, effective and nimble, we will **change how society operates** and ensure that every person has the conditions from which to **heal, develop and thrive**.

FOCUS AREAS

PREVENTION

Eliminate system entries for non-safety reasons

KINSHIP CARE

Increase youth living with and connected to kin who have the proper supports

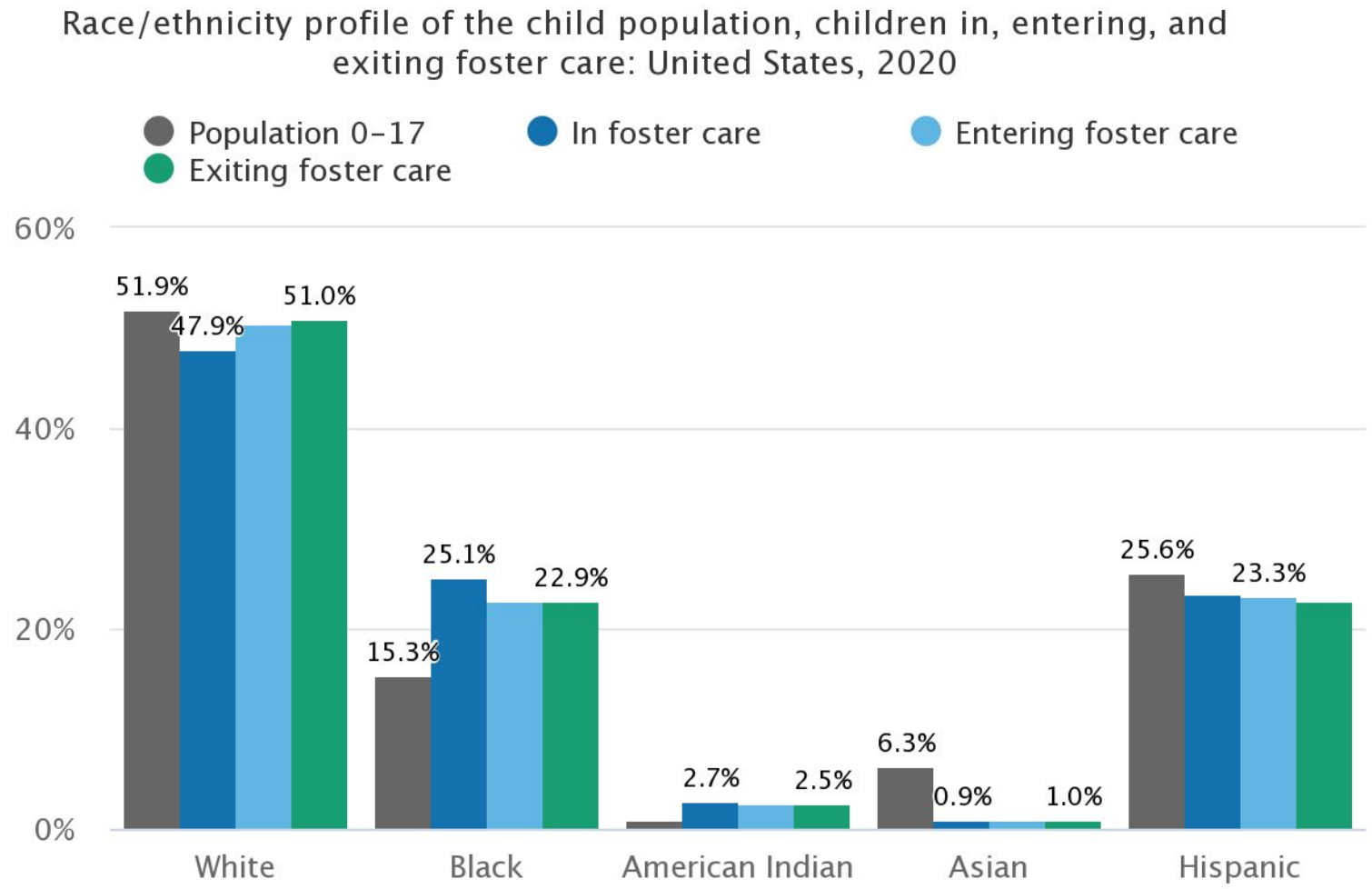
OLDER FOSTER YOUTH

Provide supports for people whose lives intersect with and exit the child welfare system to Heal, Develop + Thrive

