

CLASP

Policy solutions that work for low-income people

Preparation and Policy Levers for Anti-Racist Early Childhood Practices

Ohio State University Crane Center 2020 Symposium on Children

October 2020

CLASP Overview

- The Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
 - Advancing policy solutions that:
 - Eliminate poverty
 - Promote economic empowerment and security
 - Disrupt structural and systemic racism
 - Policy areas
 - CLASP teams
 - Cross-cutting teams

Presentation Overview

- **Part I: Connecting Racial Equity Practice and Policy**
 - Understanding the historical context of racial inequity in early education
 - Taking a closer look at the people behind the policies, and what drives them
 - Centering racial equity from the inside, organizational and individual recommendations
- **Part II: Centering Racial Equity from the Inside Out**
 - The 10 key assumptions and principles in developing racially equitable policy
 - Uncovering opportunities to create anti-racist policies in early education
 - How to approach early learning policy areas through a racial equity lens
- **Part III: Discussion, Questions, and Feedback**

How Did We Get Here?

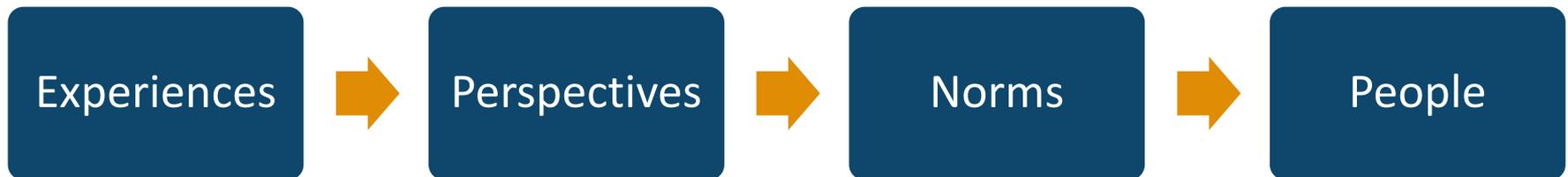
- Racial inequality, systemic racism, discrimination, structural racism...
 - Child care is least affordable for Black and Latinx families with low incomes.
 - Native American and Latinx communities are more likely to live in child care deserts.
 - Child care workers – who are predominately women of color – are paid poverty level wages.
 - Black and Latinx child care workers are more likely to be employed in lower-level positions in child care programs.
- Centering racial equity is more than an organizational goal

Beyond Outcomes and Outputs

- Outputs
 - Laws and policies which dictate how resources are allocated and administered, and who is and is not eligible to receive them.
- Outcomes
 - Disproportionately negative impacts on communities of color.
- Centering racial equity in early childhood policy is absolutely necessary, but not nearly sufficient.

