



# Advancing Data Equity Across Human Services Systems

Peer Learning Webinar

*June 1, 2023*



# 2023 APHSA Conferences



**SNAP, TANF, &  
PROGRAM INTEGRITY**



**TECHNOLOGY  
& LEGAL**



**ORGANIZATIONAL  
EFFECTIVENESS**

# TODAY'S PANELISTS



**Temilola Afolabi**  
Senior Research Associate  
Center for Open Data Enterprise  
(CODE)



**Merih Bennett**  
Deputy Chief Data Officer  
Indiana Family and Social  
Services Administration (FSSA)



**Breanca Merritt, Ph.D.**  
Chief Health Equity and ADA  
Officer  
Indiana Family and Social  
Services Administration (FSSA)



**Natalie Williams**  
Chief Equity, Diversity, Inclusion  
and Belonging (EDIB) Officer  
APHSA



**Natalie Williams**

**Chief Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and  
Belonging (EDIB) Officer**





# WHAT IS DATA EQUITY?

- ⚙ Data Equity is the consideration through an equity lens of the ways in which data is **collected, analyzed, interpreted, and distributed**.
- ⚙ Data has the potential to **reinforce racial bias and stereotypes**, as well as to **advance social justice**.
- ⚙ There is ample opportunity to advance the **use and impact of data**.



# WHY AN EQUITY LENS?

- ❁ **Persistent disparities** across services and systems.
- ❁ Data is a foundational lever to **setting goals and designing strategies** for programs and community outcomes.
- ❁ Data establishes important **baselines and accountability measures**.
- ❁ Data helps us **prioritize progression on indicators** that can decrease disparities across race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, income levels and ability.



# WHERE TO BEGIN

- Take proper **security measures** to protect data and individuals.
- Have a **central repository** for qualitative and quantitative data.
- Look at current **aggregated and disaggregated data**.
- Begin an analysis with **communities facing the greatest disparities**. Look at data to drive insights.
- **Compare and contrast** data sets.
- Develop a **partnership map**.
- **Identify policies** that impact outcomes.
- Develop a **roadmap for action** with accountability measures.



# WHERE TO BEGIN

Operationalizing data equity practices begins with collaborative and courageous conversations across a wide cross-section of human services roles – Executive, Program, IT, EDIB, HR, EEO, to name a few.

Our discussion guide provides a set of conversational prompts spanning a selection of key areas – **Sponsorship, Data Infrastructure, Skills Building, and Collaboration & Co-Design.**



## Advancing Data Equity in Human Services Systems



### A DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR PROGRAM, IT and EDIB LEADERS

Data equity broadly considers how individuals and communities have equal opportunities to benefit from and contribute to data-driven systems. Its practices and principles aim to promote inclusivity and address disparity by challenging biases in data collection, analysis and interpretation.

Data equity supports the advancement of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (EDIB) throughout human services systems by highlighting how outcomes are not distributed equally across different communities. As uses of technology, machine learning and AI continue to expand and evolve, a data equity lens can create pathways towards evidence-based decision-making that centers equity and community voice in achieving population-wide social and economic mobility.

The following questions serve as a starting point for human services leaders across a wide cross-section of roles – Program, IT, EDIB, HR, EEO, to name a few – to discuss how data and technology usage are currently and can further be centered in equity.

#### SPONSORSHIP

- How does your agency's Executive Leadership articulate its commitment to advancing equity and eliminating disparity?
- How is equity framed within a larger agency strategy or strategic planning? How is equity framed within your agency's own accountability practices?
- How are resources dedicated to hiring staff who have the capacity to analyze data from an equity lens?
- What data does your agency's Executive Leadership currently access to understand how and where disparity exists in program outcomes and internal operations, such as recruitment, hiring and promotion?
- How is data being used to inform Executive Leadership decision-making?

#### DATA INFRASTRUCTURE

- How thoroughly do your data systems capture relevant demographic information on the communities served?
- How easy or difficult is it to produce datasets for analysis around disparities in access, utilization and outcomes?
- How do data reports disaggregate data to highlight disparate outcomes?

