

WASHINGTON STATE RACIAL
DISPROPORTIONALITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

SHB 1472

Racial Disproportionality in Washington State Report to the Legislature

Chapter 465, Laws of 2007 (SHB 1472)

January 1, 2011



CA Children's Administration

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Department of Social and Health Services

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A current list of Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Members can be found at <http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ca/about/disproportionbios.asp>.

Introduction

As required by the Washington Legislature in SHB 1472 (2007), this report is the second annual update on efforts by the Department of Social and Health Services to remediate disproportionality in the Washington state child welfare system.

Across the country, children of color enter and remain in the child welfare system at rates greater than their proportions in the population. In addition, children of color do not have equitable access to culturally appropriate services and supports delivered by culturally competent and sensitive staff and service providers. The 2007 Legislature passed SHB 1472 and created the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) to study racial disproportion in Washington's child welfare system. WSRDAC was directed to investigate whether racial disproportionality exists in Washington and develop a plan to remedy racial disparity and disproportionality if it were found to exist.

The results of the study conducted by the Washington State Institute on Public Policy (WSIPP) found that racial disproportionality exists for Native American, Black and Hispanic children in the child welfare system in Washington state.

In response to these findings WSRDAC submitted its recommendations for remediation to the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Secretary who accepted them and forwarded them to the Washington Legislature in January 2009. WSRDAC and Children's Administration (CA) began work on implementing the remediation activities.

This report describes the remediation activities and progress that has been achieved since January 2010. Significant reduction in disproportionality has not yet occurred throughout the child welfare system. New initiatives will take several years to produce results and it will take time for system changes to appear in the data. However, even given this lag, one positive finding is that the overall rates of children entering the child welfare system and children being removed continued to decline in 2009.

Evaluation of strategies and activities to reduce disproportionality will continue, and WSRDAC will continue to monitor progress in reducing disproportionality across the child welfare system. This report describes and reflects the thoughtful work of a network of DSHS leaders, staff, Tribes, stakeholders, state partners and DSHS CA philanthropic partners such as Casey Family Programs, Stuart Foundation and Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Establishment of a System to Measure Progress

Summary & Status:

The Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS)/Children’s Administration (CA) monitors the progress and impact of implementation of the remediation plan. This second report to the Legislature highlights changes in disproportionality rates from 2004 - 2009.

The table below lists each remediation activity and highlights where the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee (WSRDAC) hopes to see changes in disproportionality rates. The shaded columns are those decision points emphasized in the remediation plan.

ACTIVITIES <i>These activities are expected to decrease disproportionality in:</i>	Referrals	Accepted Referrals	Removed from home	Out of home > 60 days	Out of home > 2 years
Conduct Assessment of Children’s Administration	X	X	X	X	X
Implement a Racial Equity Impact Analysis Tool	X	X	X	X	X
Evaluate Structured Decision Making (SDM®)			X		
Maintain Compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act by Continuing ICW Case Reviews	X		X	X	X
Study impact of Enactment of a Washington State Indian Child Welfare Act			X	X	X
Evaluate Family Team Decision Making (FTDM)			X	X	X
Implement Kinship Care Policies			X	X	X
Implement Cultural Competency and Anti-Racism Training	X	X	X	X	X
Implement Mandated Reporter Training	X	X			
Explore Implementation of In-Home, Community Based Services			X		
Implement Council on Accreditation Standards Caseload Standards		X	X	X	X

The five child welfare decision points studied are the same ones that were used in the original Washington State Institute of Public Policy (WSIPP) study reported in “Racial Disproportionality in Washington State” dated June 2008, and in the initial tracking report to the Legislature dated January 2010: 1) Referral/intake; 2) Accepted referrals for investigation; 3) Removals; 4) Placements lasting more than 60 days; and 5) Placements lasting more than two years. Previous studies reported a sixth stage, Initial high risk, but it is no longer included in the analyses because it no longer represents a distinct decision point.

CA analyzes disproportionality using three different disproportionality statistics:

- **Rate of Occurrence** measures the number of children in the child welfare system of a certain racial/ethnic group per 1,000 children in that same racial/ethnic group in the general population of Washington State. (See Chart 1 and 2)
- The **Disproportionality Index (DI)** is the ratio of a racial/ethnic group compared to whites at a given decision point. Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality. Values less than one (1.0) indicate underrepresentation. (See Chart 3)
- The **Disproportionality Index after Referral (DIAR)** is the ratio of a racial/ethnic group compared to whites which controls for disproportionality at referral. Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality. Values less than one (1.0) indicate underrepresentation. (See Charts 4, 5 6, and 7)