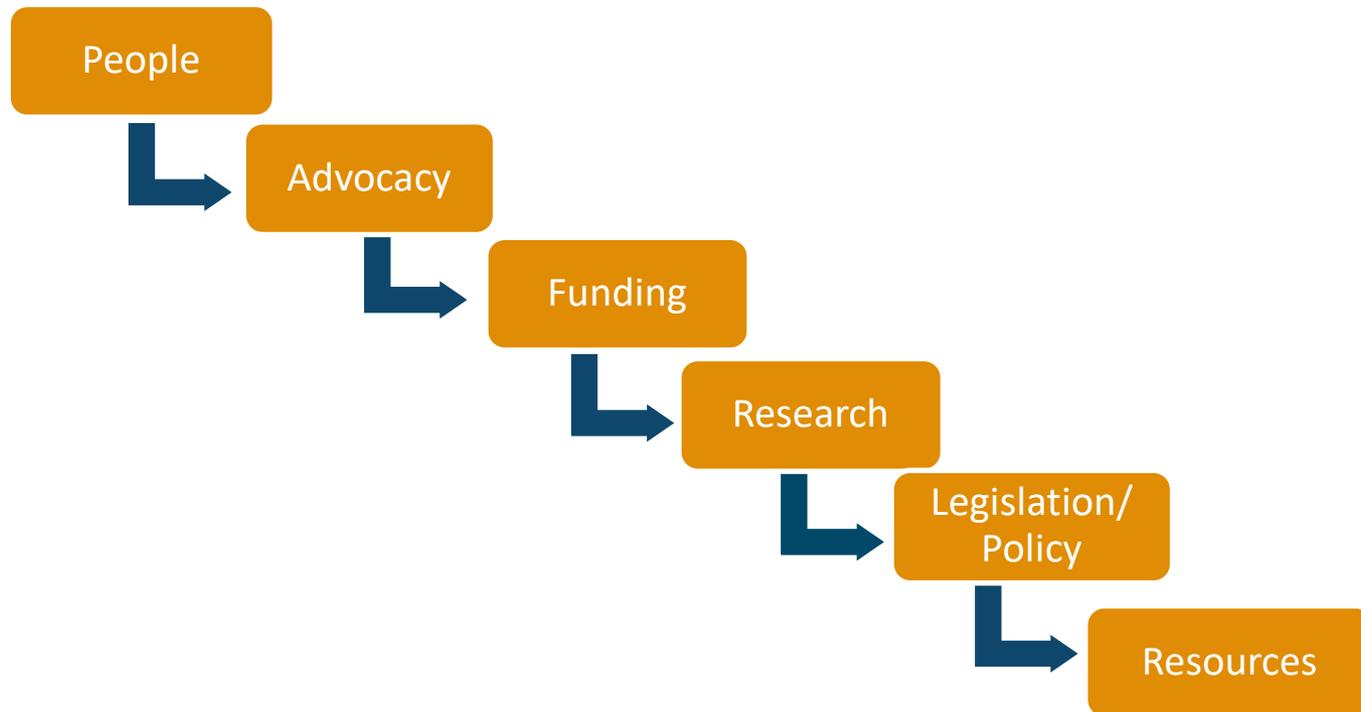
Experience Driven

Laws and polices do not exist in a vacuum, they are researched, developed, implemented, and administered by people.



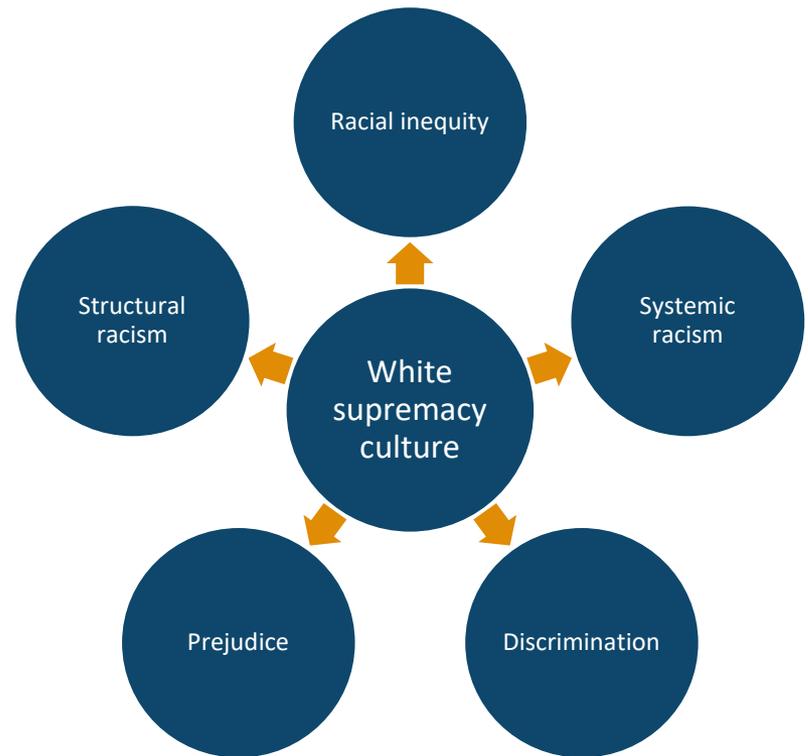
People Driven

The experiences, perspectives, and norms that shape people deeply influence the incremental processes that dictate policy and resource distribution.