#### SKILLS BUILDING

- What is the organizational knowledge base around equity and disparity across the agency?
- What kinds of learning and messaging emphasize how equity is operationalized within an agency?
- Which data practices are currently in place to support continuous quality improvement, and do they disaggregate data by relevant service participant demographics?
- How are leaders supported in the building of their data literacy?
- How are data scientists supported in their methodologies by other data scientists?

#### COLLABORATION AND CO-DESIGN

- What kind of cross-functional workgroups bring together diverse stakeholders from IT, Program, and EDIB to tap their respective areas of expertise?
- What kinds of outcome reporting and open data are made available to the public?
- What channels are in place for service participants to provide feedback on their experiences accessing services?
- How are service participants brought in as co-design partners before new technology projects are implemented?

This discussion guide was developed in conjunction with human services leaders from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration and the APHSA EDIB Peer Community.





# Open Data for Equity in the Public Sector

**Temilola Afolabi**

Senior Research Associate



**CODE**



# OPEN DATA FOR RACIAL EQUITY

**The Center for Open Data Enterprise** is a DC-based nonprofit whose mission is to maximize the value of open and shared data for the public good.

## **Open Data for Racial Equity Program**

- Policing & Criminal Justice
- Environmental Justice
- Fair Housing
- Healthcare Access
- Workforce Opportunity

# PRESENTATION OUTLINE

- ❖ Open Data Frameworks
- ❖ Examples of Open Data Advancing EDIB in the Public Sector
- ❖ Public-Private Collaborations
- ❖ Opportunities in the Human Services Sector

# Open Data Frameworks





# OPEN DATA FRAMEWORKS

**The principles, policies, and technical standards that govern the release and accessibility of data by government entities or other organizations.**

- ❖ Open Data Policy
- ❖ Open Data Standards (e.g. Open311)
- ❖ Open Data Initiatives (e.g. Open Government Partnership)
- ❖ Open Data Licensing (e.g. 'CC0' Public Domain; 'CC-BY' Attribution)

# OPEN DATA FRAMEWORKS

## Healthcare

### Can support:

- ⚙ Monitoring and addressing disparities in access to care, quality of care, and health outcomes
- ⚙ Identifying and addressing inequities
- ⚙ Supporting the development of targeted interventions
- ⚙ Measuring progress over time



# OPEN DATA FRAMEWORKS

## Workforce

### Can support:

- ⚙ Identification of disparities in employment outcome (e.g. disparities in hiring, promotion or wage gaps)
- ⚙ Addressing systemic bias
- ⚙ Development of diversity and inclusion strategies
- ⚙ Creating pathways for underrepresented communities to access economic opportunities



# OPEN DATA FRAMEWORKS

- ❖ Foster collaborations and partnerships
- ❖ Design of data-driven solutions with input from the communities they aim to serve
- ❖ Identify local needs, challenges, and aspirations



# Open Data Use for EDIB in the Public Sector



# OPEN DATA INITIATIVES

Aim to empower communities, identify disparities, and inform policy and decision-making processes through the **promotion of transparency and access to information.**

# OPEN DATA INITIATIVES

- ❖ **The Opportunity Project** | U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
- ❖ **Police Data Initiative** | The White House
- ❖ **Executive Order 13985** | Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities

# Public-Private Collaborations





# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATIONS

Can bring together government agencies, private companies, nonprofit organizations and community groups to harness open data for promoting EDIB.

# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATIONS

## Open Data for Good Programs

Private companies have launched initiatives that promote the use of open data for social good.

- ❖ **DataKind** collaborates with corporations, nonprofits, and governments to apply data science and analytics to address societal challenges.

# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATIONS

## Civic Tech Partnerships

Private technology companies partner with government agencies to develop innovative solutions that promote EDIB

- ❖ **NYC311** allows developers and civic technologists to access and utilize data related to service requests made by residents of NYC.

# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATIONS

## Data Collaboratives

Data collaboratives can involve public-private partnerships, which pool and share data resources for the public good.

- ❖ The Open Competency Framework Collaborative
- ❖ Public-private collaboration in the education sector to analyze student performance data and identify factors driving disparities



# PUBLIC-PRIVATE COLLABORATIONS

## Data Sharing Agreements

Formal contracts that detail what data are being shared and the appropriate use for the data. Can support research, policy development, and program implementation by providing access to relevant datasets and expertise.

- ❖ U.S. Department of Labor and LinkedIn data sharing agreement

# Open Data Opportunities in Human Services



# ACCESSIBLE & TRANSPARENT DATA

Open data can empower communities, policymakers and organizations to identify disparities, drive evidence-based decision-making and develop targeted interventions.

# OPPORTUNITIES IN THE HUMAN SERVICES SECTOR

- ❖ Addressing Disparities
- ❖ Evidence-Based Policy
- ❖ Support Community Engagement
- ❖ Foster Partnerships and Collaboration
- ❖ Promote Accountability & Transparency
- ❖ Data-Informed Resource Allocation

# **Thank You**

**Temilola Afolabi**

**temilola@odenterprise.org**







**Merih Bennett**

**Deputy Chief  
Data Officer**



**Breanca Merritt, Ph.D.**

**Chief Health Equity and  
ADA Officer**





*To compassionately serve our diverse community of Hoosiers by dismantling long-standing persistent inequity through deliberate human services system improvement.*

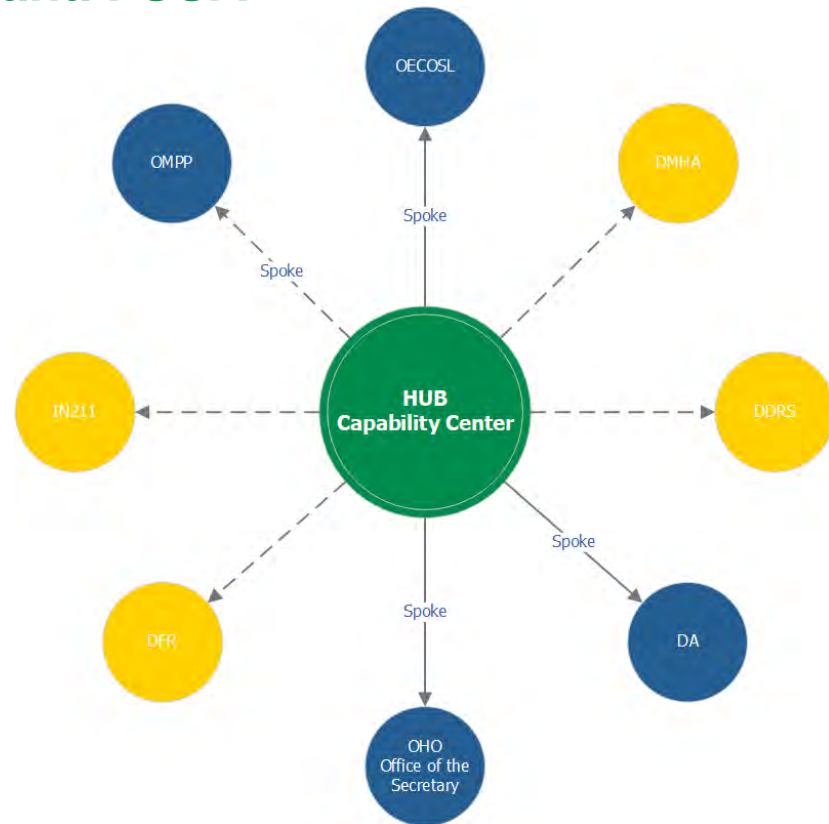
**WWW.FSSA.IN.GOV**



# Bringing together Data, EDIB, and Program Leaders

## Data and Analytics Infrastructure at Indiana FSSA

- ⚙ FSSA: Eight care divisions and multiple support offices
- ⚙ Hub and spoke model and agency data stewards
- ⚙ Agency-wide vision for equity
- ⚙ Office of Healthy Opportunities → Equity Team Structure → Accountability Team



