

National League of Cities Race, Equity And Leadership (REAL)

Town of Frisco, CO

Tuesday, May 11, and Tuesday, May 25, 2021

REAL 101

Normalizing Racial Equity in Local
Government



GETTING STARTED

WELCOME

OBJECTIVES

**LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT**

OBJECTIVES



Understand the foundations for normalizing, organizing, and operationalizing racial equity in governing.



Comprehend the context of historical and current events, as they relate to institutional and systemic racism in America.



Develop a shared understanding of racial equity terminology, concepts, and frames



Explore opportunities to use racial equity tools and data to drive results.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

**Safe Space/
Brave Space**

**What is said
here, Stays
here**

**What is learned
here,
Leaves here**

**Offer what you
can;
Ask for what
you need**

**Lean into the
Uncomfortable**

**Start where you
are**

**Participation is
a learning
opportunity**

**Keep Cameras
On, if possible**

REAL MISSION

To build local leaders' knowledge and capacity to eliminate racial disparities, heal racial divisions and build more equitable communities.



REAL VISION

REAL envisions a nation in which every local official is equipped to effectively lead and serve an inclusive, thriving and healthy community.

Safe places where people from all racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds thrive socially, economically, academically and physically.

REAL TODAY

Training and Capacity Building

Technical Assistance

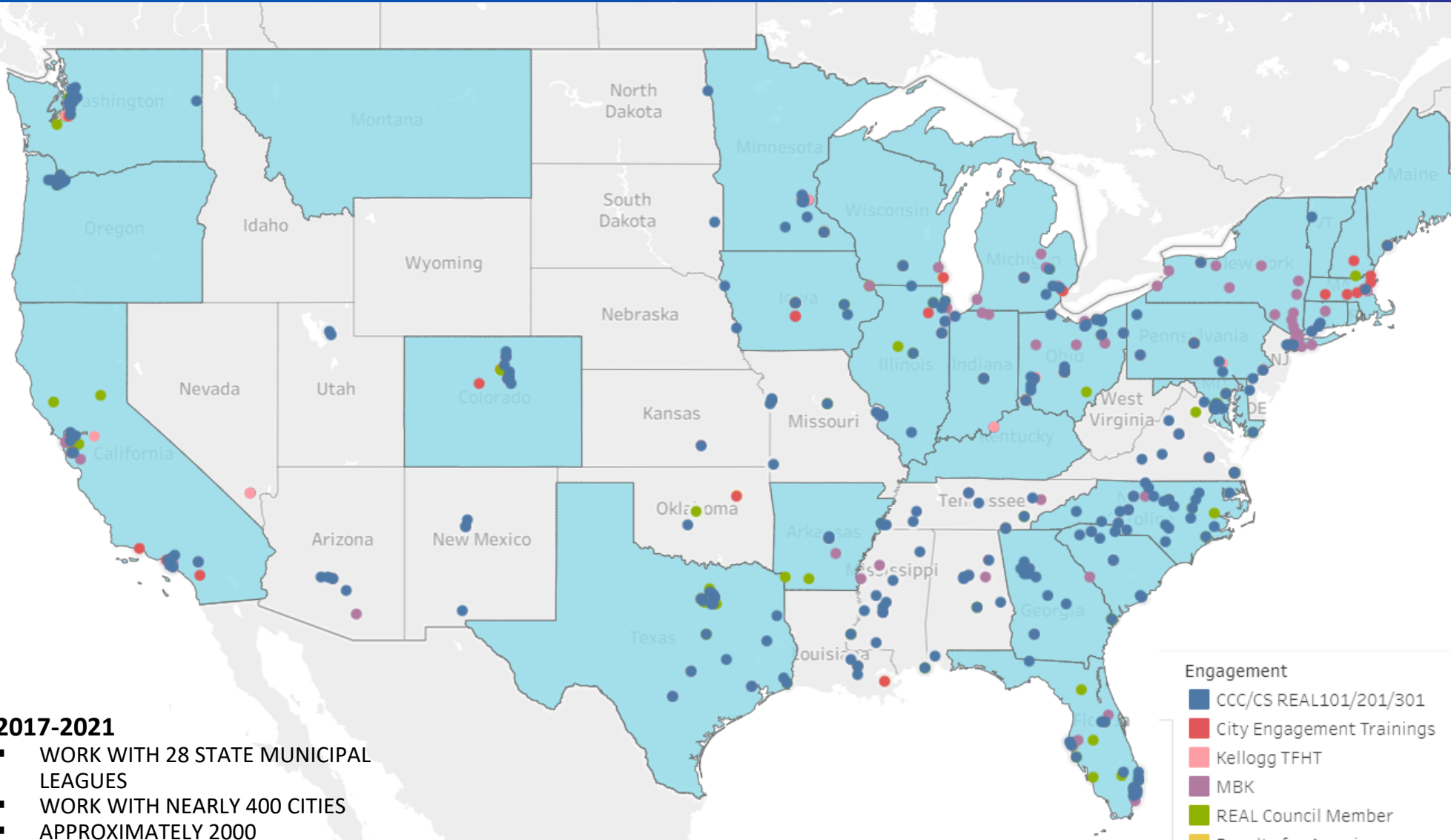
Network Building

Building Special Populations Work

The REAL Network

2017-2021

- WORK WITH 28 STATE MUNICIPAL LEAGUES
- WORK WITH NEARLY 400 CITIES
- APPROXIMATELY 2000 INDIVIDUALS TRAINED



Engagement

- CCC/CS REAL101/201/301
- City Engagement Trainings
- Kellogg TFHT
- MBK
- REAL Council Member
- Results for America
- Wells Fargo

State Municipal League Engagements

- ☒ (All)
- ☒ AR
- ☒ CA
- ☒ CO
- ☒ CT
- ☒ FL
- ☒ GA
- ☒ IA
- ☒ IL
- ☒ IN
- ☒ KY
- ☒ MA
- ☒ MD
- ☒ ME
- ☒ MI
- ☒ MN
- ☒ MT
- ☒ NC
- ☒ NH
- ☒ NY
- ☒ OH
- ☒ OR
- ☒ PA
- ☒ RI
- ☒ SC
- ☒ TX
- ☒ VT
- ☒ WA
- ☒ WI

PARTNERS + ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



Race Forward's mission is to build awareness, solutions, and leadership for racial justice by generating transformative ideas, information, and experiences.



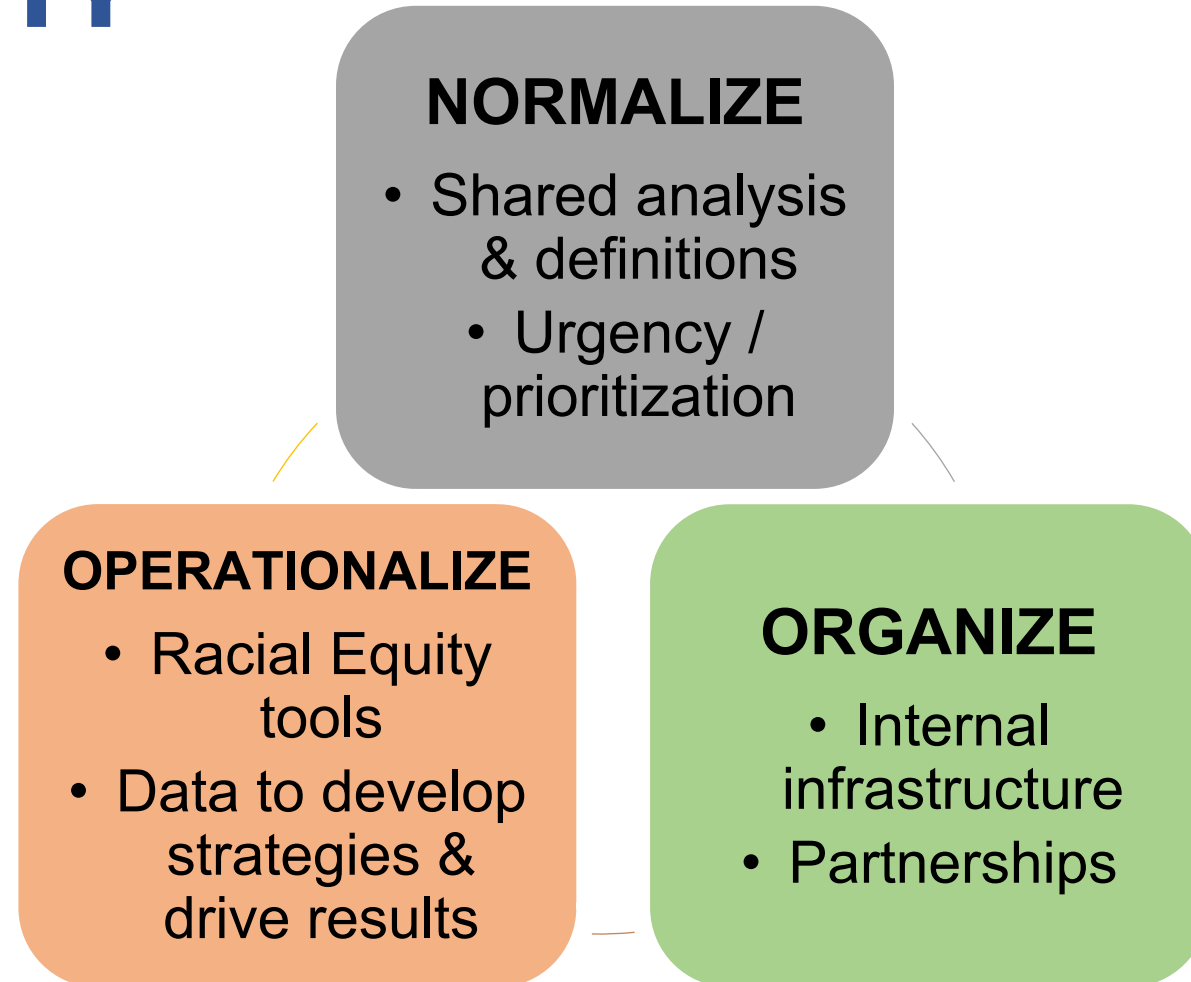
A national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

THEORY OF CHANGE

Change happens when people recognize:

- 1) Why the change is needed
- 2) Potential of proposed solutions
- 3) Shared urgency

