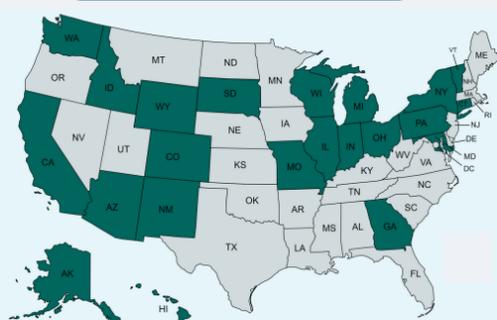


# OUR IDENTITIES | OURSELVES

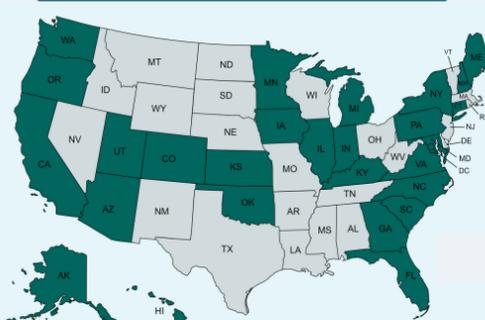
## Antiracist Data Project Survey and Focus Group Findings

### Survey Participants



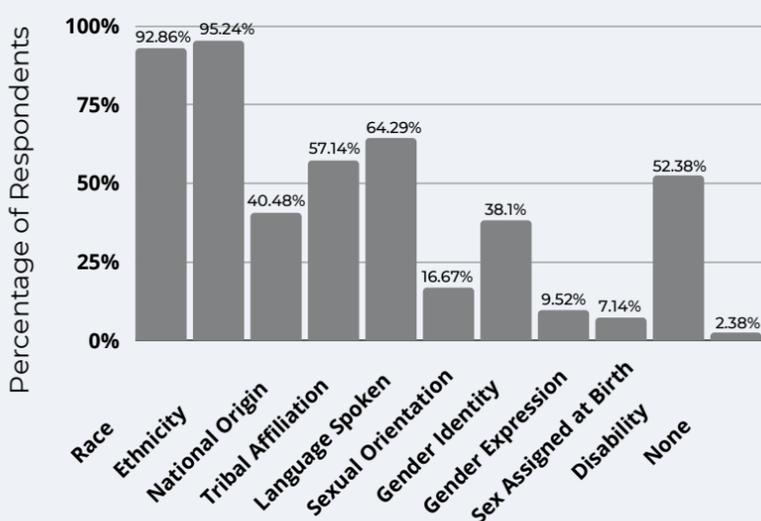
Child welfare data administrators  
42 responses from 27 jurisdictions

### Focus Group Participants



17 youth & young adults, 18 parents, 10 caseworkers, and 9 data administrators

### What elements of personal identity or demographic characteristics do child welfare agencies or contracted agencies collect data on?



The vast majority of child welfare jurisdictions collect data on race and ethnicity. However, often this data is not accurate or specific to subgroups or cultures beyond the Office of Budget Management (OMB) categories.

Some jurisdictions also collect data on national origin (40%), disability (52%), language spoken (64%), and gender identity (38%). Some indicated they are working to improve their collection of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE) data.

88%

of survey respondents reported that race and ethnicity data is collected using either youth self-report or caregiver self-report.

This contradicts findings from the focus groups, wherein many said that they were not asked about race or ethnicity, indicating discrepancies between policy and practice. Methods such as reporter observation or caseworker observation are also frequently used, with 79% and 74% using these methods, respectively.

### Challenges in Accurate Collection of Race or Ethnicity

**47.6%** Lack of Clear Guidance Regarding What Data to Collect, How, and When

**52.4%** Inconsistent Application of Guidance Regarding Data Collection

**54.8%** Lack of Training for Staff About Why It's Important to Collect This Data

**61.9%** Staff Don't Feel Comfortable Asking About Racial/Ethnic Identity

**45.2%** Lack of Time/Low Priority on Caseworker's Demanding Workload

**7.1%** N/A—Race or Ethnicity Data Not Collected

**7.1%** Other

### Data Are Used for Varying Purposes in Child Welfare Jurisdictions.

**81%** said data is used to be shared with staff and with partners

**45%** said data is used to inform decision-making regarding resource allocation

**50%** said the data was used to inform policy decisions

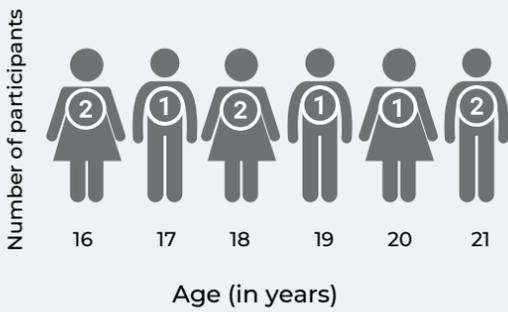
**74%** said the data was used to inform practice, training, and programs

