

Department of Social & Health Services  
**RACIAL EQUITY STRATEGIC PLAN: TO ELIMINATE RACIAL  
DISPROPORTIONALITY 2014-2016**

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**CA** Children's Administration

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## **Background**

In 2007, the Washington state Legislature created the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) to address racial disproportionality and disparity issues in the child welfare system and develop a remediation plan to reduce and eliminate racial disparities within the system.

In creating WSRDAC, the legislature recognized that the engagement and commitment of a broad range of systems, communities, tribes, partners and stakeholders was needed to battle racial disproportionality and disparities within the child welfare system. WSRDAC and Children's Administration collaborated to develop a framework for achieving this goal while keeping in mind that families and communities are essential to a child's growth, well-being and achievement. (See Appendix A for a current list of committee members.)

## **Mission**

To transform lives by acting to protect children and promote healthier families through strong partnerships with the community and tribes. This includes fighting against racial inequities and disparities stemming from individual, institutional and structural racism.

## **Vision**

Eliminate racial disproportionality and disparities in the Washington state child welfare system without compromising child safety, well-being or permanency, or lowering the quality of services.

- Race will not be a predictor of how children will fare in the child welfare system.
- Race will not be a factor when the child welfare system makes decisions about a child.
- Children and their families will have equitable access to culturally appropriate services and supports delivered by culturally competent and sensitive staff and contracted providers.

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**Values**

Honesty & Integrity	Commitment to Service
Pursuit of Excellence	Collaboration
Open Communication	Compassion
Diversity & Inclusion	Respect

**Foundations for the Work**

- Training and Education

We will work collaboratively with the Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence to provide:

- Prejudice reduction training and other training with follow up activities.
- Coaching in cultural competence to improve social worker practice.
- Social worker & supervisor first-year mandatory training that includes racial disproportionality.

- Racial Equity Analysis Tool Training and Implementation

We will develop a training and implementation plan to use the Racial Equity Analysis tool as we:

- Develop and adopt new policies, practices and programs, and review existing polices, practices, and programs including Performance Based Contracting, Evidence Based Programs, and Family Assessment Response.

- Continuous Quality Improvement Advisory Committee

This committee will:

- Review and analyze racial disproportionality data, reports, and program work to determine the effectiveness of disproportionality reduction efforts and make recommendations for improvement.
- Advise staff as requested on specific racial disproportionality efforts and work.

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- Review and analyze whether racial equity was achieved through culturally appropriate services and social work practices designed to effectively prevent and reduce disproportionality.
- Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC)  
This committee will continually:
  - Analyze and make recommendations to Children’s Administration on how to reduce disproportionate representation of children of color in the state’s child welfare system.
  - Analyze what occurs with children of color in the state’s child welfare system.
  - Analyze the effectiveness of the most recent initiatives for Children’s Administration by reviewing:
    1. Documentation of race, ethnicity and tribal affiliation of children coming into care.
    2. Length of stay data (i.e. decrease long-term foster care as a permanent case plan).
    3. Data on recruitment efforts to increase the number of foster families of color.
    4. Mandatory training efforts to increase the level of cultural competency of CA staff.

## **STRATEGIES**

### **1. Disproportionality Data**

Objective: We will use data to guide and strategically plan the work needed to reduce racial disproportionality in the Washington state child welfare system. We will:

- Produce quarterly data specific to racial, ethnic, & tribal affiliation.
- Use data to identify overrepresented children of color on caseloads.
- Use data and qualitative measurements for program and practice improvements.

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- Use data to educate communities, interest groups, and policy makers through community dialogues and meetings.

Success Measure: Children’s Administration quarterly disproportionality data will be available to all CA staff by May 1, 2015. The University of Washington, Partners for Our Children (POC) will supply regional data which will be accessible to community partners and CA through the POC data portal.

Action Plan: The Data Management & Reporting unit will generate quarterly data that includes race/ethnicity detail. The Regional Disproportionality Leads with Regional Quality Assurance staff will monitor the data, and evaluate outcomes to determine areas of focus to guide their disproportionality efforts. They will also work in consultation with the Continuous Quality Improvement Advisory Board. Data will be used to modify existing strategies, and develop new strategies as needed.

## **2. Decision Points**

Objective: Ensure staffs know the decision points in the state’s child welfare system where overrepresentation of children of color occurs and for which specific racial groups, zip codes, cities, or counties. These decision points are:

- Intake
- Removals
- Out-of-home placement
- Length of stay
- Permanency

Success Measure: We will decrease by 2% the length of stay for Multiracial Native American and African American children by July 2016. (Data is from the core metrics for children in care 2 years or more.)

Action Plan: We will engage, collaborate and strategize with the community and tribes to address disproportionality at these major decision points using data to guide the work. We will invite tribes and community partners to be involved in the

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shared decision making process used in Family Team Decision Making meetings, Permanency Roundtables, and other shared planning meetings conducted.