EFFECTIVE NATIONAL PRACTICES TO ACHIEVE RACIAL EQUITY



NORMALIZING RACIAL EQUITY PART I

Develop a shared
understanding of historical
context



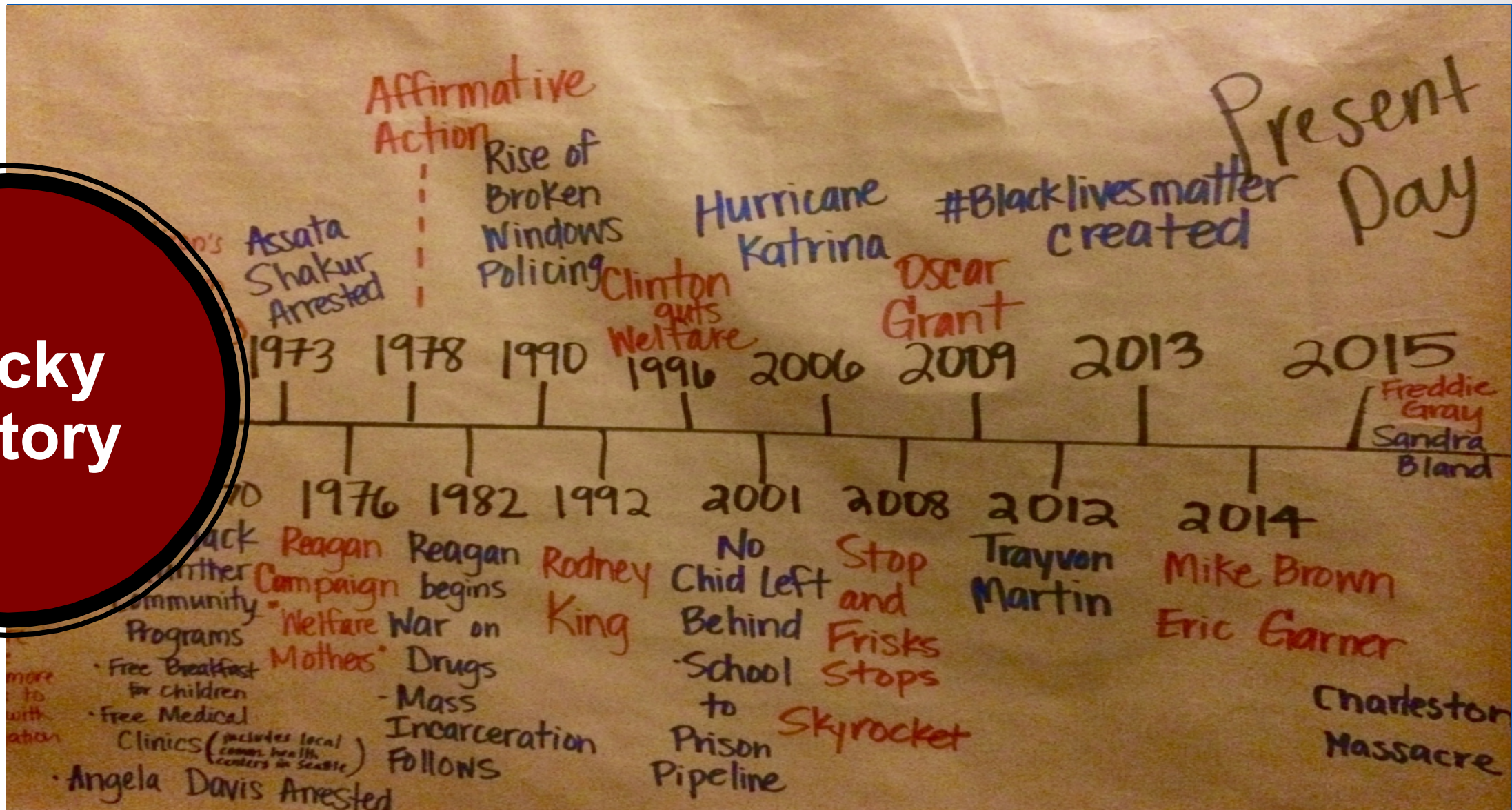
American **Values** vs. **Realities**

"All men are created equal..."

*"...With liberty and justice for
all"*

*"Government of the people, by
the people, for the people, shall
not perish from the earth...."*

Sticky History



STICKY HISTORY

1492-1699

1700-1899

1900-1949

1950-1999

2000-Present

Federal Housing Administration Redlining (FHA determined areas that were deemed fit for investment by banks, and other financial services companies. Areas were physically demarcated with red shading on a map, based primarily on the assigned “risk” level associated with an area’s racial composition)

Berman v Parker (SCOTUS allowed local government to take properties by eminent domain to rebuild areas considered blighted)

Housing Act as part of Fair Deal (gave federal, state, and local governments unprecedented power to shape residential life. One of the Housing Act's main initiatives - "urban renewal" - destroyed about 2,000 communities in the 1950s and '60s and forced more than 300,000 families from their homes. Overall, about half of urban renewal's victims were black, a reality that led to James Baldwin's famous quip that "urban renewal means Negro removal.")

Homestead Act (allocating Native American Land - to anyone” who could pay \$1.25 and cultivate it for five years. Since the Homestead Act applied only to U.S. citizens, Native Americans, Blacks and non-European immigrants were excluded.)

1492-1699 | 1700-1899 | 1900-1949 | 1950-1999 | 2000-Present

Federal Housing Administration Redlining (FHA determined areas that were deemed fit for investment by banks, and other financial services companies. Areas were physically demarcated with red shading on a map, based primarily on the assigned “risk” level associated with an area’s racial composition - **1934**

Berman v Parker (SCOTUS allowed local government to take properties by eminent domain to rebuild areas considered blighted) - **1954**

Housing Act as part of Fair Deal (gave federal, state, and local governments unprecedented power to shape residential life. One of the Housing Act's main initiatives - "urban renewal" - destroyed about 2,000 communities in the 1950s and '60s and forced more than 300,000 families from their homes. Overall, about half of urban renewal's victims were black, a reality that led to James Baldwin's famous quip that "urban renewal means Negro removal.") - **1949**

Homestead Act (allocating Native American Land - to anyone” who could pay \$1.25 and cultivate it for five years. Since the Homestead Act applied only to U.S. citizens, Native Americans, Blacks and non-European immigrants were excluded.) - **1862**

1492-1699

1700-1899

1900-1949

1950-1999

2000-Present

Child Separation Policy: Administration announces policy to separate children from guardians as a deterrent to undocumented immigration across the southern U.S. border.

Page Act (Congress bars entry of Chinese, Japanese, and “Mongolian” prostitutes, felons, and contract laborers. This act effectively barred East Asian women from entering the country and marked the end of open borders in the US.)

Launch of Operation Gatekeeper (the US Border Patrol assigned 200 additional agents to guard the 14 miles of border between the US and Mexico south of San Diego. This led to an intentional outcome derided as Deterrence by Death and is considered the birth of border militarization. More than 8,000 migrants have died as a result of this strategy)

Civil Rights Act of 1866 (mandated that "all persons born in the United States," except for American Indians, were "hereby declared to be citizens of the United States.")

1492-1699 | 1700-1899 | 1900-1949 | 1950-1999 | 2000-Present

Child Separation Policy: Administration announces policy to separate children from guardians as a deterrent to undocumented immigration across the southern U.S. border. - **2018**

Page Act (Congress bars entry of Chinese, Japanese, and “Mongolian” prostitutes, felons, and contract laborers. This act effectively barred East Asian women from entering the country and marked the end of open borders in the US.) - **1875**

Launch of Operation Gatekeeper (the US Border Patrol assigned 200 additional agents to guard the 14 miles of border between the US and Mexico south of San Diego. This led to an intentional outcome derided as Deterrence by Death and is considered the birth of border militarization. More than 8,000 migrants have died as a result of this strategy) - **1994**

Civil Rights Act of 1866 (mandated that "all persons born in the United States," except for American Indians, were "hereby declared to be citizens of the United States.") - **1866**

1492-1699 | 1700-1899 | 1900-1949 | 1950-1999 | 2000-Present

THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN / Part 1



NLC NATIONAL
LEAGUE
OF CITIES
CITIES STRONG TOGETHER



Unpacking the House We Live In

Blockbusting

Racial Covenants

Redlining

- How did the US government define whiteness during this historical period? How do you define what it means to be white?
- What are similar or different ways that you think the US has defined being Black, Latino or Asian in America?
- What role can you play to participate or lead efforts to help others in your community to understand how race has been defined?

THE HOUSE WE LIVE IN / Part 2



NLC NATIONAL
LEAGUE
OF CITIES

CITIES STRONG TOGETHER



Unpacking the House We Live In

Blockbusting

Racial Covenants

Redlining

The film shows how government policies have created unfair advantages for Whites in the past, resulting in a substantial wealth gap between Whites and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

- What examples of disparities exist in your community today?
- Will the wealth gap go away if we ignore race?

End of Day 1



Whatever affects one directly,
affects all indirectly. I can never be
what I ought to be until you are
what you ought to be. This is the
interrelated structure of reality.

— *Martin Luther King* —

AZ QUOTES



Not everything that is faced can be
changed, but nothing can be
changed until it is faced.