Results

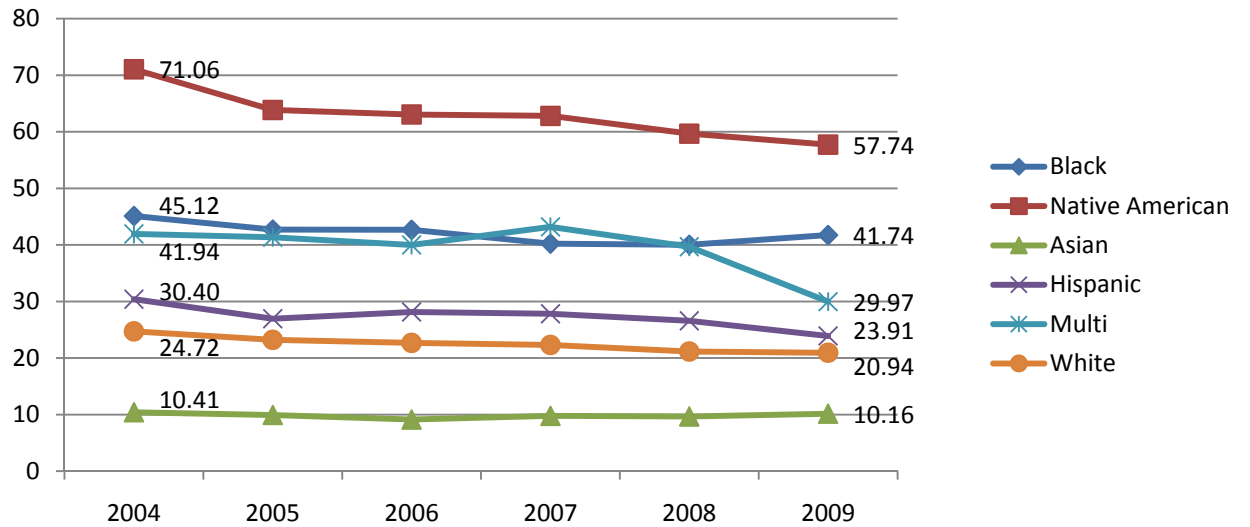
Significant changes in performance are not expected in the short time since remediation plans were developed in 2009 and implementation has just started. Trends are generally staying the same. There has been a reduction in rates overall in referrals and removal but disproportionality is basically unchanged from previous years. Overall, we have not yet seen changes in disproportionality at the major decision points in the child welfare system. We believe that once remediation plans are fully implemented and have had time to affect practice, these rates will decline significantly.

Rate of Occurrence

- Overall rates of children entering the child welfare system continued to decline in 2009 for most children. There was an increase of 1.72 in the rate of intake for Black children from 2008 to 2009 and a significant decrease of 13.2 for Multiracial children from 2007 to 2009.

1. Rates of Children Referred

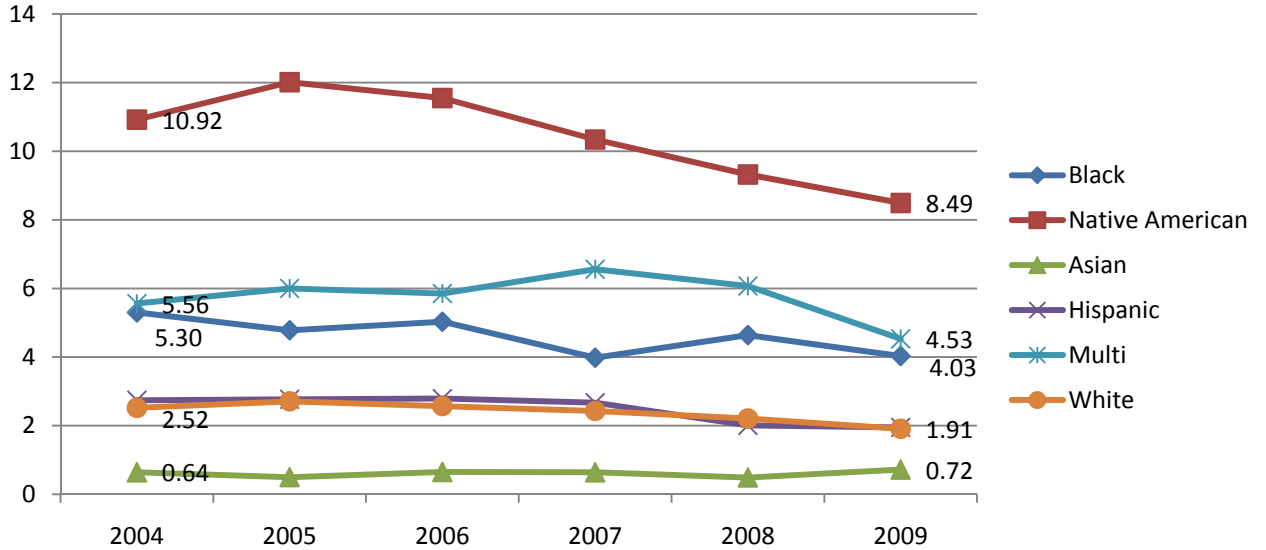
PER 1,000 GENERAL POPULATION



- The overall rates of removal declined for all races except Asian children, which increased slightly by a rate of .23 between 2008 and 2009. Rates for Native American children have declined significantly by 3.52 since 2005, but are still four times higher than white children. Rates for Multiracial children also declined by 2.03 since 2007, but are still twice the rate of white children. Rates for Black children have declined by 1.3 since 2004, but remain twice that of White children.