**3. Leadership Development and Accountability**

Objective: We will promote racially equitable practices in Washington State through leadership support, development, and accountability at every level. We are committed to:

- Statewide, regional and local disproportionality positions or allocating a specific percentage of a position's job duties for this work.
- Mandatory leadership training about racism and authentic leadership that emphasizes understanding the needs, values, and beliefs of diverse populations.
- Evaluation of social worker practice and case management through a disproportionality lens (for example; using Supervisory Case Reviews and Performance Evaluations).

Success Measures: Full time regional disproportionality leads will be hired in every region or at least 25 percent of local office disproportionality leads job duties will be allocated to disproportionality work by the end of CY2014. Leadership provides an organizational culture that ensures accountability for equitable outcomes for all families by the end of CY2016.

Action Plan: All CA staff will put into practice and promote the Statewide Disproportionality Strategic Plan by the end of CY2016. Leadership will be trained by end of CY2015 to work from a racial and social justice foundation as they educate and train staff to use this approach as best social work practice.

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**4. Community Engagement and Collaboration**

Objective: Children's Administration will engage, educate and collaborate with tribes and community on efforts to eliminate disproportionality in Washington State. We will:

- Make racial disproportionality visible in the community by sharing data, encouraging participation by engaging parents, caregivers (relative and foster parents), tribes & other Native American community partners.
- Target an area within the region or local office vicinity in which we find a disproportionate number of children of color and collaborate with the community to decrease the numbers.
- Provide disproportionality data and information to the tribes through the 7.01 Plan process.

Success Measure: Every local office will engage community stakeholders in the assessment and integration of disproportionality data into the local CQI Projects as well as community work/projects by the end of 2016. Also, we will increase recruitment of families of color for foster care and relative care by working with the Statewide Foster Care Contractors. Increase caregivers by 5 percent by the end of 2016.

Action Plan: CA will meet with and share disproportionality data with the community and tribes to collaboratively develop plans to address disproportionality. Regional Disproportionality Leads and CQI team will develop strategies and interventions through the local CQI projects in the offices along with collaborating with the partners to develop community projects where needed by the end of CY2016.

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**APPENDICES**

Appendix A

Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Members

***Ron Murphy*** – Co Chair

Senior Director – Strategic Consulting for Casey Family Programs, Tacoma, WA

***Liz Mueller*** – Co Chair

Former Director of Jamestown's S' Klallam Tribe Social Services Division  
Co-Chair of the WA State DSHS Indian Policy Advisory Committee, Sequim, WA

***Paola Maranan*** – Member

Executive Director of the Children's Alliance, Seattle, WA

***Mary O'Brien*** – Member

Clinical Services Manager for Yakima Valley Farm Workers  
Clinic-Behavioral Health Services, Yakima, WA

***Toni Lodge*** – Member

Executive Director of the NATIVE Project/NATIVE Health Clinic, Spokane, WA

***Deborah Purce*** – Member

Special Assistant for Children's Administration, Olympia, WA

***Rick Maib*** – Member

Director of A Place Called Hope Private Agency, Gig Harbor, WA

***Nancy Roberts-Brown*** – Member

Director of Catalyst for Kids, Seattle, WA

***Shrounda Selivanoff*** – Member (veteran parent of the child welfare system)

Facilitator with Washington State Parent Advocacy Network

Family Case Manager with the UW Fetal Alcohol & Drug Unit & Perinatal  
Treatment Services, Seattle, WA

***Dr. Susan Barkan*** – Member

Associate Director of Research at Partners for Our Children, Seattle, WA

***Dr. Tessa Evans-Campbell*** – Member

Professor at the School of Social Worker, University of WA, Seattle, WA

***Judge Veronica Galvan*** – Member

Judge with the City of Des Moines Municipal Court, Des Moines, WA

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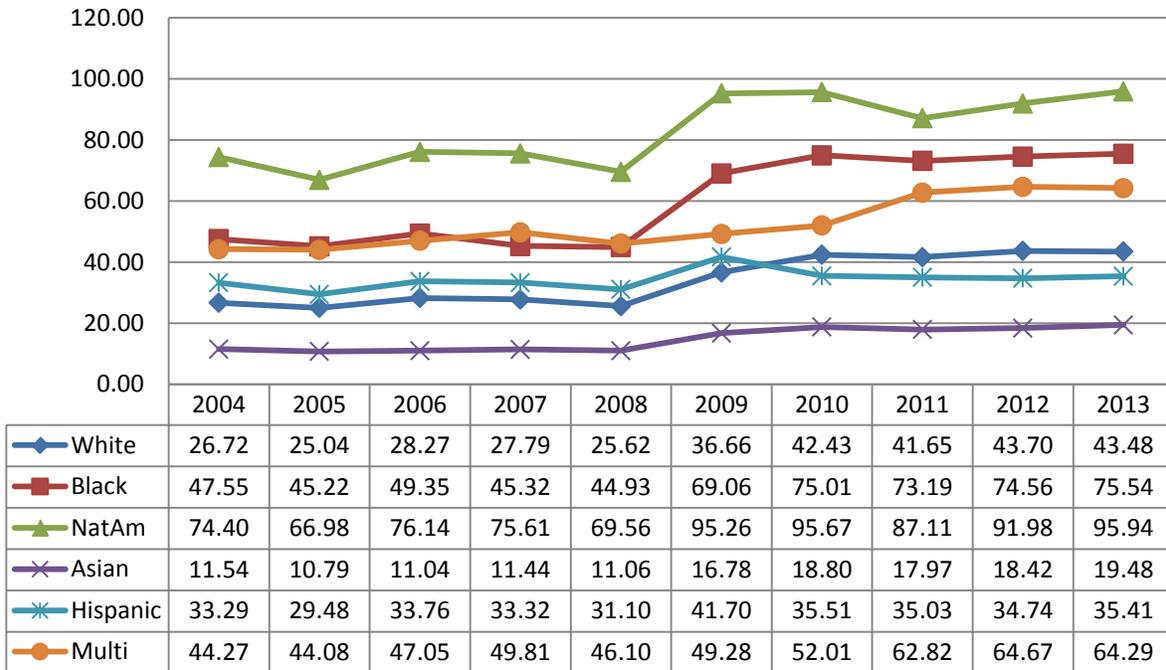
APPENDIX B

