A Conversation about the Manifestation of White Supremacy in the Institution of Child Welfare, Level 2

- Malena Arnaud, MSW, Center for Family Representation, NY
- Brejea Colthirst, East Bay Family Defenders, CA
- Renee Jones, MSW, Washington State Office of Public Defense
- Beilul Ogbazghi, Washington State Office of Public Defense
- Meredith Wallis, JD, East Bay Family Defenders, CA
Community Agreements

- Choose Authenticity Over Comfort
- Embrace Messiness & Kindness
- Practice Personal and Group Accountability
- Be Aware of Equity of Voice
- Listen in the Same Way you Want to be Heard
- Honor Subjectivity versus Objectivity
Race

- Race is a made-up social construct, and not an actual biological fact.
- Race designations have changed over time. Some groups that are considered “white” in the United States today were considered “nonwhite” in previous eras, in U.S. Census data and in mass media and popular culture (for example, Irish, Italian and Jewish people).
- The way in which racial categorizations are enforced (the shape of racism) has also changed over time. For example, the racial designation of Asian American and Pacific Islander changed four times in the 19th century. That is, they were defined at times as white and at other times as not white. Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, as designated groups, have been used by whites at different times in history to compete with African American labor.
Racism

• Racism = race prejudice + social and institutional power
• Racism = a system of advantage based on race
• Racism = a system of oppression based on race
• Racism = a white supremacy system
• Racism is different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.
White Supremacy

The idea (ideology) that white people and the ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions of white people are superior to People of Color and their ideas, thoughts, beliefs, and actions. While most people associate white supremacy with extremist groups like the Ku Klux Klan and the neo-Nazis, white supremacy is ever present in our institutional and cultural assumptions that assign value, morality, goodness, and humanity to the white group while casting people and communities of color as worthless (worth less), immoral, bad, and inhuman and "undeserving." Drawing from critical race theory, the term "white supremacy" also refers to a political or socio-economic system where white people enjoy structural advantage and rights that other racial and ethnic groups do not, both at a collective and an individual level.
The American Dream Game

- Slavery
- Segregation
- Jim Crow Laws
- KKK
- Civil Rights Era
- Poor Schools
- Subprime Mortgage Scams
- Wealth Gap

- White
- Free Land from Indians
- Free Labor from Slaves

- Black
- Lose 100 turns
- Lose 25 turns
- Lose 18 turns
- Lose 10 turns
- Lose 9 turns
- Lose 5 turns

- Are you just slow or what?

- Denial of Voting Rights
- Lynchings
- Sharecropping
- Redlining
- Subprime Mortgage Scams
- Wealth Gap

- Affirmative Action
- Redlining
- Poor Schools
- Subprime Mortgage Scams

- White
- Take another turn
The Fundamentals: Recap Level 1

- The Child Welfare System was Founded in White Supremacy
- Racial Myths have and Continue to Justify Disproportionate Treatment of POC
- Child Protection is Carceral and Prioritizes Retribution
- The Child Welfare system is an Industrial Complex that Commodifies Communities of Color
Interdisciplinary Teams: Calling Out Performative Anti-Racism

- Interrogating White Supremacy in Traditional Social Contracts: Professionalism, Hierarchy and Civility
- Why Now? Motivations and Urgency in Racial Justice
- Inclusive Representation versus Tokenism
- Gatekeeping and White Supremacy in Data Collection
- Equity vs. Equality in Representation
• How to Successfully Navigate Systems that are Not Designed for You.

• Speaking Up, and Being Your Own Advocate

• Creating Your Own Support System
Interrogating White Supremacy in Traditional Social Contracts:

Professionalism, Hierarchy and Civility

MJ Jihad, MSW, MJ Consulting Firm, Emic Cultural Consultants Collective (EC3)

- YOU are the “Man” / WE are “The System”
- Who defines “Professionalism”
- Organizations as an extension of the Community you serve
- The Face of Power in your Office
Why Now?

Motivations and Urgency in Racial Justice

Malena Arnaud, MSW, Center for Family Representation, NY

• Role of the pandemic in the social response to Black Lives Matter and police brutality

• Performative action through statements in support of Black Lives Matter and the murder of George Floyd
Inclusive Representation versus Tokenism

Beilul Ogbazghi, Washington State Office of Public Defense

• Anti-Racist Practice Requires Representation
• Diversity, Inclusion and Equity are Critical Features of Representation
• Diversity Alone is Symbolic and Lacking in Equity Commitment
Gatekeeping and White Supremacy in Data Collection

Renee Jones, MSW, Washington State Office of Public Defense

• What is gatekeeping and how do we do it?

• How is using data and collection of data inherently racist?

• Tools used in child welfare are used to uphold white supremacy.
Equity vs. Equality in Representation

Meredith Wallis, JD, East Bay Family Defenders, CA

- Equality of representation upholding white supremacy
- Civility & strategy silencing parents
- “Officers of the court” vs. “zealous advocates”
What Does Anti-Racism Look Like?

• Consensus. The Child Welfare Systems is Racist
• Rigorous Organizational Self-Assessment. Mandatory Race Equity Education
• Radical Inclusion and Courageous Partnerships with Families
• Shared and Decentralized Power
• Confronting and Naming Racism. Fierce Advocacy
• Tools for Equity Practice. Innovation and Transformational Change