2. Rates of Children Removed from Home

PER 1,000 GENERAL POPULATION

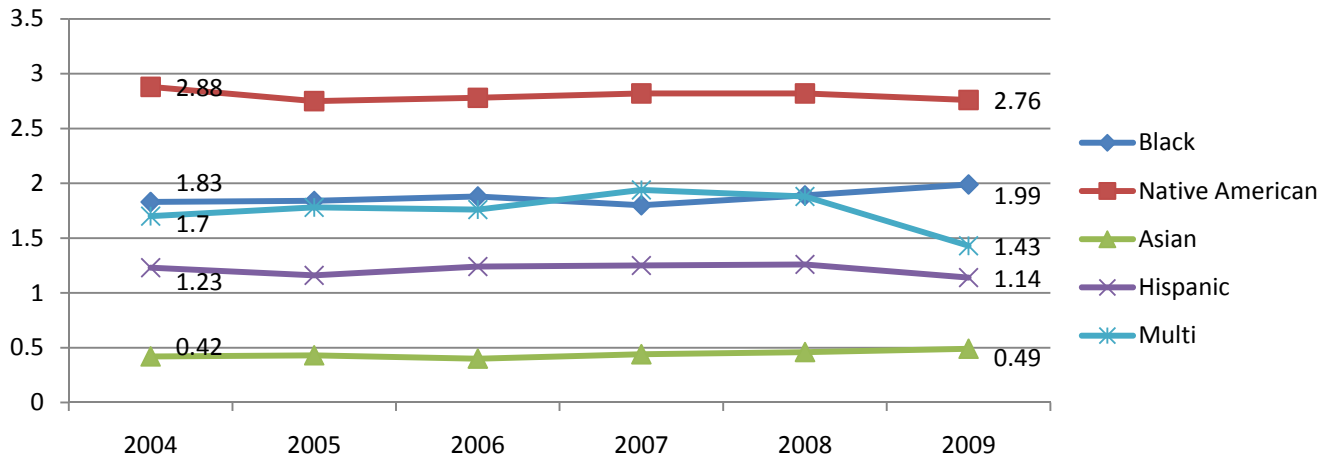


Disproportionality Indices

- As was found in earlier reports, disproportionality at intake is high for Native American children (almost three times the rate of White children), for Black children (twice the rate of White children) and for Multiracial children (one and a half times the rate of White children). The rate of disproportionality for Multiracial children has declined by .45 between 2008 and 2009.

3. Referrals

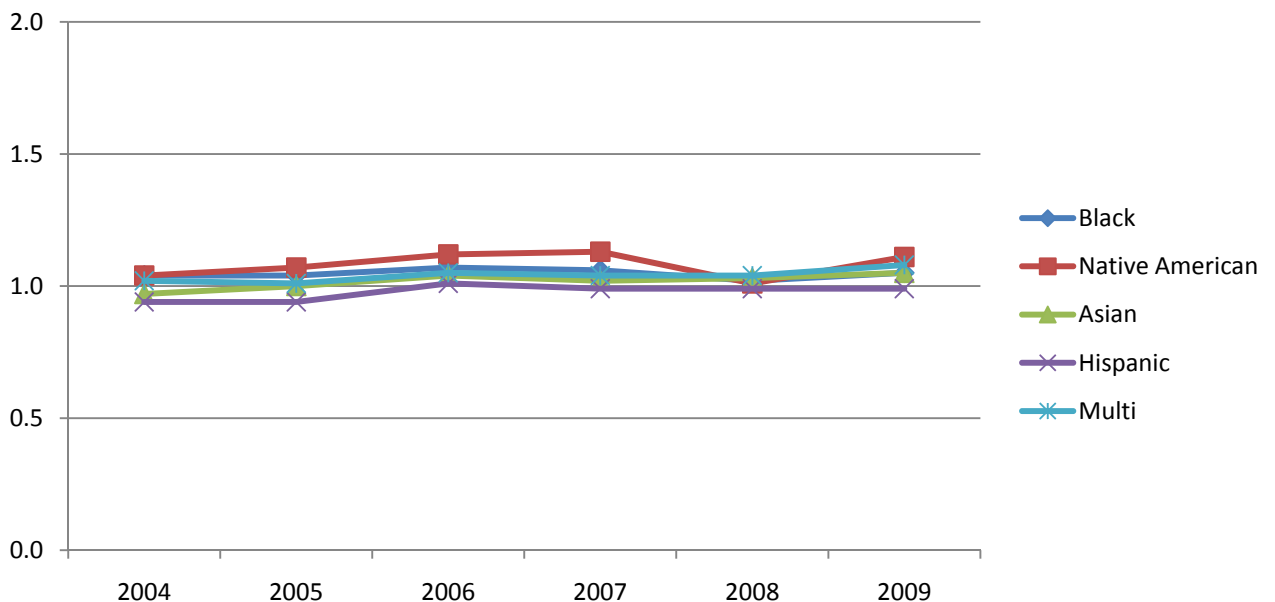
DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX - Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality



- Once the disproportionality in the intake/referral process is taken into account, there is little or no disproportionality in referrals being accepted for investigation.

