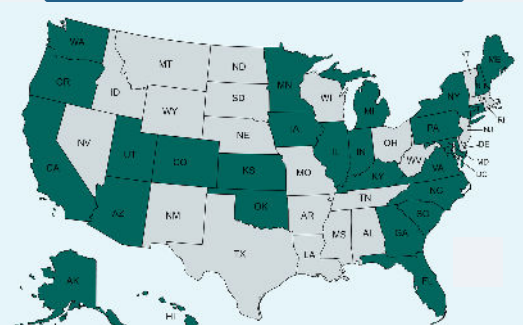


## Focus Group Participants



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

Category	Percentage of Respondents
Race	92.86%
Ethnicity	95.24%
National Origin	40.48%
Tribal Affiliation	57.14%
Language Spoken	64.29%
Sexual Orientation	16.67%
Gender Identity	38.1%
Gender Expression	9.52%
Sex Assigned at Birth	7.14%
Disability	52.38%
None	2.38%

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.

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.

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

## Lack of Clear Guidance Regarding What Data to Collect, How, and When

### Inconsistent Application of Guidance Regarding Data Collection

### Lack of Training for Staff About Why It's Important to Collect This Data

### Staff Don't Feel Comfortable Asking About Racial/Ethnic Identity

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

N/A—Race or Ethnicity Data Not Collected

Other



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

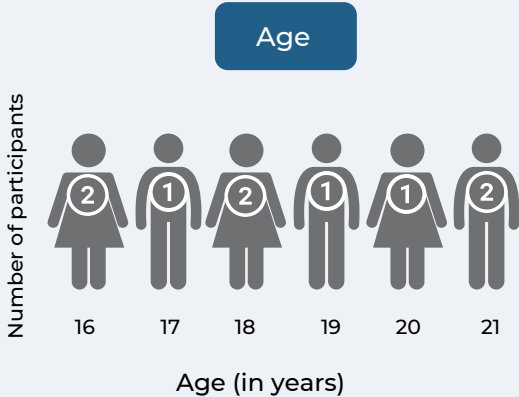


36% said data is used to inform workforce decisions



5% said that the data is not used

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



MY PRONOUNS ARE

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

Race/Ethnicity\*

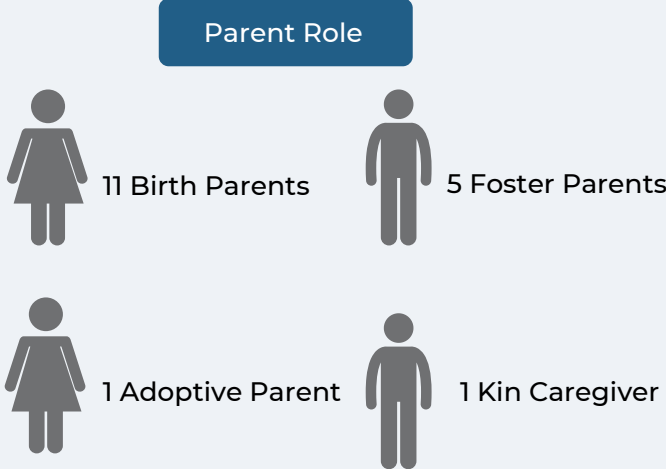


“I think being able to practice things in line with like not only your racial identity, but like your ethnic and cultural identity can be just incredibly impactful. Going from where you're hearing like familiar music or TV shows or ways of celebrating things or types of food to eat to absolutely nothing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

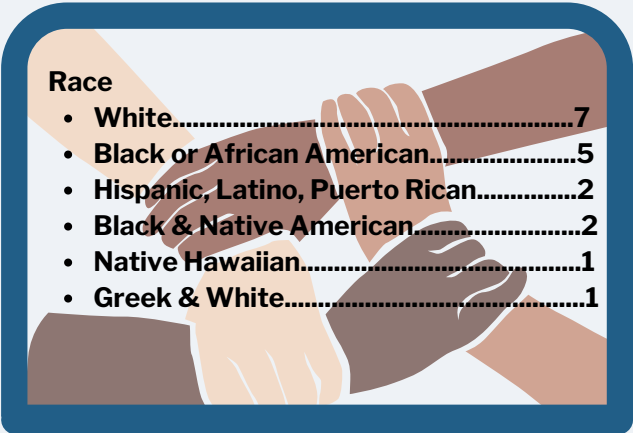
— Young Person with Lived Experience in Foster Care

”

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



Race/Ethnicity\*



“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\*

Race

- White.....8
- White & Hispanic.....1
- White, Diné, Dos Pueblos, Hispanic.....1

*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

Race

- White.....4
- Black or African American.....3
- Hispanic, Puerto Rican.....2
- Haitian American.....1

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.

