Centering Black Families: Equitable Discipline through Improved Data Policies in Child Care

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Presenters

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Who is CLASP?

- ❖ The Center for Law and Social Policy is a national, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization focused on advancing policy solutions:
  - Eliminate poverty
  - Promote economic empowerment and security
  - Disrupt structural and systemic racism

- ❖ CLASP's body research and advocacy work is supported by:
  - Five core policy teams: child care and early education; income and work supports; immigration and immigrant families; education, labor and worker justice; and youth and young adults
  - Two cross-cutting policy teams: mental health and justice
  - Teams focused on internal processes: communications, finance, administration, development, legislative, and racial equity.

- ❖ We work at the national, state, and local levels to support private, non-profit, advocacy, and grassroots organizations efforts to advance economic security and racial equity.

Presentation Overview

❖ At the intersection of discipline and data in child care and early education:
- Addressing harsh and inequitable disciplinary practices for Black children, families, and communities.
- Incorporating inclusive community engagement frameworks into expanded data strategies to shape equitable early childhood policy.

❖ Discussions on how the historical context of existing systems, policies, and practices—developed and upheld by anti-Black racism—can be used to shape solutions and support systemic change.

❖ Examining how federal and state agencies connected to CCDBG and Head Start are well positioned to begin collecting qualitative and quantitative data through currently existing systems.

❖ Creating an understanding of why changes are needed to ensure Black children and families have equitable access to high-quality, reliable, culturally affirming early education programs and how equity centered data policies are needed to improve resources and implement those changes.

Understanding the Historical and Policy Context of Child Care and Early Education

1619 - 1908

– Black women are the genesis of the American child care system.

– With the end of chattel slavery, America shifted its policy priorities around children and mothers.

– Post chattel slavery, Black women and many women of color entered into domestic work which was one of the only occupations available at the time due to racism and bias.

History Revisited

Louisa and H.E. Hayward

Understanding the Historical and Policy Context of Child Care and Early Education

1909 – 1979

- White House Conference on the Care of Dependent Children, 1909
- Social Security Act & Aid to Dependent Children, 1935
- The Lanham Act, 1940
- Aid to Families with Dependent Children, 1962
- Head Start, 1965
- Comprehensive Child Development Act, 1971

1980 – Present

- Child Care and Development Block Grant, 1990
- Child Care Entitlement to States and the Child Care and Development Fund, 1996
- Child Care and Development Block Grant Reauthorization, 2014
- COVID : federal relief and a shifting narrative to address a shifting need

Black Women remain the cornerstone

Head Start and the War on Poverty

Improving the child care and early education system

Discipline

❖ How harsh disciplinary actions manifest—
  ❖ Pushout
  ❖ Suspension
  ❖ Expulsion
  ❖ Exclusion/Isolation
 ❖ Physical Punishment

How Black children have been affected

"Black children—as young as infants, toddlers, and preschoolers—bear the brunt of {this} systemic racism that shows up in disciplinary practices that harm them, their families, and our communities and broader society."

