



The Office of Innovation, Alignment, and Accountability

## USING DATA IN DCYF TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY

January 2021



Washington State Department of  
**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES**



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Contact [OIAA@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:OIAA@dcyf.wa.gov) with questions.

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*“Institutionalized racism is often evident as inaction in the face of need.”*  
*Camara Phyllis Jones, Levels of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and Gardener’s Tale (2000)*

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## Introduction

This report summarizes the initial work of the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) Office of Innovation, Alignment, Accountability (OIAA) to develop a roadmap toward improving agencywide data collection, reporting, analysis, and research in order to promote racial and ethnic equity across DCYF services, programs, and client outcomes. This reflects a foundational mission of our agency to ensure that race and ethnicity are no longer predictors of key outcomes for children, youth, and families.

The creation of DCYF presents an opportunity to coordinate resources and information across systems and to further strengthen our collective commitment to achieving equity in Washington State. As public servants, DCYF staff are responsible for promoting equity and embracing diversity in all of our work. OIAA’s responsibilities in supporting DCYF to become an anti-racist organization are concentrated in the areas of data collection, data management and use, development and reporting of agency performance metrics, program evaluation, research, and supporting organizational reforms. In this report we focus primarily on OIAA’s responsibilities related to data and performance metrics, which we consider to be foundational in understanding and addressing equity more broadly.

## Executive Summary

### Background

In 2017, Washington State enacted House Bill (HB) 1661, which led to the creation of DCYF. This brought together three agencies of origin – Children’s Administration and the Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS), and the Department of Early Learning (DEL) – forming an agency unified in the effort to ensure that all Washington’s children grow up safe, healthy, and thriving. As part of HB 1661, the Legislature established OIAA, which is tasked with reviewing and recommending implementation of advancements in research; supporting the agency to implement data-driven and research-based efforts to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families; and supporting continuous improvement. OIAA plays an integral role in supporting DCYF’s mission by guiding and implementing innovation, alignment, integration, collaboration, and systemic reform work.

Importantly, HB 1661 emphasizes that the mission and vision of DCYF should center on the goal of promoting equity across the services and programs overseen by the agency and related outcomes for children, youth, and families. Moreover, the legislation specifies that work which aims to promote equity should be rooted in data-driven decision-making. Thus, it is the charge of OIAA to help facilitate efforts to promote equity across the agency through its ongoing commitment to better data collection, development of meaningful metrics, accurate reporting, more in-depth inquiry, and well-designed mechanisms for feedback and accountability. We see this work unfolding in the following ways:

1. Help create a data-focused environment in which there are aligned outcomes and shared accountability for achieving those outcomes.

2. Develop a process for examining and reporting on agencywide engagement, resource utilization, and outcomes for clients receiving agency services as well as youth participating in juvenile court alternative programs funded by DCYF.
3. Report data by race, ethnicity, and geography whenever possible.
4. Identify areas of focus to advance equity and inform agency strategies designed to ensure that all children, youth, and families are thriving.
5. Develop meaningful metrics detailing progress toward eliminating racial disparities and disproportionalities.

## Purpose of This Report

OIAA has made significant progress in the five areas of work outlined above, all of which require ongoing efforts and continual examination. In this report we assess progress made and discuss plans for moving forward within the last three areas, which specifically address the roles of data and metrics in achieving equitable outcomes for populations served by DCYF. We address these in two major sections:

**Part One.** "Understanding Race and Ethnicity Data." This section outlines OIAA's activities to establish a standard approach toward defining, collecting, reporting, and analyzing racial/ethnic categories. We also discuss implications of a data collection standard for aligned data systems, as well as for cross-program data collection, reporting, and analysis.

**Part Two.** "Identifying Race and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity Across DCYF Programs and Related Outcomes." This section addresses OIAA's current capacity to identify areas of focus (from the available data) to advance equity. This section aims to provide an overview of disparity and disproportionality across populations served by DCYF, using available data on system engagement, resource utilization, and related outcomes. While this information is intended for policy and program development across the agency, it also serves as a baseline for future improvements to data collection, reporting, and analysis. We conclude Part Two with a discussion of the importance of continuing to develop analytic approaches that facilitate deeper dialogue and collaboration around the topic of equity. We intend for this to lead to a greater capacity on the part of the agency as a whole to make data-informed decisions around equity, and ultimately to improve outcomes for Washington's children, youth, and families.

Finally, we should note that the topic of equity extends well beyond the bounds of racial and ethnic classifications (e.g., to language, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability/disability, etc.). For this report we have chosen to limit the subject matter to considerations around race and ethnicity, so as to have a focused discussion about the mechanisms by which this information is collected and used. We hope that by simplifying things in this way we can establish an easily understood framework from which to explore other equity-related topics in the future.

## Building a Common Understanding of Race and Ethnicity Data

OIAA is focused on improving the agency's use of race and ethnicity data as a means of advancing equity among the children, youth, and families we serve. This begins with building a foundational understanding across the agency about how race and ethnicity are defined and subsequently represented in data collection, reporting, and analysis. In Part One of this report we seek to clarify these concepts and to establish common procedures and practices for the agency. Key topics include:

- Specifying the intended uses of race and ethnicity data relative to an agreed-upon framework.

- Understanding and standardizing race/ethnicity data collection practices.
- Understanding and standardizing race/ethnicity data reporting practices.
- Summarizing existing race/ethnicity data collection and reporting practices.
- Understanding implications of the above for aligned data systems, cross-program analyses, and reporting.

## Identifying Racial and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity Across DCYF Programs and Related Outcomes

Part Two of this report examines the state of equity across populations served by DCYF, using available data on system engagement, resource utilization, and related outcomes. First, we explore the degree to which racial and ethnic groups are disproportionately represented across the three main service and program areas of DCYF (Child Welfare, Early Learning, and Juvenile Rehabilitation). Key findings include:

- [Child Welfare] American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), Black/African American (Black), AI/AN-Multiracial, Black-Multiracial, and White groups are overrepresented at multiple stages of the child welfare process relative to the underlying population of children and youth living at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.<sup>1</sup> All other groups are slightly underrepresented (Asian/Pacific Islander [PI], Asian/PI-Multiracial, and Hispanic).
- [Early Learning] Children who are Black are represented in subsidized child care at nearly twice the degree to which they make up the underlying income-eligible population. Children who are AI/AN are slightly underrepresented in Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), subsidized child care, and home visiting relative to their share of the underlying income-eligible populations.
- [Juvenile Rehabilitation] AI/AN and Black youth are overrepresented in referrals to court and Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) admissions relative to the underlying population of youth living in homes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.

In Part Two, we highlight racial/ethnic differences across a range of crucial DCYF child/youth outcomes in the areas of resilience, education, and health. We conclude that meaningful disparities exist between one or more groups of color and children/youth who are White in five of seven priority outcome areas selected for this report. The relative occurrence of these disparities is distributed somewhat evenly across racial/ethnic groups of color, with children and youth who are Asian experiencing the least disparity and children/youth who are AI/AN, Black, Hispanic, and Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander (NH/PI) experiencing the most disparity (see Figure A).

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<sup>1</sup> Over 90% of children and youth involved with the child welfare system, in Washington and across the nation, are from low-income households below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), so this group is used to identify the underlying population instead of the broader population of 0-17 year olds in the state. It is unclear from the literature the extent to which this is due to an actual higher underlying prevalence of maltreatment among low-income families, or due to heightened monitoring by mandated reporters that low-income communities may be subject to, or both. For information on the correlation between poverty and child welfare involvement, see: Partners for Our Children (2016). *Poverty & Involvement in the Child Welfare System*. Retrieved from <https://partnersforourchildren.org>.

Figure A. Summary view of race/ethnic disparities across select DCYF outcomes <sup>2</sup>

Domain	Outcome Area	AI/AN	AI/AN-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Asian	Asian/PI-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Black	Black-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	NH/PI	Multi	Other
Resilience	Supported by healthy relationships	○	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	○	▲	○	○
	Families are economically secure	▲	▲	○	○	▲	▲	▲	▲	NA	▲
Education	Kindergarten readiness	▲	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	▲	▲	○	NA
	Youth school engagement	○	NA	○	NA	○	NA	○	○	○	○
	High school engagement	▲	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	▲	▲	○	▲
Health	Low birthweight	○	NA	○	NA	○	NA	○	○	○	NA
	Mental and behavioral health of youth	▲	NA	○	NA	○	NA	▲	○	○	○

▲	Notable disparity relative to White comparison group <sup>b</sup>
○	Little/no disparity or doing better relative to White comparison group
NA	No data or not calculable

<sup>a</sup> Consistent with the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee’s (WSRDAC) Measurement Subcommittee’s recommended reporting standard, some data sources allow for the multiracial category to be disaggregated to provide AI/AN-Multiracial, Asian/PI-Multiracial, and Black-Multiracial. This is true for just one outcome area above – “Families are economically secure.”

<sup>b</sup> Disparities identified using chi squared test of significance at  $p < .05$  level and Cramer’s V effect size of .1 or greater. (See footnote 17, on p. 24.)

### Improving Capacity To Identify Areas of Focus To Advance Equity

The information presented in this report is a starting point for (1) ongoing improvements in measuring, tracking, and reporting on racial/ethnic equity, and (2) an ongoing commitment toward a deeper understanding of what drives differences in outcomes between racial/ethnic groups. We outline OIAA’s commitment toward these goals below (these elements are not exhaustive, but we identify them as top priorities).

1. Recognize communities as partners in research.
2. Engage in transparent and regular reporting regarding racial disparities within the system.
3. Assist programs agencywide to transition to the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee modified (WSRDAC/M)<sup>3</sup> reporting standards.
4. Estimate underlying population needs when possible.
5. Examine interactions between the race/ethnicity categories and related demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic/community variables so as to identify the most explanatory factors.
6. Assess program access and participation by race/ethnicity.
7. Assess service array and treatment by race/ethnicity.
8. Assess outcomes as being possibly moderated by race/ethnicity.
9. Disaggregate racial/ethnic subgroups for analysis when feasible.
10. Develop capacity for cross-program analyses.
11. Establish common criteria for determining which race/ethnicity group differences require priority programmatic attention.
12. Use qualitative data and stories to gain a more complete understanding of findings related to race/ethnicity.

<sup>2</sup> This summary table is based upon the results displayed in Figures 8-14 of the report.

<sup>3</sup> Discussion of WSRDAC/M reporting standard can be found on page 8.

Using this comprehensive approach OIAA can make important advances toward identifying areas of focus for the agency to promote racial/ethnic equity and help to ensure better outcomes for children, youth, and families in Washington State.

## Part One: Building a Common Understanding of Race and Ethnicity Data

The methods used to categorize race and ethnicity have important implications in human services, and the fields of public health and education more broadly. For example, federal and state information-gathering (e.g., the U.S. Census) relies on accurate and consistent data collection standards to address needs and improve the overall well-being of the population. For this reason, as embodied in this report, OIAA is building a foundation of aligned agency practices for the categorization of race/ethnicity data and how it is collected, reported, and analyzed. These efforts include: (1) establishing a common definition of race/ethnicity to inform use of the data, (2) setting standards related to race/ethnicity data collection, (3) the adoption of the WSRDAC/M race/ethnicity recommended reporting standard as the default for reporting race/ethnicity across DCYF, (4) maintaining an agencywide inventory of existing data collection standards, and (5) ensuring that these standards are reflected in the agency's aligned data systems as well as in cross-program reporting and analysis.

### Defining Race and Ethnicity and Specifying Intended Uses of Data

An initial step toward aligning agency practices around the use of race/ethnicity data for the purposes of promoting equity is to establish a common language for defining and discussing race and ethnicity. According to the American Sociological Association, “race” refers to physical differences that groups and cultures consider socially significant, while “ethnicity” refers to shared culture, such as language, ancestry, practices, and beliefs.<sup>4</sup>

OIAA aligns itself with thinking in the social sciences that recognizes race as a socially-constructed concept originating, in part, from historically oppressive systems and unequal power structures. These unequal power structures have created a system in which public policies, institutional practices, and cultural norms, taken as a whole, have the ongoing effect of both marginalizing and generally oppressing groups of color and reinforcing White privilege—a phenomenon widely referred to as structural racism.

These mechanisms have resulted in huge disparities across race and ethnic categories in wealth, wellness, educational progress, access to medical services, and an array of other population outcomes. Although these disparities can be explained, in part, by economic conditions, they are not reducible to these distinctions.<sup>5</sup> Rather, we should recognize that racial/ethnic inequities, including economic ones, are rooted in the socioeconomic, physiological, and psychological effects of structural racism, both historically and in current lived experiences.

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<sup>4</sup> *Race & Ethnicity*. American Sociological Association. <https://www.asanet.org/topics/race-and-ethnicity>

<sup>5</sup> For information and resources about structural racism and its effects, see the *DCYF Racial Equity, Diversity & Inclusion Training* resource guide. [https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/REDI\\_Resources.pdf](https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/REDI_Resources.pdf)

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## Considerations for Race and Ethnicity Data Collection

**Identifying the source of race and ethnicity data/Who is responding?** A fundamental consideration for data collection is the method by which races and ethnicities are identified. Approaches to race/ethnicity data collection might include: (1) exclusive self- or parent-report, (2) self- or parent-report with missing information filled in by worker inference or supposition (based only on appearance), or (3) derived from some other data source (the method of which may or may not be known). Due to differences in this regard, what might appear to the reader to be identical racial/ethnic categories reported by different agencies or programs may reflect different data collection methods and hence have different meanings. In response to these incongruences, OIAA is establishing self-report or parent/caregiver-report (in the case of young children) as the gold standard of race/ethnicity data collection in all program data collection across the agency where the client or parent/caregiver is available.

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Relatedly, OIAA aims to eliminate the practice of observer-report or inference of race/ethnicity, which should not be necessary whenever the client or parent/caregiver is available. Observer-report or inference of race/ethnicity in cases where the client or parent/caregiver are present but decline to answer the question is not an appropriate data collection technique. There are a number of reasons for rejecting the use of observer-report or inference when the client or parent/caregiver are available. Social science research demonstrates that observer-report/inference is fraught with problems of validity, subject to observer bias, and may fail to respect the preferences of Multiracial people in particular.<sup>6</sup> Furthermore, clients and parents/caregivers have the right to decline to answer questions of race/ethnicity without having to be subject to the inference of their race by an observer. The racial/ethnic identification of the clients served by DCYF belongs to the clients themselves. While we encourage the self-report of race/ethnicity, it is the clients who can choose to share it with the agency programs, or not.

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<sup>6</sup> See for example Ford, K.S., 2019. Observer-identification: A potential threat to the validity of self-identified race and ethnicity. *Educational Researcher*, 48(6), pp.378-381; Feliciano, C., 2016. Shades of race: How phenotype and observer characteristics shape racial classification. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 60(4), pp.390-419; Rivera, C. and Pennock-Roman, M., 1987. Issues in race/ethnicity identification procedures in the National Assessment of Educational Progress, Part 1: A comparison of observer reports and self-identification. *ETS Research Report Series*, 1987(1), pp.i-57; and Root, M.P. ed., 1992. *Racially mixed people in America*. Sage Publications.

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*[The] “unknown” category should be available in all DCYF race/ethnicity data collection systems, and if a client or parent/caregiver declines to answer the question, then “unknown” should be indicated.*

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Consequently, the “unknown” category should be available in all DCYF race/ethnicity data collection systems, and if a client or parent/caregiver declines to answer the question, then “unknown” should be indicated. The presence of the unknown category should not be used as a justification for not asking the client the question and, in fact, data systems may choose to audit data collection to ensure data collection is as complete as possible. Additionally, in certain cases a client or caregiver may not be present but a service provider or professional (e.g., physician, law enforcement, teacher, or caseworker) may have the client’s race/ethnicity information in their records (derived from prior interactions). OIAA advocates including the race/ethnicity information from their administrative records in such instances.