The Overwhelming Impact of Maltreatment

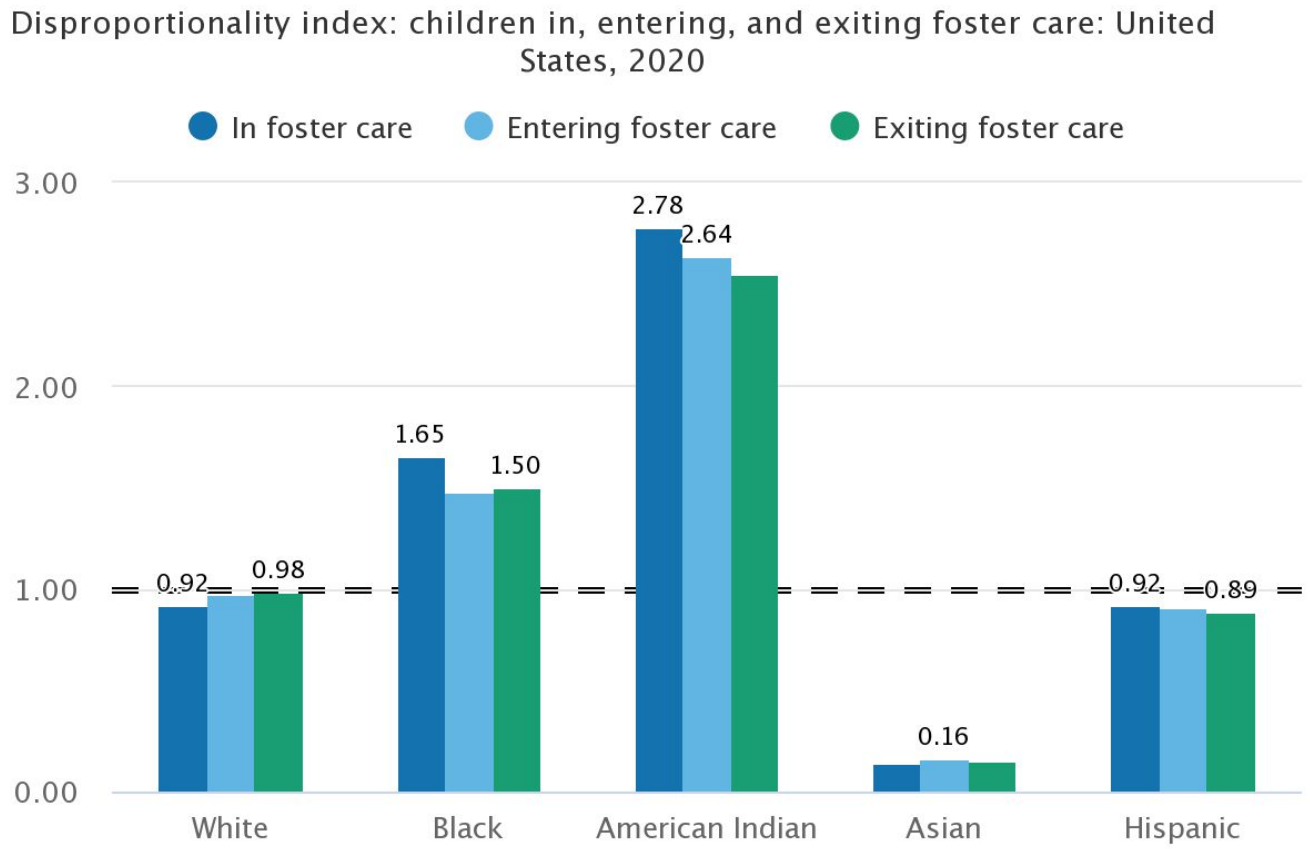
Source: Fast Facts: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Foster Care Involvement by Race/Ethnicity



Source: Race/Ethnicity Profile: Children In, Entering and Exiting Foster Care: United States 2020. Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care Dashboard (2010-2020), National Center for Juvenile Justice.