4. Accepted Referral

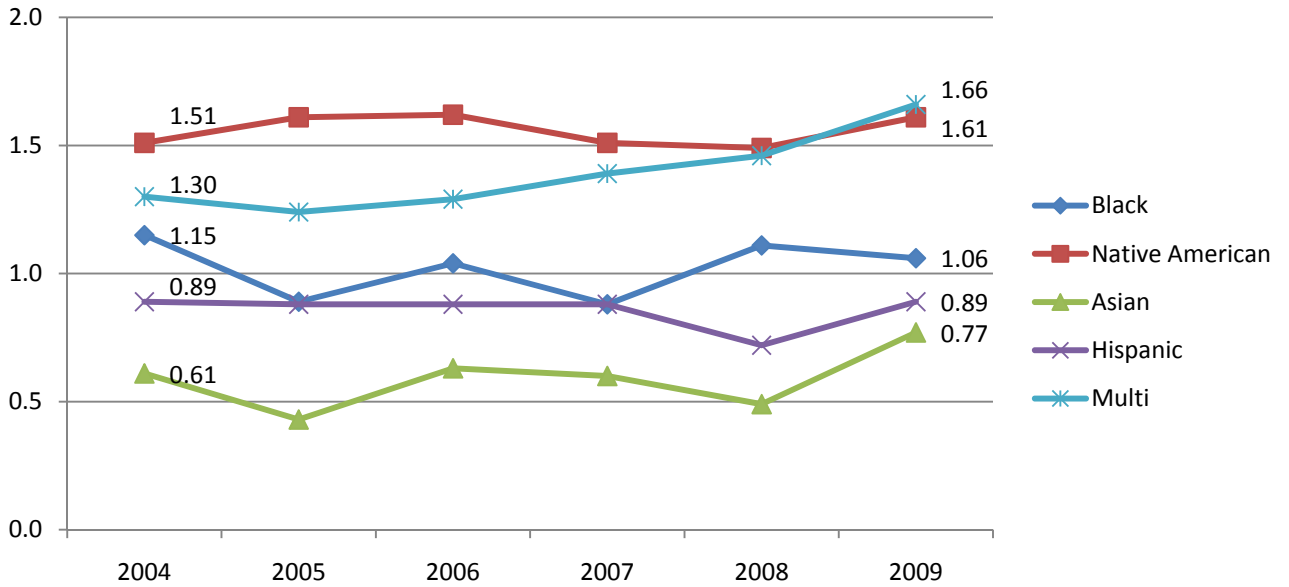
DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX AFTER REFERRAL- Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality



- However, when looking at removal from home, placements lasting longer than 30 days, and placements lasting longer than two years, disproportionality is apparent for Native American and Multiracial children with rates about one and a half times to twice that of White children. Rates of removal for Multiracial children have increased by .36 between 2004 and 2009.

5. Children Removed from Home

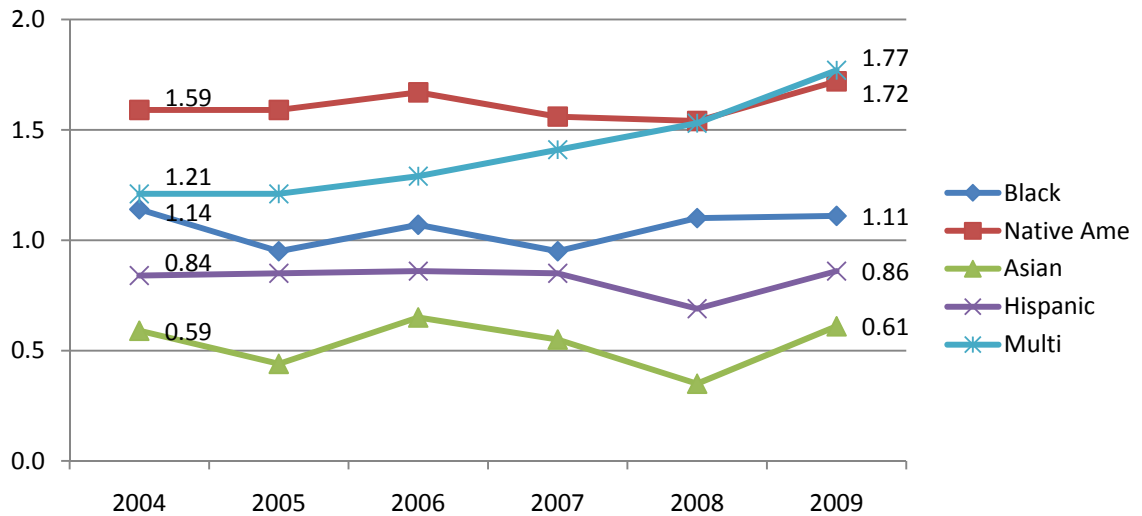
DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX AFTER REFERRAL- Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality



- Rates of removal for Multiracial children have increased by .56 between 2004 and 2009 and for Native American children by .18 between 2008 and 2009.