OIAA’s Data Governance Plan (forthcoming) will reflect this general standard as well, and the agencywide data governance system will undertake transitioning those programmatic data-collection systems that still call for observer-report to instead include an “unknown” category.

**Defining racial/ethnic categories.** Another important consideration in the collection of race and ethnicity data has to do with the selection of racial/ethnic categories themselves. That is, what categories are provided as response choices when racial/ethnic information is being collected? OIAA follows a standard originally put forth by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for data collection.

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These standards, established in 1997, are also adhered to by the U.S. Census Bureau for estimating the racial/ethnic composition of large populations. These categories are as follows:

- *American Indian or Alaska Native* – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- *Asian* – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- *Black or African American* – A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
- *Hispanic/Latino* – A person self-identifying as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.
- *Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander* – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- *White* – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

OMB data collection categories do not include a multiracial category. Rather, people who identify with more than one race may choose to provide multiple races in response to the race question. Additionally, a person

who identifies as Hispanic may be of any race. In adherence with OMB data collection standards, all DCYF race/ethnicity data collection systems should have the capacity for more than one race/ethnicity to be recorded and all race/ethnicity identified by a client or parent/caregiver should be documented.

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**Adoption and modification of the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) race/ethnicity reporting standard.** Once race and ethnicity information has been collected, organizations and agencies must make a decision as to how the data will be reported. For example, will race and ethnicity be reported as separate constructs or in combination? We might also ask how individuals identified under multiple race categories are reported, and relatedly, whether racial/ethnic categories are mutually exclusive. This is especially relevant in Washington State where we have seen an increasing multiracial population—a population that has more than doubled over the past 20 years among children/youth aged 0-17.<sup>7,8</sup>

In 2011, the WSRDAC<sup>9</sup> Measurement Subcommittee recommended a racial/ethnic reporting standard which breaks out the multiracial category for three racial/ethnic groups – American Indian/Alaska Native, Black/African American, and Asian/Pacific Islander, with a hierarchy assigned to the race when one or more are present. This was done for two reasons. First, in Washington State, two of these groups—American Indian/Alaska Native and Black/African American—historically have experienced the greatest and most consistent child welfare disproportionalities and disparities. Second, as Washington has become increasingly multiracial, AI/AN and Black children are increasingly likely to be reported in the multiracial category. The recommended reporting standard also incorporated Hispanic ethnicity into the racial standard. The WSRDAC Measurement Subcommittee recommended that Hispanic ethnicity for persons of White or unknown race should be assigned a race of Hispanic, so that the agency could also understand the disparity related to Hispanic children. In this way, the resulting reporting standard provided an opportunity to better understand and address disproportionalities that might be hidden in the broad and growing multiracial category as well as among Hispanic children who were previously categorized as White or unknown. The standard was adopted by the former Children’s Administration (CA) Racial Disparity Working Group in 2011 and after that, became the reporting standard for the former Children’s Administration in reporting child welfare data. In honor of the work done by WSRDAC and their contribution to our understanding of disproportionality, we have named this the WSRDAC Reporting Standard.

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<sup>7</sup> *Washington State Population by Race*. Office of Financial Management. <https://www.ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/statewide-data/washington-trends/population-changes/population-race>

<sup>8</sup> Note that the broad categorization of these groups as “multiracial” (as in the OFM population estimates) is less a reflection of similarities between them than it is a practical solution for representing a collection of smaller, and particularly diverse, groups in both small and large-scale datasets. For this reason, the use of a multiracial category (or categories) may lead to systematic underrepresentation of the more inclusive race and ethnic groups from which the multiracial categories are derived.

<sup>9</sup> For more information on the statutory establishment of the WSRDAC Measurement Subcommittee, see: [https://app.leg.wa.gov/ReportsToTheLegislature/Home/GetPDF?fileName=Racial%20Disproportionality%20in%20WA%20State\\_1ab0b5ee-4ce0-4bc7-9454-662e99f602b5.pdf](https://app.leg.wa.gov/ReportsToTheLegislature/Home/GetPDF?fileName=Racial%20Disproportionality%20in%20WA%20State_1ab0b5ee-4ce0-4bc7-9454-662e99f602b5.pdf)

In 2020, OIAA developed a modified version of the WSRDAC reporting standard (referred to as WSRDAC/M for WSRDAC/Modified), which specifies that children who are identified as Hispanic *and* White/Asian, Asian, White, or unknown should be coded as Hispanic rather than *Asian/PI, Multiracial* (as was the practice under the original WSRDAC reporting standard). This change was made with the understanding that the Hispanic group, in addition to AI/AN and Black groups, generally experience substantial and consistent inequities in outcomes of interest to DCYF, and should be categorically separated from the larger Asian/PI, Multiracial group for that reason. WSRDAC/M is now the race and ethnicity reporting standard for DCYF.

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*WSRDAC/M is now the race and ethnicity reporting standard for DCYF.*

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Racial/ethnic categories for the newly created WSRDAC/M reporting standard are outlined in detail below:

- American Indian/Alaska Native (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- American Indian/Alaska Native, Multiracial (any American Indian/Alaska Native indicated along with another race/ethnicity).
- Asian/Pacific Islander (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated; when sufficient numbers and data collection support doing so, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander may be reported as a separate racial group from Asian).
- Asian/PI, Multiracial (Any combination of Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and/or White; includes the combination of Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander when these groups are reported separately).
- Black/African American (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- Black/African American, Multiracial (any Black indicated along with another race/ethnicity except American Indian/Alaska Native).
- Hispanic/Latino (Hispanic indicated along with any racial category except American Indian/Alaska Native or Black/African American).
- White (just one race, Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- Unknown (no race indicated, Hispanic not indicated, including any residual “Missing” or “Other” category from source data collection).

Table 1 depicts the WSRDAC/M multiracial and ethnic categorizations graphically, as these can be more complicated to understand than single-race categorizations. The table can be read by combining the descriptions detailed along the top row with “additional” race/ethnicity categories listed in the left-most column. The colored blocks indicate which group is reported depending on the specific combinations of race(s)/ethnicity.

Table 1. Visual guide to WSRDAC/M multiracial and ethnic categories

	AI/AN reported, plus one or more additional race(s) and/or Hispanic	Black reported, plus one or more additional race(s) and/or Hispanic (not AI/AN)	Hispanic reported, plus Asian/PI, White, or “race unknown”	Asian/PI reported, plus White
AI/AN				
Black				
Hispanic				
Asian/PI <sup>a</sup>				
White				
Race Unknown				

<sup>a</sup>Includes NH/PI

DCYF recognizes that for purposes of clarity in communication and comparability in graphs and charts, or perhaps in order to address specific research questions, it may be desirable within the DCYF WSRDAC/M reporting standard to combine the AI/AN, Multiracial, Asian/PI, Multiracial, and/or Black, Multiracial categories with the corresponding single-race AI/AN, Asian/PI, and Black categories.

There are several practical benefits of the WSRDAC/M reporting standard which have led to OIAA’s decision to adopt it as the preferred standard for reporting throughout DCYF. These benefits include:

- 1) It represents both race and ethnicity (specifically Hispanic/Latino) as a single variable.
- 2) It allows for mutually exclusive categories—an important condition for easily interpretable data analysis and reporting.
- 3) It breaks out the growing multiracial category in a way that is refined and meaningful, both analytically and in terms of practice.
- 4) It permits a focus on the groups most likely to experience disproportionality in DCYF’s systems of care.

**Presentation of race/ethnicity data.** An often overlooked issue when combining race/ethnicity data across multiple sources is the importance of consistent and accurate categorical labels. We should recognize that variations considered by some to be inconsequential may hold different meanings for those reading or responding. For example, though Black and African American are often listed as a single response choice, it is important to keep in mind that this category may represent two separate constructs. Broadly, OIAA adheres to the following guidelines for labeling and presenting race/ethnicity data, unless otherwise specified.

Race/ethnic categories are labeled and abbreviated using the specifications below and should always be presented in alphabetical order.

- American Indian/Alaska Native (**AI/AN**)
- American Indian/Alaska Native, Multiracial(**AI/AN-Multi**)
- Asian and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (**Asian/PI**)
- Asian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial (**Asian/PI-Multi**)
- Black/African American (**Black**)
- Black/African American, Multiracial(**Black-Multi**).
- Hispanic/Latino (**Hispanic**)
- **White** (no abbreviation)

- **Unknown** (no abbreviation or **Unk**)

**Reporting and analyzing racial/ethnic categories as Other, Unknown, or Not Provided.** The decision to present Unknown as a separate category as well as the decision to incorporate these records in any analysis should first center on what is known about how the data were collected. The choice of the analyst of whether to present data in the Unknown category will be driven by the purpose of the analysis. The default generally should be to leave the category out of analyses, but in cases where the category is large or inclusion in the analysis accomplishes some desired ends known in advance, then the Unknown category may be included at the end of the typical list of race/ethnicity categories.

**Reporting and analyzing smaller racial/ethnic categories.** Group size is an important consideration with regard to any analysis for reasons of privacy and confidentiality. For example, in Washington State, individuals self-identifying or otherwise labeled as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (NH/PI) represent a small subset of the population relative to other racial/ethnic groups. This limits our ability to accurately characterize NH/PI as a group or make meaningful comparisons to other groups, and may compromise data confidentiality standards. For this reason, the NH/PI group is often combined with the Asian category for analysis. The agency does not publicly report aggregated data smaller than 10, to avoid the possibility of client identification.

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*The agency does not publicly report aggregated data smaller than 10, to avoid the possibility of client identification.*

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Non-statistical means of describing small groups (e.g., through qualitative analyses) can be explored so as to not, in effect, hide the experiences and outcomes of small groups as a result of data redaction. In some situations, combining related race or ethnic groups for reporting purposes, or aggregating small groups geographically or across time, may be other workable options.

**Reporting data from outside DCYF.** In many instances (including within the pages of this report), DCYF relies upon external data sources in order to better understand the populations we serve and to track agency performance. For example, most of DCYF’s nine population-level outcome goals related to the resilience, education, and health of children, youth, and families are derived from external data sources. This practice is intended to provide a neutral basis for agency accountability, but the use of external data in these instances is complicated by the varying standards used in data collection and reporting. Notably, we recognize that reporting standards that do not disaggregate the multiracial category are commonly used among partner agencies from whom DCYF obtains population-level outcome (in particular OFM). Because the WSRDAC/M reporting standard is the standard for DCYF, we must acknowledge when difference in reporting categories occur, so as to prevent inaccurate comparisons from being made across populations and outcomes.

### Existing DCYF Race/Ethnicity Collection and Reporting Practices

Race and ethnicity collection and reporting vary throughout DCYF depending on the program area and data system used. As an initial step in aligning practices around race/ethnicity data collection and reporting, OIAA has developed an inventory of practices currently being used throughout the agency (see Table 2). By cataloguing this information, OIAA will be better able to track progress toward a unified approach and to monitor longitudinal data and changes to the data that occur over time.

Table 2 shows that DCYF programs and services are aligned in certain aspects of race/ethnicity data collection. All but one program (ECLIPSE) use race/ethnicity categories (client response choices) that are aligned with, or able to be rolled up into, the OMB categories.<sup>10</sup> Additionally, programs appear to be consistent in using parent/guardian or youth self-report as the primary source for race and ethnicity information.

However, Table 2 also reveals broad inconsistencies across programs and services to do with race/ethnicity data collection and reporting practices. Notably, approaches to data collection begin to differ across programs in instances where individuals decline to self-report or are otherwise not available to answer the question. Here we see a range of approaches across programs. This includes whether staff are directed to (1) enter race/ethnicity information based on their own observation of the client, (2) are able to pull the information from another data system, or (3) are able to code the response as Unreported, Unknown, or Undetermined. To this question, programs also differ regarding whether or not a formal policy has been established for the staff who navigate this process. Another area where programs differ includes whether or not clients responding to the race/ethnicity question are prompted to “select all that apply” if they or their child identify under multiple races and ethnicities (versus being prompted to select multiracial or only one). Finally, programs differ relative to which reporting standard (if any) they have historically used once race/ethnicity data have been collected.

Table 2. DCYF Race/Ethnicity (R/E) data collection and reporting inventory

Program/ Reporting Area	Data System	R/E Response choices align or can be collapsed into OMB categories <sup>a</sup>	Data source/ Who is responding?	Are respondents prompted to select “all that apply?”	What happens if R/E is unreported by client?	Reporting standard
<b>Early Learning</b>						
ECEAP	ELMS	Yes	Parent/caregiver	Yes	Staff observation	OMB
Child Care Subsidy Program	SSPS (DSHS)	Yes	Parent/caregiver	No	Left blank, pulled from separate system or coded as Unreported/Undetermined <sup>b</sup>	None
ESIT	ESIT	Yes	Parent/caregiver	Yes	Staff observation	OMB
Home Visiting	DOH	Varies by program	Parent/caregiver	Varies by program	Coded as Unreported/Undetermined	OMB
ECLIPSE	Spreadsheet	Unknown	Parent/caregiver	Unknown	Unknown	R/E not reported
<b>Child Welfare</b>						
Child Protection Foster care and Adoption	FamLink	Yes	Parent/caregiver or youth	Yes	Staff observation or coded as Unreported/Undetermined <sup>b</sup>	WSRDAC
<b>Juvenile Rehabilitation</b>						
Multiple Reports	Automated Client	Yes	Youth self-report or	Yes	Staff observation, pulled from separate	OMB

<sup>10</sup> The OMB data collection standard allows the multiracial category to be further disaggregated to align with DCYF WSRDAC/M reporting standards for future analysis.

## USING DATA IN DCYF TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY

	Tracking (ACT)		parent/caregiver; administrative records		system or coded as Unreported/Undetermined <sup>b</sup>	
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*a See section “Defining racial/ethnic categories” on page seven of this report for a description of OMB categories.*

*b OIAA could not identify a clear policy for how program staff should respond when race/ethnicity is initially unreported. This suggests that data collection practices within the program may be inconsistent.*

### Implications for Aligned Data Systems, Cross-Program Analysis, and Reporting

A challenge for any complex agency is establishing clear and consistent guidelines around the collection and reporting of race/ethnicity data. The reality is that different systems code, collect, and report race/ethnicity differently depending on the population of clients, what the information is being used for, what data have been made available, how these data are collected, and how they are aggregated and analyzed. This limits an agency’s ability to draw cross-system conclusions, but does not render it impossible. Indeed, most of the race/ethnicity data reported by the various programs within DCYF probably can be reasonably combined or compared without being misleading, though doing so may involve collapsing or recoding some categories to allow for that comparability. OIAA’s Data Governance Plan will seek to support DCYF data stewards across the agency to systemize data collection procedures in order to ensure that equity-focused reporting and analysis is consistent across programs and services.

#### Federal, State, and Other Funder Reporting Otherwise Prescribed

It is important to note that federal, state, or other funders may have requirements that are inconsistent with the WSRDAC/M reporting standard adopted by DCYF. In these instances, accountability reporting will follow the specified guidelines outlined by funders.

## Part Two: Identifying Race and Ethnic Disproportionality and Disparity Across DCYF Programs and Related Outcomes

The following section outlines what we know about racial and ethnic subpopulations in Washington State, as well as racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity among children, youth, and families served by DCYF. For the purposes of the present report we define racial and ethnic disproportionality and disparity as follows:

**Disproportionality:** The underrepresentation or overrepresentation of a racial or ethnic group compared to its percentage in the total population.