Disproportionality Data from the FamLink Data Warehouse

In 2011, Children’s Administration modified the performance metrics used to measure changes in racial disproportionality. CA continues to measure trends in key decision points, and measures that relate to the types and stability of out-of-home placements.

CA began collecting information in 2009 on intakes screened in for investigation and those screened out by race. Including the screened out intakes affects the number and disproportionality of total intakes from 2009 forward. Figure 1 shows the effects of including these intakes. Intake rates for all racial groups except Hispanic children have increased from 2009, when we began to implement strategies to reduce disproportionality in the child welfare system, to 2013.

**Figure 1. Rates per Thousand, of Children Identified in any Intake**



Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

**Changes to Disproportionality Index after Referral (DIAR)**

The DIAR is the ratio of a racial/ethnic group compared to Whites, which controls for disproportionality at the referral stage. FamLink, CA’s data system changed the term “referral” to “intake.” Therefore, the statistic used in this report is the Disproportionality Index After Intake (DIAI). The DIAI measures any increase in disproportionality after a CPS intake. The meaning of the statistic is the same as in previous reports; values greater than

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one (1.0) indicate disproportionality; values less than one (1.0) indicate underrepresentation.

**Racial Groups**

Beginning with the January 2012 report, for measures based on children in CA care, we separated the multiracial group into three categories: Multiracial Native American, Multiracial Black and Multiracial Other. When we separate the multiracial category into these subcategories for children in care, the results show different rates of disproportionality for these three groups. These additional multiracial categories are used for performance measures based on the child welfare population. However, we cannot calculate these new race categories for measures that use the state population estimates, so for those measures we used the original multiracial category (Figures 1, 2, and 3).

**Results**

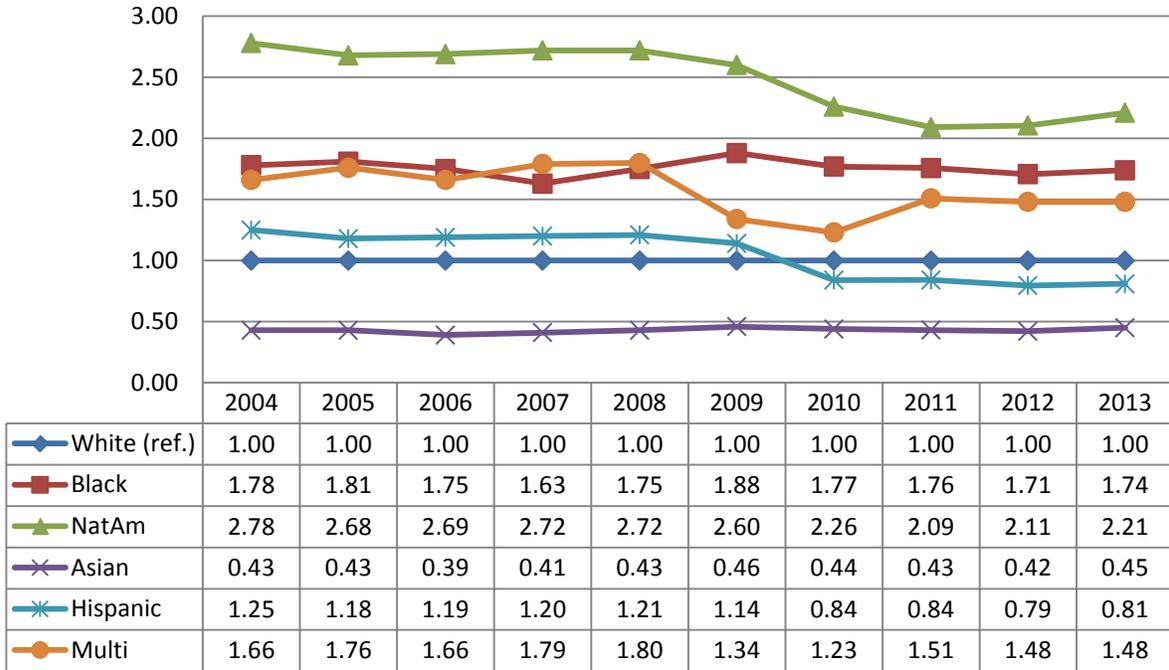
Overall, the results are promising for current efforts to reduce disproportionality in the child welfare system. Since 2009, when we began our efforts to reduce racial disproportionality, the rate of disproportionality in intakes has decreased for all, except for multiracial children, even though the overall number of intakes has increased. Stability in placement has increased for most groups. Rates of reunification within 12 months of placement for most racial groups are higher than White children.