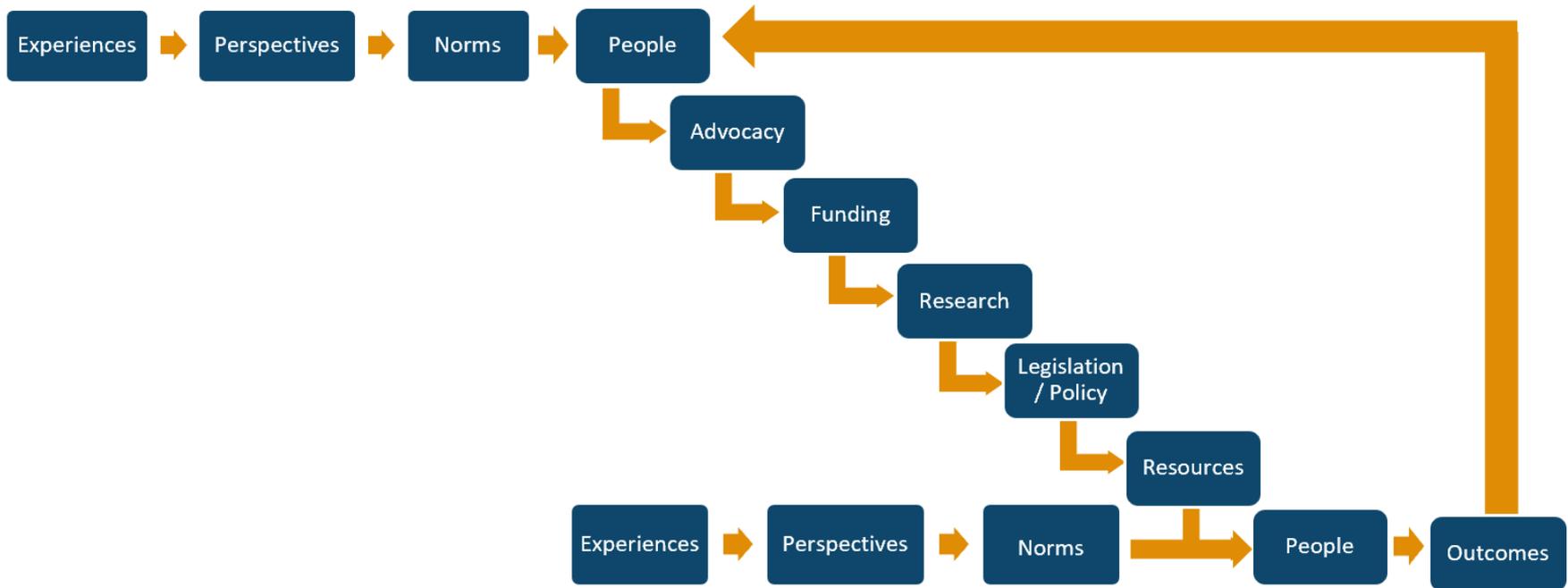
A Rose by Any Other Name: A Note on White Supremacy Culture

- Centering norms, values, ideas, beliefs, and standards around those which are most closely aligned with western, white cultural expectations.
 - Language
 - Engagement strategies
 - Communication methods
 - Cultural values
 - Behaviors
- Ascribing cultural values and norms that are rooted in implicit/explicit bias.
 - Disproportionately high suspensions of Black boys in early education
 - Saviorism