**Disparity:** The unequal outcomes of one racial or ethnic group as compared to results for another racial/ethnic group.

We engage with this information on several fronts. First, we highlight an inventory of existing DCYF reports addressing the topics of racial/ethnic disproportionality and disparity. Drawing from these reports, as well as original program and service-related data from which they pull, we then seek to highlight (1) demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic trends across racial/ethnic groups; (2) racial and ethnic disproportionality in DCYF service representation; and (3) racial and ethnic disparity in the agency’s three strategic performance categories: resilience, health, and education.

## Existing Reports

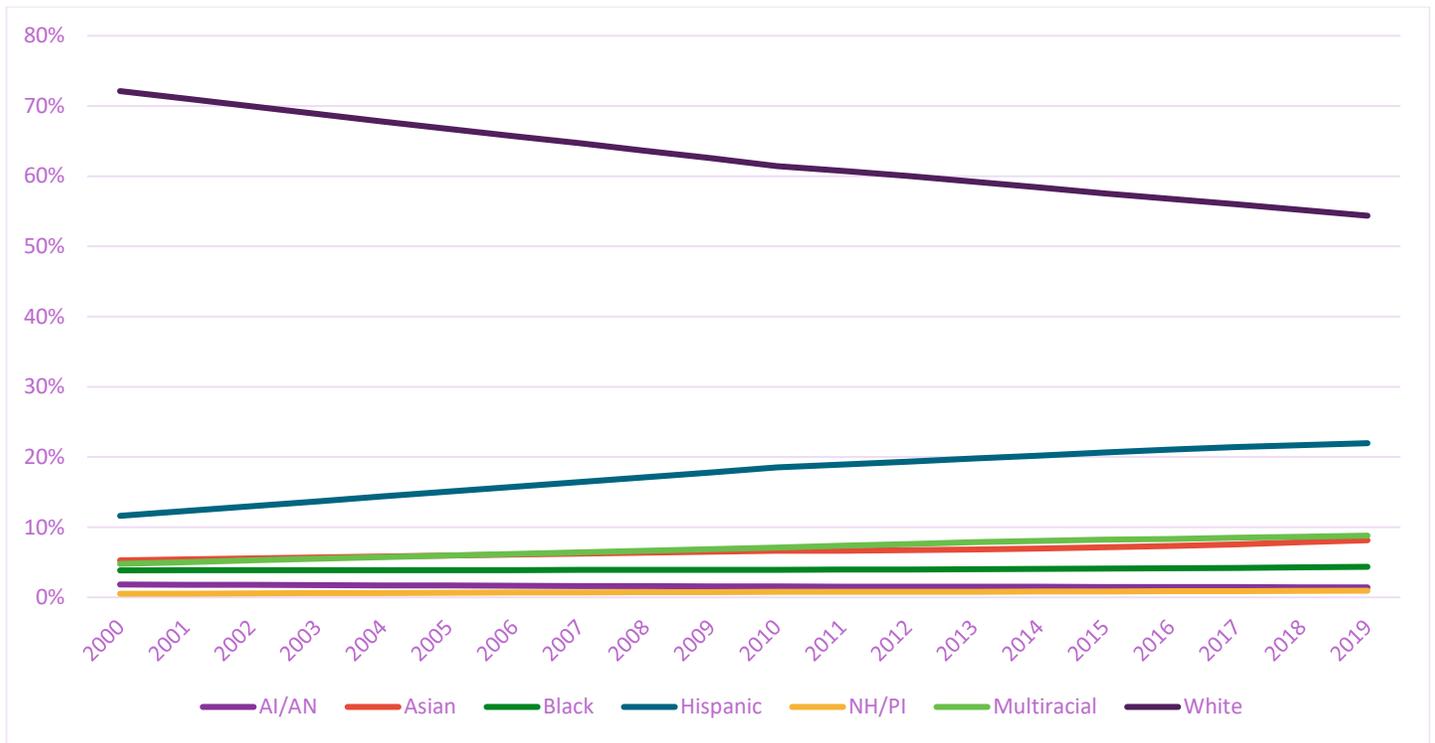
Before the creation of DCYF in 2018, several reports published by DCYF’s agencies of origin, and later by DCYF (reporting on earlier data), laid the groundwork for an agencywide focus on racial/ethnic disproportionality and disparity. These reports are identified in Table 3.

*Table 3. DCYF existing reports with focus on disproportionality and/or disparity*

Service Area	Report (Agency, Date)	Purpose
Early Learning	<u>Racial Equity Initiative Data Report (Department of Early Learning, 2016)</u>	Program-specific
Child Welfare	<u>Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Washington State (Children's Administration, 2017)</u>	Program-specific Legislative report (final of a series)
	<u>Washington State DCYF Racial Disparity Indices Report (DCYF, 2018)</u> <u>2019 Washington State Child Welfare Racial Disparity Indices Report</u>	Program-specific (final two of a series)
Juvenile Rehabilitation	<u>Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Juvenile Court - Evidence-Based Programs (DCYF, 2018)</u>	Legislative report
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention	<u>2019 Compliance with the Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Core Requirement</u>	Program-specific

**Demographic shifts in Washington State.** The population metrics discussed in this report center on children and youth living in Washington State, ages 0 to 19 (as well as subsets of this age range). Among this population, some demographic shifts have occurred over the last two decades. Notably, over the span of the last 19 years, the White population has decreased from 72% of the population in 2000 to 54% in 2019, a reduction of about 196,000 children. With the exception of children who are AI/AN, who have decreased by about 4,000 children (the AI/AN population of children are increasingly Multiracial), the number of children of all other racial/ethnic groups has been steadily increasing, most notably with those who are Hispanic increasing from 12% to 22% (about 215,500 children), those who are Asian from 5% to 8% (about 63,500 children), and those who are Multiracial from 5% to 9% (about 84,000 children; see Figure 1). Note that Figure 1 does not use WSRDAC/M reporting standards, as these race/ethnicity categories were not available across the entire date-range shown.

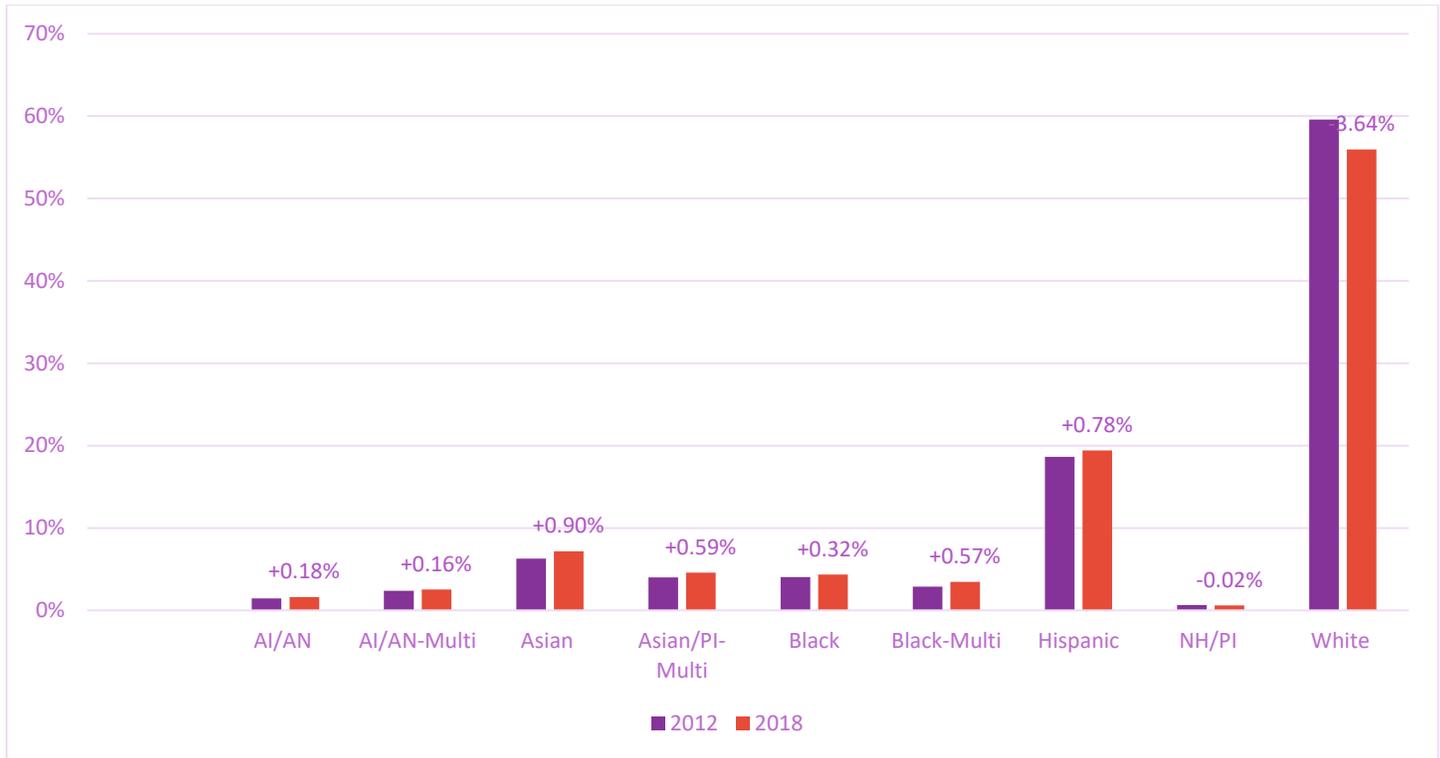
Figure 1. Demographic shifts in Washington State among children/youth ages 0-19 (FY 2000-19)



Data Source: OFM, Small Area Demographic Estimates (SADE). <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/asr/default.asp>  
 WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

More recent data from the American Community Survey (ACS) five-year population estimate allows us to observe demographic shifts using multiracial categories corresponding to those of the more detailed WSRDAC reporting standard. From 2012 to 2018 we can see a notable increase in the percent of children in the state who are AI/AN-Multiracial (about 4,500 children) and children who are Black-Multiracial (about 12,000 children; see Figure 2). This allows for a better understanding of the larger multiracial category (represented in Figure 1 above) particularly with respect to growing AI/AN and Black subgroups.

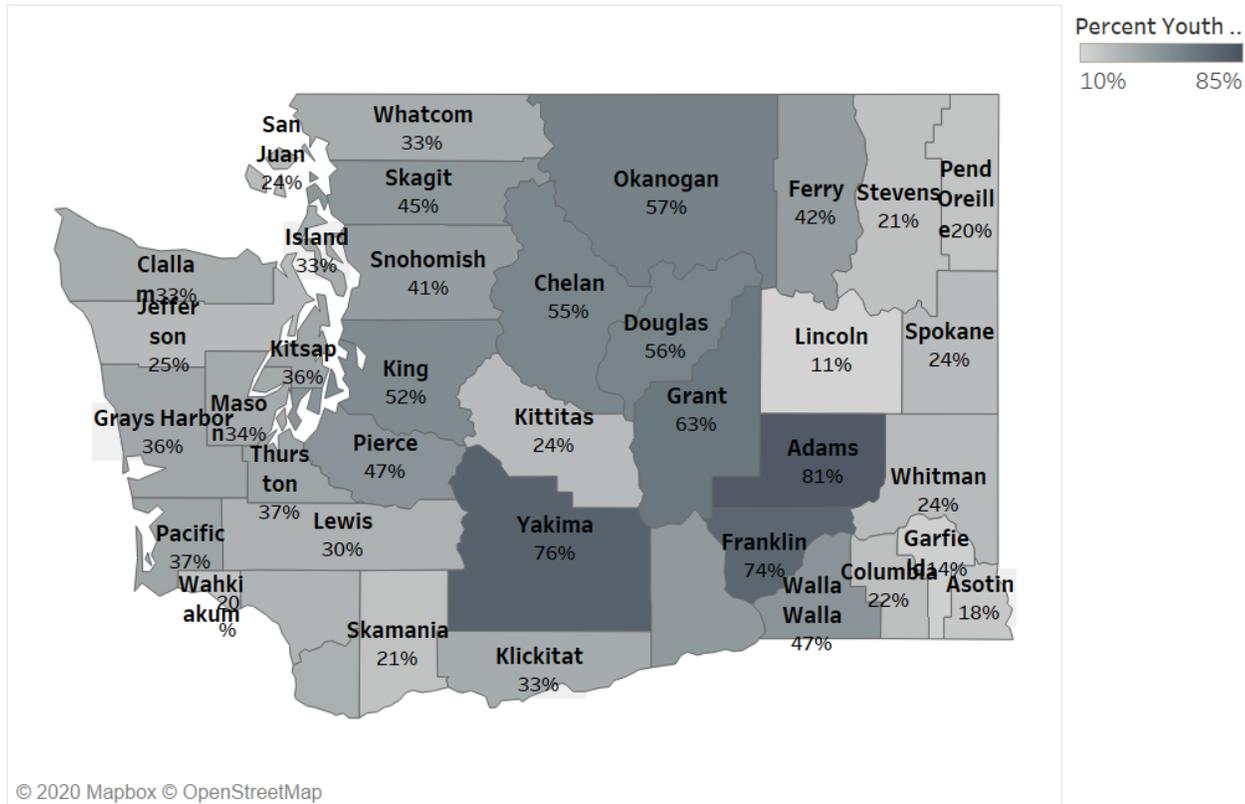
Figure 2. Demographic shifts in Washington State among children/youth ages 0-17 (FY 2012-18)



Data Source: ACS PUMS 2018 5-year estimates.  
 WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: Yes

**Race and ethnicity by geography among children and families served.** Recently released U.S. Census Bureau estimates for 2018 reveal that the concentration of children/youth of color under the age of 18 in Washington State varies widely from county to county. One way to visualize this is to map the percentage of children/youth under the age of 18 who are a race or ethnicity other than White (see Figure 3). Notably, Figure 3 reveals that children/youth of color represent a greater percentage of the 0-17 age group in densely populated urban areas of the state, particularly in King and Pierce counties. Children/youth of color are also a greater percentage of the 0-17 age group in counties throughout Central Washington.