— *James A. Baldwin*

AZ QUOTES

Day 2

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

**Safe Space/
Brave Space**

**What is said
here, Stays
here**

**What is learned
here,
Leaves here**

**Offer what you
can;
Ask for what
you need**

**Lean into the
Uncomfortable**

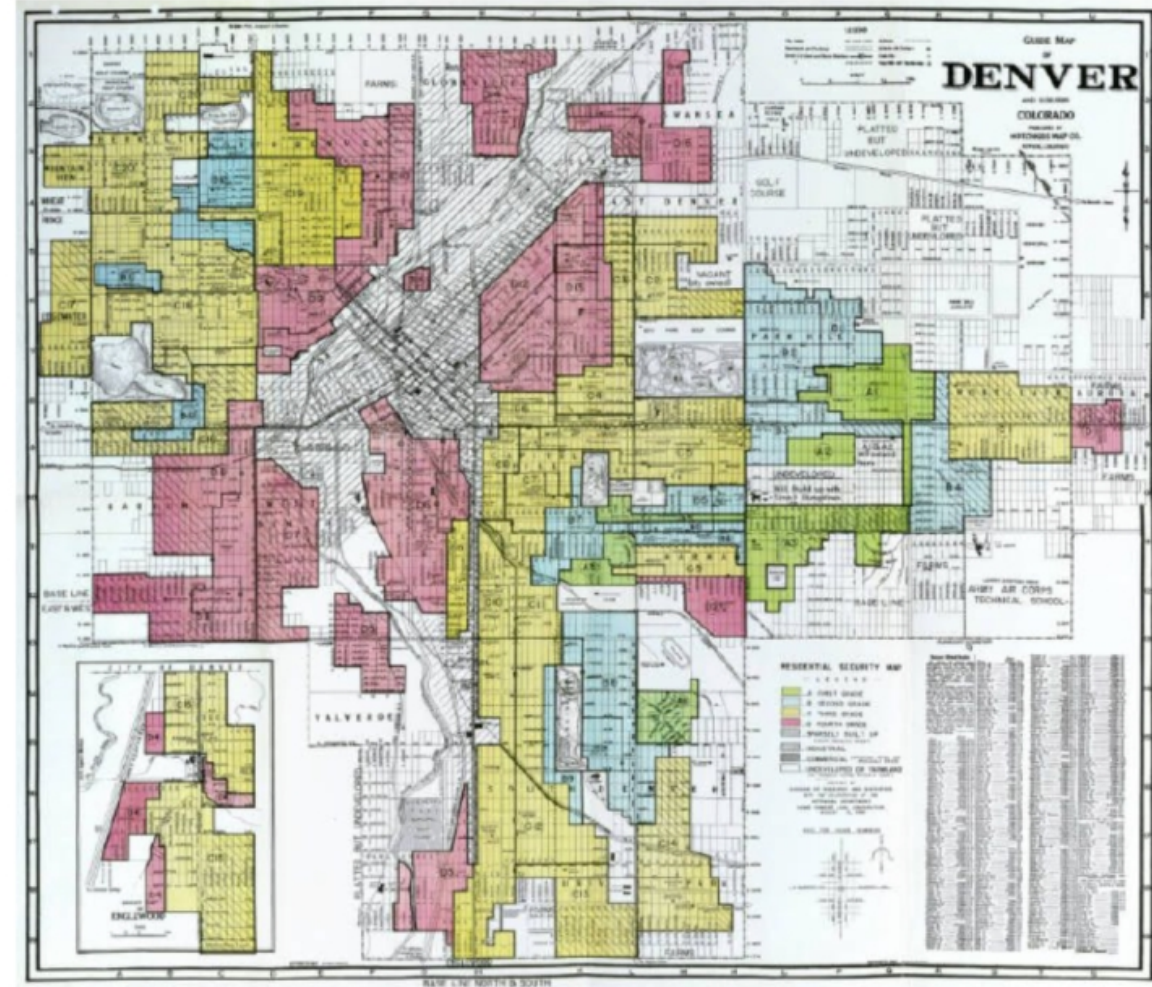
**Start where you
are**

**Participation is
a learning
opportunity**

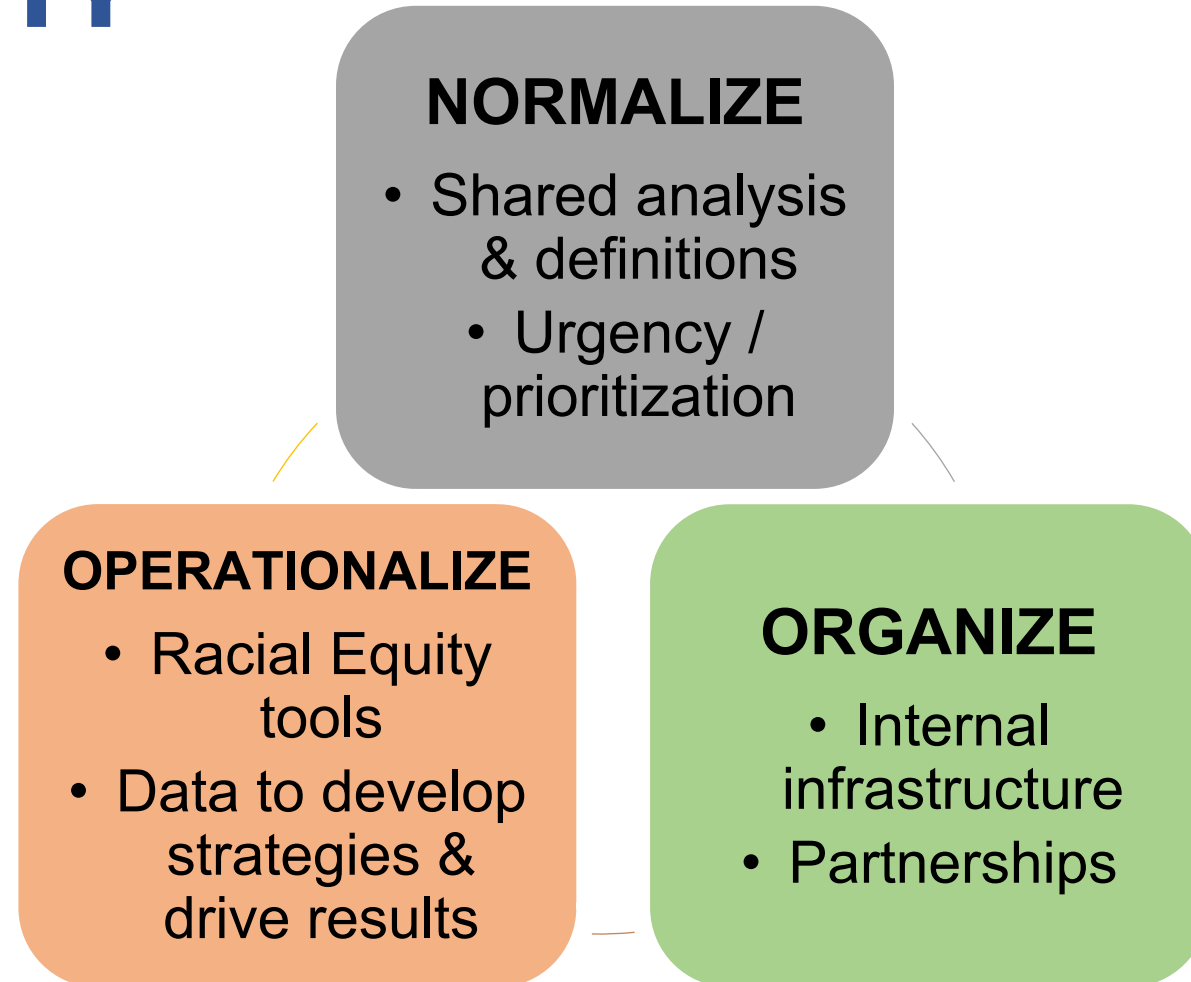
**Keep Cameras
On, if possible**

REDLINING OF DENVER AND MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES STARTED IN THE 1940S

Denver's redlining map included the areas of Five Points, Elyria Swansea, and Sunnyside



EFFECTIVE NATIONAL PRACTICES TO ACHIEVE RACIAL EQUITY

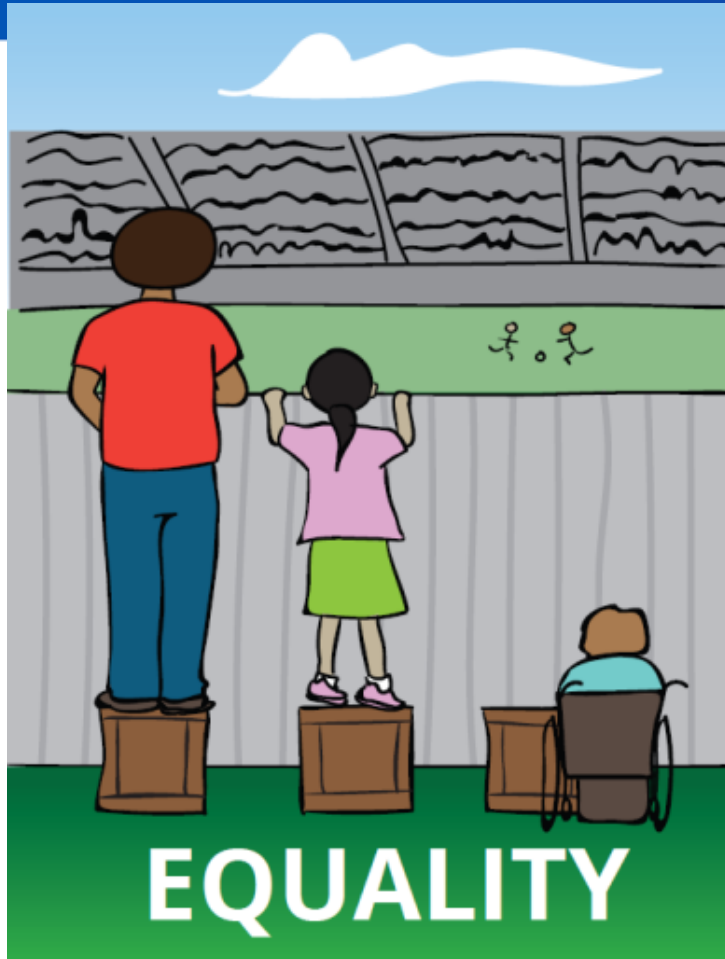


NORMALIZING RACIAL EQUITY

PART II

Create a shared analysis and language about racism and equity

Foster the urgency of equity to prioritize it in governance



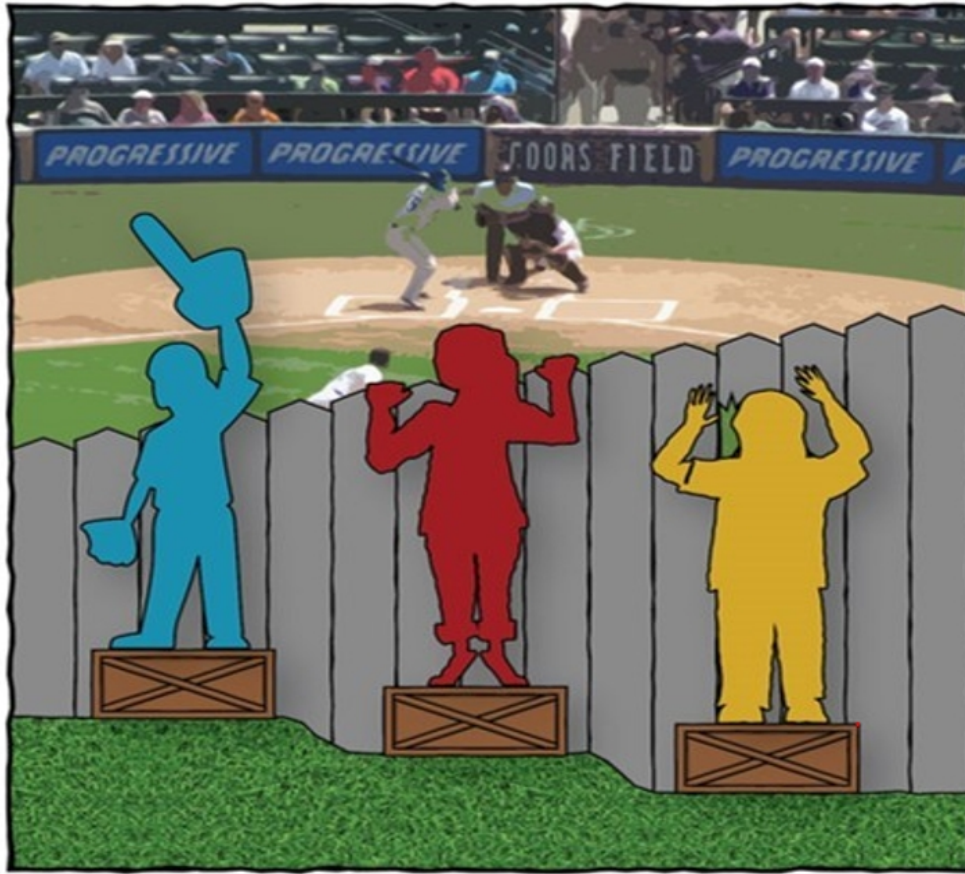
Equality = Sameness

Equality provides the same thing for everyone.
This only works when people start from the same place, history and set of circumstances.