6. Placements Greater Than 60 Days

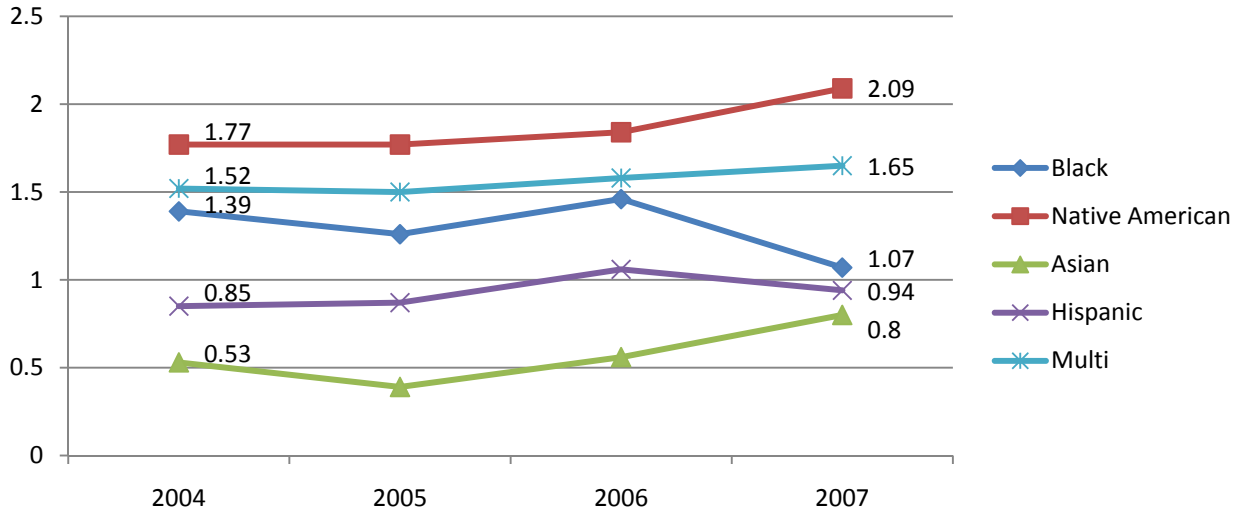
DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX AFTER REFERRAL- Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality



- There was a decrease of .39 for Black children in placements greater than two years from 2006 to 2007 bringing them very close to the rates for white children in 2007. Native American children increased by .25 during this same time.

7. Placements Greater Than Two Years

DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX AFTER REFERRAL- Values greater than one (1.0) indicate disproportionality



TECHNICAL NOTES

Data Sources:

- Child Welfare Data: FamLink Data Warehouse, Children’s Administration, Department of Social and Health Services.
- Population Data: Office of Financial Management, Washington State

Statistics are taken from “Washington State Department of Social and Health Services Children’s Administration Racial Disproportionality Tracking Report: 2004-2009”

For methodological and data questions contact: Chris Graham, 360.412.3935, chris.graham@dshs.wa.gov

Recommendation A: Structured Decision Making (SDM)[®]

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“Structured Decision Making (SDM[®]) should be studied to determine its impact on reducing disproportionality for Black, Native American and Hispanic Children referred to the Washington Child Welfare System.”

Status:

Washington state implemented the Structured Decision Making risk assessment system developed by the Children’s Research Center (CRC) in Madison, Wisconsin. It is designed to assist Child Protective Services (CPS) workers to make decisions regarding child safety and the risks associated with a child remaining in a home (California Department of Social Services, 2007).

The SDM[®] tool was implemented in October 2007 after an intensive training and validation process.

The Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) is conducting an evaluation of the Administration’s implementation of Structured Decision Making (SDM[®]) as directed by the 2009 Legislature. CA’s program and data staff met with WSIPP staff to provide and discuss programmatic information and data needed for the evaluation. CA staff remain available to WSIPP to answer questions as WSIPP conducts the evaluation.

Timeline:

The report from WSIPP on the effectiveness of SDM[®] as a tool for reducing racial disproportionality will be available to both the Department of Social and Health Services and the Washington State Legislature in April 2011.

Recommendation B: Family Team Decision Making (FTDM)

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“The Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) model should be assessed to determine its impact on disproportionality for American Indian, Black, and Hispanic Children. Specifically, it should be determined if the model reduces disproportionality in the placement and length of stay for Native American, Black, and Hispanic children in the Washington child welfare system.”

Status:

Family Team Decision Making (FTDM) is one of four “core strategies” within the Family to Family (F2F) initiative. FTDM meetings bring together family members, relatives, and other support systems to make placement decisions about a child or children.

WSIPP is conducting an evaluation of CA’s implementation of FTDM as directed by the 2009 Legislature. CA program and data staff met with WSIPP staff to provide and discuss programmatic information and data needed for the evaluation. CA staff remain available to answer questions as WSIPP conducts the evaluation.

Timeline:

The report from WSIPP on the effectiveness of FTDM as a tool for reducing disproportionality will be available to both DSHS and the Washington State Legislature in March 2011.

Recommendation C: Kinship Care

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“Policies should be implemented to ensure equitable services and supports for children and families in kinship care.”

Status:

Children’s Administration implemented many activities to ensure equitable services and supports for kinship caregivers. The Kinship Care Oversight Committee recommendations are being implemented throughout 2010 and 2011. Progress to date includes:

- Implement the Federal Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act (Fostering Connections) which promotes legal permanency through relative guardianship (R-GAP) and adoption. R-GAP, implemented in October 2009, allows relative caregivers who are foster care licensed to receive a subsidy similar to the foster care payment. Children’s Administration can then close the case with court approval.
- Increase collaboration within the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and with partners such as the Area Agencies on Aging to better respond to the needs of kinship caregivers. A work plan was developed to address the following issues:
 - Food security issues (ensuring availability and access of food) for kinship families
 - Improve access to medical and mental health care for children in kinship families
 - Improve health of kinship caregivers
 - Promote readiness to learn for children in kinship care
 - Improve kinship caregiver access to information, resources, and services
 - Provide respite services for kinship caregivers
- In 2005 DSHS established a direct telephone line which is still in use, specifically for caregivers to call with issues and comments.
- The cross-administration workgroup including DSHS Administrations and other agency partners such as the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction and Department of Health, have identified respite/child care, financial support, and legal assistance as top needs to be addressed for the relative caregivers. This information has been shared with DSHS leadership. At this time the budget is not able to fiscally support this endeavor. In addition, the Aging and Disability

Services Administration and community partners received a grant in October 2010 that will fund start-up of a lifespan respite project.