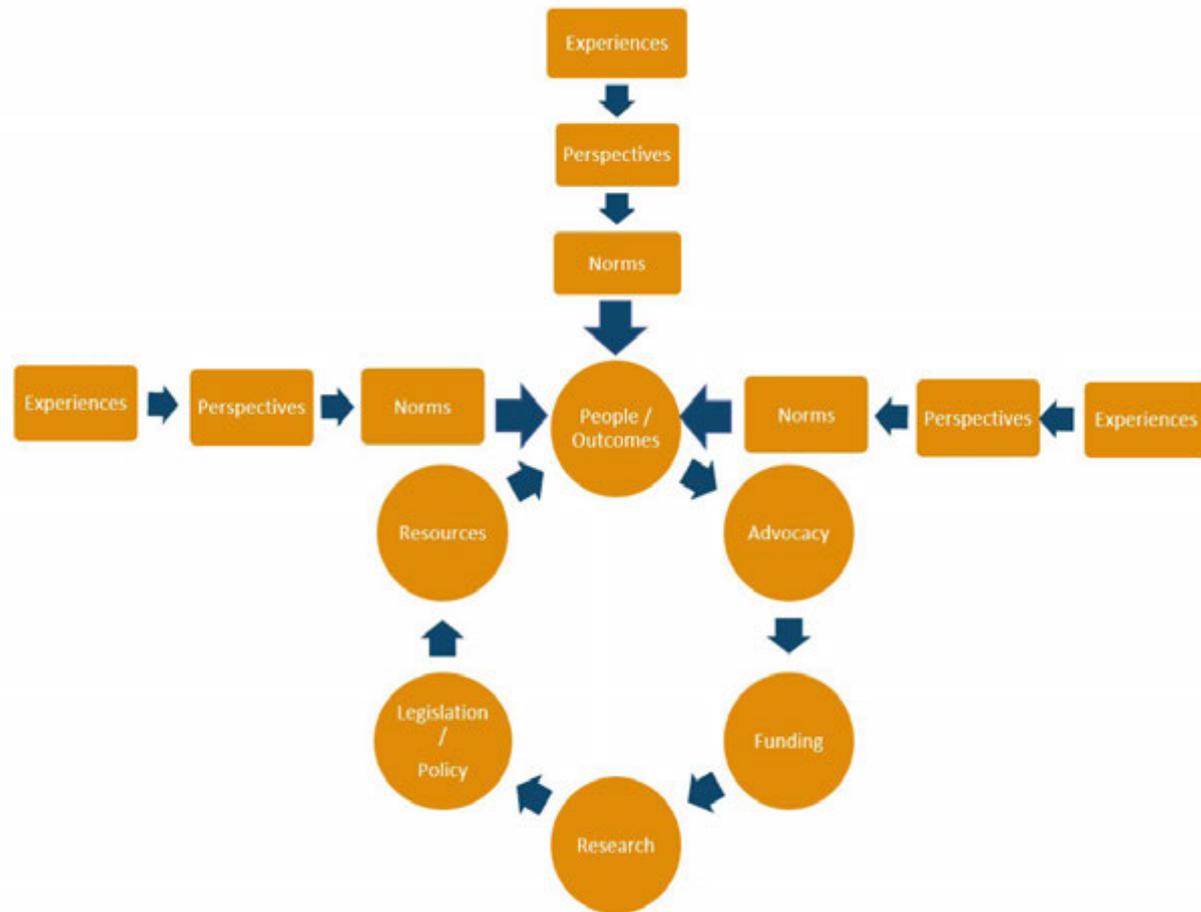
The Great Disconnect

Those who are in the position of power to drive the processes that influence policy, and ultimately resources, are disconnected from those who are most impacted by those policies.



Equitable Feedback Loops

- Incorporate a variety of experiences, perspectives, and norms throughout each stage of policy development and resource allocation.
- Minimize inequitable power dynamics by elevating the voices of those who are directly impacted.
- Analyze outcomes in the context of how history, experiences, perspectives and norms shape communities.
- Use outcomes to supplement the voices of those who are impacted and not as the primary influence in shaping policy to meet needs.



Organizational Level Recommendations

- Create safe spaces in the workplace for thoughtful and engaging organization-led conversations.
- Encourage and offer resources for learning about racial equity that do not burden colleagues and staff members of color.
- Intentionally develop external partnerships with trusted community groups and grassroots and parent-led organizations from across different communities of color to elevate parent voices and inform families of available options.
- Pay people who are directly impacted and used as a resource for their time and expertise.
- Move beyond disaggregating data by race and ethnicity and adopt multi-layered perspective that understands the multiple factors that shape family child care needs, also known as intersectionality.
- Use multiple languages, technologies, accessibility supports, and engagement and communication strategies to fit the needs of various communities.

Individual Level Recommendations

- Respect the safe spaces created during organization-led conversations.
 - Develop a personal commitment and willingness to learn, listen, and respond with empathy without distracting from the experiences of people of color.
 - Do not expect people of color to use their trauma as a learning lesson for others.
 - Take the initiative to do independent research and learning to establish a foundational understanding, instead of placing the burden on people of color to educate you every step of the way.
- Be willing and active in applying the knowledge you learn to your personal and professional life.
 - A commitment to racial equity and dismantling white supremacy is more than a 9 am – 5pm job.
 - Push your discomfort aside, and use what you learn in interactions with coworkers, coalition partners, friends, family, and in a variety of settings.
- Apply a racial equity lens to brainstorming ideas, doing initial research, fact checking, providing technical assistance, etc.
 - Avoid grouping the experiences and needs of Asian, Black, Indigenous, Latinx, Pacific Islander, and other communities of color together.
- Develop and strengthen your awareness in distinguishing impact from intention as you approach discussions, provide recommendations, and investigate policy implication.