**36%** said data is used to inform workforce decisions

**5%** said that the data is not used

## Youth and Young Adults Focus Group Demographics (N=17)

### Age



### MY PRONOUNS ARE

She/Her	53%
She/They	6%
They/Them	6%
He/Him	29%
All	6%

### Race/Ethnicity\*

#### Race

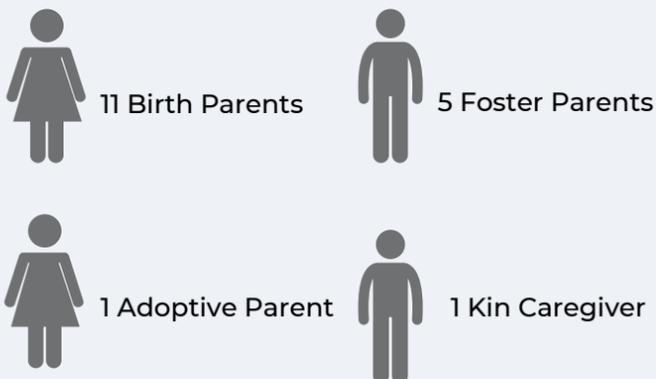
- White.....4
- Greek, Native American, & White.....1
- African American.....3
- White and Middle Eastern.....1
- Native American & Black.....1
- Ethiopian.....1
- White (Irish/Italian on one side, German/Dutch on one side).....1
- Salvadorian American.....1
- Native American & South African.....1
- Hispanic/Mexican.....2

*I think being able to practice things in line with like not only your racial identity, but like your ethnic and cultural identity can be just incredibly impactful. Going from where you're hearing like familiar music or TV shows or ways of celebrating things or types of food to eat to absolutely nothing on top of being in the foster care system is just incredibly isolating.*

— Young Person with Lived Experience in Foster Care

## Parent and Caregiver Focus Group Demographics (N=18)

### Parent Role



### Race/Ethnicity\*

#### Race

- White.....7
- Black or African American.....5
- Hispanic, Latino, Puerto Rican.....2
- Black & Native American.....2
- Native Hawaiian.....1
- Greek & White.....1

*This is who we are, right? It's like it's like asking somebody, 'Do you mind if I spell your name wrong?', you know? It's something basic. You should know as much as you can about families, right, about our family, about our children, about ourselves. And if we're not there to give that information, then to the best of your ability [you should] be able to find that out.*

— Birth Parent

### Themes and Findings

- Shared importance of asking about race/ethnicity as a starting point for getting to know children, youth and families and connecting them to services and supports that meet their needs
- Expressed concern about these data being used to stereotype or pigeonhole young people and their family members
- Expressed frustration about not being asked, and assumptions made, about their identity by caseworkers and resource parents
- Emphasized value of caseworkers practicing cultural humility and reflecting on their biases
- Identified concern that asking about race is a potentially sensitive subject if young people or their family members don't know their background or ancestry

## Data Administrators Focus Group Demographics (N=9)

### Race/Ethnicity\*



*We want to make this question as regular and as normal as possible. We don't want our workers to be afraid of asking about race or ethnicity.*

— Data Administrator

## Caseworker Focus Group Demographics (N=10)

### Race/Ethnicity\*



*Being here is definitely out of my comfort zone. Forcing me to talk about things that I'm not used to or comfortable with—I don't like being combative. And I don't like to come off like I don't know anything, but you don't learn anything if you don't ask questions. So that's something I'm learning to do.*

— Caseworker

### Themes and Findings

- Expressed concern about unintended consequences of these data that could lead to bias or stereotypes.
- Shared that pushing through discomfort to ask about race has led to learning and benefits for caseworkers.
- Emphasized need for training and resources on this topic.

\*Focus group facilitators did not collapse any categories on race or ethnicity. We reported the information using the same descriptors as the focus group participants.