"{These young} Black children are too often penalized for behaviors that are within the range of what is developmentally appropriate by being excluded from group child care and early education settings."
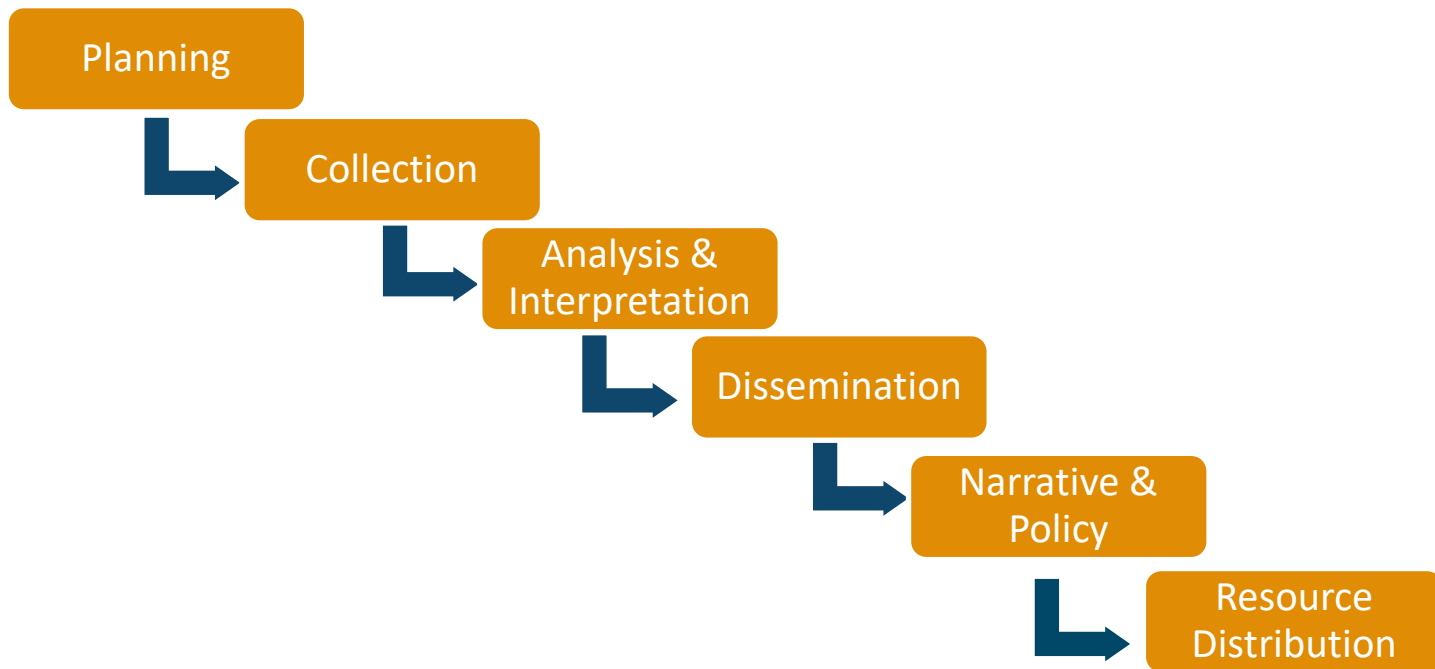
Connecting Data & Historical Context: People Driven Processes

Data is not created and used in a vacuum. It is collected, analyzed, and used to drive policy by people.

Experiences → Perspectives → Norms → People
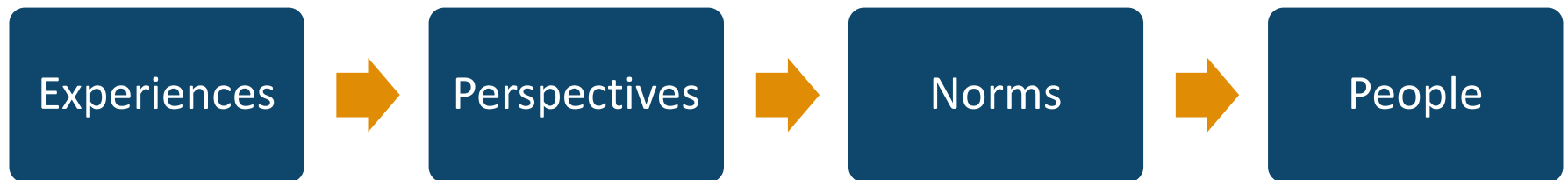
Connecting Data & Historical Context: Unpacking the Data Process

The data process may look slightly different depending on the specific desired use for the data but generally includes these steps at a high-level.

Planning → Collection → Analysis & Interpretation → Dissemination → Narrative & Policy → Resource Distribution

The report

Group Discussion & Engagement

1. Based on the history and context we've shared what are the present policies and practices that are causing harm and negatively impacting Black children's experiences in the child care and early education space?

2. How can these systemic harms impact Black children's development?

3. How are these impacts described or how are they connected to children and family outcomes?

Current Data Uses

- Outcomes:
  - Long and short-term studies on improvement to children's development in response to access to early childhood resources and interventions.
  - Connections between child/family characteristics & program access, impact, and specific outcomes.
  - Comparing outcomes related to specific interventions across groups.

- Outputs
  - Funding, spending, and program costs.
  - Characteristics of those participating and rates of participation
  - Monitoring quality, efficiency, funding, spending, and adherence to program requirements.