- Kinship Navigators are available in several areas of the state to support relative caregivers in understanding the child welfare system and when accessing services. The number of sites with Navigators increased in September 2009 to nine, all currently attached to Area Agencies on Aging. Navigators presently serve 30 of the state's 39 counties. The nine sites are in Seattle, Olympia, Tacoma, Spokane, Bellingham, Colville, Wenatchee, Vancouver, and Yakima.
- In FY2011 Children's Administration is revising practice and policies to ensure relative caregivers have access to the same supports as foster parents and is continuing active efforts to license relatives. Policy changes in effect on July 31, 2010 include:
 - All out-of-home caregivers may participate as members of the child's treatment team.
 - All out-of-home caregivers have the right to be treated with respect and be supported in their responsibilities for the protection, daily care, and nurturance of the child in their home to maintain the health and safety of the child

Timeline:

Efforts by CA and our partners inside and outside DSHS are on-going. This will help ensure progress continues towards relatives receiving the same supports as foster parents and to continue active efforts to license relatives.

Recommendation D: Compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“DSHS should comply with ICWA. The Indian Child Welfare Case Review Model developed in collaboration with Tribal partners and the Indian Policy Advisory Committee (IPAC) should be the anchor for an enhanced ICW quality improvement/compliance measurement system.”

Status:

The Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Case Review is conducted every two years in each region. From the results of the review, regional and statewide implementation plans are developed with state and tribal representatives and staff to address areas needing improvement. Monitoring of the improvement plans is done on a quarterly basis through the regional Administrative Policy 7.01 planning meetings and through the monthly Children’s Administration/Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration ICW IPAC sub-committee meetings.

The results of the 2009 case review showed some improvement over 2007 towards compliance with the ICWA. Based on these reviews, early identification of Indian children, early engagement of tribes (by making contact early in the life of a case) and timely legal notice continue to be primary goals.

The Children’s Administration implemented several activities based on the results of the two previous reviews, including:

- Developed and implemented mandatory ICW training for supervisors, as directed by the Assistant Secretary in October 2009.
- This training was incorporated into the Supervisors’ Academy in April, 2010. In addition, two ICW trainings were held in each region by June 2010 and 1 more training per region is scheduled through June 2011.
- Developed regional and statewide implementation plans to enhance ICWA compliance.
- Added additional staff and supervisors to ICW units to reduce caseloads and provide better supervision. Added staff for family search and tribal notification. Regions also addressed system change to better meet the needs of Indian children within their regions. Examples are:

- Region 1
 - Over the past two years has added an ICW Area Administrator, a supervisor, and an ICW relative search/relative support specialist, which resulted in an increase of relative placements. These positions along with a Tribal & LICWAC Liaison, a Tribal Payment specialist and an Inquiry and ICWA Determination position are all integral to the redesigned ICW units.
 - Spokane has a unique court team process with the same team following a case throughout the court process. The ICW court team has incorporated the ICW CPS unit into its team, which is unique to this team. This allows all staff to more closely follow cases from initial CPS through CFWS, through the lenses of Safety, Permanence and Well-Being.
- Region 3
 - Added a Relative Search Unit with 3 Social Workers and 1 Supervisor whose primary duties are Native American inquiries.
 - Added a Tribal Payment Unit with 1 Native Supervisor and 1 Social Worker responsible for Tribal Payment cases.
- Region 4
 - New responsibilities added to clerical support who do initial tribal inquiries with follow through by the identified social worker to assure that documentation and consistency is achieved.
 - Improving communication by sending quarterly update to Tribes, LICWAC members, and community organizations regarding policy issues, general information of interest, staff changes, and other information that may be pertinent.
- Region 5
 - Converted two vacant CFWS positions to ICW-CFWS and hired staff into those positions to reduce case loads for ICW staff.
- Regions 2 and 6
 - These regions have integrated ICW practice into their offices, as opposed to having ICW units, and continue to effectively address ICW cases thru local, area and regional CA offices and tribes.

Timeline:

The ICW case review will be conducted again in 2011. Implementation plans based on the results of the review will be developed regionally and statewide by tribal and state representatives and staff.

Recommendation E: Enactment of a Washington State Indian Child Welfare Act

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“DSHS should study the impact that state-level Indian Child Welfare Acts have had in states, such as Iowa, that have implemented state ICW legislation. If the study finds that implementation of state-level legislation increases compliance with the core tenets of ICW and reduces racial disproportionality, DSHS should support enactment of a Washington State ICWA.”