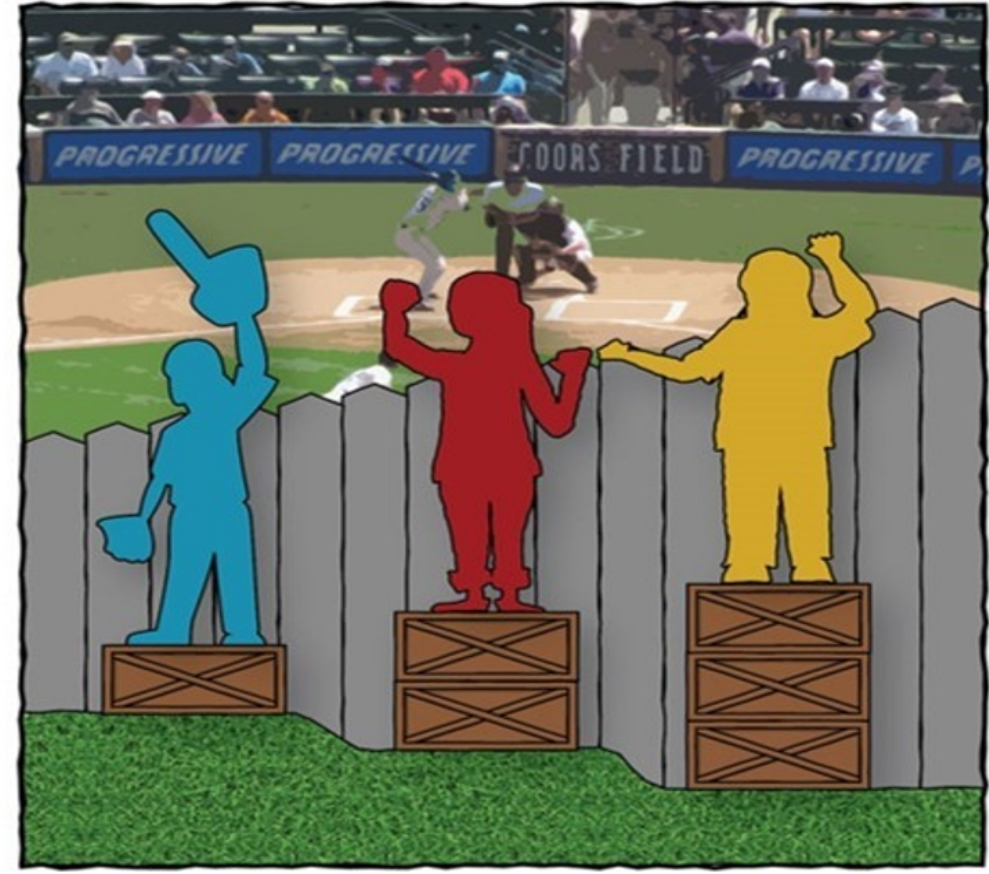
Equity = Justice

Equity is about fairness and providing people with the resources and opportunities they need, given their history and set of circumstances.



Equality = **Sameness**

Equality provides the same thing for everyone. This only works when people start from the same place, history and set of circumstances.



Equity = **Justice**

Equity is about fairness, and providing people with the resources and opportunities they need, given their history and set of circumstances.

BIAS IS EXPLICIT AND IMPLICIT – WE ALL HAVE IT

- The evaluation and association of one **group** and its members relative to another.
- **Inescapable** reality of humanity
- We do have choice over how much we let bias influence our **actions**.
- Acting on bias can be discriminatory and create negative **outcomes** for particular groups

Explicit

Expressed directly

Aware of bias /
operates consciously

Example:

Sign in the window
of an apartment
building noting
“Mexicans need not
apply”

Implicit

Expressed indirectly

Unaware of bias / operates
sub-consciously

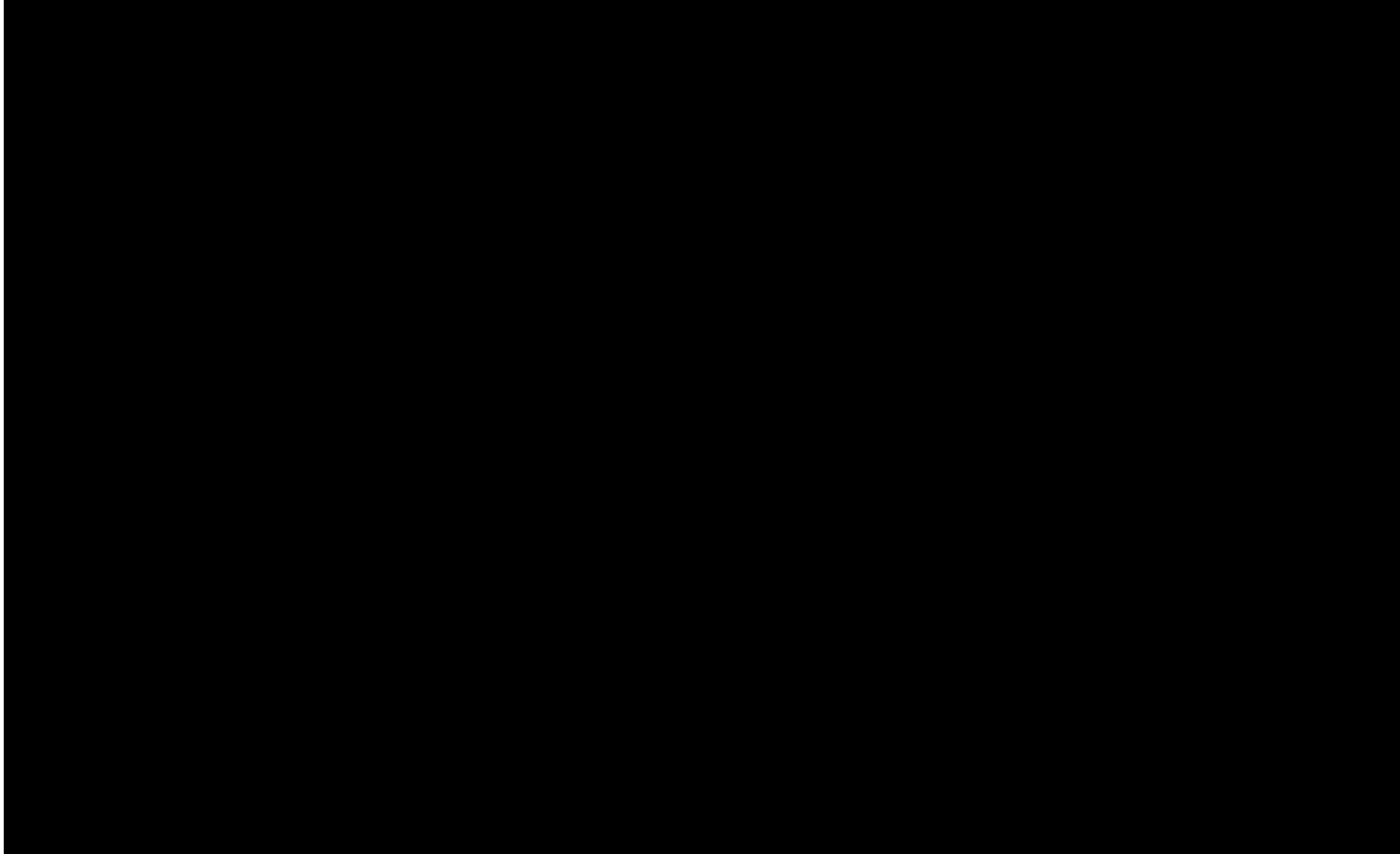
Example:

A property manager
doing criminal
background checks
on black applicants
and not white
applicants.

- Schemas: the “frames” through which our brains help us understand and navigate the world
- They are shaped by our environment and largely reside in the sub-conscious.
 - 1) Sort into categories
 - 2) Create associations
 - 3) Fill in the gaps



HOW MANY PASSES DOES THE TEAM IN WHITE MAKE?



What Color are the Lines of Text?

- Cvr zxyq brm
- Xoc jbn oew mne
- Vqeb peow ytro
- Vqeb peow ytro

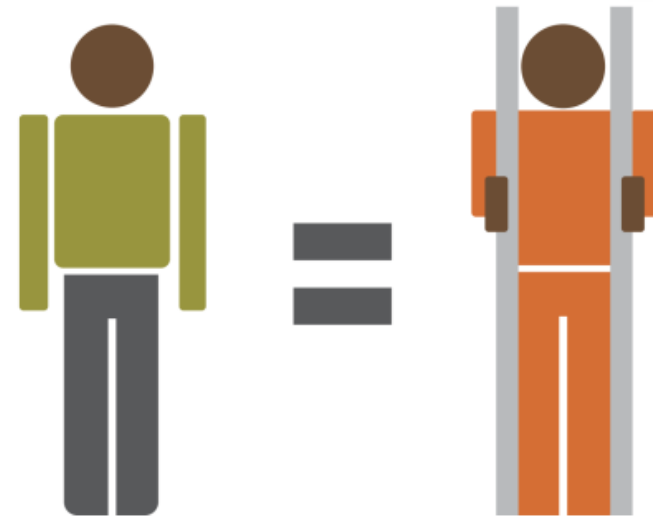
- Black
- Red
- Blue
- Green

- Green
- Black
- Red
- Blue

OUR IMPLICIT BIASES DO NOT REFLECT REALITY

When we are exposed or socialized to certain identity groups being paired with certain characteristics, we **automatically** and **unconsciously** **associate** the **identity** with the **characteristics**...

whether or not that association aligns with reality.



In the U.S., there is a strong implicit association between African Americans and criminal activity.



WHAT WAS “THE LOOK”?

What do you see the judge is experiencing in this short video?

Which stereotypes of Black people, and, specifically Black men, informed others' actions toward the judge?





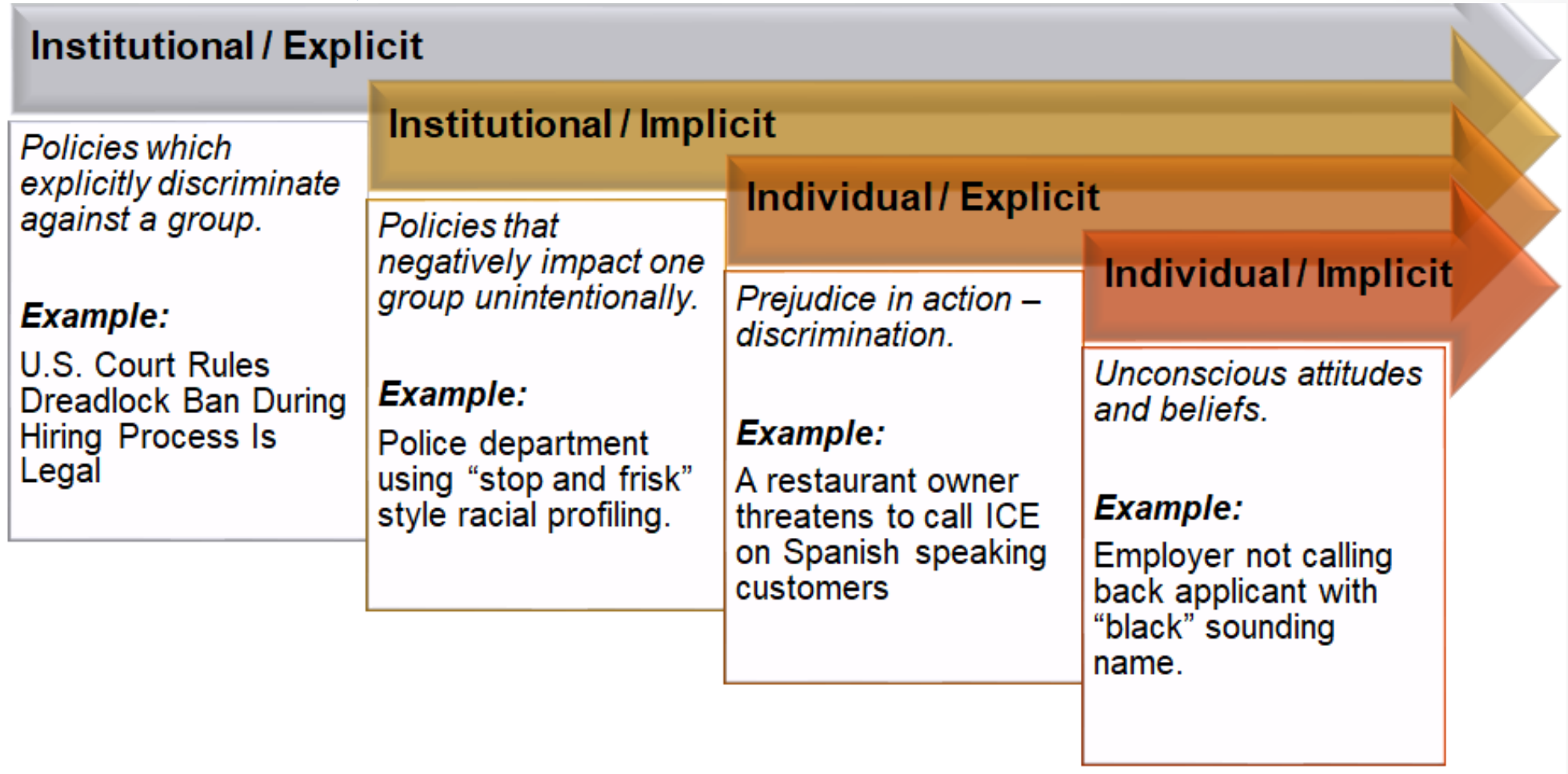
**Acknowledge bias to act
against it**

Suppressing or denying biased thoughts can actually increase prejudice rather than eradicate it.