# Strategies for Collecting and Disaggregating Data

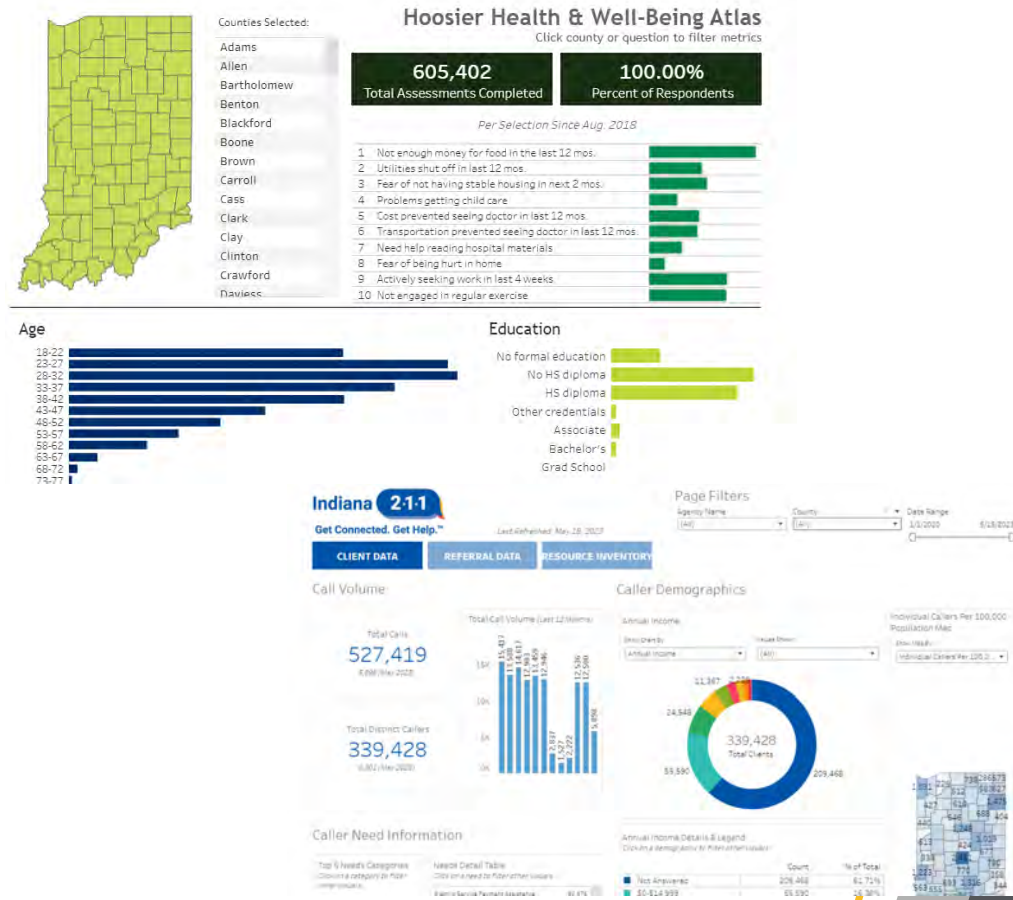
## Current Activities

Assessment to understand needed improvements of data systems

- Demographics Best Practices process
- Issue Brief: *Analysis of FSSA Demographic Data*
- Client registry mapping

## Review of existing platforms

- Hoosier Health and Wellbeing Atlas
- IN211 Dashboard



# Integrating Community and Staff Voice

## Current Activities

### Informing Agency-wide Strategy

- Staff Equity Dashboard and leadership guidance
- Strategic hiring efforts

### Integrating community voice

- Focus groups with constituents and front-line staff
- Systems and applications improvement; equitable access





# Policy Implications

## Example Efforts Resulting from Equity-focused, Data-informed Activities

### Division of Mental Health and Addiction (DMHA)

- Equitable 988 development
- Behavioral health data systems assessment (with USF)
- Updated Know the Facts campaign targeting POC