**Detailed Findings**

Racial disproportionality in all intakes (Figure 2) and screened in intakes (Figure 3) decreased from 2009 when we began implementing strategies to reduce disproportionality, to 2013 for all groups except multiracial children.

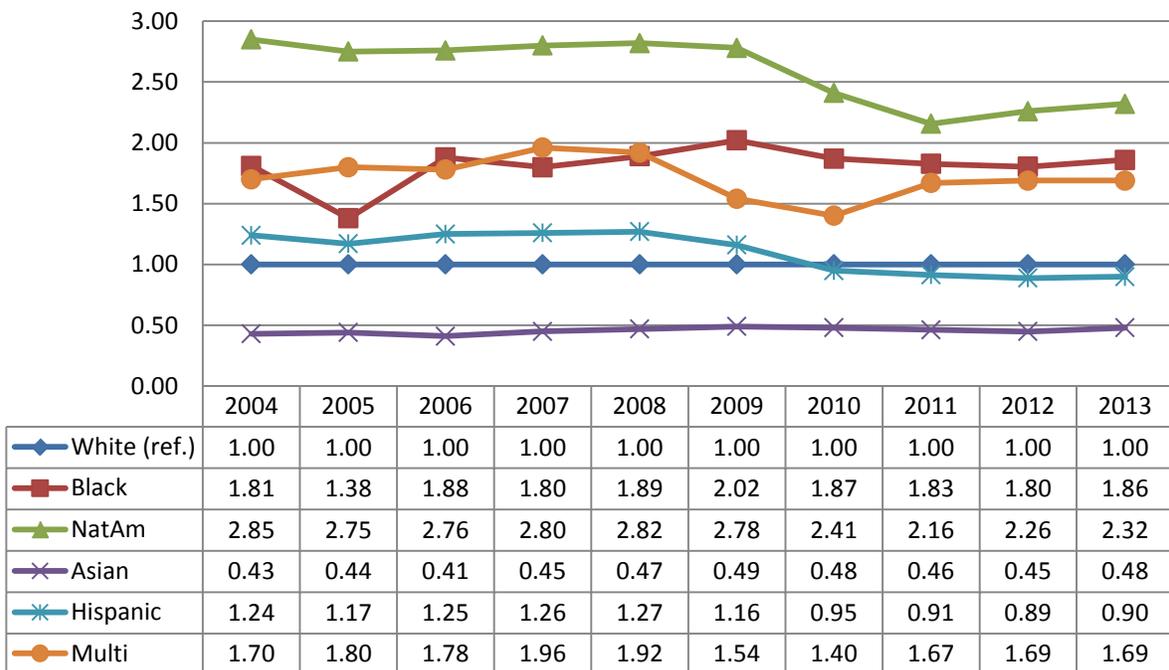
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**Figure 2. DI of All Intakes (Screened Out or Screened-In)**



Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

**Figure 3. DI of Intakes (Screened-In)**



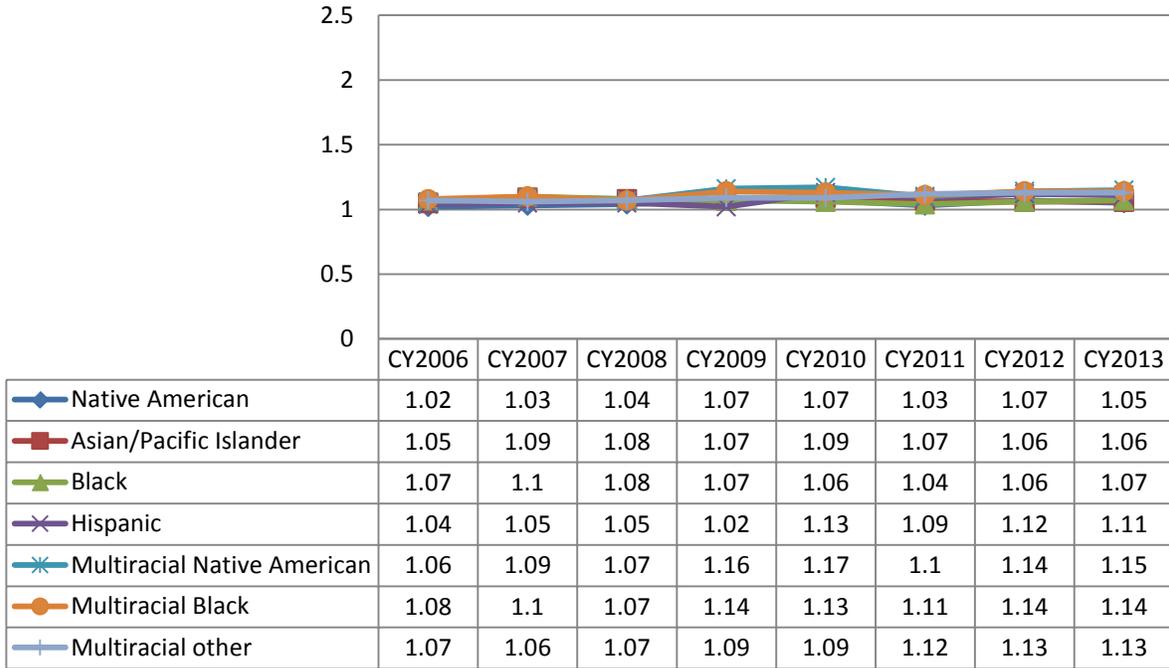
Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