Black and Native American Children Disproportionately Represented



Source: Disproportionality Index: Children In, Entering and Exiting Foster Care: United States 2020. Disproportionality Rates for Children of Color in Foster Care Dashboard (2010-2020), National Center for Juvenile Justice.

Racial Disparities Along Child Welfare Continuum

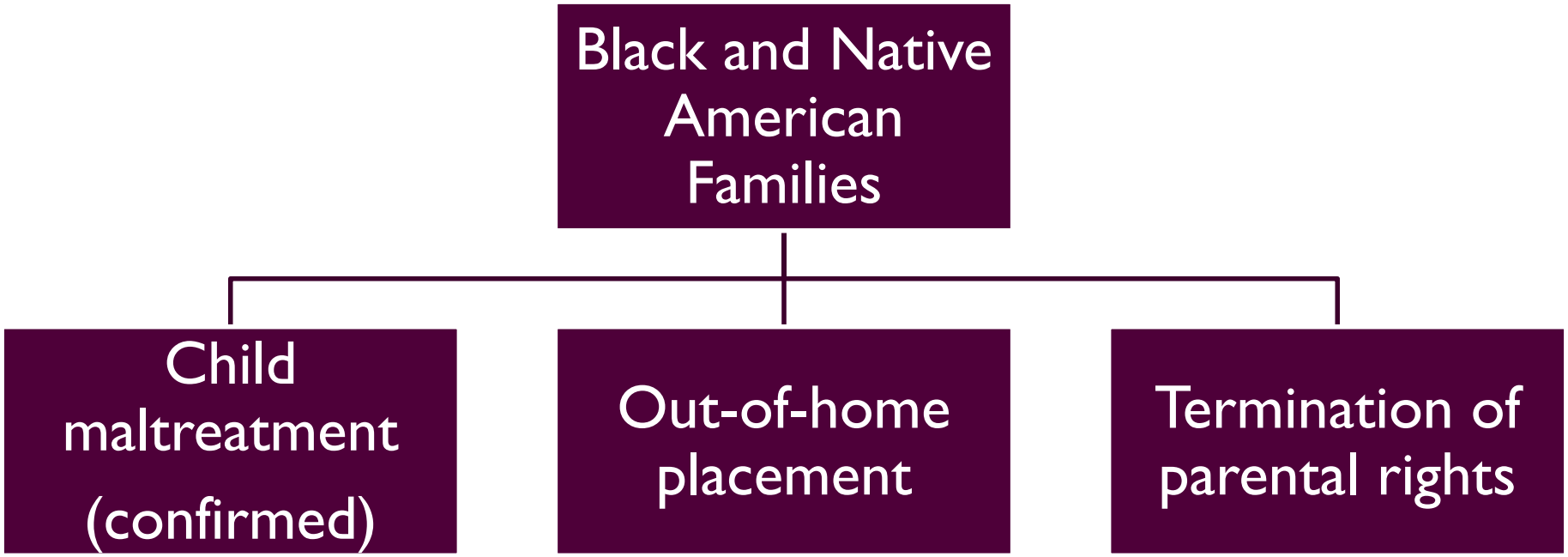
Black Families More Likely to…

- ✔ Be suspected of child maltreatment
- ✔ Be subjected to Child Protective Services investigations
- ✔ Spend more time in foster care

- ✔ And, less likely to be reunified

Source: The Problem of Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare. Child Welfare Practice to Address Racial Disproportionality and Disparity. Children's Bureau, An Office of the Administration for Children and Families. April 2021.

Racial Disparities Along Child Welfare Continuum



Source: The Problem of Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare. Child Welfare Practice to Address Racial Disproportionality and Disparity. Children's Bureau, An Office of the Administration for Children and Families. April 2021.

A Closer Look at Underrepresentation in Foster Care

"Although Hispanic children have historically been underrepresented in foster care at the national level, they were overrepresented in 20 States in 2018, when the most recent available data were collected (Puzzanchera & Taylor, 2020)."

Source: The Problem of Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare. Child Welfare Practice to Address Racial Disproportionality and Disparity. Children's Bureau, An Office of the Administration for Children and Families. April 2021.

Socioeconomic Status as an Indicator

Maltreatment rates are 5 times higher for children in families with low socioeconomic status.

Source: Fast Facts: Preventing Child Abuse and Neglect. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Implicit Bias = Unconscious Bias

"…the automatic and unconscious stereotypes that drive people to behave and make decisions in certain ways."