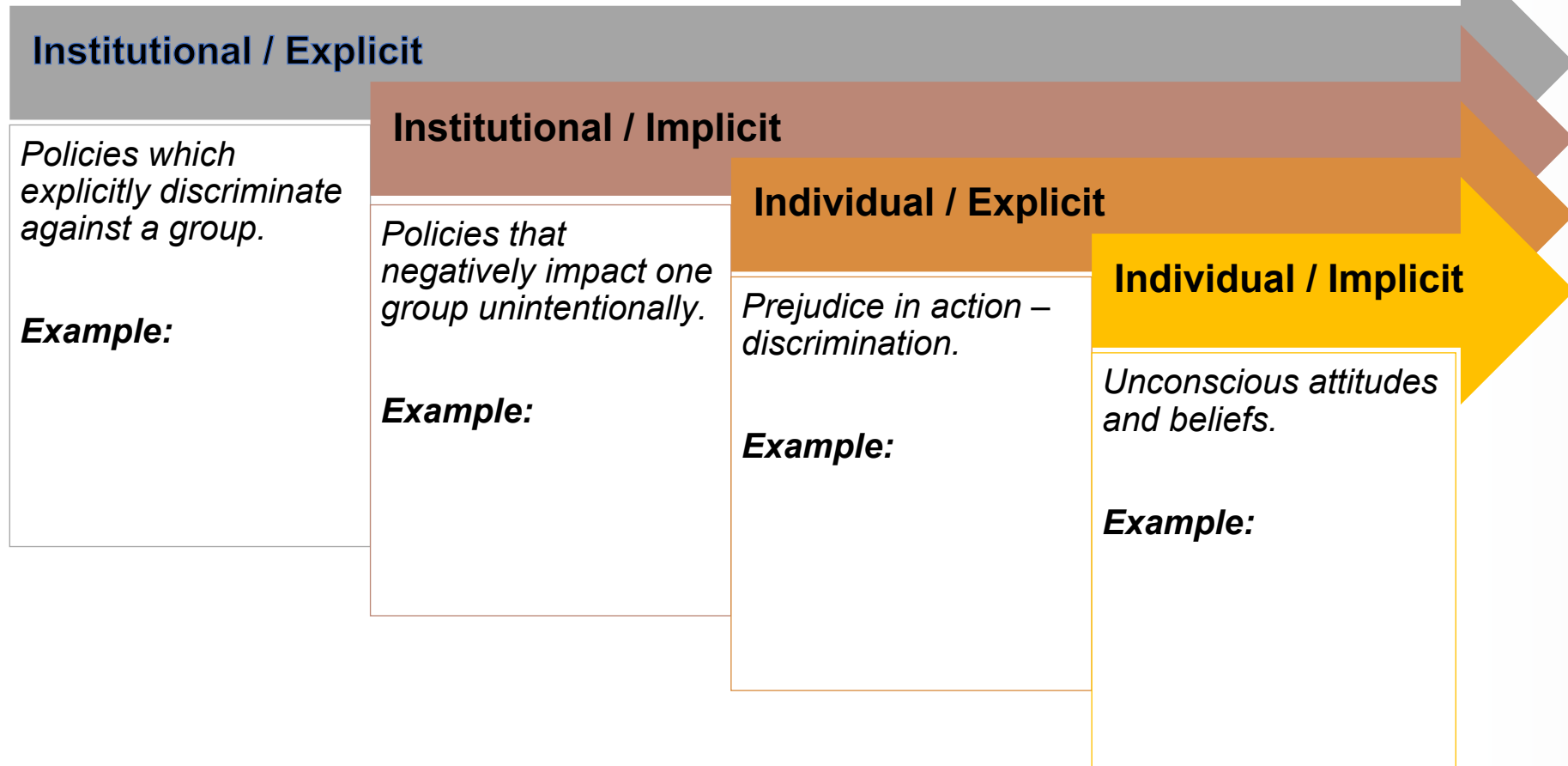
Be Accountable: Take the time to examine your actions or beliefs.

Take Action: Increase contact with people outside of your own demographics, experiences, and thought groups.

BIAS EXISTS IN BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS, IMPLICITLY & EXPLICITLY



BIAS EXISTS IN BOTH INDIVIDUALS AND INSTITUTIONS, IMPLICITLY & EXPLICITLY



Racism is:

Systemic: System of oppression based in superiority of White people and inferiority of BIPOC

- **Individual:** Pre-judgment, bias, or discrimination by an individual based on race.
- **Institutional:** Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color.
- **Structural:** A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts Black, Indigenous and communities of color.



Racism is a **SYSTEM** of **POWER**

- A system of power and oppression that creates race and racial hierarchy to advantage White people and disadvantage Black, Indigenous and People of Color.
- Different from discrimination, prejudice, and bias.
- Racism requires the use of institutional power and/or authority to create policy, practices, and procedures that create and perpetuate racial inequities.
- Individuals can hold and act upon racist prejudice and ideas, but racism itself is a **system of power**.



RACISM AND RACIAL DISPARITIES ARE EVERYWHERE

- From infant mortality to life expectancy, **race** predicts how well one will do.

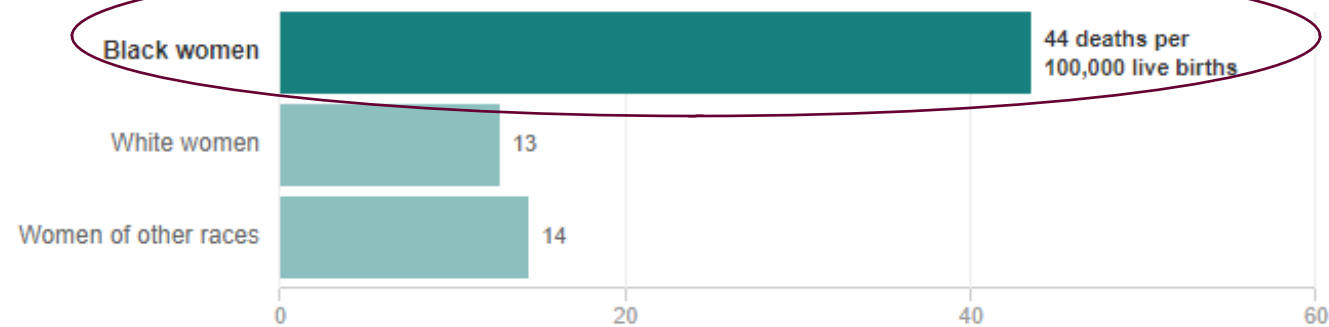


Racial disparity across incomes

In recent years, as high rates of maternal mortality in the U.S. have alarmed researchers, one statistic has been especially concerning. According to [the CDC](#), black mothers in the U.S. die at three to four times the rate of white mothers, one of the widest of all racial disparities in women's health. Put another way, a black woman is 22 percent more likely to die from heart disease than a white woman, 71 percent more likely to perish from cervical cancer, but 243 percent more likely to die from pregnancy- or childbirth-related causes. In a [national study](#) of five medical complications that are common causes of maternal death and injury, black women were two to three times more likely to die than white women who had the same condition.

Black women face significantly higher maternal mortality risk

Maternal deaths per 100,000 live births (2011-2013)



Source: [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#)

Credit: [Alamy/USAP](#)

Black Mothers Keep Dying After Giving Birth. Shalon Irving's Story Explains Why

December 7, 2017 · 7:51 PM ET
Heard on All Things Considered

NINA MARTIN, PROPUBLICA



RENEE MONTAGNE

Listen · 12:11

+ Queue

Download

Embed

Transcript



RACISM IS COMPLEX AND INTENTIONAL

6 in 10

of U.S. prisoners
are Black/Latinx
(yet only comprise
30% of the U.S.
population)



65%

Black or Latinx men
graduate from High
School
(80% of White males
will)



Black and Native
American
unemployment is

2x

that of Whites

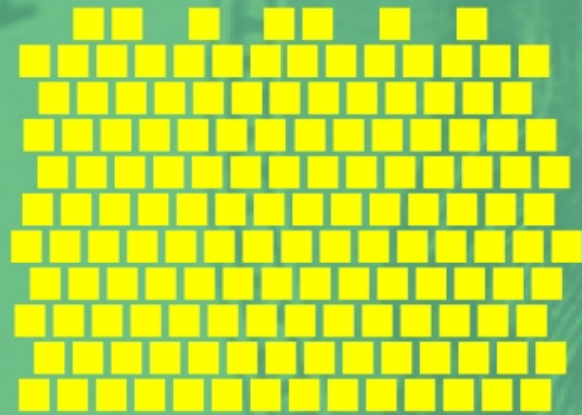
57%

of Blacks and
Latinxs spend more
than 30% of their
income on
housing costs

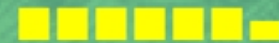


**THE RACIAL
WEALTH
GAP IS
STARK AND
WORSENING**

MEDIAN FAMILY WEALTH TODAY:



**WHITE
FAMILY:
\$147,000**



**LATINO
FAMILY:
\$6,600**



**BLACK
FAMILY:
\$3,600**

**REPORT: DREAMS
DEFERRED 2019**

INEQUALITY.ORG
AN INSTITUTE FOR POLICY STUDIES PROJECT

 **Institute for
Policy Studies**



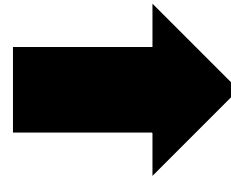
“The heartbeat of antiracism is self-reflection, recognition, admission and fundamentally self-critique... A racist when charged with racism will say, ‘I’m not a racist,’ no matter what they said or did. An antiracist would be willing to confess and recognize what they just said or did was, in fact, racist.”

IBRAM X. KENDI
AUTHOR OF *HOW TO BE AN ANTIRACIST*

Anti-
Racism

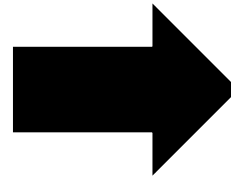
The opposite of “Racist” is not “Not Racist” It’s “Antiracist”

Racism creates policies, practices, and procedures that produce or sustain racial inequity between racial groups.



Racism generates racist ideas to support and justify racial inequity.

Antiracism creates policies, practices, and procedures that produce or sustain racial equity between racial groups.



Antiracism generates antiracist ideas to support and justify racial equity.

From

Blame
Who's a racist?

Intentions
What did they mean?
What was their attitude?

Prejudice
What beliefs made them do it?

Grievance
How can we fix what just
happened?



To

Causes
What's causing the
racial inequities?

Effects
What were the actions?
What are the impacts?