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For screened in intakes, there is very little disproportionality for any racial group. This finding has been consistent since CY 2006. (Figure 4)

**Figure 4. DIAI: State Trends, Children in Screened-In CPS Intakes**

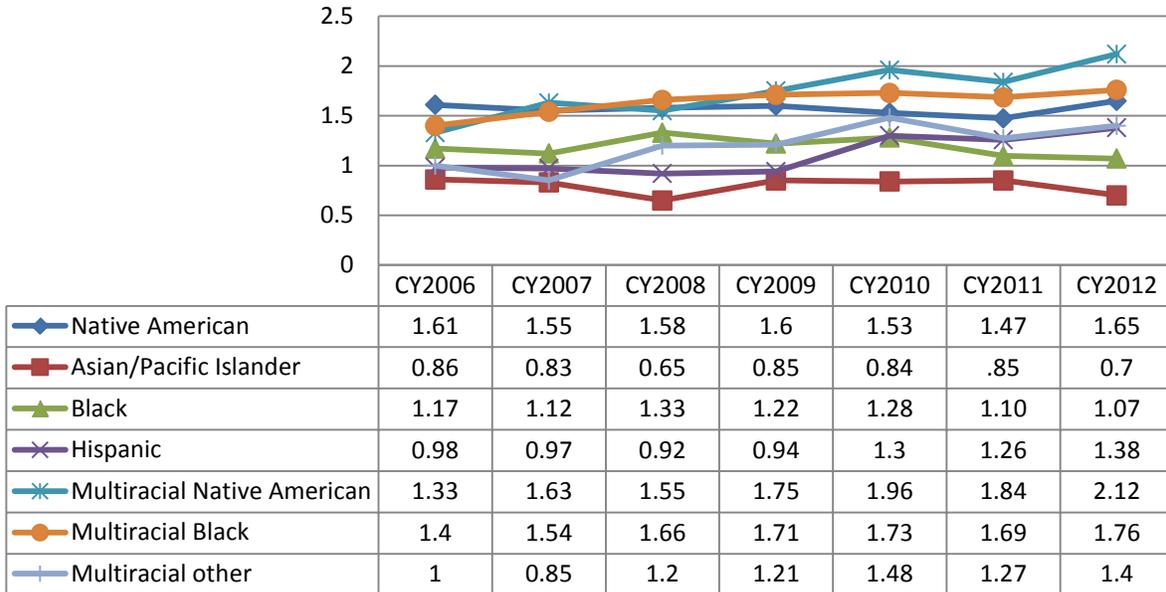


Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

Disproportionality in placement within 12 months of CPS intake from 2009 to 2012 decreased for Asian and Black children and increased for Hispanic and multiracial Black children. (Figure 5)

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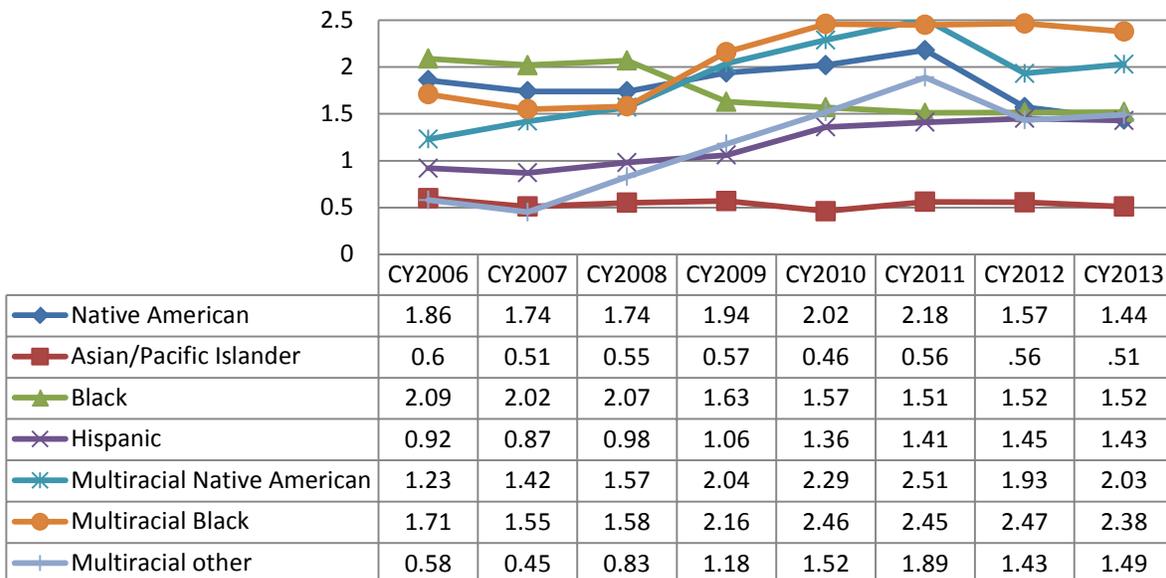
**Figure 5. DIAI: Children Entering Placement within 12 Months of CPS Intake**



Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

For children in care over 2 years, disproportionality decreased from 2009 to 2013 for Native American, Asian and Black children and increased for Hispanic, multiracial Black and multiracial other children. (Figure 6)

**Figure 6. DIAI: Children In Care for more than 2 Years**



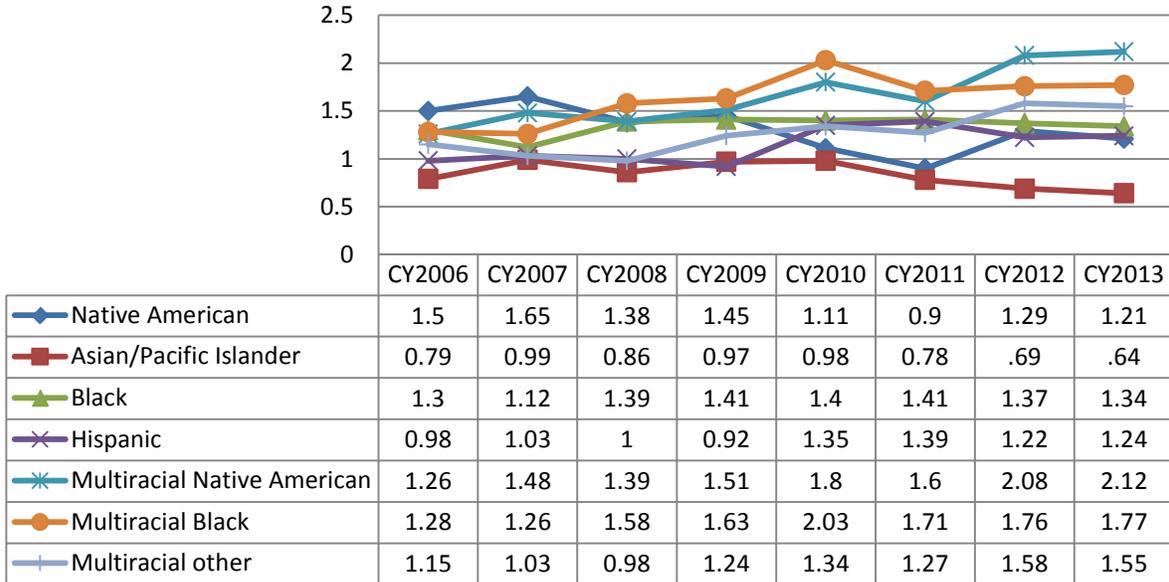
Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

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**Placement Measures**

From 2009 to 2013, White children were more likely to be placed with relatives during initial placement than other groups. This disproportionality decreased or stayed about the same from 2012 to 2013. (Figure 7)

