

# EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Commission on Improving the Status of Children in Indiana



Equity and cultural competence work require a shared language to assure we are referring to the same issues when we reference commonly used terms. Having a common language for talking about and across various sectors is essential for breaking down divisions and working towards achieving understanding and collaboration. In developing a common language around cultural competence, race equity, and inclusion, our goal is when these selected terms are used, everyone has a clear sense of their implications, usage, and meaning. The *Equity, Inclusion & Cultural Competence* workgroup offers the following term distinctions for your consideration. They are derived from a broad literature focused on cultural competence and racial equity.

## EQUALITY

Equality is ensuring that everyone gets the same things to enjoy full, healthy lives. It only works if everyone starts from the same place



## EQUITY

Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full healthy lives



*Like equity, equality aims to promote fairness and justice, but it can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same things. Equity involves trying to understand and give people what they need to enjoy full healthy lives. Equality, in contrast, aims to ensure that everyone gets the same things to enjoy full healthy lives.*

Adapted from *ThinkInclusive.us* (2017)

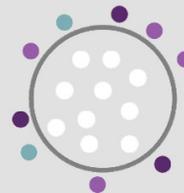
## INCLUSION

Authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and groups (racial/ethnic minorities, low social economic status, disability, non-English speaking, immigrants, LGBTQ+) into processes, activities, and decision/policymaking in a way that shares power.



INCLUSION

VS



EXCLUSION



SEGREGATION



INTEGRATION

## CULTURAL COMPETENCE

**Cultural competence** is defined as a set of values, behaviors, attitudes, and practices within a system, organization, program or among individuals, and which enables them to work effectively cross-culturally. Further, it refers to the ability to honor and respect the beliefs, languages, interpersonal styles, and behaviors of individuals and families receiving services, as well as staff who are providing such services. Striving to achieve cultural competence is a dynamic, ongoing, developmental process that requires a long-term commitment.

**System, organizational or program level cultural competence** requires a comprehensive and coordinated plan that includes interventions on levels of:

- » Policymaking
- » Infra-structure building
- » Program administration and evaluation
- » The delivery of services and enabling supports
- » The individual

This often requires the re-examination of mission statements; policies and procedures; administrative practices; staff recruitment, hiring and retention; professional development and in-service training; translation and interpretation processes; family/professional/community partnerships; health care practices and interventions including addressing racial/ethnic health disparities and access issues; health education and promotion practices/materials; and community and state needs assessment protocols.

**Individual level cultural competence** is an examination of one's own attitude and values, and the acquisition of the values, knowledge, skills, and attributes that will allow an individual to work appropriately in cross-cultural situations. Cultural competence mandates that organizations, programs, and individuals must have the ability to:

- » Value diversity and similarities among all peoples
- » Understand and effectively respond to cultural differences
- » Engage in cultural self-assessment at the individual and organizational levels
- » Make adaptations to the delivery of services and enabling supports
- » Institutionalize cultural knowledge

## BIAS

### EXPLICIT BIAS

Attitudes and beliefs that we have about a person or group on a conscious level. We are fully aware of these, so they can be self-reported

Line of consciousness

### IMPLICIT BIAS

Unconscious attitudes that lie below the surface, but may influence our behaviors

*Adapted from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia*

## IMPORTANT TERMS

### DISPARITY

The condition of being unequal and refers to the difference in outcomes and conditions that exist among specific groups as compared to other groups due to unequal treatment or services.

### DISPROPORTIONALITY

The overrepresentation of a particular race or cultural group in a program or system compared to their representation in the general population.

### RACE EQUITY LENS

The process of paying disciplined attention to race (a social construct created to categorize people into designated groups {e.g. Black, white} based primarily on appearance) and ethnicity (a social, not biological, category referring to social groups, often sharing cultural heritage and ancestry) while analyzing problems, looking for solutions, and defining success. A race equity lens critiques a "color blind" approach, arguing that color blindness perpetuates systems of disadvantage in that it prevents structural racism from being acknowledged. Application of a race equity lens helps to illuminate disparate outcomes, patterns of disadvantage, and root causes.

### RACE EQUITY CULTURE

A culture focused on proactive counteraction of social and race inequities inside and outside of an organization.