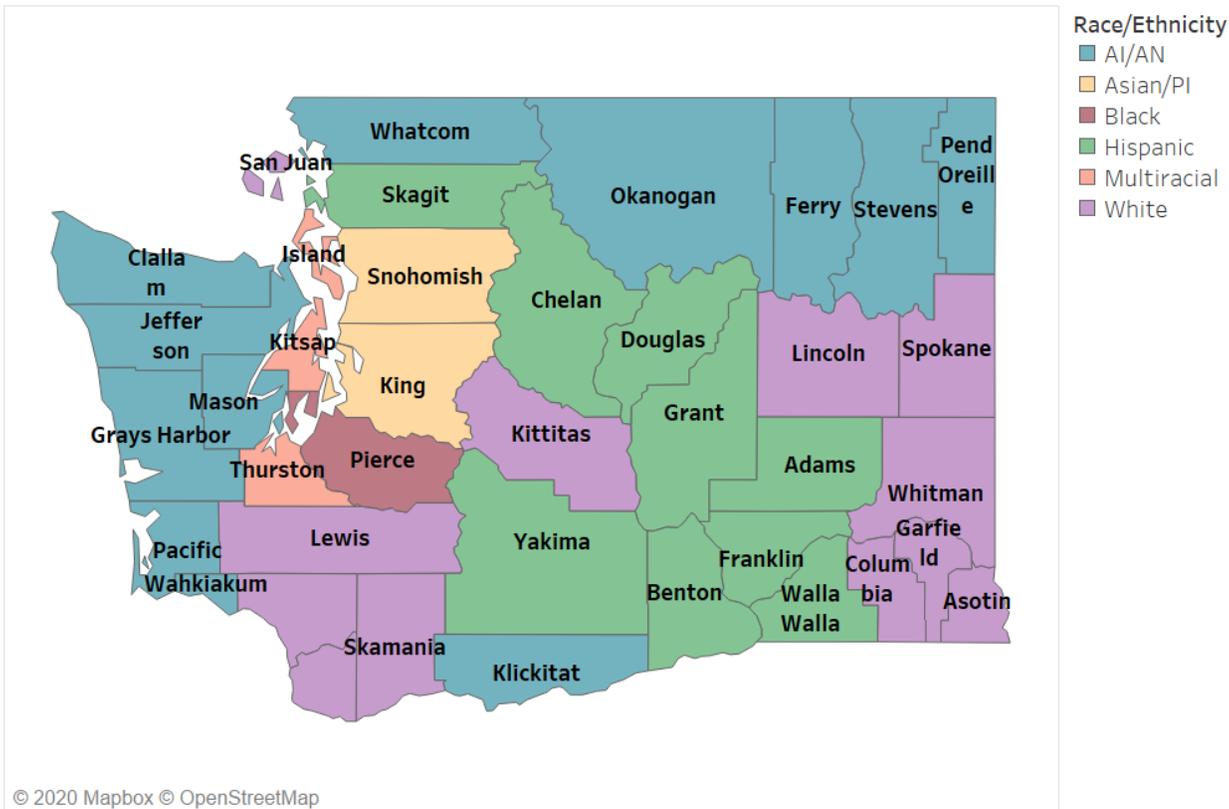
Figure 3. Children and youth of color as share of population ages 0-17, by county (FY 2018)



Data Source: OFM, Small Area Demographic Estimates (SADE), FY 2018. <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/asr/default.asp>  
 WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

Figure 4 shows, alternatively, for a given county, which racial/ethnic group is the most highly represented relative to how represented they are among the state’s total population of 0-17 year olds. For example, children/youth who are Black represent 4% of all 0-17 year olds in the state. In Pierce County, 7% of all children/youth in this age range are Black . In Pierce County, the difference between county and state percent representation is greatest among Black children/youth when compared to all other race/ethnic groups.

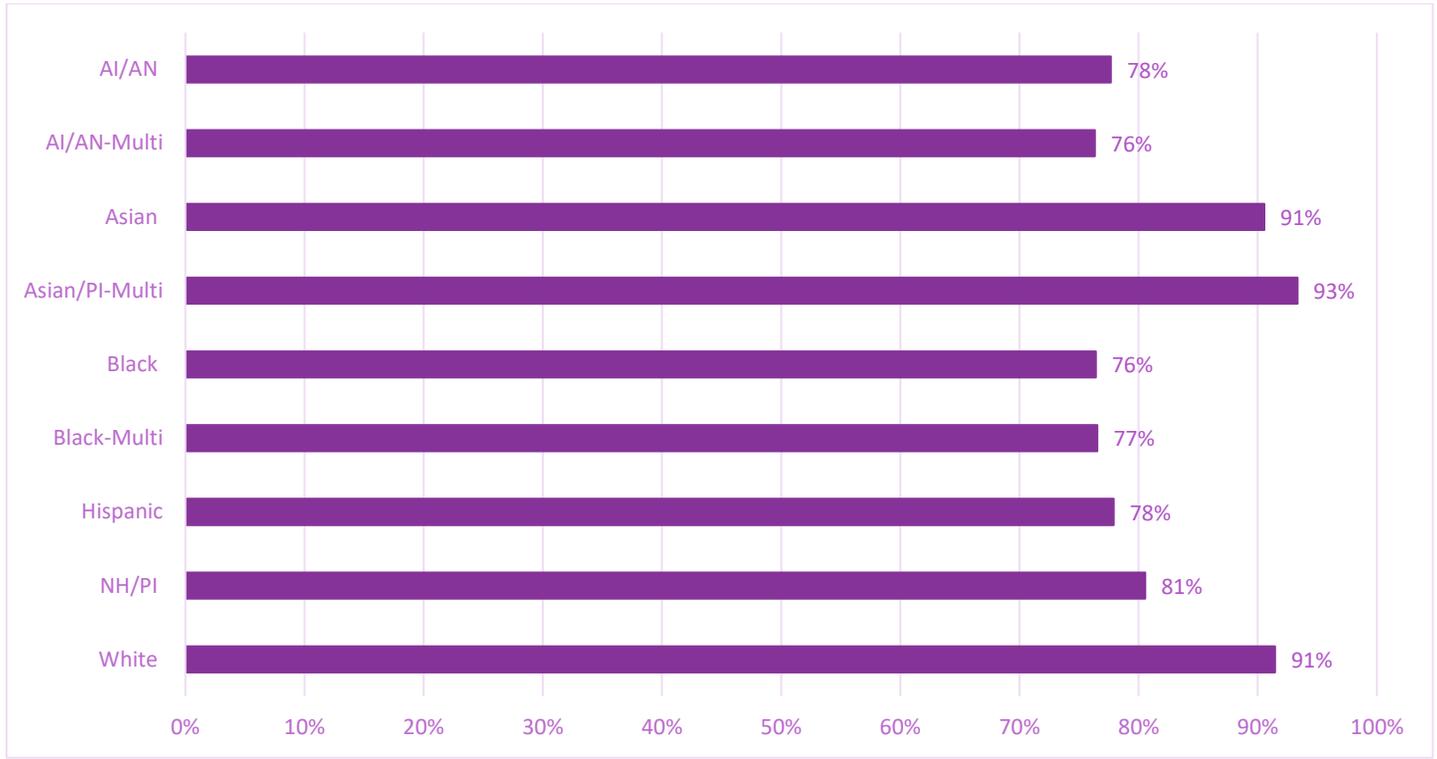
Figure 4. Geographic disproportionality ratio: Largest race/ethnic representation by county, relative to representation in the state ages 0-17 (FY 2018)



Data Source: OFM, Small Area Demographic Estimates (SADE) FY 2018. <http://www.ofm.wa.gov/pop/asr/default.asp>  
 WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

**Race and ethnicity by income.** Understanding the relationship between race/ethnicity and income is a crucial task in understanding disparities and disproportionality that occur throughout the population. In Washington State, children/youth under the age of 18 who live with related parents or guardians are more likely to be living above 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) if they are Asian (91%), Asian/PI, Multiracial (93%), or White (91%) compared to those who are AI/AN (78%), AI/AN-Multiracial (76%), Black (76%), Black-Multiracial (77%), or NH/PI (81%; see Figure 5).

Figure 5. Percent children and youth ages 0 to 17 living above 100% of the FPL, by race/ethnicity (2018, five-year estimate)



Data Source: ACS PUMS 2018 5-year estimates.  
WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: Yes

### Identifying Disproportionality in Service Engagement and Resource Utilization

This section of the report seeks to provide an aligned baseline understanding of disproportionality in service engagement across DCYF's three main program and service areas – Early Learning, Child Welfare, and Juvenile Rehabilitation. It is important to keep in mind that representation in a program or service is determined largely by aspects of underlying need, risk, eligibility, and access (see Figure 6 below). In this report we discuss disproportionality relative only to the available data while recognizing that a more complete understanding of these dynamics should be explored moving forward.

Figure 6. Identifying disproportionality along the service delivery path



Adapted from: *Identifying Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Human Services* (2017). OPRE. Retrieved from <https://www.urban.org/research/publication/identifying-racial-and-ethnic-disparities-human-services>

**Data analysis and interpretation.** The mathematical representation of disproportionality as the relative level at which groups of children, youth, or families are present in a given system at equal, higher, or lower rates than in the general population we refer to as the “disproportionality ratio.” We use this statistic in the remainder of this report to indicate the degree of disproportionate outcomes for a given group.

Specifically, the disproportionality ratio is calculated by taking the share of individuals in a given system and dividing it by the share of the same racial/ethnic group in the population. The result is a ratio where scores ranging from 0.00 to 0.99 indicate underrepresentation, while scores of 1.1 and greater indicate overrepresentation. A score of 1.0 indicates the population is represented proportionally in the system compared to the population. The further a disproportionality ratio is from 1.0, the greater the level of disproportionality. For example, a disproportionality ratio of 3.0 for a given racial/ethnic group suggests that group is three times more represented in that service than they are in the general population.

**Data sources and estimation.** As noted in Part One, there have not been consistent standards across DCYF’s agencies of origin for the collection of race and ethnicity information. As such, race and ethnicity data collection used in this section vary by program/service area. Statewide disproportionality ratio calculations require counts of (1) the service-eligible<sup>11</sup> population of children or youth in the state by race/ethnicity, and (2) the numbers of children or youth in the program being examined by race/ethnicity. **Appendix I** includes tables that present detailed results on disproportionality in early learning services.

Note that rates are based on population data from the American Community Survey (ACS), which uses the OMB data collection standard. This standard for data collection allows the multiracial category to be further disaggregated to align with DCYF WSRDAC reporting standards for future analyses. Note too that all race/ethnicity data below are presented using mutually exclusive categories.

## Child Welfare

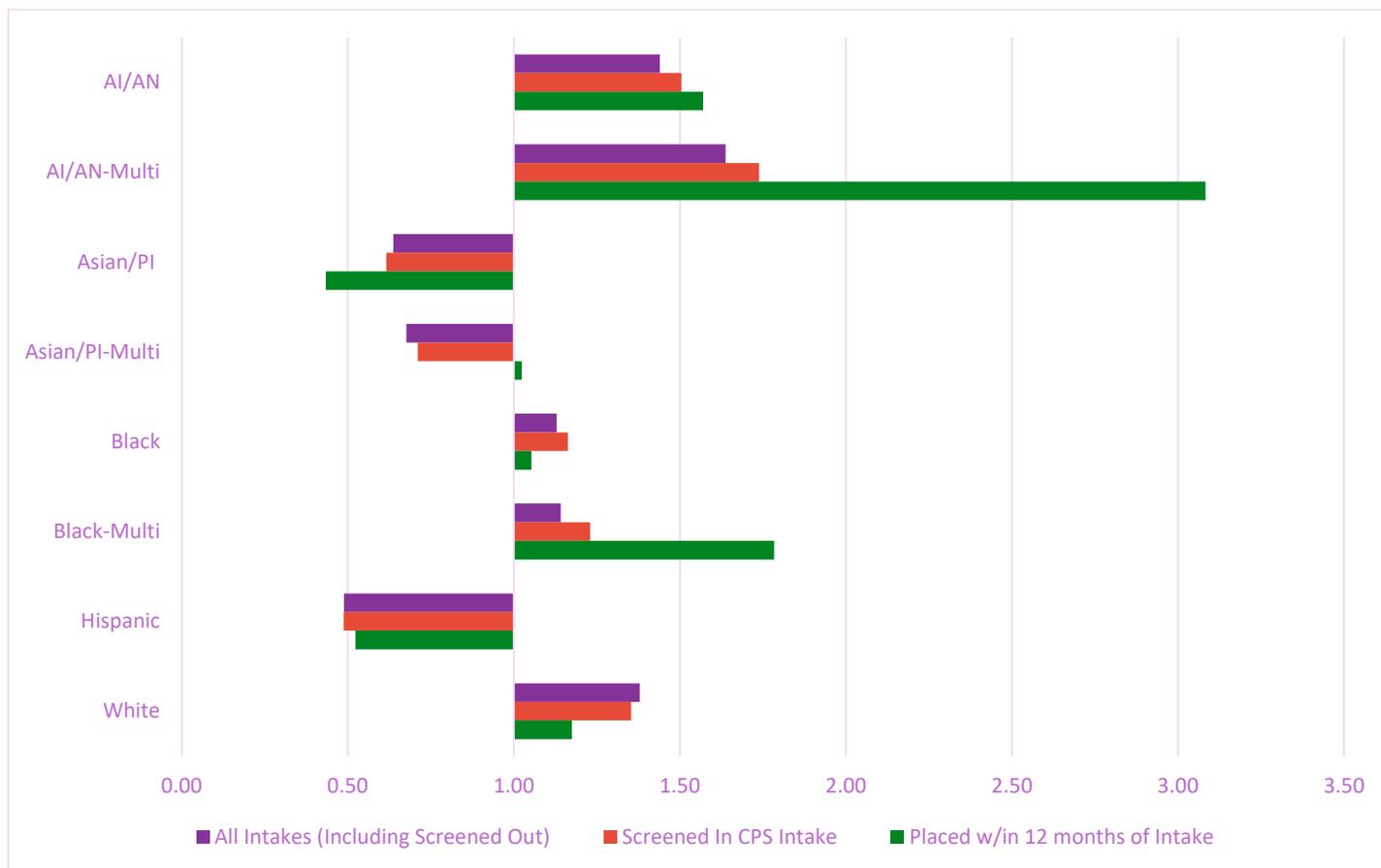
We explore disproportionality in Child Welfare across multiple decision points, from initial intakes to placement. While other junctures exist in the child welfare system, these points are critical in determining a child’s or youth’s further involvement with the system. Because the vast majority of child welfare-involved children and youth come from family situations characterized by poverty,<sup>12</sup> we examine racial/ethnic disproportionality relative to the underlying state population of 0 to 17-year olds living under the 200% FPL.

Results indicate that the AI/AN, Black, AI/AN-Multiracial, Black-Multiracial, and White groups are overrepresented at multiple stages of the child welfare process. All other groups are slightly underrepresented (Asian/PI, Asian/PI-Multiracial, and Hispanic; see Figure 7).

*Figure 7. Racial and ethnic disproportionality ratio of Child Welfare (ages 0-17; FY 2017)*

<sup>11</sup> For many programs there are age- and income-eligibility guidelines, (e.g., state-funded child care). In other cases, we identify a population in poverty (using 200% FPL as a proxy for poverty). Note that because children and youth of color are overrepresented among low-income populations, we can expect that limiting state population estimates to those living at or below 200% FPL will result in disproportionality ratios for children/youth of color that may differ from ratios derived from state population estimates not constrained by income level.

<sup>12</sup> Pelton, Leroy H. (2015). The continuing role of material factors in child maltreatment and placement, *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 41: 30–39; Partners for Our Children (2016). *Poverty & Involvement in the Child Welfare System*. Retrieved from <https://partnersforourchildren.org>. As stated above (footnote 1, p. 3), over 90% of children and youth involved with the child welfare system, in Washington and across the nation, are from low-income households, below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.



Data Sources: FamLink, FY 2017 Cohort; Population estimates from ACS 2017 5-year estimates <200% FPL among children ages 0-17. Source data tables provided in [Appendix I](#).

WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

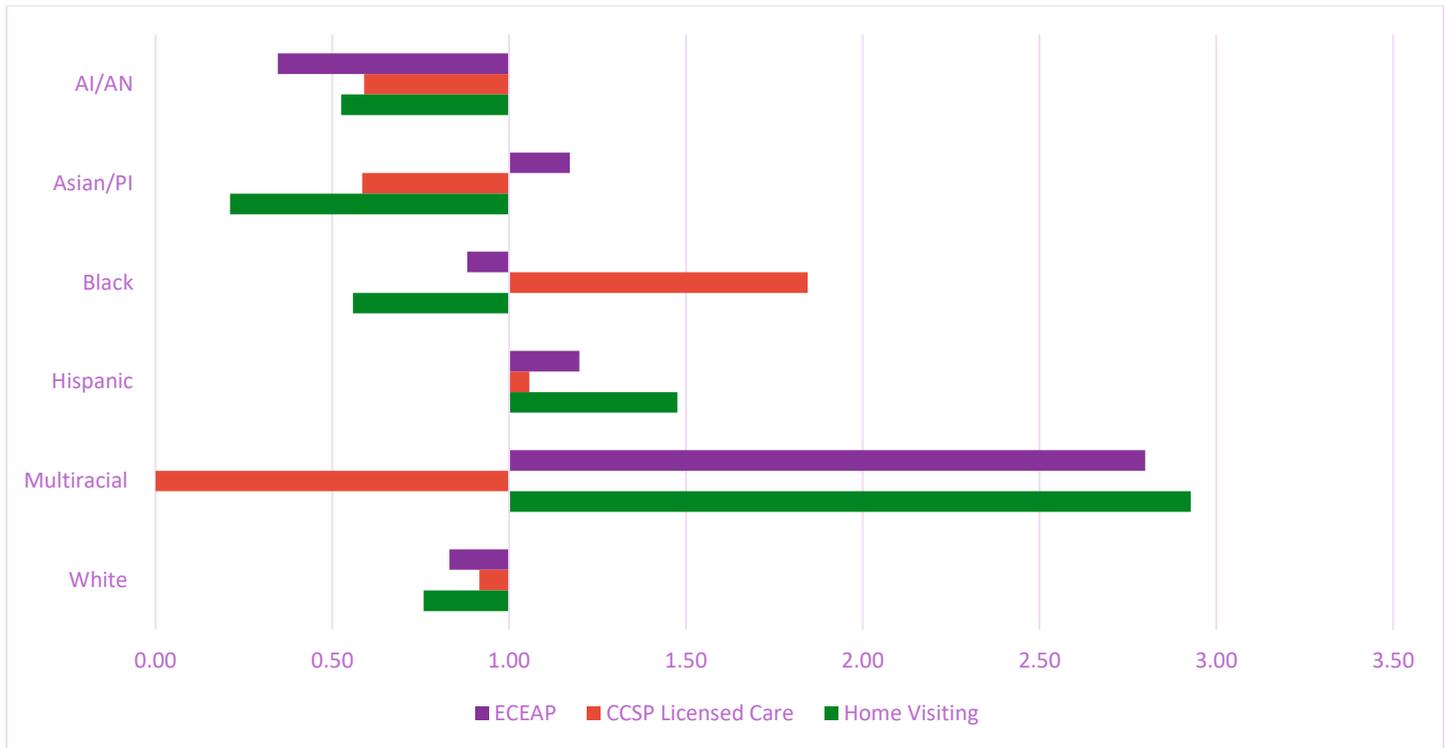
WSRDAC Reporting Standard: Yes

### Early Learning and Family Support

This report highlights three of DCYF’s early learning and family service programs: Home Visiting, Early Childhood Education and Assistance Program (ECEAP), and the Child Care Subsidy Program (CCSP) for children in licensed care. We highlight these programs because they rely, in part, on income-eligibility determinations, which can be mapped onto available ACS population parameters. Doing so allows for a comparison of racial/ethnic representation among the corresponding underlying income-similar population across the state: children in households with incomes under 200% FPL (for subsidy and Home Visiting), and under 110% FPL (for ECEAP).

Figure 8 shows that children who are Multiracial are over-represented in ECEAP and Home Visiting by nearly three times their share of the underlying income-eligible populations. This may be due to the reporting practices of these two programs, which do not disaggregate the multiracial category, whereas the denominators were constructed by disaggregating and allocating the AI/AN-Multiracial and Black-Multiracial groups of children to the corresponding single-race categories. Another prominent finding is that children who are Black are represented in subsidized child care at nearly twice their share of the underlying 200% FPL population of children under age 5.

Figure 8. Racial and ethnic disproportionality of children under age 5 across early learning and family services (FY 2019)



Data Sources: ECEAP from ELMS Demographics reporting 2019-20 SY standard racial categories; CCSP Licensed Care from most recent (6/2020) analysis of FY 2019 Flat File; Home Visiting from DOH tables (FY 2019); Population estimates from ACS 2018 5-year estimates. Source data tables provided in [Appendix I](#).

WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

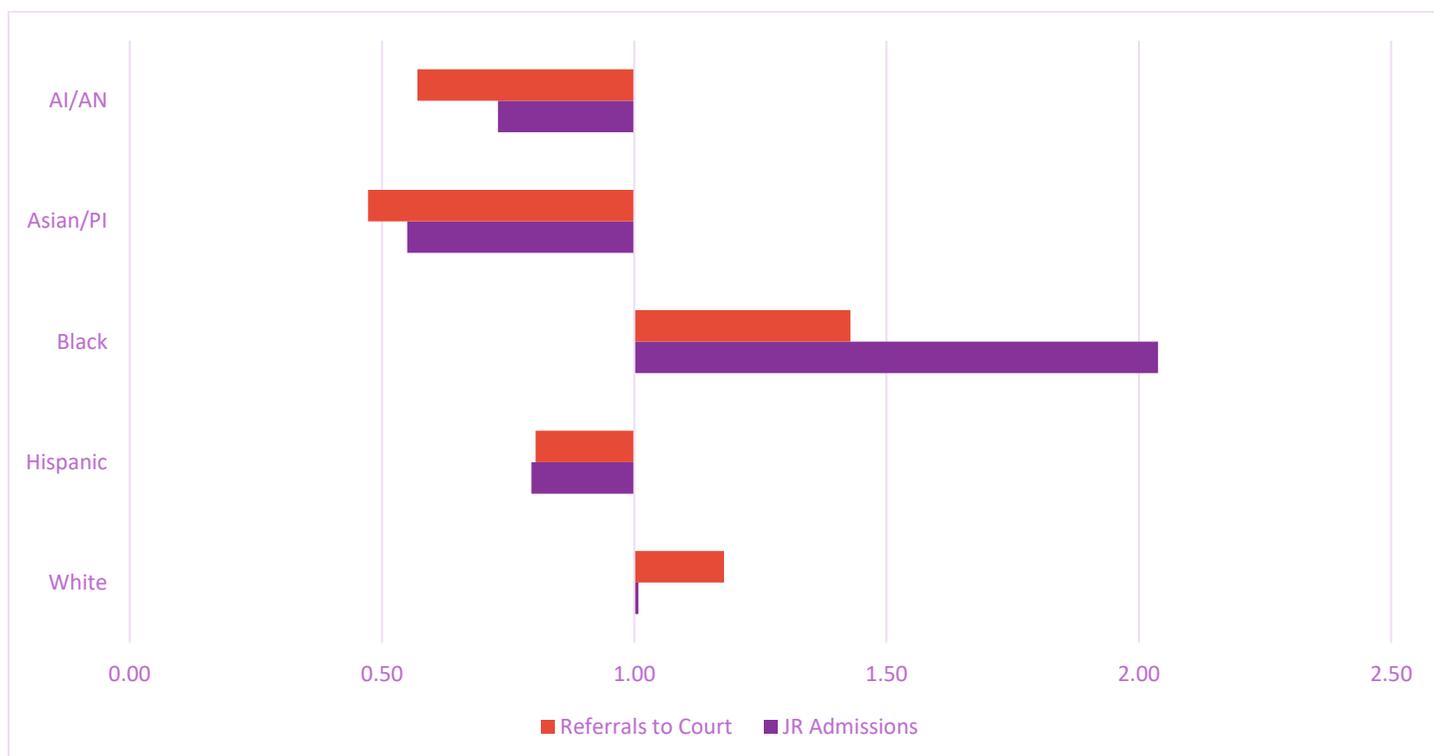
Note: ECEAP 3 and 4-year-olds Base population: WA children <5 FPL 110%; CCSP Licensed Care children <5 Base population: WA children <5 FPL 200%; Home Visiting children <5 Base population WA children <5 FPL 200%. All children with unknown race/ethnicity have been excluded.

### Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR)

We explore disproportionality in juvenile justice with reference to youth referrals to court and to admissions into JR. Because the vast majority of JR-involved youth come from family situations characterized by poverty,<sup>13</sup> we examine racial/ethnic disproportionality relative to the underlying state population of 10 to 17-year olds living under 200% federal poverty. Results indicate that Black youth are overrepresented in referrals to court and JR admissions. Specifically, youth who are Black are over two times more represented among all JR admissions than they are in the underlying population (see Figure 9).

Figure 9. Juvenile Rehabilitation racial and ethnic disproportionality ratio (ages 10-17; FY 2018)

<sup>13</sup> Just over 85% of JR-involved youth who are enrolled in school are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL) according to the following report: Education Research & Data Center (2019). *Education Outcome Characteristics of Students Admitted to Juvenile Detention*. Retrieved from <https://erdc.wa.gov/publications/justice-program-outcomes/education-outcome-characteristics-students-admitted-juvenile>.



Data Sources: Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); Automated Client Tracking (ACT), FY 2018; Population estimates from ACS 2018 5-year estimates among children ages 10-17 and <200% FPL. Source data tables provided in [Appendix I.WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No](#)

### Identifying Disparity in Child and Youth Outcomes

**Data analysis and interpretation.** This section highlights racial/ethnic differences across a range of crucial DCYF child/youth outcomes in the areas of resilience, education, and health. For each outcome we indicate whether or not a disparity was identified based on the following criteria:

1. A notable difference was found between one or more race/ethnic groups of color and Whites.<sup>14</sup>
2. Differences were found to be statistically significant.<sup>15</sup>
3. Differences were associated with an appreciable effect size.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> For this report, we have chosen to use the non-Hispanic White population as the comparison group because they are historically least likely to experience discrimination based on race compared to persons of color.

<sup>15</sup> Group differences found to be statistically significant at the .05 level—or the probability that the observed difference occurred by chance is less than 5%—as determined by a Chi-square test.

<sup>16</sup> We used Cramer’s V test of correlational strength to indicate effect size in terms of the differences between the groups. Solely for the purpose of this effect-size estimation we corrected for lack of statistical power due to greatly different sizes of populations. We did this by equating the sizes of the groups (i.e., by reducing the size of the White group to be the same as the one to which it was being compared). Then we used the population-estimated outcome rate for the White group in order to make each comparison. Effect sizes can be interpreted as follows; > .1, < .3 = small, > .3 < .5 = medium, >.5 = large. For this report, we consider anything over .1 to be notable. It should be noted that weak to moderate associations between agency outcomes and racial/ethnic categories are expected, given the range of other factors that are likely also to play a role. See Appendix II for effect sizes associated with each outcome metric.

4. When applicable, 95% confidence intervals are not overlapping.<sup>17</sup>

A final note: All outcome metrics are considered to be positive outcomes (i.e., the outcome believed to be most constructive in a youth’s development) unless otherwise noted (as with Low Birthweight). In this frame, disparities are indicated when the percentage for a given race/ethnic group falls below that of White children/youth.

**Data Sources and Estimates.** The child/youth outcome metrics discussed in this report are based upon data obtained from a variety of sources; these include state administrative records, surveys, and population estimates. As a result, the outcome data presented herein differ in terms of how inclusive they are of the populations of interest. For example, aggregated reporting data obtained from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) represents the total population of school-aged children and youth enrolled in public education within a specified period. In contrast, data obtained from surveys such as the Healthy Youth Survey (HYS) sample a population of interest within a given age range and geography. While surveys in general introduce a certain degree of uncertainty (which can be characterized statistically), we consider HYS results to be generalizable to the same-age population in Washington State. Finally, outcome data presented in this report also differ in terms of available date ranges, the race/ethnicity data collection standards used in generating the source data, or race/ethnicity data reporting standards used in reporting the data. For simplicity, we show the most recent data available for each outcome. In this portion of the report, unless otherwise stated, race/ethnicity data have been derived from data that were collected using the OMB Standard, and are mutually exclusive.

Finally, we examine disparity (the unequal outcomes of one racial or ethnic group as compared to results for another racial/ethnic group) across key DCYF outcomes within the categories below. These are represented by at least one, and often multiple, outcome metrics.<sup>18</sup> However, for clarity, this report will highlight just one metric per category unless otherwise noted.

**Resilience**

- Children and youth are supported by healthy relationships with adults.
- Parents and caregivers are supported to meet the needs of children and youth.<sup>19</sup>
- Families are economically secure.

**Education**

- Kindergarten readiness.
- Youth school engagement.
- High school graduation.

**Health**

- Healthy birthweight.
- Child and youth development.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> 95% confidence intervals (CI) suggest that there is a 95% chance that the population value is within the range indicated. See Appendix II for CI values associated with each outcome metric.

<sup>18</sup> For full overview of key DCYF performance metrics, see <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/oiaa/agency-performance>.

<sup>19</sup> This outcome is not included in this examination of disparities because it is included to some extent in the previous section (in terms of disproportionality within child welfare).

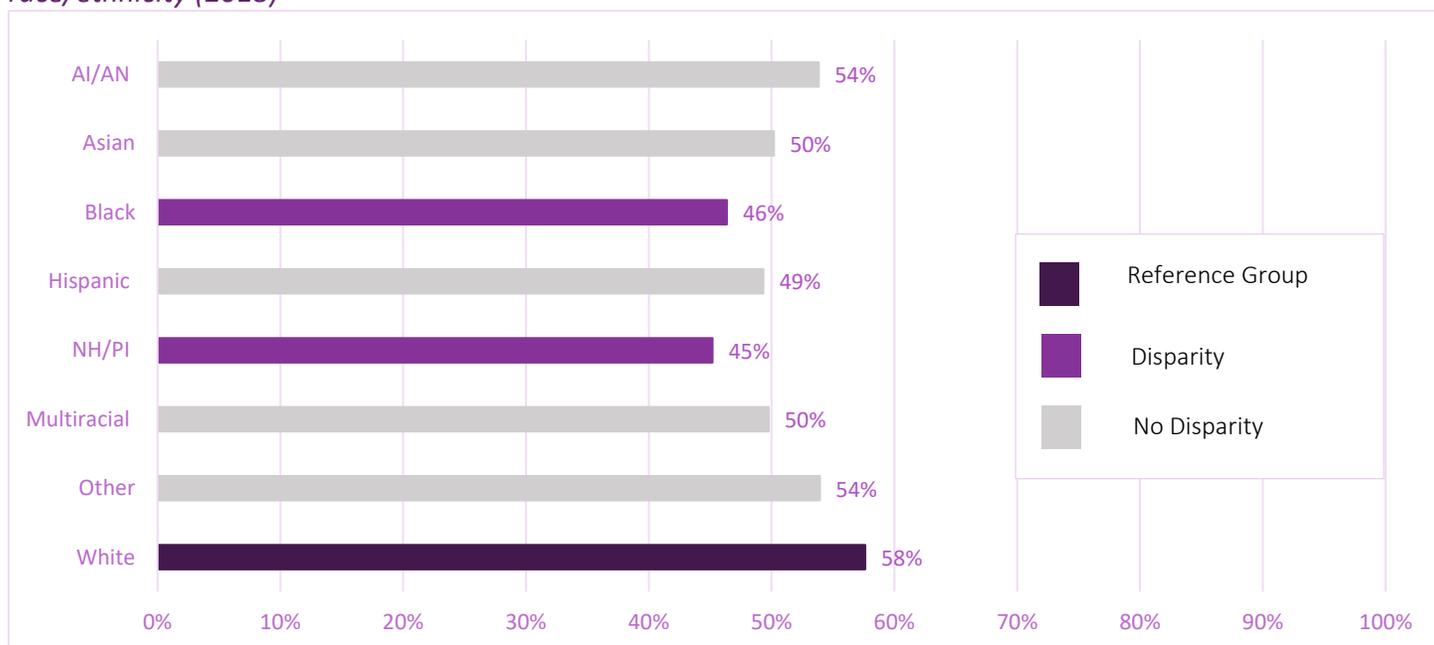
<sup>20</sup> This outcome is currently represented by the metric “Percent of 3-6 year olds on Medicaid receiving one or more well-child visit,” however; this metric is excluded in this report because race/ethnicity data are not yet available for reporting.