**Figure 7. DIAI: Children *Not* Initially Placed with Relatives**

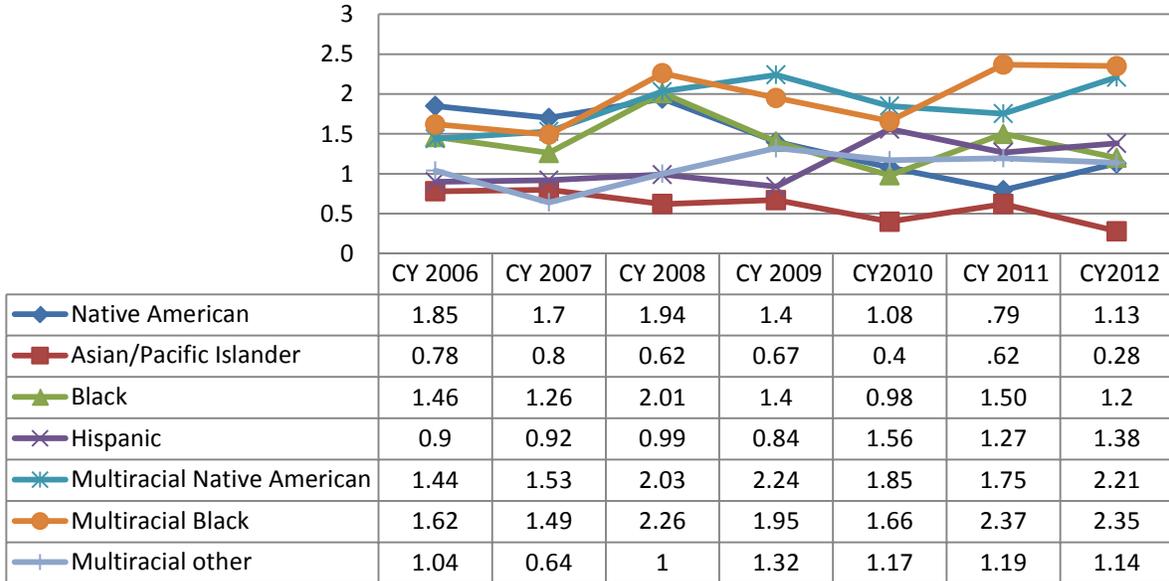


Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

From 2009 to 2012, disproportionality in placement stability during the first 12 months of placement decreased for all except Hispanic and multiracial Black children. (Figure 8)

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**Figure 8. DIAI: Children Moved twice or more during first 12 months of Placement**

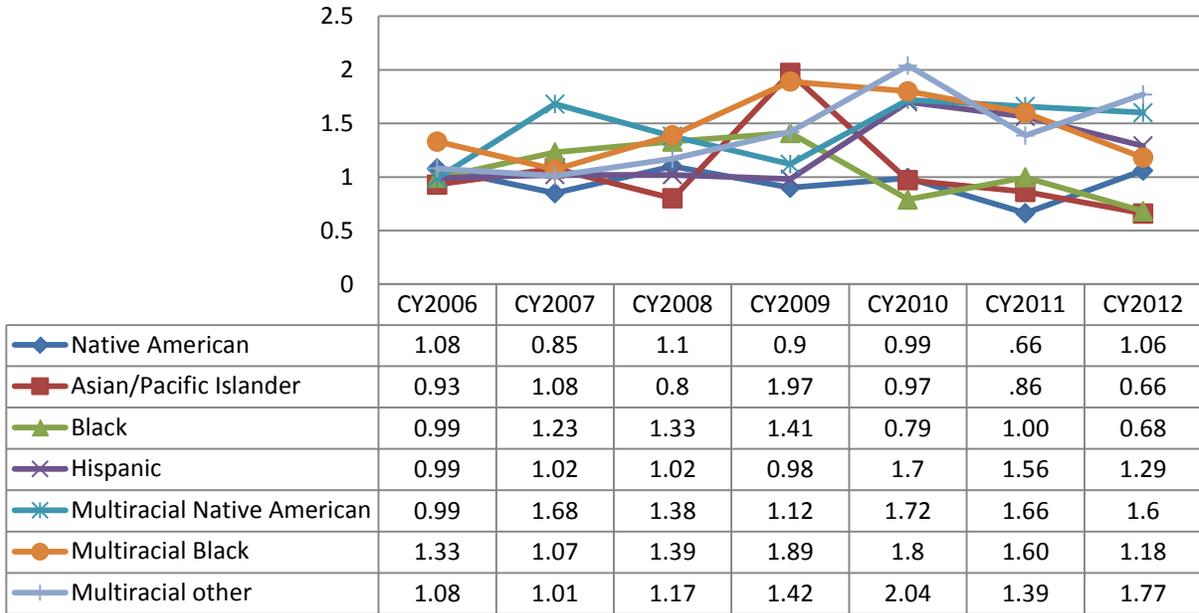


Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

From 2009 to 2012, Native American, Hispanic, Multiracial Native American and Multiracial other children were more likely than\* White children to be reunited within 12 months of placement. Multiracial Black children, while decreasing, are still above rates of White children. Asian and Black children were reunified at rates slightly below those of White children.\* (Figure 9)

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**Figure 9. DIAI: Children Reunified Within 12 Months of Placement**



**\*For this indicator, values above 1 are positive, indicating that children are more likely to be reunified within 12 months**

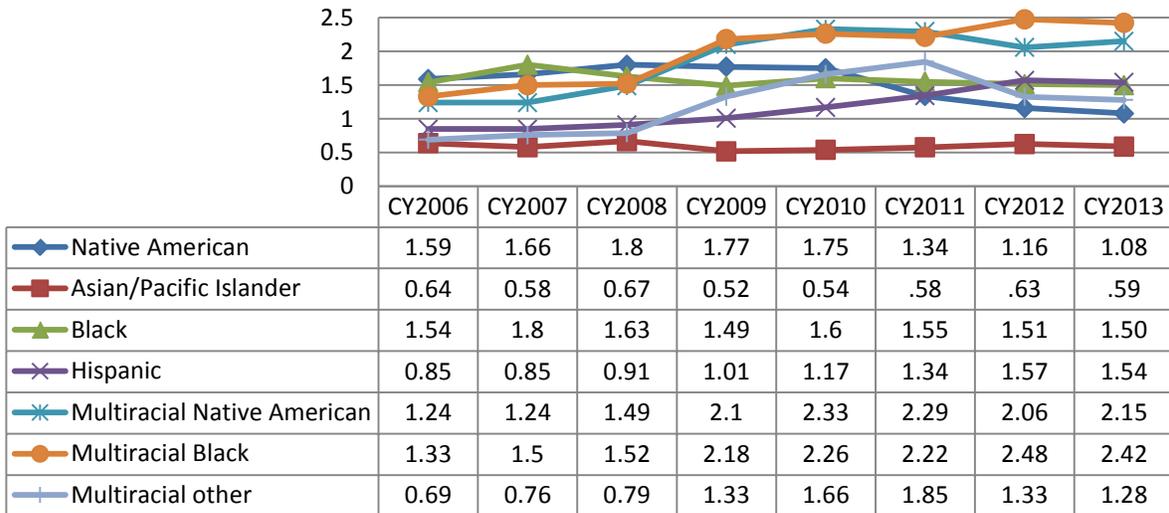
Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

