

# CLASP

Policy solutions that work for low-income people

## Shaping Equitable Early Childhood Policy: Incorporating Inclusive Community Engagement Frameworks into Expanded Data Strategies

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# Child Care and Early Education Data

- Data is critical in identifying and scaling public supports to meet community needs.
- Administrative, survey, individual outcome, observational, etc.
- Exacerbated long-standing inequities in child care and early education (CCEE).
- A critical moment to reimagine how the CCEE system uses data to drive policy.
  - Using data to identify and address the immediate impacts of COVID in a way that targets federal investments at communities that have been most impacted and allows those communities the flexibility to use those funds.
  - Developing the long-term infrastructure and capacity to create data processes that center equitable community engagement to address long-standing inequities in how communities of color are engaged in the data process.

# Disconnected Communities & Inequitable Data

- Administrative, program evaluation, and individual level performance and other one-dimensional data replace the voices, narratives, and experiences of impacted people.
- Historically, the disconnect between those who inform and make policy decisions and those who are directly impacted by those decisions has been intentional.
- Presently, the absence of equity centered community engagement in data processes has resulted in the weaponization of data:
  - Deficit language
  - Reinforcing the disconnect and inequitable power structures between those who drive ECE policy and those who are directly impacted by those policies

# Equitable Community Engagement

- Current data processes were created within the same systems, institutions and structures that have been shaped by the impacts of white supremacy culture and systemic racism.
- Equitable community engagement can help bridge the disconnect between those who drive policy decisions and those who are directly impacted by those decisions.
- The lack of community engagement frameworks in data processes and decision making creates intentional and unintentional barriers to participation.
  - This produces inequitable outcomes in the form of laws, policies, and practices that enslaved, excluded, and devalued Black, Indigenous, and other people of color.
  - These historic barriers, which blocked access to critical supports that could help strengthen economic, educational, health, and social wellbeing in communities of color, continue harming these communities to this day.

# Equitable Community Engagement Frameworks

- ~~Difficult to reach communities~~ Poorly engaged communities
- Equity ≠ Sameness
- Community Access points
  - Inviting people to the table vs. finding already existing tables
  - Co-creating tables
- Minimal, foundational characteristics of an equitable framework:
  - Building trust
  - Relevant methods that are tailored to incorporate language, culture, communication styles, community history and other factors that shape engagement.
  - Direct compensation for those being engaged, for their time and expertise as well as other mutual community benefits.
  - Equitable power structures that allow directly impacted people to lead and contribute throughout the data process, meaningfully and consistently.

# Data Cycle Processes

- Planning
- Collection
- Coding/cleaning
- Analysis
- Contextualization
- Design
- Dissemination
- Decision Making

# Integrating Data Across State Agencies

- Often, data collected from various CCEE programs remain in disconnected state agencies.
- Integrating data across state agencies allows for more holistic, inclusive CCEE policy decisions.
- The recent relief funds offer opportunity to build this integration infrastructure prioritizing equitable community engagement.
  - Community members' time and expertise are valued in building this infrastructure and the subsequent collection, use, and privacy of their data.

# Equity Mapping

- Using data to physically map resources and supports through spatial analyses.
  - Resource location
  - Who has access and where they're located
  - Identify inequities in resources across geographies
- Centering equitable community engagement frameworks in equity mapping.
- Layering data strategies on a foundation of equitable community engagement.

# Making Data Accessible, Usable, & Inclusive

- Accessibility: informs the limitations on how people acquire data and how people interact with data and technology.
- Inclusion: addresses how race and/or ethnicity intersects with income, education, language, disability status and other factors that impact how communities experience and interact with the ECE system.
- Usability: is the intersection of accessibility and inclusion, where meeting both criteria creates practical data resources regardless of race and/or ethnicity and other intersecting identities or factors.

# Making Data Accessible, Usable, & Inclusive

- Language

- The content of data reports should be translated into the languages that best fit context of the community that is receiving it.
- Researchers should continuously engage with the current lexicon of the communities to ensure their identities and experiences are accurately and inclusively reflected.
- Any content from the data process for the public should avoid wording that may be more fitting for internal program staff and academic audiences.

- Visualization

- Understanding colors are more than a design feature: color association, visual impairment, gendered color palettes
- Language labels

- Dissemination

- Offline vs. Online options
- Privacy measures or barriers to equitable access
- Resource format

# Equitable and Inclusive Policy

- Equitable, inclusive CCEE policy is inextricably linked to equitable, inclusive data processes rooted in equitable, inclusive community engagement frameworks.
- Expanding data strategies beyond disaggregating individual level data by race/ethnicity, income, & other characteristics:
  - Integrating and linking data across state agencies to better understand and meet community needs and create aligned ECE resources.
  - Using data to physically map resources through spatial analyses to gauge and increase equitable access to appropriate resources.
- Accessible, usable, and inclusive for practitioners, families, and advocates; not just researchers, policy analysts, and policymakers.

# Additional Considerations

- Conducting equity assessments at the individual, team, and organizational level.
- Hiring and retaining staff who reflect impacted communities and who have the authority to lead and contribute.
- Assessing current data governance policies and processes related to privacy, security, ethics, access, and quality.
- Conducting an inventory of currently available interagency CCEE data.

# Contact Us

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