

# Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services

## Commitment to Anti-racism

### OVERVIEW

This is to affirm where NALCS stands on anti-racism, social justice, racial justice, and racial equity. We have now developed a point of view, which is informed by research and perspectives internal and external to the organization that have been gathered formally and informally. This document seeks to outline our point of view and our supporting rationale only. Our expectation is that this point of view will:

1. Evolve into our organizational commitment to anti-racism, and serve as a foundational set of beliefs alongside and integrated with our Vision, Mission, Core Values, and Declaration of Principles and Beliefs.
2. Serve as a guide for all of our subsequent priorities, goals, strategies, and actions at the organizational, team, interpersonal, and individual levels.
3. *Not* outline how we will act on this point of view. Aligned priorities, goals, strategies, and actions for our commitment to anti-racism will be outlined in a white paper on anti-racism and other various places as appropriate.

### BACKGROUND

#### ***Racism as the Organizing Mechanism for Oppression in the U.S.***

In the United States, the act of racialization has been the central organizing mechanism for oppression. Michael Omi and Howard Winant developed a concept of racialization, or racial formation, which they define as "the process by which social, economic and political forces determine the content and importance of racial categories, and by which they are in turn shaped by racial meanings" ([Racial Formations](#)). The construction of race extends from an intentional and substantive effort by the government of England to use slavery as a mechanism to maintain control, authority, and economic security in what were then the British colonies. The institution of slavery commoditized Africans in America through forced migration and forced uncompensated labor, empowering persons of European heritage to gain wealth and political clout while disempowering persons of African heritage as they became relegated to not just building, but being capital. Enslaved Africans became defined as property, disavowing their rights to citizenship, but more importantly their human-hood. From this legacy of imprisonment, non-citizenship, and dehumanization, a hierarchical distinction between Europeans and "others" came to be as a worldview by those in power, which accepted Europeans as superior ([White People Did Not Exist Until 1681](#)). In the U.S., race has persisted as a defining socio-political construct that has determined not only access to power and resources, but the right to be treated as human. For this reason, we center race as the basis of our fight for equity, with the unwavering belief that eliminating racism will break down other forms of oppression.

#### ***Racism, Othering, and Intersectionality***

Because of the legacy of racialization, people who are not men of European ancestry are often either not allowed equal rights as humans, and/or discriminated against and consequently limited in power. From this political and economic dominion, men of European descent hold a social standing that has become the center of the U.S.'s social paradigm— what is now considered white dominant culture. Systemic barriers have sustained the economic and socio-political harm and immobility of African Americans in the U.S., but discrimination has played a key role in the lives of many others outside of white dominant culture. The genealogy of the exclusion, othering, and maltreatment of people who do not demonstrate, adopt, or exist in close proximity to this culture continues today. This is particularly important when examining the treatment of people who identify as part of the LGBTQ community, women, non-Christian, immigrant, living with a disability, and other marginalized groups and the challenges they

face. And yet, race remains a fundamental factor for not only intolerance, but economic and socio-political suppression within these groups. People who are at the intersection of multiple identities, especially those who identify as Black or African American, often experience complex and heightened injustice. Therefore, by centering anti-racism, we also prioritize combating other forms of intolerance ([Black Sexual Politics](#)).

### ***Disparities Across All Sectors of Society***

Racism has a disparaging impact across U.S. society as a whole. Due to the act and process of racialization, race has a significant association with disparate outcomes across sectors. Even in cases where persons of African descent are faring well within a field, it is frequent that they are still not in positions of power.