- Connecting outcomes and outputs

Data Collection Methods, Strategies, & Partnerships

- **Data Collection Methods**
  - Administrative
  - Survey
  - Focus groups
  - Program
- **Data Analysis Strategies**
  - Disaggregated
  - Intersectional
  - Systems vs. Individuals
- **Public Private Partnerships**

How Data Can Inform Policy

- Establishing program requirements and/or restrictions

- Estimating need, impact, program efficiency, and quality

- Setting goals and measuring success

- Resource allocation

- Identifying best practices

- Informing legislation and implementation

Tracking Discipline Data

- The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Civil Rights .
  - Civil Rights Data Collection
  - Tracks education opportunities and school climate for almost all public schools (pre-K – 12) in all 50 states, D.C., and Puerto Rico
  - Includes suspension and expulsion data

- Discipline and/or behavioral management for children birth-three years old is virtually nonexistent at the federal and state level.

- In the absence of data for young children, information is extrapolated from Pre-K – 12 to determine policy for children birth – three-years old.

# Tracking Discipline Data, Continued

- While pre-K-12 data can point to similar inequities in birth-three settings, there are specific nuances for infants and toddlers related to discipline.

- Without this nuance policies can't address:
  - Frequency and scope of disciplinary practices
  - Disproportionate use of these practices
  - Economic, social-emotional, and other impacts for families

- When children are suspended, expelled, or informally asked to not return to child care settings, there are different implications for parents.

- Two of the most comprehensive systems, CCDBG and Head Start, are two places most equipped to begin collecting this data.

Child Care and Development Block Grant

- Program Overview
  - Primary federal funding source to states to support child care access for families with low incomes
  - Federal and state investments can also be used to improve the quality of all child care

- Existing data and uses
  - Lead agencies and case-level reports
  - Program statistics
  - Funding allocations
  - State expenditures

- Opportunities to expand data to include discipline and behavioral management through the 2014 reauthorization and updated 2016 guidance
  - State and territory CCDF plans
  - Statewide assessments
  - Monitoring compliance with health and safety

- CCDBG broader impact and quality investments

Head Start

- Federal-to-local program that
    - Provides comprehensive services to children and families
    - Sets rigorous baseline standards for all locally implemented program
    - Builds in enough flexibility so programs meet local needs

- Though there is an active ban on suspension and expulsion ban this has unintended consequences.

- Leveraging the Program Information Report and other opportunities to improve data
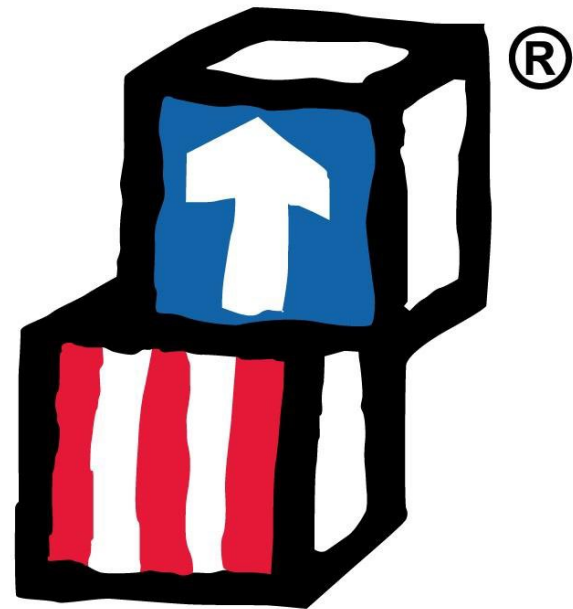
Pitfalls of Data

- Data can be used as a tool but is not a solution on its own.

- Disconnect between the people creating policies and the people directly impacted by them.

- Data are often used to feed into bias and shape policies rooted in anti-Blackness that support those biases.

- Centering whiteness deeply impacts how we define need, identify barriers, develop ideas of deservingness, create solutions, and implement policy to address identified problems.

- Remember that the lack of data collected does not invalidate the experiences of Black children and families in early childhood settings.

Shifting Power Through Equitable Community Engagement

- By shifting power and building inclusive engagement strategies, data progresses from simply being extractive to being meaningful.

- While there are multiple strategies, there are shared foundational characteristics including:
    - Trust building or rebuilding
    - Relevant methods tailored to incorporate language, culture, communication styles, community history, etc.
    - Compensation
    - Redistributed power dynamics

Looking Ahead to Better Uses of Data

- Identifying and addressing the historic and ongoing harms experienced by young Black children, due to harsh discipline.

- Ensuring that the people managing and using data —as well as those using the resulting data to inform policy—are reflective of those who are overrepresented in receiving discipline.

- Dismantling exploitative relationships through equitable community engagement frameworks.

- Centering the unique experiences of Black, Indigenous, and other people of color and their voices in policy creation.