Status:

As reported in the January 2010 report, a literature review found no articles or research on the impact of state ICW legislation on the disproportionality of Indian children in the child welfare systems.

The Washington State Tribes are the lead in developing the proposed Act. They have met with legislative representatives and staff to continue to bring this initiative forward. DSHS and Children’s Administration have been monitoring and will continue to monitor and engage as appropriate.

Timeline:

Completed. Children’s Administration will continue to provide updates on the status of the State ICWA.

Recommendation F: Cultural Competence and Anti-Racism Training

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“On-going anti-racism training should be mandatory for all case-carrying Children Administration and Child Placing Agency workers, all service provider staff, all Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), all Guardian ad Litem (GAL), all individuals who represent children and birth parents in dependency proceedings, and all individuals who serve on public committees, boards, and other groups that are charged with providing guidance, oversight, or advice regarding the operation and management of the Washington child welfare system. This training should focus on increasing the trainee’s level of cultural competency and understanding of race and racism. The training should include ICW standards, government to government relations, local agreements, and the operation of the Indian Policy Advisory Council. The training should also include a self assessment of cultural competency using a tool similar to the Cultural Competency Continuum.”

Status:

The department aggressively engaged in culturally competent and anti-racism training as a vital step in the efforts to eliminate disproportionality in our child welfare system.

Children’s Administration (CA) contracted for six, two-day sessions of Undoing Racism and a one-day follow up for participants. In CY 2010 trainings were conducted in Regions 1, 4, 5, and 6 with staff attending from all regions. CA partnered with Juvenile Rehabilitation Administration (JRA) and the Department of Early Learning (DEL) to have their staff participate in the workshops.

“Building Bridges” training deals with all areas of oppression and focuses primarily on dialogue. Two sessions of “Building Bridges” training were held in spring 2010, one each in eastern and western Washington. The training was so well received that a three-day “Train the Trainer” session for 50 staff and community partners was conducted in June 2010 to help CA build internal capacity to offer the “Building Bridges” training to all staff. After attending the “Train-the-Trainer” session, all regions developed plans to offer this training to staff and community partners. Five regions provided training in 2010 and all have developed or are developing schedules for 2011. The goal is for training to be offered in all offices during 2011.

“Knowing Who You Are” is a three-part curriculum for child welfare professionals. The training helps them explore race and ethnicity, and support the healthy development of their constituent’s racial and ethnic identity. CA is developing a link to the video section of this training and to an e-learning tool on the Casey Family Program website for staff to access.

On December 1 and 2, 2010, Washington state hosted Joyce James, a national expert on disproportionality from Texas. Ms. James held trainings and discussions with multiple levels of Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) leadership, and participated in a panel and reception in Seattle for community partners and DSHS staff. Participants plan to incorporate many of the lessons and ideas from Ms. James into efforts and actions to reduce and eliminate disproportionality in Washington's child welfare system.

CA developed and implemented mandatory supervisor ICW training, and updated Academy and Post Academy ICW training to incorporate solution based case management. Both curriculums included Government to Government tribal, state and federal legislation, and training on resources and references related to ICW.

Timeline:

We will continue these efforts in the upcoming year, with plans to include more community partners.

Recommendation G: Caseloads (Council on Accreditation Standards)

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“Children’s Administration caseloads should be reduced to meet COA standards. Caseloads for CPS Workers should not exceed ten (10) and caseloads for Child Welfare Workers should not exceed eighteen (18).”

Status:

Children’s Administration has employed a number of strategies to help safely reduce caseload sizes including increasing adoptions, working with the courts, and increasing the stability of children.

These strategies are helping to:

- Safely maintain children in their own home when possible
- Safely return children home as quickly as is in the best interest of the children
- Safely place children in the homes of relatives and support those caregivers
- Safely place children into permanent homes who cannot return to their own families

On-going efforts will help decrease the caseloads of social work staff in the field, and increase or maintain child safety.

As of December 11, 2010, the average caseloads were:

- 1:20 for Child Protective Services (CPS) social workers
- 1:17 for Child and Family Welfare Services (CFWS) social workers
- 1:15 for Family Reconciliation Services/Family Voluntary Services (FRS/FVS) social workers
- 1:17 for social workers with mixed caseloads

Children’s Administration continues to refine the caseload report. This report, when fully developed, will help managers determine and monitor case assignments, and more appropriately target caseload reduction strategies, as well as better describe who we are serving and determine trends.

Timeline:

Children's Administration continually works on permanency and other efforts to reduce caseloads. A prime mission of the Children's Administration is finding and maintaining safe permanent homes for children through reunification and adoption.

Recommendation H: Mandated Reporter Training

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“The training for mandated reporters should be revised. One of the major goals of this revised training is to increase awareness of racial disproportionality in the child welfare system, familiarize mandated reporters with the data regarding referral and the impact of race and racism on their reporting decisions. We recommend an evaluation of training in all mandated reporter work settings external to DSHS to determine if this training has a cultural competency component that is designed to facilitate an understanding of race and racism and how these factors impact their reporting decisions. Further research is warranted regarding mandated reporters and their decisions to report.”

Status:

The first major decision point in which disproportionality is evident in the child welfare continuum is when a child is referred for concerns of abuse or neglect. In Washington state approximately 60 percent of referrals to Child Protective Services are made by mandated reporters. Mandated reporters are those who, because of their professional or volunteer role or proximity to children, are required by law to report any concerns of abuse or neglect.