From 2009 to 2013, when in care two years or more, multiracial Native American and multiracial Black children were more than two times more likely than White children to have moved within the last year. Disproportionality has decreased or stayed about the same for all except Hispanic and Multiracial Black children. (Figure 10)

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**Figure 10. DIAI: Ongoing (In)stability: Children In Long-term Care who Moved Within Last 12 Months**



Source: FamLink Data Warehouse

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APPENDIX C  
Disproportionality Working Definitions

**DISPROPORTIONATE – (DISPROPORTIONALITY)**

Webster’s definition:

1. Being out of proportion as in relative size, shape, or amount.
2. Absence of due proportion.

**RACIAL DISPROPORTIONALITY**

Child Welfare definition: The overrepresentation of children of color in the child welfare system compared to their numbers in the general population.

**DISPARITY**

Webster’s definition:

1. The condition or fact of being unequal in age, rank, or degree: Difference.
2. Incongruity or unlikeness.

Child Welfare definition: The treatment and services provided to children of color compared to Caucasian children.

**RACISM**

Webster’s definition:

1. The notion that one’s own ethnic stock is superior.
2. Prejudice or discrimination based on racism.

Casey Family definition: A belief or doctrine that inherent differences in human races determine individual and cultural achievement, usually reinforcing the idea of supremacy or superiority of one race; racial prejudice plus power.

**RACE**

Webster’s definition:

1. A local geographic or global human population distinguished as a more or less distinct group by genetically transmitted physical characteristics.
2. Humanity as a whole; the human race.

Casey definition: Race is an arbitrary classification of modern human beings. Race is a belief or doctrine that there are certain inherent differences between people.

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**RACIAL TOLERANCE**

A fair, permissive, and objective attitude toward races different from one's own. Tolerance allows us to take advantage of diverse resources and perspectives which leads to a greater prosperity for all. In an environment of ever-increasing diversity, the need to respect and tolerate differences is a basic necessity for daily life.

**RACIAL EQUITY**

When social, economic, and political opportunities are not predicted based upon a person's race.

**RACIAL INEQUITY**

When a person's race can predict their social, economic and political opportunities and outcomes.

**ETHNICITY**

Webster's definition: 1. The state of belonging to an ethnic group.  
(Ethnic = of or relating to a religious, racial, national, or cultural group.)

**PREJUDICE**

Webster's definition: 1. An adverse opinion or judgment formed beforehand or without full knowledge or complete examination of the facts. b. A preconceived idea or preference: Bias.  
2. Irrational hatred or suspicion of a specific group, race, or religion.

**DISCRIMINATE**

Webster's definition: 1. To make a clear distinction: Differentiate, Partiality, Prepossession.  
To act on the basis of prejudice <accused of discriminating against the elderly>

**BIAS**

Webster's definition: 1. An inclination or preference, especially one that interferes with impartial judgment: PREJUDICE.

Casey definition: Explicit bias consists of stated values that we use to direct our behavior deliberately. Implicit bias describes unconscious attitudes that direct our behavior.

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**INDIVIDUAL RACISM**

Pre-judgment, bias, stereotypes about an individual or group based on race. The impacts of racism on individuals including white people internalizing privilege and people of color internalizing oppression.

**INSTITUTIONAL RACISM**

This type of racism is much more subtle, and restrained. It is embedded within the operations of various organizational programs, policies, or procedures that work to the benefit of white people and to the detriment of people of color usually unintentionally or inadvertently. It is sometimes not obvious or traceable.

**STRUCTURAL RACISM**

The interplay of policies, practices and programs of multiple institutions' which leads to adverse outcomes and conditions for communities of color compared to white communities that occurs within the context or racialized historical and cultural conditions.

**CULTURAL COMPETENCE**

A set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that enable individuals in a society, group, organization, or agency to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

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APPENDIX D  
Disproportionality Program Managers & Leads

<b><u>STATEWIDE</u></b> <b><u>DISPROPORTIONALITY</u></b> <b><u>PROGRAM MANAGER</u></b> Kathy Taylor – Headquarters	<b><u>Region 1 North</u></b> Charina Carothers Cassie Anderson	<b><u>Region 1 South</u></b> Jose Leon Angel Tovar
<b><u>Region 2 North &amp; South</u></b> Krysten Legette	<b><u>Region 3 North &amp; South</u></b> Hermenia Jackson	