- Maintaining equitable and inclusive community engagement as the foundation for systems of accountability.

Current State Disciplinary Practices

- **Where states are:**
  - Approaches range from high-level thinking and planning; to allocating funds; to conducting surveys; and enacting legislation that bans suspensions and expulsions in child care and early education.

- **California**
  - Discipline has been addressed for a number of years
    - Assembly Blue Ribbon Commission on Early Childhood Education (BRC)
    - Governor Newsom's Master Plan or Early Learning and Care
  - "Conversations in California recognize that exclusionary and harsh discipline practices epitomize a variety of concerns—racial equity, quality, workforce, and data issues."

- **Colorado**
  - UC Denver supported the US DOE and HHS Pyramid Equity project to "establish a national model that addresses implicit bias and uneven implementation of discipline."
  - Enacted HB 19-1194 to limit suspensions and expulsions in the early years

- **Illinois**
  - HB 2663 in 2017 prohibited the expulsion of children in programs that receive state Board of Education grants in preschool programs
  - Enacted HB 19-1194 to limit suspensions and expulsions in the early years

- **Oregon**
  - Passed a total suspension and expulsion ban in July 2021
  - Discipline declared an emergency and it directs the state's Early Learning Division to conduct a study on use of suspension and expulsion in early childhood care and education

Recommendations

Federal Recommendations

- Bold investments in child care systems to support training for providers that meets families' needs.

- Provide increased, direct funding to states explicitly to identify and eliminate harsh punishment.

- Directly connect continuous quality improvement and health and safety to reduce and prohibit harsh practices.

- Create an HHS office like the US Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights for children birth – three years old.

- Establish more frequent research partnerships with non-governmental research and policy organizations.

- Set professional development and training guidelines or recommendations for ECE providers that promote the use of fair, equitable responses to children's behaviors.

State Recommendations

- Conducting statewide needs assessments and surveys to understand:
  - Current family and provider experiences
  - Existing barriers for families and providers
  - Available funding to support providers, families, and children
  - Access to resources and supports
  - The kinds of professional development and resources needed

- Incorporating equitable community engagement strategies to support expanding current data strategies
  - Capturing suspensions, expulsions, pushouts, isolation, and other data as defined by families.
  - Pairing quantitative and qualitative information, collected through collaborative community engagement

- Passing legislation to severely limit or prohibit suspension, expulsion, and removal for all children in state-funded and/or state-licensed programs and:
  - Allocating state resources to learn more about discipline and behavioral management practices
  - Aligning public investments with findings from data and community experiences

- Creating outreach materials for families (on harms of suspension/expulsion and where the state stands on these practices

- Intentionally shifting power in who manages data processes and leads efforts to shape policy

Toward a better system

Thank you!

❖ Thank you for being here with us today! We will now take questions!

Related CLASP Resources

- Recent, CLASP Resources
  - A Black History Month reflection on discipline failures in child care https://www.clasp.org/publications/fact-sheet/roots-discipline-induced-trauma-black-children-early-childhood-settings/
  - Advancing Equitable State Child Care Policies Using ARPA and Other Relief Funds https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/advancing-equitable-state-child-care-policies-using-arpa-and-other-relief/
  - Half-Truths, the Capitol Insurrection, and My Black Son https://www.clasp.org/blog/half-truths-capitol-insurrection-and-my-black-son/
  - Mitigating the Criminalization of Black Children through Federal Relief https://www.clasp.org/blog/mitigating-criminalization-black-children-through-federal-relief/
  - Shaping Equitable Early Childhood Policy: Incorporating Inclusive Community Engagement Frameworks into Expanded Data Strategies https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/shaping-equitable-early-childhood-policy-incorporating-inclusive-community/
  - Standing with Black Communities by Standing Against White Supremacy in Child Care and Early Education Spaces https://www.clasp.org/blog/standing-black-communities-standing-against-white-supremacy-child-care-and-early-education/
  - Supporting Immigrant Providers and Families Through Child Care Relief Funds https://www.clasp.org/publications/report/brief/supporting-immigrant-providers-and-families-through-child-care-relief/
  - Centering Black Families: Equitable Discipline Practices through Improved Data Policies in Child Care https://www.clasp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/2.28.2023_Centering-Black-Families-Equitable-Discipline-through-Improved-Data-Policies-in-Child-Care.pdf

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Thank You

Please fill out our survey.