- Mental and behavioral health of youth.

## Resilience

**Children and youth are supported by healthy relationships with adults.** In the agency's efforts to improve and support the resilience of children, youth, and families in Washington State, DCYF has established a goal that children and youth are supported by healthy relationships with adults. We use responses to the Healthy Youth Survey as a means of measuring this outcome, and have combined survey items that ask about youth's prosocial involvement, specifically opportunities to discuss problems with parents/caregivers, chances to have fun with their families, and opportunities to be involved in family decisions. It is possible to summarize responses to this indicator dichotomously by counting the number of 10<sup>th</sup> graders who were above or below an established cutoff. Compared to White (58%), there was notable disparity in opportunities for prosocial involvement among Black (46%) and NH/PI (45%) groups (see Figure 10).

Figure 10. Percentage of 10th graders who indicate having opportunities for prosocial involvement by race/ethnicity (2018)

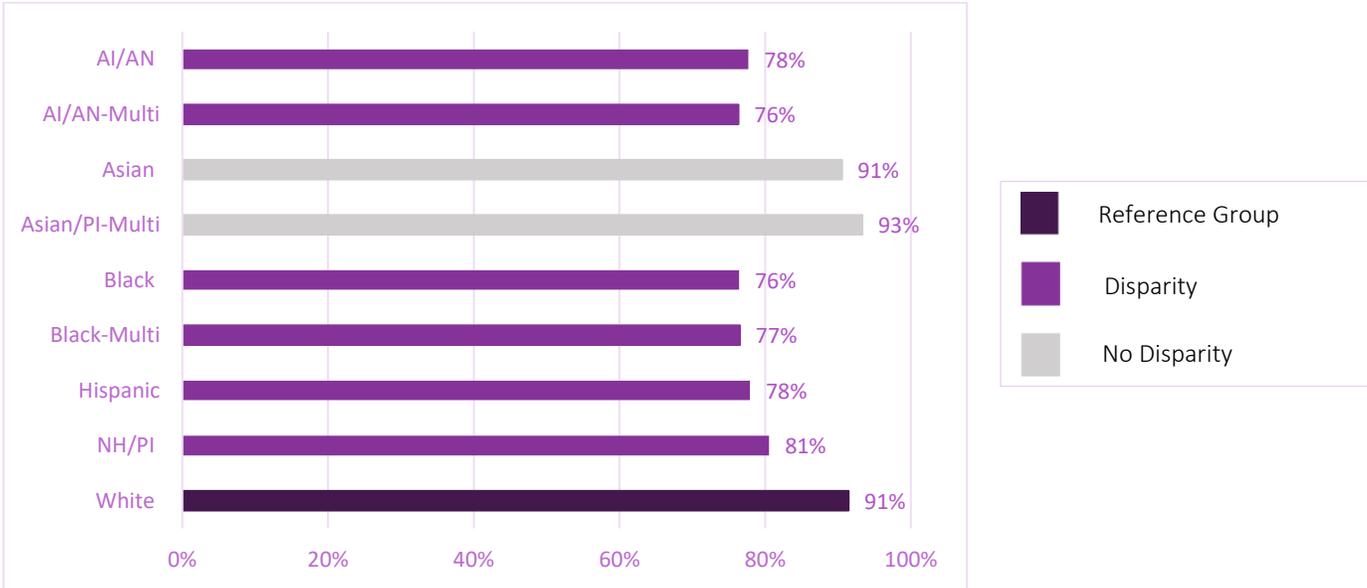


Data source: Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder. WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

**Families are economically secure.** Another goal of DCYF is that families have economic stability. American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates were used to calculate the percentage of families living in households with children/youth under the age of 18 by race/ethnicity, who were above 100% of the FPL in 2018. Across racial/ethnic groups represented in the available data, the percentage of households above 100% of the federal poverty level was highest among the Asian (91%), Asian/PI-Multi (93%), and White (91%) households. Compared to White, percentages were so low as to show disparity among Al/AN (78%), Al/AN-Multi (76%), Black (76%), Black-Multi (77%), Hispanic (78%), and NH/PI households (81%); see Figure 11.

Figure 11. Percent of children/youth ages 0 to 17 living in households above 100% of the Federal Poverty Level, by race/ethnicity (2018, five-year estimate)

## USING DATA IN DCYF TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY



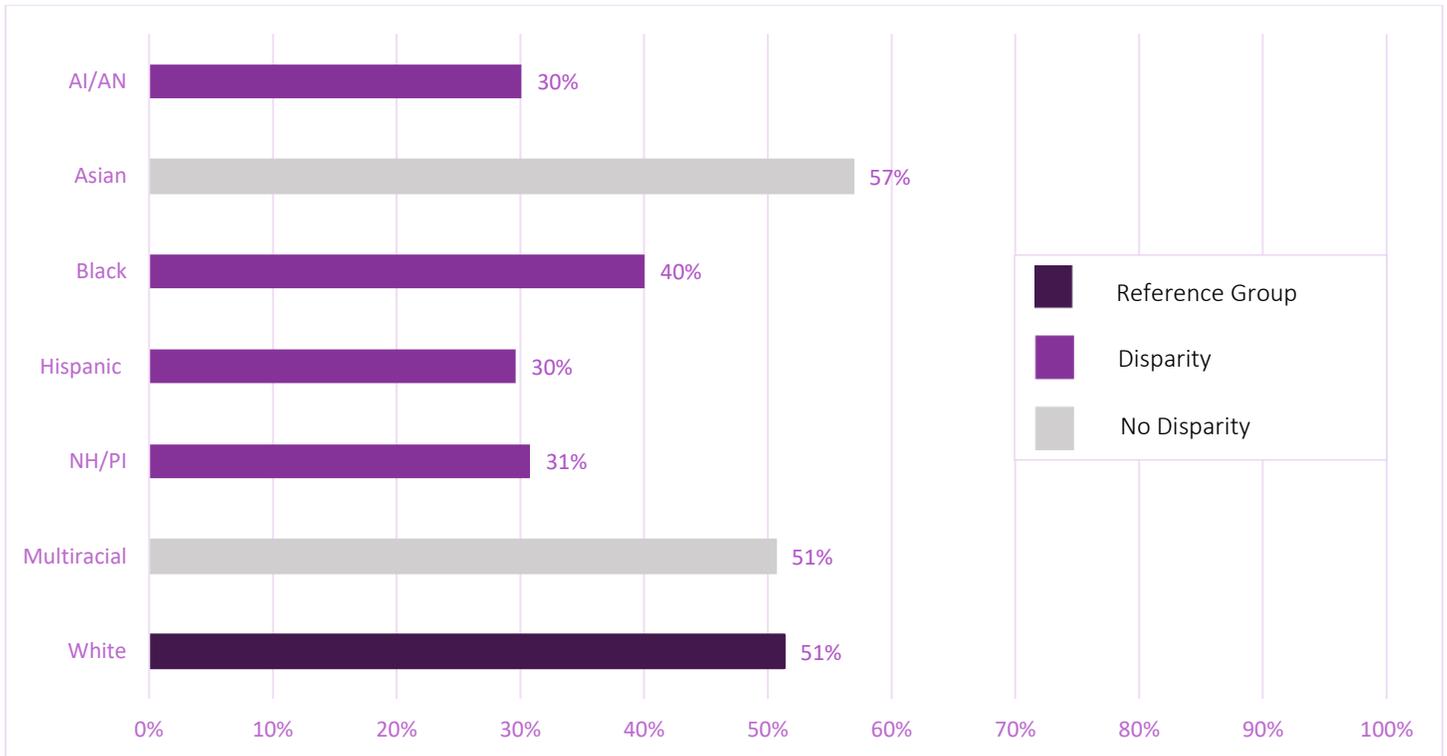
Data Source: ACS 2018 5-year estimates. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov).

WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: Yes

## Education

**Kindergarten readiness.** One of DCYF's child outcome goals is that children should be ready for kindergarten as measured by the Washington Kindergarten Inventory of Developing Skills assessment (WaKIDS). Across racial/ethnic groups, the percentage of entering kindergarteners who were ready on all six of the WaKIDS domains was highest among Asian (57%), Multiracial (51%), and White children (51%). Compared to White children, percentages were so low as to show disparity among AI/AN (30%), Black (40%), Hispanic (30%), and NH/PI children (31%); see Figure 12.

Figure 12. Percent of entering kindergarteners ready on six of six WaKIDS domains by race/ethnicity (Fall 2018)

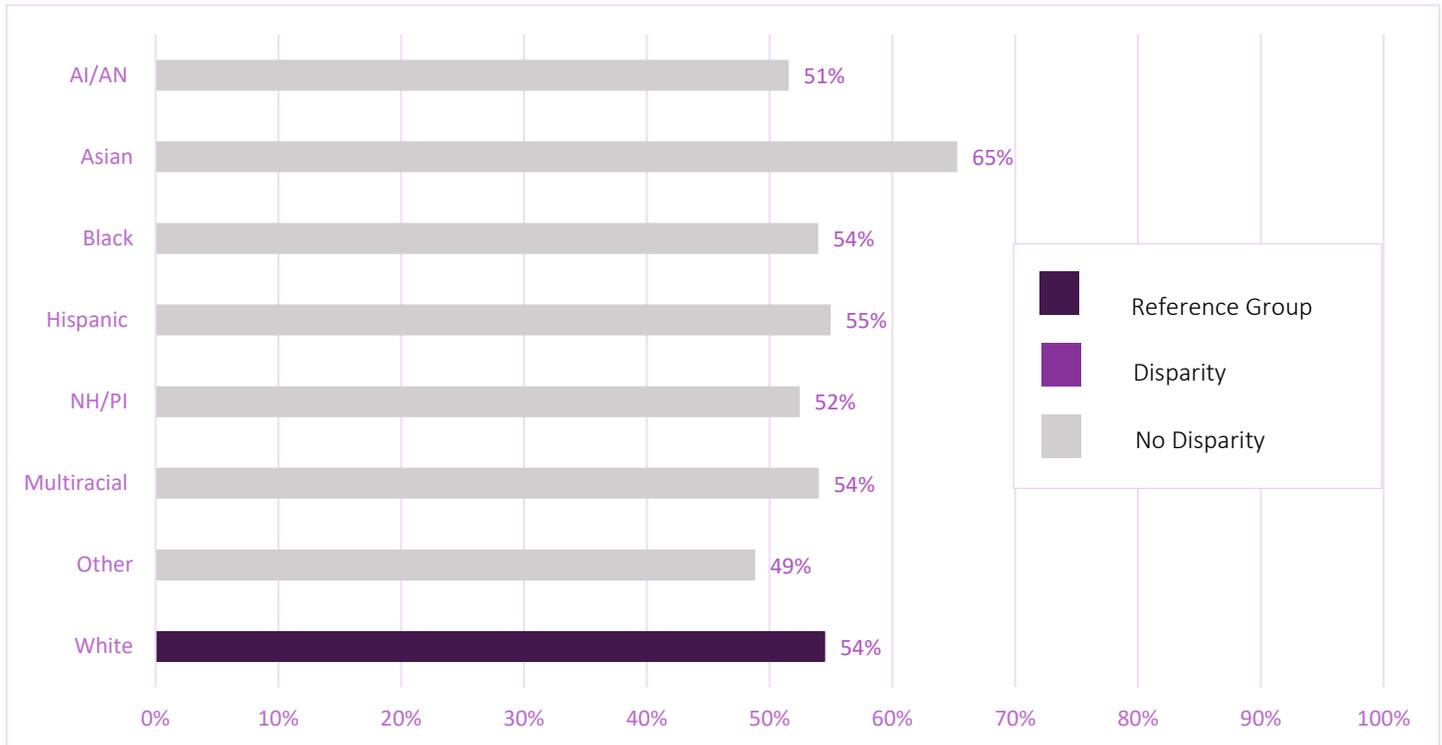


Data source: OSPI Report Card, fall 2018

WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

**Youth school engagement.** The second DCYF education outcome goal is that youth are engaged in school. Youth who feel more connected or committed to school are more likely to achieve positive academic outcomes and are less likely to experience mental health issues. Engagement in school can be measured by the Healthy Youth Survey's index of commitment to school, which captures information on student perceptions of how meaningful their schoolwork is, how important learning is to their future, and how often they skip school. It is possible to summarize responses to this item dichotomously by indicating the counts of 10<sup>th</sup> graders who were above or below an established cutoff. On this metric, no notable disparities were found between White youth and other racial/ethnic groups (see Figure 13).

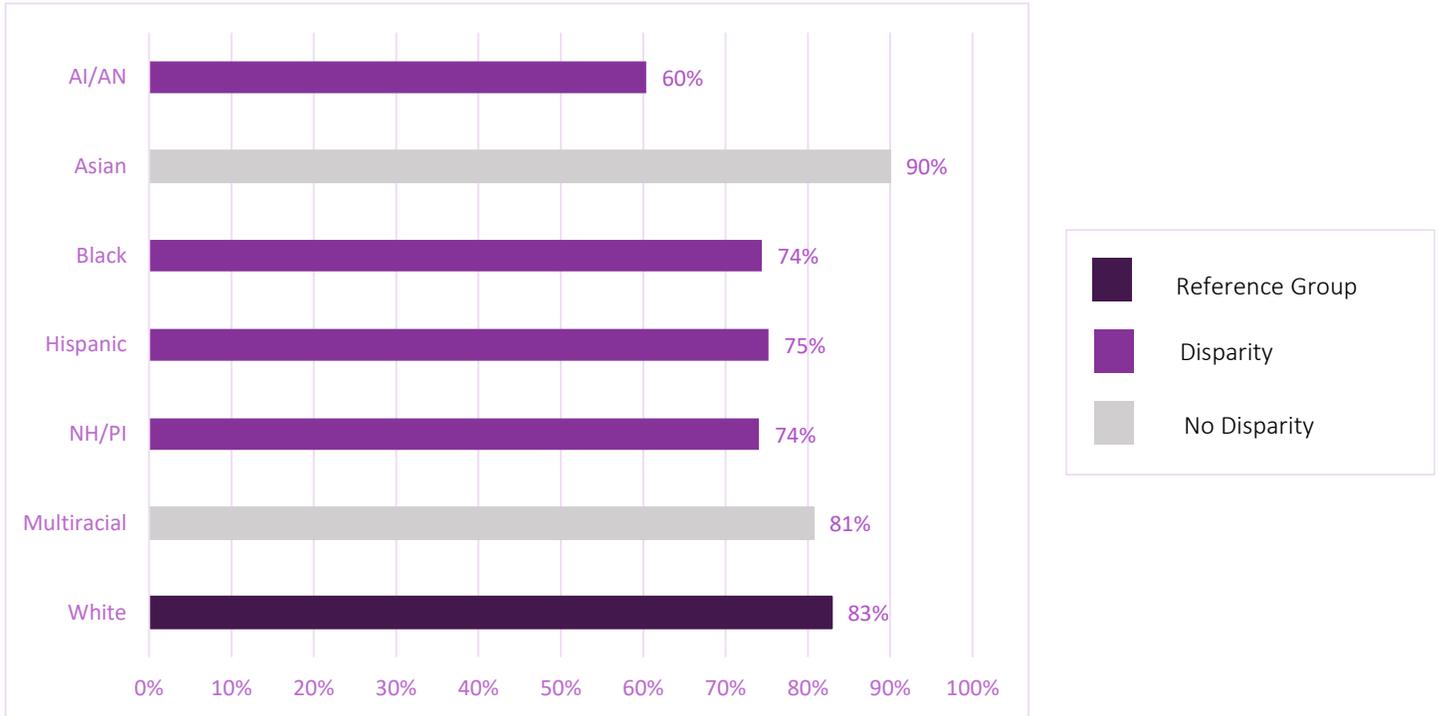
Figure 13. Percentage of 10th graders who report high levels of school engagement by race/ethnicity (2018)



Data source: Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder.  
 WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

**High school graduation.** DCYF’s third outcome goal related to education is that high school students graduate on time. Among 84,048 high school students in the 2018 cohort, 67,994 graduated on time (81%). Across racial/ethnic groups, on-time graduation rates were highest among Asian youth (90%) and White youth (83%). Moreover, on-time graduation rates were significantly higher for Asian youth compared to White youth. Using White youth as a reference group, graduation rates were so low as to indicate disparity for AI/AN youth (60%), Black youth (74%), Hispanic youth (75%), and NH/PI youth (74%); see Figure 14.