~Yale School of Medicine

"A bias is a departure from some point that has been marked as 'neutral.' Biases in implicit stereotypes and implicit attitudes are called 'implicit biases.'"

~Implicit Bias: A Primer for Courts

Black Households Have a Disproportionately High Rate of Child Maltreatment Due to…

Normal "Blurry" Lens

Abuse and neglect being more rampant in Black households.

Equity Lens

More caretakers having low-paying jobs with inflexible schedules, and a lack of quality childcare.

↓

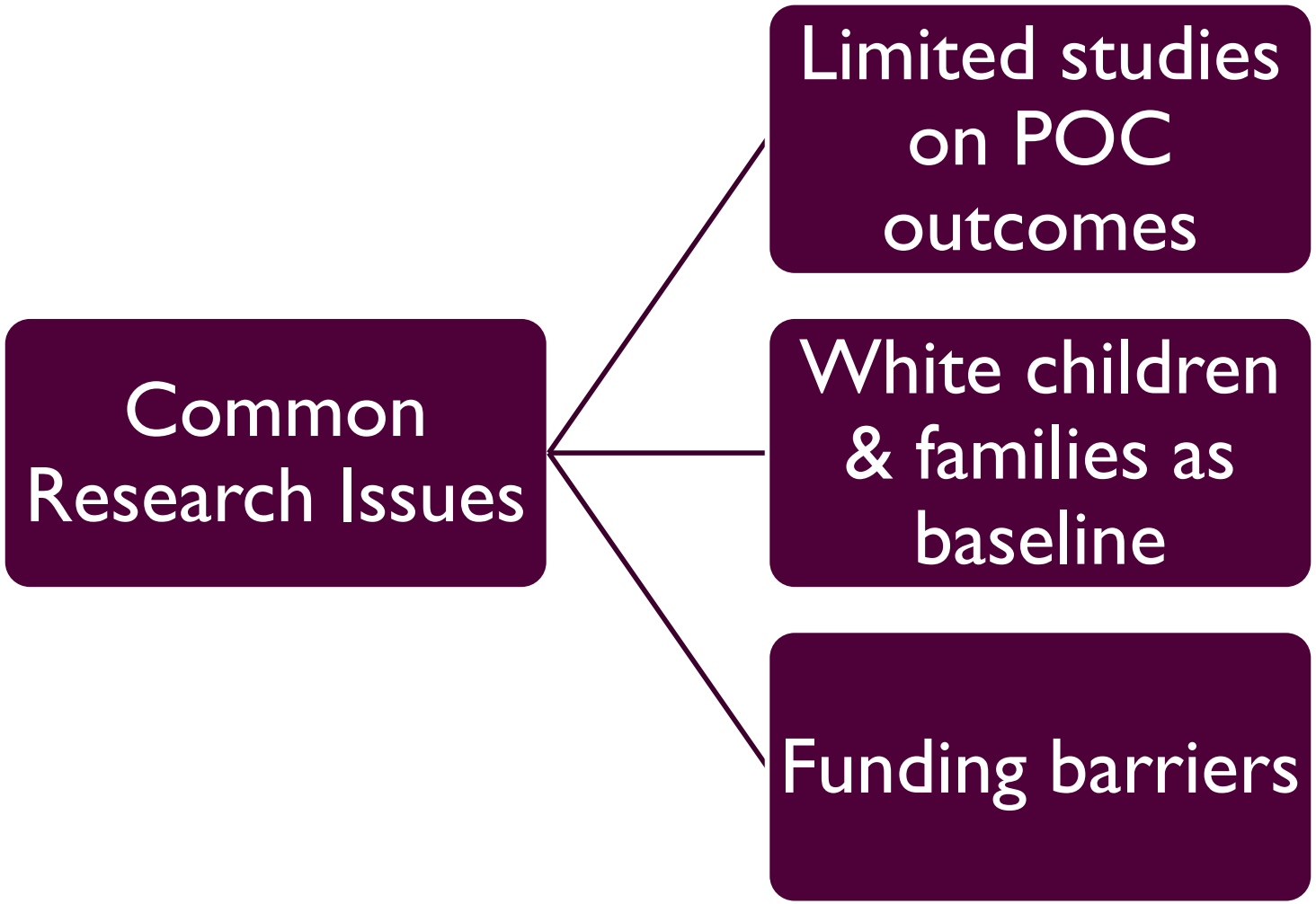
Children left at home alone

↓

NEGLECT

Source: Trevizo, Perla. Racial and Ethnic Disparities Go Unaddressed Here. March 8, 2018.