### Medicaid

- Postpartum Medicaid coverage
- Managed Care support for health equity
- Department of Correction/FSSA Taskforce



# Lessons Learned and What's Next

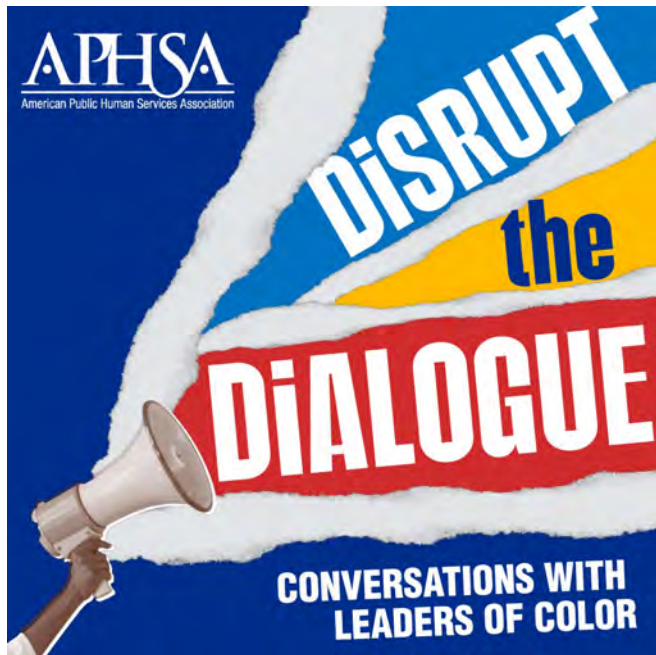


- ⚙️ Sincere, improvement-focused leadership buy-in
- ⚙️ Ongoing assessment of key initiatives and programs
- ⚙️ Patience → in discovery, processes, and time to see “results”
- ⚙️ Leveraging and maximizing resources for other programs, initiatives
- ⚙️ Collaboration → creativity with key stakeholders

# Roundtable Discussion



# EDIB RESOURCES



**Podcast co-hosted by Tina Wright-Ervin and Alexander Figueroa**

**Episode 1 – Unapologetically Affirming Your Voice w/Derrick Anderson**, Executive Director at Race Matters for Juvenile Justice (Charlotte, NC)

**Episode 2 – Creating a Safe Space for All w/LaRae Cantley**, Senior Manager of Centering Community & Well-Being at Full Frame Initiative (Greenfield, MA)

**Episode 3 – Forging a Path for Others w/Vannessa Dorantes**, Commissioner for the Connecticut Department of Children and Families

**Episode 4 – Be Unafraid to be Bold w/Dannette Smith**, Chief Executive Officer of the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services

**Episode 5 – Discovering the Full Story w/Natalie Williams**, APHSA

# EDIB RESOURCES



## These EDIB eLearning Courses are currently available on THRIVE:

- An Introduction to Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
- EDI: Cultivating a Culture of Inclusion & Safety
- EDI: Understanding & Addressing Implicit Bias
- Active Allyship: How to Put Intention Into Action

[www.thrive.matrixlms.com](http://www.thrive.matrixlms.com)



# EDIB RESOURCES



## Technical Assistance and Learning & Development Areas

- Organizational Culture
- Leadership Development
- Advancing Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Belonging
- Strategic Planning
- Mission, Vision, and Values Development
- Business Process Mapping/Improvement
- Emotional Intelligence
- Curriculum Development
- Community Engagement
- Organizational Learning
- Training System Redesign
- Embedding Continuous Quality Improvement
- Practice Model and Competency Development

**For more information contact: Jen Kerr, Director of Organizational Effectiveness**  
**[jkerr@aphsa.org](mailto:jkerr@aphsa.org)**

# THANK YOU!

Please complete our short feedback survey that will be emailed to you shortly. This supports APHSA's continuous improvement efforts.

Slides and Zoom recording will be emailed to all registrants in the coming week.