Figure 14. Percent on-time graduation by race/ethnicity (2018)



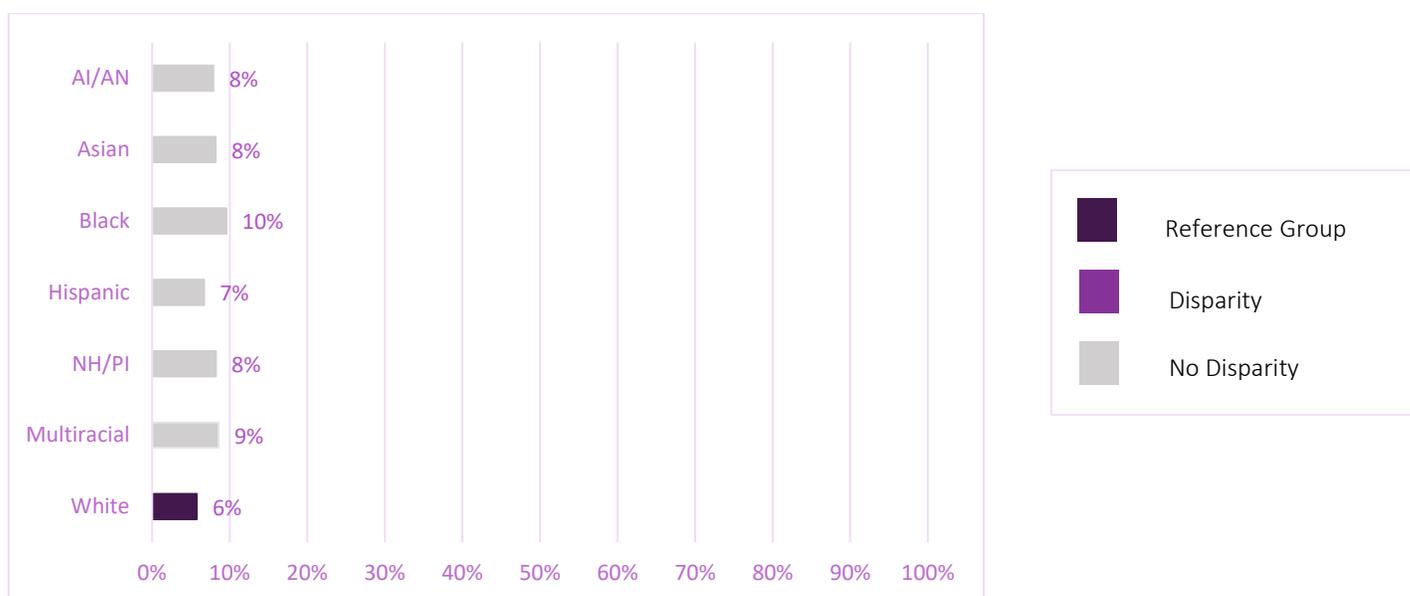
Data source: OSPI Report Card, 2018

WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

## Health

**Low Birthweight.** DCYF’s first health outcome goal is reducing the percentage of babies born at a low birthweight.<sup>21</sup> Babies born at a low birthweight are less likely to experience healthy childhood development, both physically and mentally. The Washington Department of Health provides statewide birthweight counts wherein birthweights are categorized by low (227-2,499 grams), healthy (2,500-3,999 grams), and high (4,000-8,164 grams). Figure 15 shows the percent of children born with low birthweights relative to total births, by maternal race/ethnicity. No notable disparities by our criteria were found between babies born to White mothers and other racial/ethnic groups. That said, it is worth noting that infants born to mothers who are Black consistently show the highest rate of low birthweight across all racial/ethnic groups, a trend that has been widely acknowledged and is closely monitored in Washington State.<sup>22</sup>

Figure 15. Percent low birthweight by maternal race/ethnicity (2018)



Data source: Department of Health Data Dashboards (2018):

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/HealthDataVisualization/BirthDashboards>

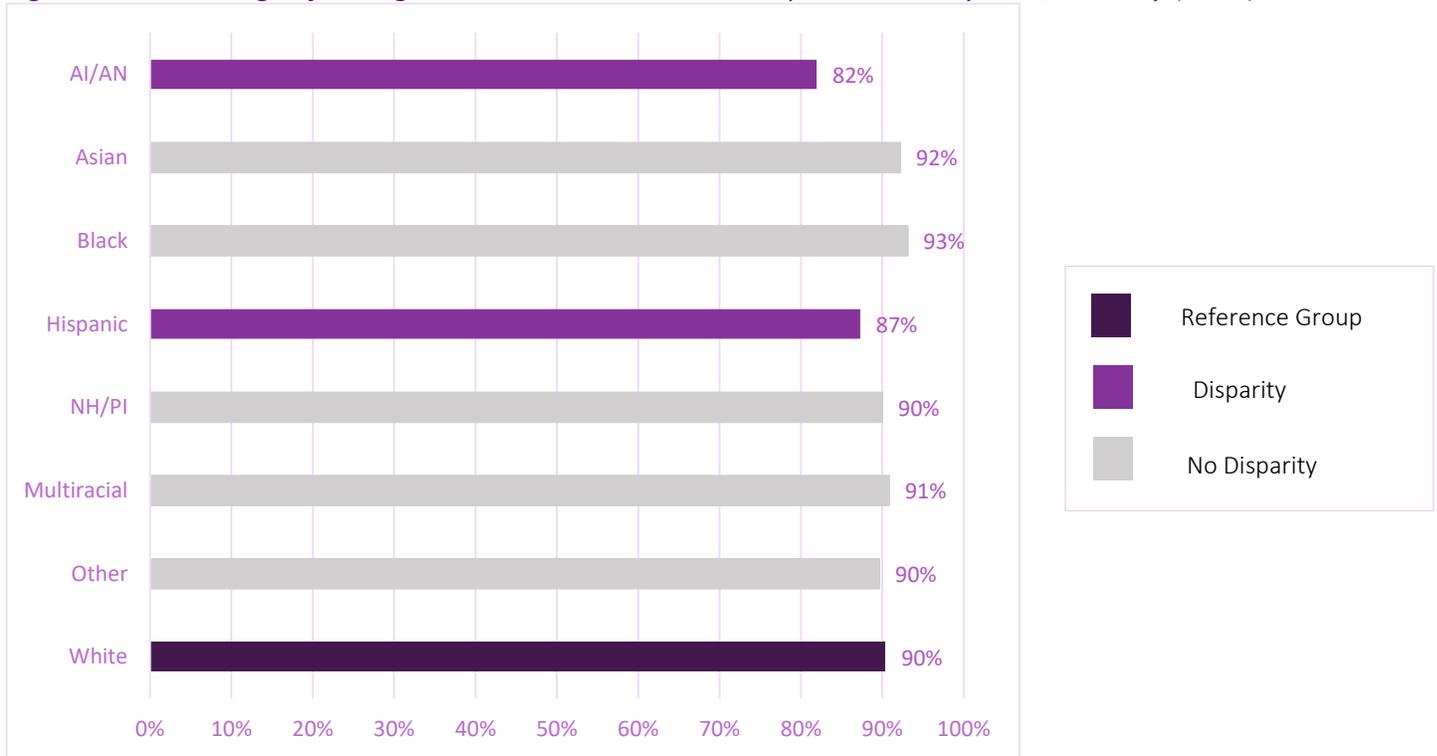
WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

<sup>21</sup> Note that the “low birthweight” outcome differs from all others presented in this report in that it focuses on reducing a negative outcome versus promoting a positive one. This framing is thought to be most meaningful, and is consistent with how DCYF typically reports and tracks birthweight information.

<sup>22</sup> For information on the association between race/ethnicity and birthweight as well as rates of infant mortality, see: Washington State Department of Health (2017). *Infant Mortality Reduction Report*. Retrieved from <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/140-157-InfantMortalityReductionReport.pdf>.

**Mental and behavioral health of youth.** Another of DCYF’s health goals is for youth to experience positive behavioral and mental health. DCYF uses responses to the Healthy Youth Survey as a means of measuring this outcome, within which youth are prompted to indicate whether or not they have ever attempted suicide. Compared to White youth, the percentage of 10<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed in 2018 who reported they have never attempted suicide was so low (i.e., more youth reported having attempted suicide) as to indicate disparity among AI/AN (82%) and Hispanic youth (87%); see Figure 16.

Figure 16. Percentage of 10th graders who have never attempted suicide by race/ethnicity (2018)



Data source: Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder. WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard: No

**Summary of disparities in child and youth outcomes.** Figure 17 below provides a summary view of racial/ethnic disparities we observed across the seven DCYF outcome metrics selected for this report. We conclude that meaningful disparities exist between one or more groups of color and children/youth who are White in five of seven priority outcome areas selected for this report. The relative occurrence of these disparities is distributed somewhat evenly across racial/ethnic groups of color, with children and youth who are Asian and Multiracial experiencing the least disparity and children/youth who are AI/AN, Black, Hispanic, and NH/PI experiencing the most disparity. Note that just one outcome area—Families are economically secure—draws on source data which allows for the multiracial category to be disaggregated. For this reason, we are not yet able to draw conclusions across outcome areas relative to these expanded WSRDAC/M reporting categories.

Figure 17. Summary view of race/ethnic disparities across select DCYF outcomes

Domain	Outcome Area	AI/AN	AI/AN-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Asian	Asian/PI-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Black	Black-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	NH/PI	Multi	Other
Resilience	Supported by healthy relationships	○	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	○	▲	○	○
	Families are economically secure	▲	▲	○	○	▲	▲	▲	▲	NA	▲
Education	Kindergarten readiness	▲	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	▲	▲	○	NA
	Youth school engagement	○	NA	○	NA	○	NA	○	○	○	○
	High school engagement	▲	NA	○	NA	▲	NA	▲	▲	○	▲
Health	Low birthweight	○	NA	○	NA	○	NA	○	○	○	NA
	Mental and behavioral health of youth	▲	NA	○	NA	○	NA	▲	○	○	○

▲	Notable disparity relative to White comparison group <sup>b</sup>
○	Little/no disparity or doing better relative to White comparison group
NA	No data or not calculable

<sup>a</sup> Consistent with the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee’s (WSRDAC) Measurement Subcommittee’s recommended reporting standard, some data sources allow for the multiracial category to be disaggregated to provide AI/AN-Multiracial, Asian/PI-Multiracial, and Black-Multiracial. This is true for just one outcome area above – “Families are economically secure.”

<sup>b</sup> Disparities identified using chi squared test of significance at  $p < .05$  level and Cramer’s V effect size of .1 or greater. (See footnote 17, on p. 24.)

## Improving Capacity to Identify Areas of Focus to Advance Equity

This report reflects the agency’s commitment to (1) ongoing improvements in measuring, tracking, and reporting on racial equity; and (2) developing a deeper understanding of what drives differences in services provided to, and outcomes of, the different racial/ethnic groups. The following list outlines the specifics of OIAA’s approach toward these goals. These steps are not exhaustive but are considered by the agency to be key priorities:

1. Recognize communities as partners in research.
2. Engage in transparent and regular reporting regarding racial disparities within the system.
3. Assist programs agencywide to transition to the WSRDAC/M reporting standards.
4. Estimate underlying population needs when possible.
5. Examine interactions between the race/ethnicity categories and related demographic, socioeconomic, and geographic/community variables, so as to identify the most explanatory factors.
6. Assess program access and participation by race/ethnicity.
7. Assess service array and treatment by race/ethnicity.
8. Assess outcomes as being possibly moderated by race/ethnicity.

9. Disaggregate racial/ethnic subgroups for analysis when feasible.<sup>23</sup>
10. Develop capacity for cross-program analyses.
11. Establish common criteria for determining which race/ethnicity group differences require priority attention from DCYF programs.
12. Use qualitative data and stories to gain a more complete understanding of findings related to race/ethnicity.

We expect that the agency's advancing the above interacting objectives will provide mutually reinforcing and cumulative benefits, and will in the course of the work lead to the identification of priority areas of agency focus, both to promote racial/ethnic equity and, consistent with that, to ensure better outcomes for all children, youth, and families in Washington State.

## Conclusions

The overarching goals of this report were to 1) communicate OIAA's role in supporting DCYF to become an anti-racist agency and to eliminate racial/ethnic disproportionalities and disparities of outcomes; 2) establish definitions and standards for agencywide collection, reporting, and use of race/ethnicity data; and 3) to make use of available data to provide a baseline understanding of racial/ethnic disproportionalities and disparities among children, youth, and families served by DCYF. We also have sought to provide an aligned analytic approach, which allows us to see where differences exist across program areas and outcomes while remaining consistent in our determination of whether or not these differences are of such a degree that they deserve to be highlighted. Presenting information in this way provides a high-level view of areas of deserving focus in order to advance equity and to allow for a comprehensive and systematic examination of agency progress.

In keeping with the agency's overarching mission of promoting racial equity, OIAA must continue to emphasize efforts to support DCYF to identify and interrupt systems and patterns that contribute to the marginalization and ongoing oppression of persons and communities of color in our state. OIAA accomplishes this through our careful use of data as described in this report; using data and research to elucidate causal pathways; and evaluating and supporting effective solutions. DCYF and its agencies of origin bear the historical legacy of exploitation and the current imprint of structural racism. We acknowledge the role of our agency as it exists within the historical context of its predecessors and must use this knowledge to better understand our present-day agency systems, how they are embedded within broader social structures and dynamics, how they function, and how they can be improved. We also have the opportunity in our work to inform the direction of the legacy that we will leave behind for youth and families in Washington State. We have the opportunity to illuminate where our systems falter and to celebrate where they succeed. We have the opportunity to design our work to ensure that it casts a light on inequity when and where it exists, and to propose actionable changes to address the systemic and programmatic inequities that we observe.

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<sup>23</sup> Many race/ethnic groups can be further disaggregated into more specific subpopulations. For example, there may be value in examining Asian subpopulations (e.g., Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese) relative to a given outcome if cell sizes are 10 or larger.