Disproportionality at such an early decision point indicates that mandated reporters are referring children of color at rates that are disproportionate to white children and families.

Mandated reporter training materials are being revised and supplemented to ensure that the issue of racial disproportionality is addressed. This must be done with forethought, planning, and collaboration to avoid sending any message that would dissuade a mandated reporter from making a call about child abuse or neglect.

The Mandated Reporter Guide now includes language on disproportionality and additional materials, resources and training are in development.

Children’s Administration, in collaboration with statewide partners, is working to inform and train mandated reporters about disproportionality and anti-racism through the development of visual and oral communication including:

- Video Brochure – completed December 2010,
- PowerPoint – completed December 2010, and
- Disproportionality Fact Sheet for Mandated Reporters – completed December 2010.

Timeline:

New and updated mandated reporter training resources will be sent to the field by March 31, 2011.

Recommendation I: Assessment of Children’s Administration

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“CA, its service providers, and child placing agencies should assess their organizational cultural competency and commitment to the elimination of racial disproportionality for children of color. The National Association of Public Child Welfare Administrators (NAPCWA) Disproportionality Diagnostic Tool should be used to conduct the assessments. This tool is used to evaluate social, systemic, and individual factors that may be contributing to disparate treatment of children of color in the child welfare system.”

Status:

In 2009 and early 2010 Children’s Administration (CA) completed 2 phases of the assessment implementation by having CA executive, divisional and regional leadership, the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee and the Children, Youth and Family Services Committee complete the assessment. CA headquarters and field staff completed the assessment in January 2011.

The results of the first two phases of the assessment were preliminarily analyzed in 2010 and the next phase is scheduled to be analyzed through Spring 2011. Using this information, major themes will be identified as well as strengths and challenges. The identification of key themes will help target practice and policy areas for improvement to guide us and our work in effectively reducing racial disproportionality.

Timeline:

This assessment is being implemented in phases:

- **Phase one:** The Children’s Administration Leadership Team -completed in August/September 2009.
- **Phase two:** Division and Regional Leadership Teams and critical advisory committees – completed December 2009 through January 2010.
- **Phase three:** Children’s Administration staff – completed December 2010 through January 2011.
- **Phase four:** Other Department of Social and Health Services administrations and community partners - beginning in 2011.

Recommendation J: Implement a Racial Equity Impact Analysis Tool

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“DSHS, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), relevant legislative committees and staff, relevant judicial committees and staff should use this tool to review all policies and practices. The policy staff of legislative, judicial, and executive branch agencies, including DSHS, should be trained in the use of a tool that assesses the racial disproportionality impact of legislation, administrative policies, practices and procedures. These agencies should be required to apply the tool. The Applied Research Center has developed an analysis tool that is currently used in the child welfare system in Ramsey County, Minnesota.”

Status:

Children’s Administration (CA) will use the Racial Equity tool based on the Race Matters Tool Kit and is currently consulting with Community Development Associates (CDA), in conjunction with Annie E. Casey Foundation, for technical assistance. Plans are in development with CDA to provide training in Spring/Summer 2011 to CA staff on the Racial Equity Tool. Day long training is being developed to enhance staff understanding of racism and disproportionality, provide information about the tool and its uses, and train staff on how to use the tool on CA policy and procedures. Training will be given to CA Leadership, policy developers, disproportionality staff, and policy reviewers.

The Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee will work with CA on policy review protocols.

Timeline:

CA is receiving technical assistance on a racial equity tool and staff will be trained on the tool in Spring/Summer 2011.

Recommendation K: In-Home Community Based Services

Recommendation from the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee Remediation Plan, dated December 2008:

“Explore Implementation of in-home, community based services that will keep children safe and reduce the need for out-of home placement.”

Status:

The Children’s Administration believes that implementing in-home community based services is best practice. We are using the implementation of Performance Based Contracted Services as the vehicle to increase these services for the children and families we serve.

The Children’s Administration intends to release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for Performance Based Contracted Services in February 2011. The RFP includes expectations for services that will increase in-home community-based services to keep children safely in their own homes and prevent out-of-home placement.

Timeline:

The scheduled timeline for Contracts to be executed is July 2011.

Conclusion

This report addresses the charge of the Legislature to report back on the implementation of the remediation plan created by the Washington State Racial Disproportionality Advisory Committee in response to the findings of their investigation that disproportionality exists for Black, Native American, and Hispanic children in the child welfare system. This report describes progress made toward the goal of reducing racial disproportionality in the child welfare system.

As outlined in this report, many activities have been initiated or strengthened in 2010 to reduce disproportionality.

As we continue to implement our strategies, analyze their effects and strengthen our data, we expect to see trends upon which we will build throughout 2011. However, because of the impact of the unprecedented budget crisis facing the state, positive impacts from these strategies may progress slower than originally planned until financial stability returns.

It is our goal for the efforts of all partners and stakeholders in the child welfare system to come together to definitively impact and eliminate racial disproportionality in the state of Washington. We strive to provide equity and permanence not only for children of color in care, but continue ongoing work towards achieving a safe, productive and healthy future for all children.