

# JUSTICE FOR CHILDREN TASK FORCE

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## PURPOSE

The Maine Justice for Children Task Force (“the Task Force”) is hereby continued as a collaborative, multidisciplinary Task Force to **improve safety, permanency, and well-being for children in the State of Maine child welfare system**. It is anticipated that the work of the Task Force will regularly occur in conjunction and collaboration with the work of the Executive and Legislative Branches, along with appropriate child welfare entities. This collaboration may include joint meetings designed to maximize the experience of the membership of each committee, prevent redundancy, and be respectful of members’ work schedules.

- Implementation of a virtual child welfare parent curriculum.
- Race and Equity Data Assessment Project.
- Continuing education for all system stakeholders.
- Interagency data sharing.



STRATEGIC  
PLAN

# PARENT CURRICULUM

- In August 2020, the Task Force added the development of information sessions for parents involved in the child welfare system to the strategic plan.
- Goal: Offer voluntary classes to parents, focused on understanding child welfare agency processes, court procedures, and suggested best practices for parents to implement in order to be successful throughout the life of a child welfare case. The sessions are led by parents with lived experience in the child welfare system or parents who have navigated multiple systems.

## PARENT CURRICULUM: DATA COLLECTION

- **Data Collection:**
  - Pre- and post-parent surveys;
  - Time to permanency;
  - Participation in family visitation;
  - Participation and engagement in reunification services; and
  - Attendance at court proceedings.

## PARENT CURRICULUM: SEPTEMBER UPDATE

- 23 participants
- Pre/Post Survey Results from January 27, 2022 to July 13, 2022 (scale 1-5; score are for 19 participants)
  - I have an understanding of how the child protective system works.
    - Pre-curriculum score: 2.4
    - Post-curriculum score: 4
  - I understand who is on my child protective services team and what the each do.
    - Pre-curriculum score: 2.7
    - Post-curriculum score: 4.3
  - I have an understanding of what I need to do to reunify my family.

## PARENT CURRICULUM: SEPTEMBER UPDATE

- I have an understanding of what I need to do to reunify my family.
  - Pre-curriculum score: 3.4
  - Post-curriculum score: 4.3
- I feel hopeful about my child protective services involvement.
  - Pre-curriculum score: 3.5
  - Post-curriculum score: 4.0

## PARENT CURRICULUM: SEPTEMBER UPDATE

- I would recommend this class to others: 4.8
- The professional video presentations were helpful. 17 Yes/1 Maybe
- The “Information and Tips” Sections was helpful. 18 Yes/0 No
- The parent stories were helpful. 18 yes/ 0 No
- What was most helpful about the class: (free text response)
  - “Each part of the process was laid out and explained.”
  - “Knowing the process and what can happen.”
  - “Talking with other’s that have stories relatable to my own story.”
  - “The whole class was very helpful there was a lot of information that I had not known or had been given the wrong information before this class.”



## RACE AND EQUITY DATA ASSESSMENT

### **Goals of the Race and Equity Subcommittee**

- Assess systemic data collection with regard to race and other important markers of equity;
- Better understand what systems are in place for the collection and sharing of aggregated data on various data points in order to inform policy decisions, measure fairness and equity, and provide the courts and agencies with data about the people and populations they serve.



RACE AND  
EQUITY DATA  
ASSESSMENT

**Project Partners**

- The Maine Judicial Branch;
- The Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child and Family Services;
- Department of Corrections;
- Department of Public Safety; and
- Department of Education



# RACE AND EQUITY DATA ASSESSMENT

## Data Point Set

- Race;
- Ethnicity;
- Connection with tribe/band/nation;
- Enrollment or eligibility for enrollment with a federally recognized tribe(s);
- Sexual orientation;
- Income;
- Location;
- Gender;
- Gender identity; and
- Disability.



## RACE AND EQUITY DATA ASSESSMENT

### **Action Steps**

- May 2021: Self- Assessment- an effort to inventory which data are collected, how they are collected, and how those data are coded in the various systems.
- October 2021: Public Consulting Group (PCG) was hired through the RFP process to create a data mapping inventory and produce a final report with findings and recommendations.



RACE AND  
EQUITY DATA  
ASSESSMENT

### **Data Mapping Inventory**

Generally, the Data Mapping Inventory is designed to provide an overview of the current systems and processes for the collection of the data point set by Project Partners.

#### **September Update:**

Draft report was provided to the Task Force in July 2022.



# RACE AND EQUITY DATA ASSESSMENT

## **Final Report**

- Identify barriers, if any, for collection of data from the data point set;
- Best practices for the collection of data;
- Opportunities, advantages, and disadvantages for interagency aggregated data sharing; and
- A proposed evaluation plan for the collection and possible sharing of aggregated data pertaining to the data point set by the Project Partners.
- To be completed by September 30, 2022.

### **September Update:**

Draft final report was provided to the Task Force in August 2022.

Updated draft provided on September 15, 2022.  
Race and Equity Subcommittee meeting on Tuesday, September 20<sup>th</sup> to review.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

- Meets throughout the year to plan the annual Maine Judicial Branch Child Welfare Conference.
- Attendees at the conferences include:
  - Parent's attorneys;
  - Guardians ad litem;
  - Assistant Attorney Generals;
  - DHHS caseworkers;
  - Judges; and
  - Other system stakeholders.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

- Virtual Conference on October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup>.
- *The Effects of COVID-19 on the Child Welfare System and Trauma-Informed Practice*
- The conference has been approved for 13 CLE/CPE credits including 1 Ethics and Professionalism and 1.5 Harassment and Discrimination credits.

## CONTINUING EDUCATION SUBCOMMITTEE

- Conference Highlights:
  - Keynote: Adrian McLemore- *How do we BETTER Serve Families in a Post-Pandemic World*
  - *COVID-19 Panel: What Worked Well and Not so Well*
  - Presentation on the Collaborative Safety Model



COMMUNICATION  
AND  
COLLABORATION  
WITH OTHER  
CITIZEN REVIEW  
PANELS

**Citizen Review Panels:**

- Quarterly meetings with chairs/designees (January 24, 2022/April 25, 2022/ August 29,2022).
- Attendance at monthly MCWAP and CDSIRP meetings.
- Inter-panel sharing of annual reports and presentation of annual reports at panel meetings.

QUESTIONS?