Systems
What institutions are
responsible?

Solutions
What proactive strategies
and solutions?

RACIAL EQUITY REQUIRES ANTIRACIST POLICIES THAT:



Close the gaps so that race does not predict one's success, while also improving outcomes for all.



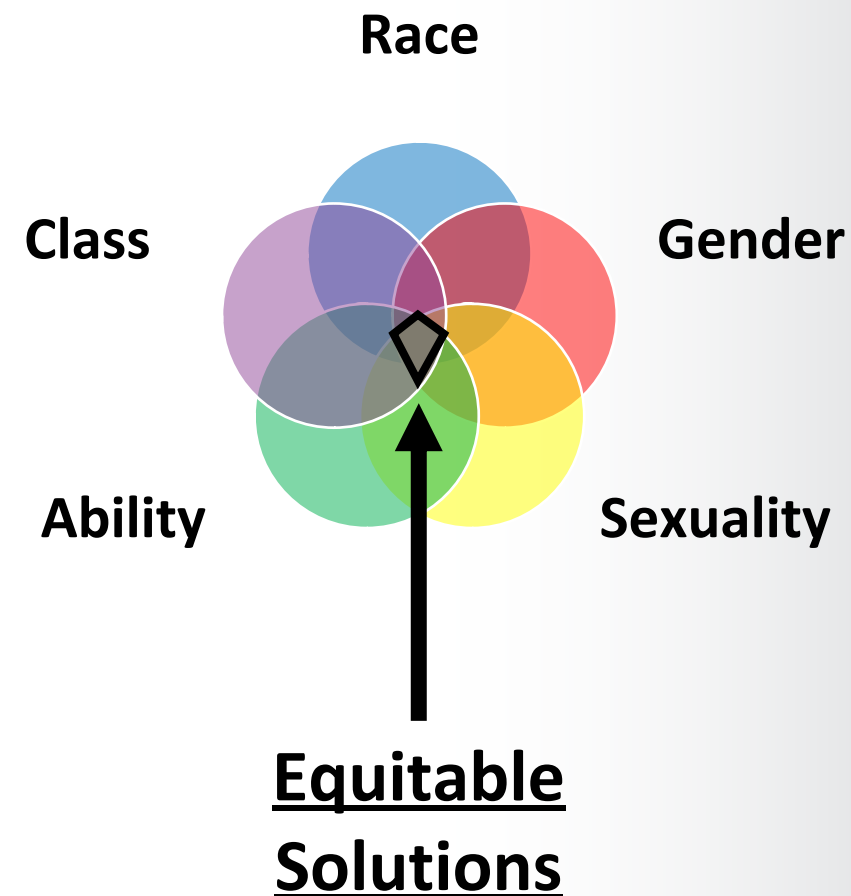
Target systemic changes to focus on improvements for those worse off.



Move beyond “services” and focus on the root causes of racially inequitable outcomes.

SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION OVERLAP TO PRODUCE COMPOUND INEQUITIES

- Race is the primary predictor of success in most areas of daily life
- However, racism overlaps with classism, sexism, queerphobia, and ableism to produce **compound inequities**
- Examining the overlap of these inequities is called **intersectionality**





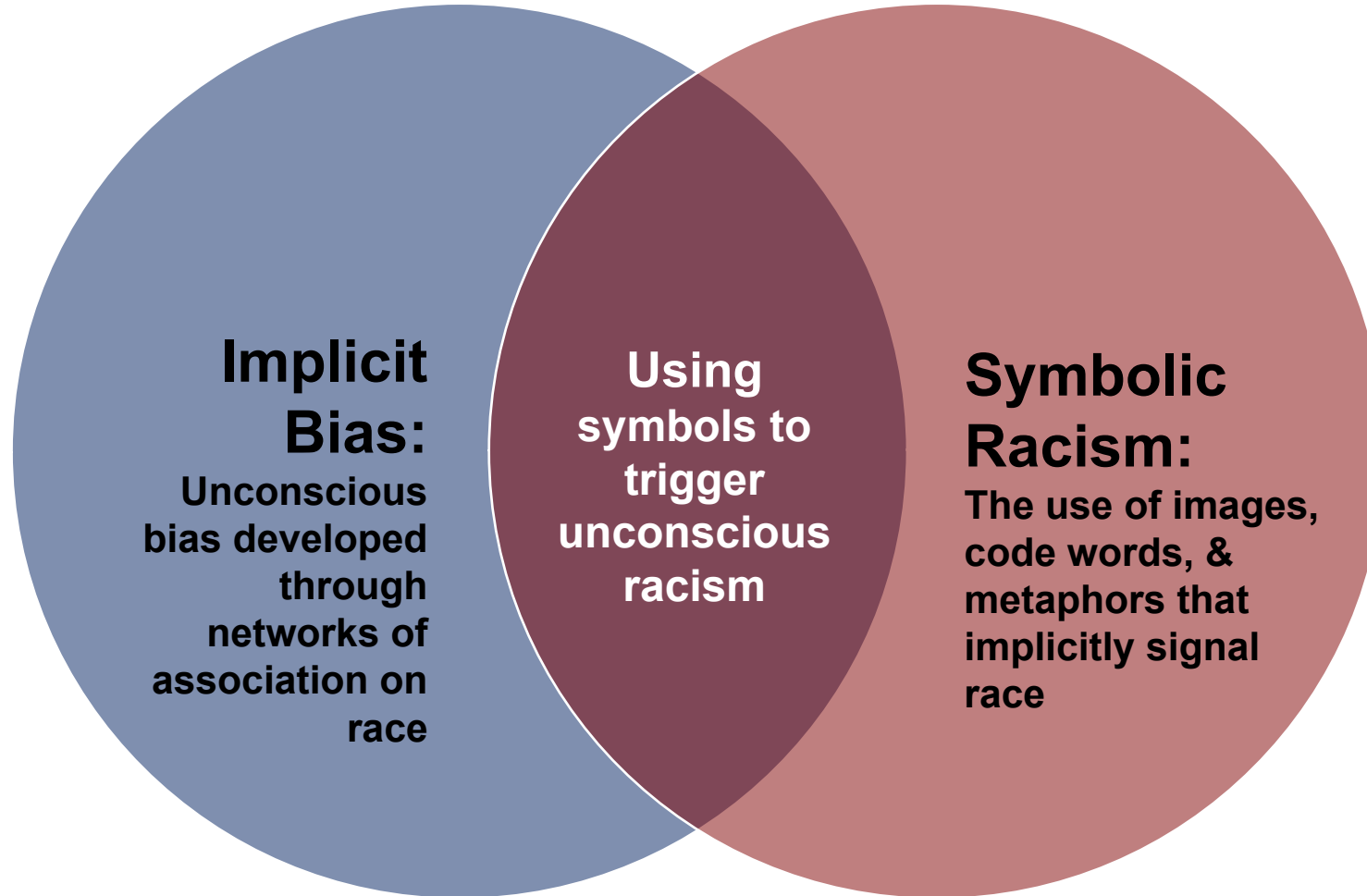
Communicating: Racial Equity and Antiracism



Racist
ideas can
be subtle



WE ACT UPON RACIST IDEAS UNCONSCIOUSLY



Source: Understanding Implicit Bias. Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, 2014. Web. October 14, 2014.
David O. Sears and P. J. Henry, "The Origins of Symbolic Racism", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 85, no. 2 (2003): 259-275.

DOG WHISTLE POLITICS USE RACIST IDEAS

- Political speech using code words understood by a particular group of people but seem innocuous to the general population.
- Racial dog whistles often reinforce racist ideas and sentiments.

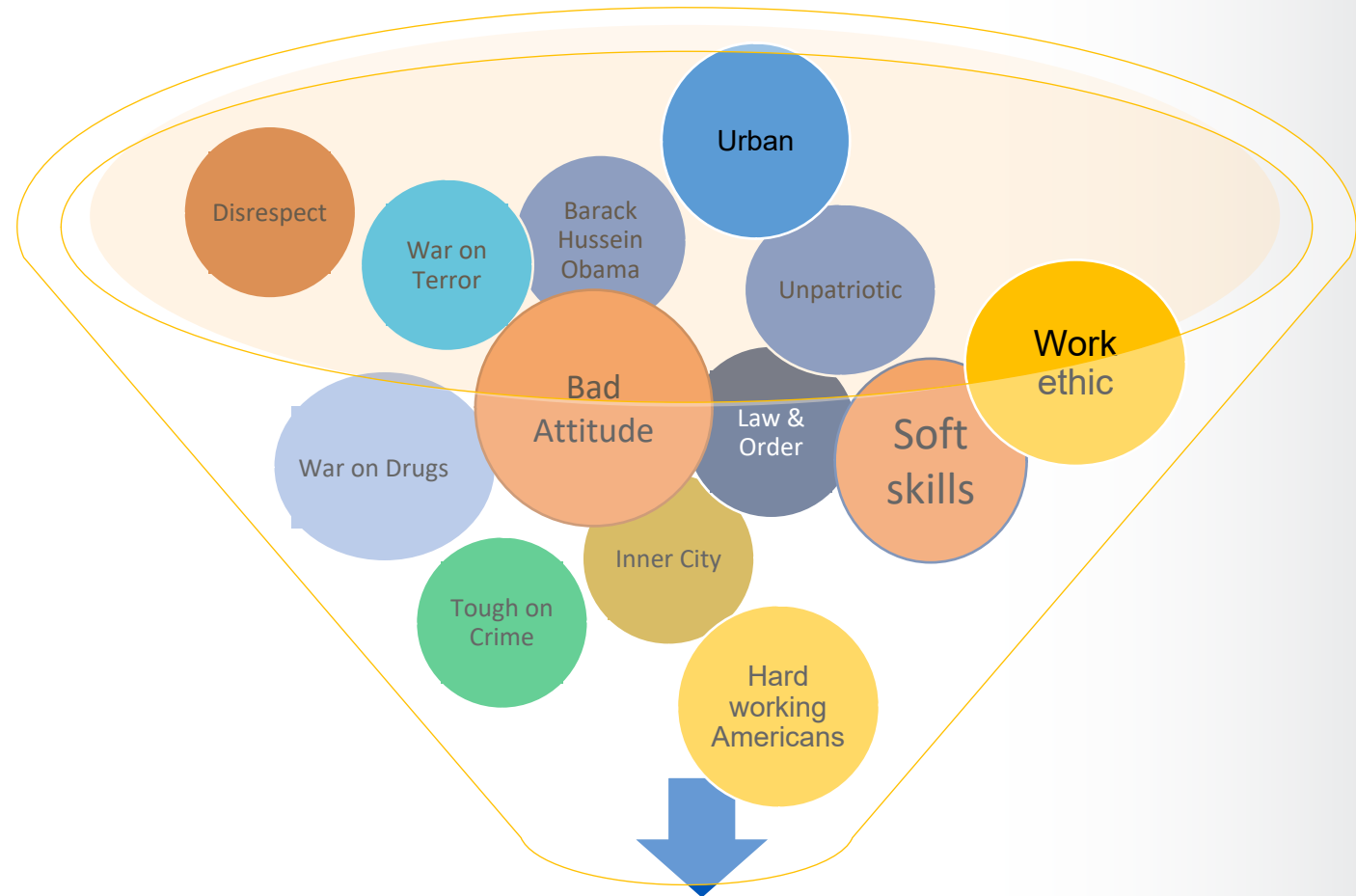
“STATES’ RIGHTS”

Powers of individual state governments, often code for institutionalized segregation & racism

IDENTIFY CODED LANGUAGE AS RACIST

Can you think
of other coded
language we
often hear in
politics **now**?