## Appendix I

### Early Learning Disproportionality Ratio Source Data

Early Learning and Family Service Child Counts					
	WA <=5 <200% FPL	WA 3-4 <=110% FPL	ECEAP	CCSP <=5 Licensed Care	Home Visiting
AI/AN	11,208	1,888	310	862	77
Asian/PI	9,087	1,547	860	693	25
Black	21,509	3,958	1,656	5,174	157
Hispanic	65,264	11,265	6,407	8,998	1260
Multiracial	6,190	811	1,077	0	237
White	86,865	13,406	5,288	10,377	861
Unknown	211	18	0	3,200	
<b>Total</b>	<b>200,334</b>	<b>32,893</b>	<b>15,598</b>	<b>29,304</b>	<b>2617</b>

Percentage of Column Total					
	WA <=5 <200% FPL	WA 3-4 <=110% FPL	ECEAP	CCSP <=5 Licensed Care	Home Visiting
AI/AN	0.06	0.06	0.02	0.03	0.03
Asian/PI	0.05	0.05	0.06	0.03	0.01
Black	0.11	0.12	0.11	0.20	0.06
Hispanic	0.33	0.34	0.41	0.34	0.48
Multiracial	0.03	0.02	0.07	0.00	0.09
White	0.43	0.41	0.34	0.40	0.33

Disproportionality Ratio: Program Percentage of WA Income-Eligible Population by Race/Ethnicity			
	ECEAP	CCSP <=5 Licensed Care	Home Visiting
AI/AN	0.35	0.59	0.53
Asian/PI	1.17	0.58	0.21
Black	0.88	1.84	0.56
Hispanic	1.20	1.06	1.48
Multiracial	2.80	0.00	2.93
White	0.83	0.92	0.76

Data Sources: ECEAP from ELMS Demographics reporting 2019-20 SY standard racial categories; CCSP Licensed Care from most recent (6/2020) analysis of FY 2019 Flat File; Home Visiting from DOH tables (FY 2019); Population estimates from ACS 2018 5-year estimates.

**Child Welfare Disproportionality Ratio Source Data**

Child Welfare Child/Youth Counts				
	WA <200% FPL, ages 0-17	All intakes (including screened out)	Screened in CPS intake	Placed within 12 months of intake
AI/AN	15478	3262	1731	210
AI/AN-Multi	17376	4166	2245	463
Asian/PI	30398	2835	1392	114
Asian/PI-Multi	13553	1342	716	120
Black	36585	6050	3161	333
Black-Multi	23996	4011	2193	370
Hispanic	182681	13057	6623	825
White	218388	44110	21962	2218
<b>Total</b>	<b>538455</b>	<b>78833</b>	<b>40023</b>	<b>4653</b>

Percentage of Column Total				
	WA <200% FPL, ages 0-17	All intakes (including screened out)	Screened in CPS intake	Placed within 12 months of intake
AI/AN	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.05
AI/AN-Multi	0.03	0.05	0.06	0.10
Asian/PI	0.06	0.04	0.03	0.02
Asian/PI-Multi	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03
Black	0.07	0.08	0.08	0.07
Black-Multi	0.04	0.05	0.05	0.08
Hispanic	0.34	0.17	0.17	0.18
White	0.41	0.56	0.55	0.48

Disproportionality Ratio: Program Percentage of WA <200% Population by Race/Ethnicity			
	All intakes (including screened out)	Screened in CPS intake	Placed within 12 months of intake
AI/AN	1.44	1.50	1.57
AI/AN-Multi	1.64	1.74	3.08
Asian/PI	0.64	0.62	0.43
Asian/PI-Multi	0.68	0.71	1.02
Black	1.13	1.16	1.05
Black-Multi	1.14	1.23	1.78
Hispanic	0.49	0.49	0.52
White	1.38	1.35	1.18

Data Sources: FamLink FY 2017 Cohort; Population estimates from ACS 2017 5-year estimates <200% FPL among children ages 0-17.

Juvenile Rehabilitation Disproportionality Ratio Source Data

Juvenile Rehabilitation Youth Counts			
	WA <200% FPL, ages 10-17	Referrals to Court	Juvenile Rehabilitation (Admissions)
AI/AN	15,250	555	13
Asian	18,712	560	12
Black	27,205	2462	65
Hispanic	81,415	4150	76
White	115,905	8650	137
<b>Total</b>	<b>258,487</b>	<b>16,377</b>	<b>303</b>

Percentage of Column Total			
	WA <200% FPL, ages 10-17	Referrals to Court	Juvenile Rehabilitation (Admissions)
AI/AN	0.06	0.03	0.04
Asian	0.07	0.03	0.04
Black	0.11	0.15	0.21
Hispanic	0.31	0.25	0.25
White	0.45	0.53	0.45

Disproportionality Ratio: Percentage of WA <200% Population by Race/Ethnicity		
	JR Admissions	Referrals to Court
AI/AN	0.73	0.57
Asian/PI	0.55	0.47
Black	2.04	1.43
Hispanic	0.80	0.80
White	1.01	1.18

Data Sources: Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC); Automated Client Tracking (ACT), FY 2018; Population estimates from ACS 2018 5-year estimates among children ages 10-17 and <200% FPL.

## USING DATA IN DCYF TO ADVANCE RACIAL EQUITY

### Appendix II

### Source Data for Disparity Figures

		AI/AN	AI/AN-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Asian	Asian/PI-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Black	Black-Multi <sup>a</sup>	Hispanic	NH/PI	Multi	Other	White
<b>RESILIENCE</b>												
10th graders with opportunities for prosocial involvement <sup>b</sup>	%	54%	n/a	50%	n/a	46%	n/a	49%	45%	50%	54%	58%
	N	91	n/a	502	n/a	179	n/a	677	73	225	165	1560
	C.I.	±14%	n/a	±5.4%	n/a	±6.6%	n/a	±7.6%	±11.3%	±5.8%	±7.6%	±3.2%
	P value	0.478	n/a	0.004	n/a	0.004	n/a	0.000	0.036	0.026	0.362	ref
	V	0.017	n/a	0.064	n/a	0.069	n/a	0.076	0.052	0.053	0.022	ref
Percent children and youth ages 0 to 17 living above 100% FPL <sup>c</sup>	%	78%	76%	91%	93%	76%	77%	78%	81%	n/a	89%	91%
	N	26962	41945	119192	76318	72341	57114	322315	10182	n/a	4814	928384
	C.I.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Pvalue	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	n/a	0.000	ref
	V	0.191	0.206	0.016	0.036	0.205	0.203	0.188	0.157	n/a	0.006	ref
<b>EDUCATION</b>												
Percent of kindergarteners ready on 6 of 6 WaKIDS domains <sup>d</sup>	%	30%	n/a	57%	n/a	40%	n/a	30%	31%	51%	n/a	51%
	N	987	n/a	6168	n/a	3362	n/a	17689	874	7405	n/a	41143
	C.I.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	P value	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	0.000	0.267	n/a	ref
	V	0.216	n/a	0.056	n/a	0.114	n/a	0.221	0.209	0.007	n/a	ref
10th graders' commitment to school <sup>e</sup>	%	49%	n/a	35%	n/a	46%	n/a	45%	48%	46%	51%	46%
	N	101	n/a	549	n/a	219	n/a	765	84	254	199	1708
		±				±			±			
	C.I.	10.5%	n/a	± 5.8%	n/a	7.7%	n/a	± 4.2%	10.9%	± 5.5%	± 7.4%	± 2.9%
	P value	0.561	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.874	n/a	0.835	0.710	0.878	0.126	ref
	V	0.014	n/a	0.093	n/a	0.004	n/a	0.004	0.009	0.003	0.035	ref
Percent on-time graduation <sup>f</sup>	%	60%	n/a	90%	n/a	74%	n/a	75%	74%	81%	n/a	83%
	N	1206	n/a	6519	n/a	3948	n/a	17240	913	5668	n/a	48543
	C.I.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	P value	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	0.000	0.000	n/a	ref
	V	0.511	n/a	0.389	n/a	0.229	n/a	0.21	0.237	0.067	n/a	ref
<b>HEALTH</b>												
Percent low birthweight <sup>g</sup>	%	8%	n/a	8%	n/a	10%	n/a	7%	8%	9%	n/a	6%
	N	1205	n/a	8836	n/a	4144	n/a	15977	1193	3769	n/a	49470
	C.I.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
	P value	0.04	n/a	0.000	n/a	0	n/a	0.000	0.02	0.088	n/a	ref
	V	0.042	n/a	0.048	n/a	0.072	n/a	0.019	0.048	0.054	n/a	ref
Percentage of 10th graders who have never attempted suicide <sup>h</sup>	%	82%	n/a	92%	n/a	93%	n/a	87%	90%	91%	90%	90%
	N	83	n/a	577	n/a	247	n/a	826	70	262	164	1758
		±				±						
	C.I.	9.9%	n/a	± 2.2%	n/a	4.1%	n/a	± 2.6%	± 6.2%	± 3.1%	± 4.3%	± 1.4%
	P value	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	n/a	0.000	0.733	0.444	0.331	ref
	V	0.14	n/a	0.095	n/a	0.116	n/a	0.138	0.008	0.017	0.022	ref

**Data Sources:**

<sup>a</sup> Consistent with the WSRDAC reporting standard, data allows for the multiracial category to be disaggregated to provide AI/AN, Multiracial, Asian/PI, Multiracial, and Black, Multiracial .

<sup>b</sup> Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder

<sup>c</sup> ACS 2018 5-year estimates. [data.census.gov](https://data.census.gov)

<sup>d</sup> OSPI Report Card, 2018

<sup>e</sup> Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder

<sup>f</sup> OSPI Report Card, 2018

<sup>g</sup> Department of Health Data Dashboards, 2018

<sup>h</sup> Healthy Youth Survey (OSPI, DOH, DSHS, Liquor and Cannabis Board), 2018; Data captured from HYS Query Builder

## Appendix III

### DCYF Race and Ethnicity Data Collection Brief

The following standards are recommended by OIAA for all DCYF data collection systems:

**Identifying the source of race and ethnicity data/who is responding:** OIAA has established self-report or parent/caregiver-report (in the case of young children) as the gold standard of race/ethnicity data collection in all program data collection across the agency where the client or parent/caregiver is available. Relatedly, OIAA aims to eliminate the practice of observer-report or inference of race/ethnicity, which should not be necessary whenever the client or parent/caregiver is available. Collection of preliminary race/ethnicity data when a referral is made by a third party (as in a CPS Intake) is acceptable, however; in such instances, the information should be confirmed or revised based upon client self-report or parent/caregiver report. Observer-report or inference of race/ethnicity in cases where the client or parent/caregiver are present but decline to answer the question is not an appropriate data collection technique.

**Use of “unknown” category:** The “unknown” category should be available in all DCYF race/ethnicity data collection systems, and if a client or parent/caregiver declines to answer the question, then “unknown” should be indicated.

**Defining racial/ethnic categories:** OIAA follows a standard originally put forth by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for data collection. These standards, established in 1997, are also adhered to by the U.S. Census Bureau for estimating the racial/ethnic composition of large populations. These categories are as follows:

- **American Indian or Alaska Native** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment.
- **Asian** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam.
- **Black or African American** – A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.
- **Hispanic/Latino** – A person self-identifying as being of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin.
- **Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Hawaii, Guam, Samoa, or other Pacific Islands.
- **White** – A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.

Data may be collected at a more refined level than the OMB standard if it meets the needs of the program or external reporting requirements, but should be easily aggregated to the OMB standard for reporting. For example, a program may choose to have the client or parent/caregiver select between one or more of the specific populations identified in the Asian race category in order to have a better understanding of variation

within the Asian race groups, but these specific populations should be clearly and easily aggregated to the OMB standard for general reporting. Documentation of rules for this aggregation should be available upon request.

**Multiple race/ethnicities indicated:** OMB data collection categories do not include a multiracial category. Rather, people who identify with more than one race may choose to provide multiple races in response to the race question. Additionally, a person who identifies as Hispanic may be of any race. In adherence with OMB data collection standards, all DCYF race/ethnicity data collection systems should have the capacity for more than one race/ethnicity to be recorded, and all race/ethnicity identified by a client or parent/caregiver should be documented.

**Abbreviations:** Race/ethnic categories are labeled and abbreviated using the specifications below and should always be presented in alphabetical order (with the exception of Unknown, which should come last).

- American Indian/Alaska Native (**AI/AN**)
- Asian (no abbreviation)
- Black/African American (**Black**)
- Hispanic/Latino (**Hispanic**)
- Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (**NH/PI**)
- **White** (no abbreviation)
- **Unknown** (no abbreviation or **Unk**)

## WSRDAC/M Reporting Standard

The WSRDAC/M standard will be followed by the OIAA when reporting on race/ethnicity.

**Concise Definition:** Persons with a single race identified and without Hispanic ethnicity are classified by that single race. Persons with Hispanic ethnicity and White, Asian/PI, or unknown race are categorized as Hispanic. Unless they are categorized as Hispanic, persons with more than one race/ethnicity are grouped into one of three multiracial categories. The remainder are grouped as Unknown. The categorization is as follows:

- **Single Race:** Asian, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, Black/African American (Black), American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN), or White (single race also includes Asian/PI when these groups are combined due to small numbers).
- **Hispanic** – Hispanic/Latino ethnicity along with any race designation(s) except AI/AN and Black. Race also may be unknown.
- **AI/AN–Multi:** American Indian/Alaska Native with any other race/ethnicity.
- **Asian/Pi–Multi:** Any combination of Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and/or White.
- **Black–Multi:** Black/African American with any other race/ethnicity except AI/AN.

- **Unknown:** No race indicated, and Hispanic not indicated.

This categorization, known as the WSRDAC/Modified (WSRDAC/M) standard, is based on the standard recommended by the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) in 2011 and modified by DCYF in 2020 to slightly change the definition of Hispanic (and Asian/PI, Multiracial).

Racial/ethnic categories for the WSRDAC/M reporting standard are outlined in detail below:

- **American Indian/Alaska Native** (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- **American Indian/Alaska Native, Multiracial** (any American Indian/Alaska Native indicated along with another race/ethnicity).
- **Asian/Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander** (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated; when sufficient numbers and data collection support doing so, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander may be reported as a separate racial group from Asian).
- **Asian/PI, Multiracial** (Any combination of Asian, Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, and/or White; includes the combination of Asian and Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander when these groups are reported separately)
- **Black/African American** (just one race/ethnicity indicated; Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- **Black/African American, Multiracial** (any Black indicated along with another race/ethnicity except American Indian/Alaska Native).
- **Hispanic/Latino** (Hispanic indicated along with any racial categories except American Indian/Alaska Native and Black/African American). Race also may be unknown.
- **White** (just one race, Hispanic/Latino not indicated).
- **Unknown** (no race indicated, Hispanic not indicated, including any residual “Missing” or “Other” category from source data collection).

For ease of reporting, AI/AN-Multi, Asian/PI-Multi, and Black-Multi categories may be collapsed with their single-race counterparts, so long as a reference clarifies that the WSRDAC/M standard is being used and that AI/AN, Asian/PI, and Black categories are inclusive of AI/AN-Multi, Asian/PI-Multi, and Black-Multi.

Racial/ethnic categories are labeled and abbreviated using the specifications below and should always be presented in alphabetical order (with the exception of Unknown, which should come last).

- American Indian/Alaska Native (**AI/AN**)
- American Indian/Alaska Native, Multiracial (**AI/AN-Multi**)
- Asian and Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander (**Asian/PI**)
- Asian/Pacific Islander, Multiracial (**Asian/PI-Multi**)
- Black/African American (**Black**)

- Black/African American, Multiracial (**Black-Multi**).
- Hispanic/Latino (**Hispanic**)
- **White** (no abbreviation)
- **Unknown** (no abbreviation or **Unk**)