From the Inside, Out

Centering Child Care and Early Education Policies on Racial Equity and Anti-Racism



10 Key Assumptions and Principles

1. **Uncover historic context** - seek to understand the historic role of policy in creating marginalization for communities of color
2. **Openness to unlearn** - Engage in consistent negotiation of assumptions and biased approaches, thoughts, and norms
3. **Adopt an anti-racist lens** - race specific data, qualitative and quantitative, should be analyzed and disaggregated
4. **“Be of and in the Community”** - representation and connection with grassroots organizations, leaders, and community members is essential.
5. **Decrease the distance** between yourself (organization) and the issue

10 Key Assumptions and Principles

6. **Assess at the intersections** - understand intersected oppressions
7. **Discontinue the use of deficit language and modes of thought** place responsibility on correcting systems, not people
8. **Assess and deconstruct structures or power** - The metaphorical table should be co-constructed and collaboratively built
9. **Center the Voices of People of Color** - The narratives and experiences within the community direct next steps and strategy
10. **Racism & poverty are interconnected** - you cannot eradicate socio economic concerns without focusing on eradicating racism; which is why poverty exists within communities of color

Putting it Into Practice on Policies



What are some policy decisions that have implications for equity and opportunities to create anti-racist policy?

Center Voices of Impacted People

- Collect and use data, to understand and center the experiences of people of color
- Conduct intentional outreach—engaging community leaders, parent-led organizations, and trusted community messengers
- Collect and analyze data disaggregated by race and ethnicity
- Oversample in communities that are historically underrepresented
- Gather stories from providers and families, using ethical storytelling methods, focus groups, and other strategies, in their data collection



Center Voices of Impacted People



- Engage people who are directly impacted through public forums, town halls, community and policy councils (e.g., Head Start Policy Councils), public comments, etc.
- Employ a variety of languages, technologies, accessibility supports, and engagement strategies
- Consider the needs and unique challenges of mixed-status and immigrant families

Invest to stop scarcity thinking

- \$50 billion to save child care
- States meet matching requirements to maximize federal dollars
- Protect early childhood investments from budget cuts
- In addition to federal investment, explore revenue raising



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

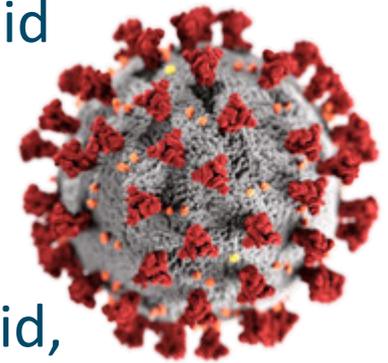
Equitable Access

- Reduce or eliminate child care co-pays for families—particularly those who have suffered economically from the pandemic—during the response and recovery period
- Simplify subsidy eligibility policies and procedures
- Strengthen outreach
- Support the needs of dual language learners and provide linguistically and culturally appropriate information and services
- Commit to ending suspension and expulsion
- Provide the professional development and supports child care educators and caregivers need to recognize their biases and manage children’s behavior and needs
- Distribute federal funds with equity as a priority



Health, Safety, and Job Quality

- Providers across settings have access to the supports, supplies, and funding they need to meet enhanced health and safety standards and protocols.
- Child care providers have access to job-protected paid leave
- Premium pay to child care workers during the pandemic
- Expanded access to mental health supports, Medicaid, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Unemployment Insurance, WIC, and more.
- Delivery of mental health, early intervention, family support, and other services to children



Definitions of Quality

- Quality goals and standards should reflect the priorities and meet the needs of parents and children
- Racial, cultural and developmental inclusion should be embedded in quality standards
- Recognizing value of diverse staff and leadership
- Anti-bias, anti-racist, and cultural competence professional development is critical (internal work)
- Systems distributing resources to reach families and providers equitably



Supporting Workforce Equity



- Policies informed and led by educators and caregivers of color
- Equitable workforce qualifications and standards
- Compensation, benefits, job safety, and access to health care
- Using disaggregated and qualitative data to equitably distribute funding

Supporting Workforce Equity

- Equitable access to education, training, and professional development
- Training and technical assistance opportunities for LEP child care workers and providers
- Support for educators in all settings, including informal and license exempt caregivers with culturally and linguistically appropriate training, professional development, quality improvement efforts, and family support programs



Discussion

Where do you see racial inequity in child care and early education policies?

What will you do to commit to anti-racist child care policies?

Please use what you've learned or experienced today to make one commitment that will move you toward anti-racist policy work.

Contact Us

Alycia Hardy

ahardy@clasp.org

Christine Johnson-Staub

Cjohnson-staub@clasp.org

<https://www.clasp.org/issues/children-youth-families/child-care-and-early-education>