What do these
codes **mean**?



Racism normalized through coded language

WE CAN SHIFT NORMS TOWARD ANTIRACISM

- The best way to change attitudes is to change behaviors.
- Attitudinal change tends to follow behavior change.
- This requires both short and long-term approaches.



Listen to the Needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

- It's imperative that authentic engagement allows space for the voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Color and their feelings—**without dismissal or vilification for their anger.**
 - What is behind coded responses like “*appropriateness*” “*if people would just be civil*”, “*respect*”, “*this isn't the time/place*”, etc.?



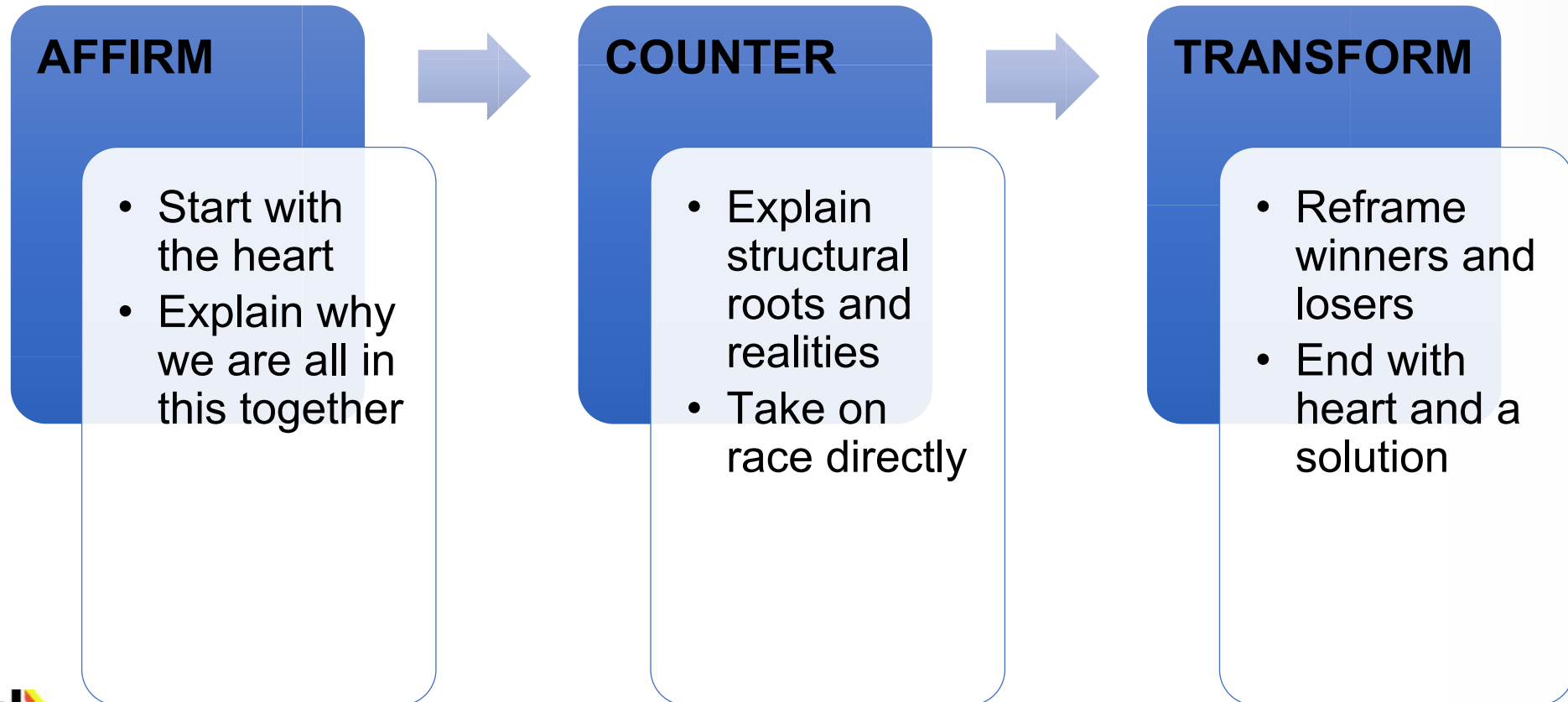
Listen to the Needs of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

Listening and validation is an important first step, but what you hear should drive **systemic policy change** based on the needs of Black, Indigenous and People of Color



ANTIRACISM REQUIRES ACTION

It's more than just talk – ACT



OPERATIONALIZING IS ACTION

Racial equity tools

Data to develop strategies
and drive results



IMPACT OVER INTENT



Centered in Fairness and Justice

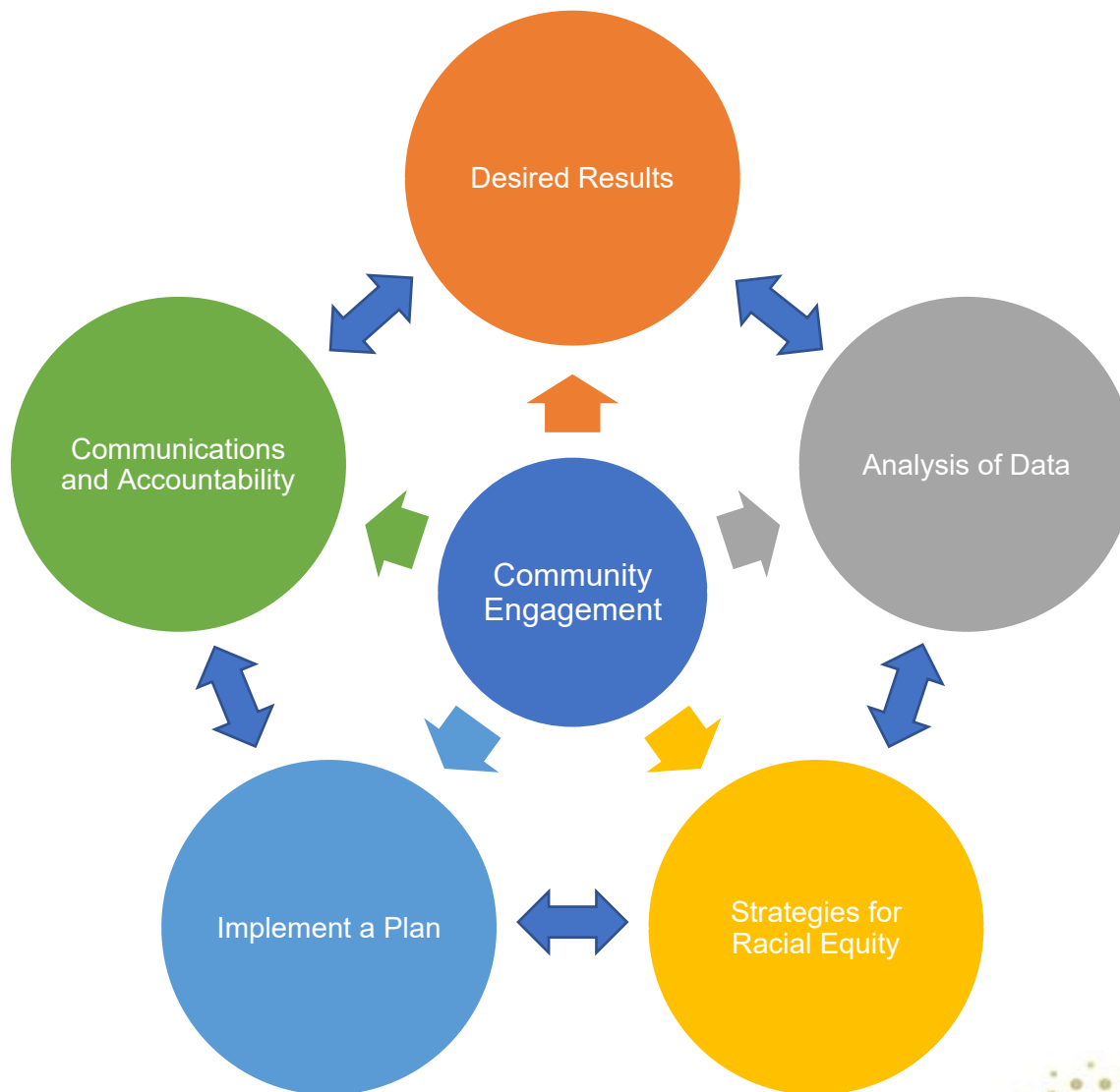


Guilt should *never* be the motivation



Is your city ready to govern for
Racial Equity?

RACIAL EQUITY TOOLS REQUIRE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT EVERY STEP



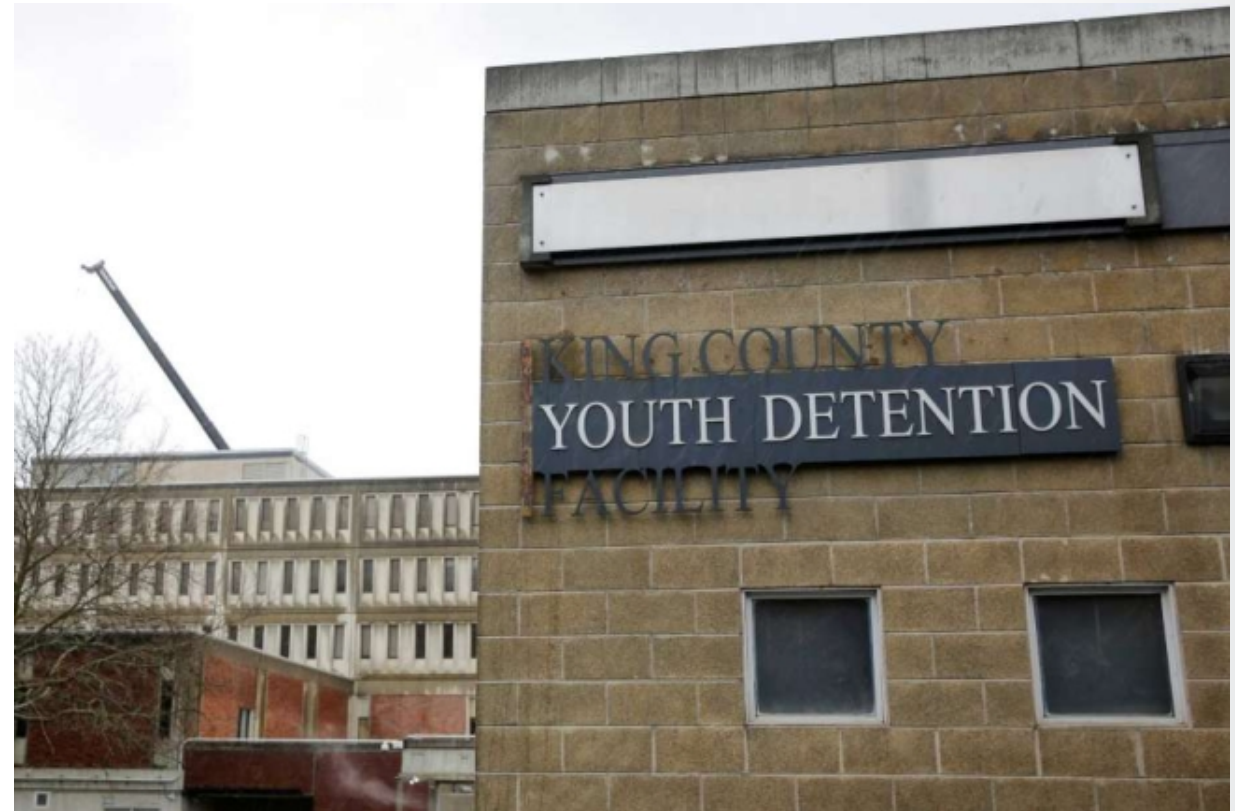
LOCAL AND REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE ON
RACE & EQUITY

Decision Making with a Racial Equity Tool

- STREETLIGHTS / COMPLAINT-BASED SYSTEMS
- BAN THE BOX POLICIES
- CONTRACTING POLICIES + PROCEDURES
- INCREASES TO THE MINIMUM WAGE
- POLICING + CRIMINAL JUSTICE + BAIL
- INFRASTRUCTURE + TRANSPORTATION
- RE-ENTRY + EMPLOYMENT
- SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY POLICIES
- LOCAL FINES + FEES
- ZONING + PERMITTING
- PUBLIC + RECREATIONAL SPACES
- WHAT ELSE?