Interventions: Impactful for Whom?



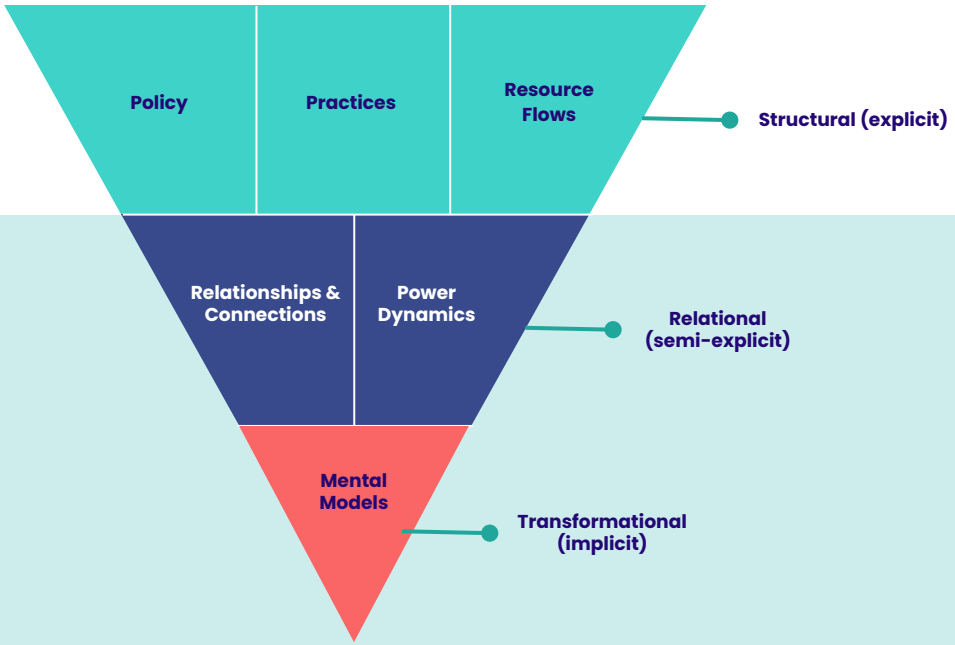
What Equity Looks Like

Source: Internet/Unknown Source

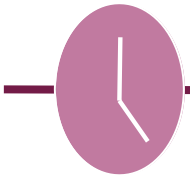
the least of these
fairness in systems
possible
equality in outcomes
balance
politics
tribal
fruitful
whole
social justice
difference
support
diversity and inclusion
balanced
money
fair
goal
sharing
better
humanity
opportunity
choice
Wakanda
your belongings
veil of ignorance
firm
living wage
reciprocated
fairness
flourishing
home
equality of access
power
equal
growth
even
team
freedom
policy
wealth
voice
justice
ownership
investment
equality
inclusion
hopeful
harmony
things you have
agency
equal chance
compensated
access
starting off in the same place
symbiotic
safety net
misunderstood
system that works
level playing field
quality education
equal opportunity

Tension: Current Design and the System and Equity

Every system outcome is are dependent upon a combination of these **six conditions of systematic elements**.



Need for Community Resources along the Spectrum



Targeted Solutions

To address urgent, localized, time-bound needs

Example:

A beach clean-up project to collect plastic bottles

Solutions at Scale

To address a widespread need in a sustained way

Example:

Technology that is used at scale to remove plastic from the ocean

Systemic Innovations

To disrupt a problematic pattern or amplify a positive one

Example:

Building a movement and passing legislation to ban single use plastic bags

Systemic Transformation

To commit to improving the health of a system by affecting its web of underlying patterns

Example:

Changing consumer values and behavior to reduce the demand for goods overall (and therefore plastic)

Adapted from: Rob Ricigliano, The Omidyar Group, Systems Diagnostics, 2019.

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