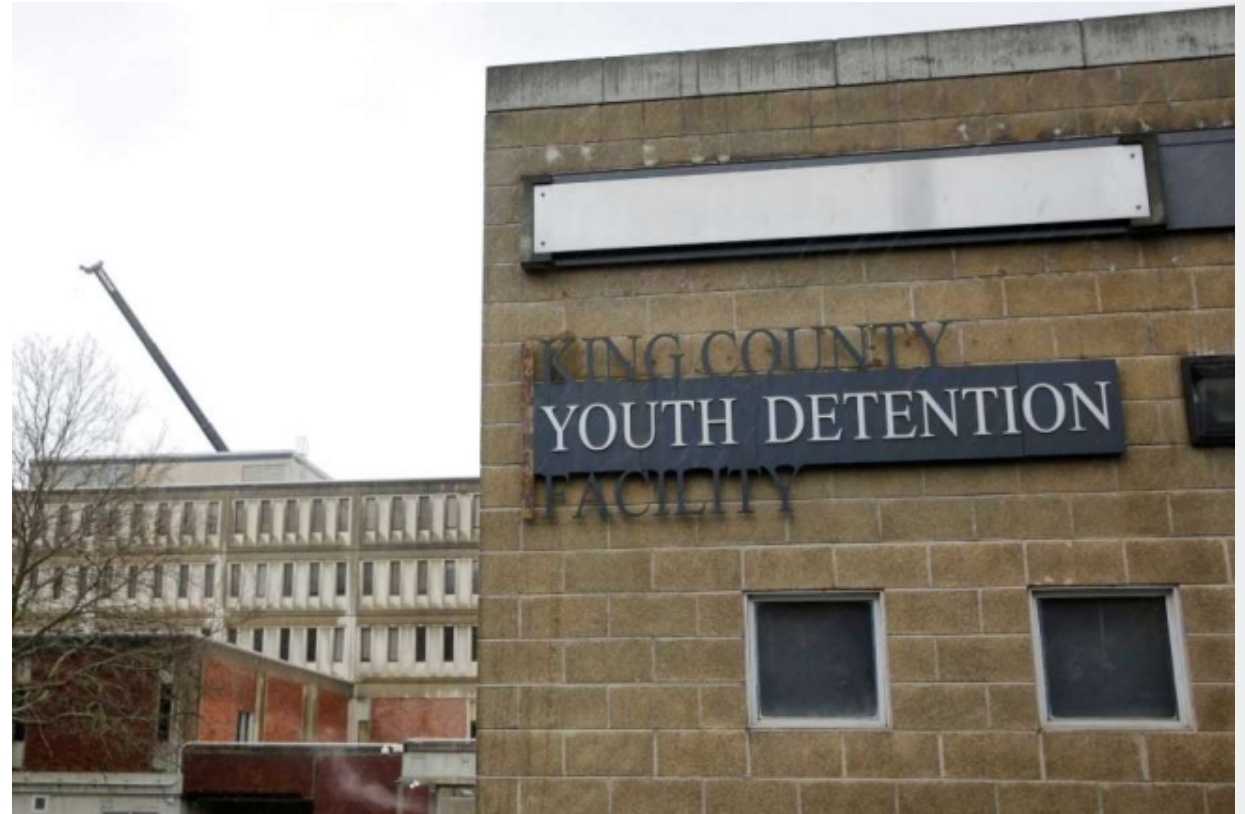
NON-TARGETED STRATEGIES EXACERBATE RACIAL INEQUITIES

- “No shows” were resulting in youth going further into school-to-prison-pipeline
- First attempt to address (without a Racial Equity Tool) – sent reminder letters in the mail
- **Overall result successful** – increased court appearances!
- **However**, – racial disproportionality increased – a strategy that didn’t work for youth of color.



TARGETED STRATEGIES CREATE RACIALLY EQUITABLE OUTCOMES

- Back to the drawing board, used a Racial Equity Tool
- Youth engagement – new strategies included reminder texts and transit assistance.
- **Overall result** – court appearances increased even further
- **Racial equity result** – decreased racial disproportionality



ORGANIZING FOR RACIAL EQUITY

Internal infrastructure

Partnerships

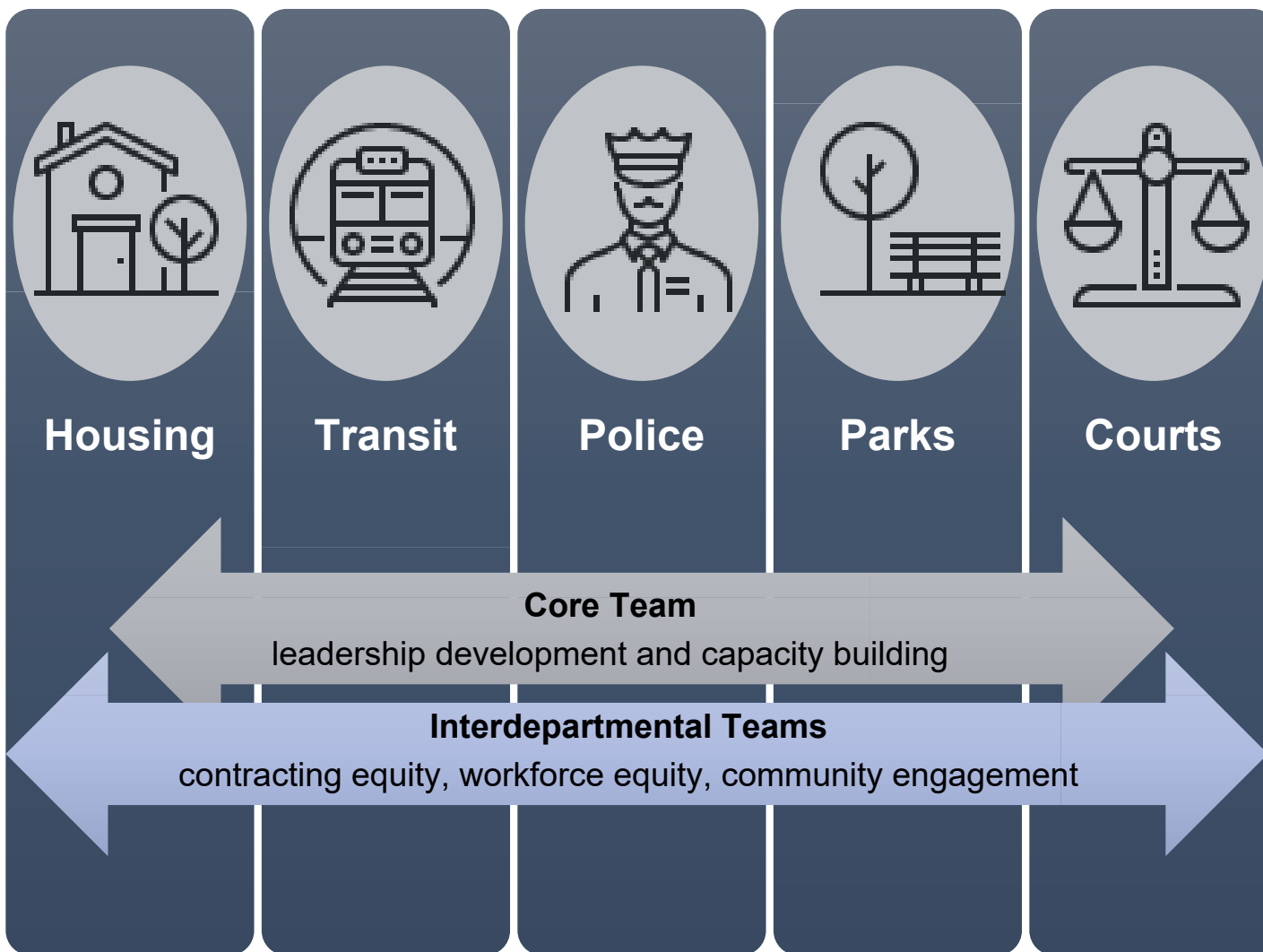


To achieve equity:

- Set an Example
- LISTEN
- Make a Public Declaration
- Dedicated Infrastructure → Action
- Commit to Change Systems & Policy
- Create a Racial Equity Plan



Racial Equity Leadership Team – senior leadership



- Accountability agreements
- Departmental work plans
- Performance reviews
- Racial Equity Tools
- Institution-wide work plans

ORGANIZING AROUND GROUPS

- 1) ADVOCATES = *SUPPORTER*
- 2) FOLLOWERS = *SHOW UP/ BUT NOT ACTIVE*
- 3) SKEPTICS = *HAVE MANY QUESTIONS*
- 4) RESISTORS = *OPPONENTS*



- 1) ADVOCATES = *SUPPORTER*
- 2) FOLLOWERS = *CONVERT TO ADVOCATES/SUPPORTERS*
- 3) SKEPTICS = *CONVERT TO ADVOCATES/SUPPORTERS → USE A.C.T. TOOL*
- 4) RESISTORS = *IF NOT CONVERT, MAKE LESS RESISTANT*

REFLECTIONS



NLC NATIONAL
LEAGUE
OF CITIES

CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

Antiracism – a continuous learning process

PODCASTS

- **CODE SWITCH - “LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION!”**

GOOD READS

- **WHITE FRAGILITY (ARTICLE)**
- **UNPACKING THE INVISIBLE KNAPSACK**
- **THE COLOR OF LAW**
- **HOW TO KILL A CITY**

FILMS

- **CRACKING THE CODES**
- **HEALING JUSTICE**
- **13TH**

DON'T ISOLATE YOURSELF

- **HAVE CONVERSATIONS (WITH EACH OTHER)**
- **ASK QUESTIONS**
- **BE OPEN MINDED**
- **KEEP GOING!**



**I am no longer accepting the things I cannot change.
I am changing the things I cannot accept.
-Angela Y. Davis**

CONTACT US

SEANTAE BYERS (She /Her)

Senior Executive and Director Member and Partner Engagement

Sbyers@nlc.org / 202.626.3168

RITA SOLER OSSOLINSKI (She / Her)

Program Director, NLC Race, Equity And Leadership

ossolinski@nlc.org / 202.626.3008

DARRYL EDWARDS (He / Him)

Senior Program Specialist, NLC REAL

edwards@nlc.org



CITIES STRONG TOGETHER

[@LEAGUEOFCITIES](https://twitter.com/LEAGUEOFCITIES)