- *Environment:* Children in poorer neighborhoods are more likely to be exposed to lead, industrial emissions, vehicle exhaust, and other contaminants ([Scientific American](#)).
- *Housing:* Owning a home is still one of the most formidable ways a person can build wealth in the U.S., yet Black and LatinX families have considerably lower home ownership rates than white families. Home loans are consistently more expensive for Black and LatinX buyers than they are for white buyers. This is why these groups are much less likely to purchase a home, and if they do, they are less likely to have homes that appreciate in value. They are also more likely to lose their homes through foreclosure ([The National Bureau of Economic Research](#) & [The U.S. Census Bureau](#)).
- *Criminal Justice:* Black people are overwhelmingly policed and profiled at alarmingly higher rates than white people ([The U.S. Justice Department](#), [The ACLU 2018](#), a [2015 Statistical Analysis](#), [The ACLU 2014](#)). In comparing Black and white arrest rates for petty crimes, Black people are almost twice as likely to be arrested ([The Scale of Misdemeanor Justice](#)). “Black people are consistently arrested, charged, and convicted of drug crimes including possession, distribution, and conspiracy at far higher rates than white people. This, despite research showing that both races use and sell drugs at about the same rate” ([The ACLU Survey of SWAT Teams](#) & [Vera Institute Criminal Justice Study 2018](#)).
- *Politics:* “A study ... by the Reflective Democracy Campaign on the demographics of elected officials in the United States found white men hold a majority of positions at all levels of government. Despite white men comprising only 31 percent of the population, 97 percent of all Republican elected officials are white and 76 percent are male. Of all Democratic elected officials, 79 percent are white and 65 percent are male, according to the study” ([Who Runs \(in\) America?](#)).

### ***Disparities in Education***

The U.S. is one of the wealthiest countries in the world—boasting the most billionaires, the most people who live above the poverty line, and the most people who report generational wealth. Despite this, according to the [2015 Program for International Student Assessment \(PISA\) results](#), 34 nations and other jurisdictions outperformed the U.S. in mathematics by a statistically significant margin. This ranking represents a drop from three years prior, when the U.S. ranked 28th overall in math outcomes. In science and reading, U.S. students performed 24th and 23rd respectively amongst nations that administered the assessment—results that have not changed significantly in recent years.

The middling overall outcomes of our educational system as compared with other nations are troubling, and the picture is even direr when those outcomes are disaggregated by race. Within the United States, people of color, particularly Black, LatinX and indigenous peoples of the Americas, face greater obstacles to academic achievement. When other identity markers are also considered, particularly socio-economic status, the effects are compounded.

- Highly qualified and effective teachers are inequitably distributed, resulting in students of color being taught disproportionately by less experienced, less effective teachers. ([Stanford University School of Education](#))
- Nearly 30 percent of Native American public school students do not graduate from high school. ([Partnership with Native Americans](#))
- Nationally, high-poverty districts, which disproportionately serve students of color, spend 15.6 percent less per student than low-poverty districts. ([U.S. Department of Education](#))
- Fifty-three percent of public school buildings in low-income communities needed repair totaling \$197 billion to be considered in “good condition.” ([National Center for Education Statistics](#))
- Forty-eight percent of Black Pre-K students are suspended at least one time. ([U.S. Department of Education for Civil Rights](#))

### **Disparities in Children’s Services**

A significant amount of research has documented the overrepresentation of racial and ethnic populations which include African Americans and Native American when compared to the general population. With about 500,000 children being in foster care at any given moment, 40-50% of former foster youth will be homeless within 18 months of leaving care. In addition, 80% of people who are incarcerated have spent time in foster care. These data points reflect grander systems of inequity that interconnected, which pave a pathway for foster youth to experience negative life outcomes. ([Foster Care 2.0](#); [Child’s Bureau](#))

- About 25% of foster youth will be in prison within 2 years of emancipation. This represents a financial inefficiency within public policy as the average budgetary allocation for a child in care is \$35,000 per year, in comparison to the cost of \$47,000 a year to incarcerate someone in California. The disparity is further represented by the comparison: 81% of males have been arrested compared to 17% of their peers who are not in foster care. ([Foster Care 2.0](#))
- Despite the [National Incidence Studies of Child Abuse and Neglect](#) (NIS) finding no relationship between race and the incidence of child abuse, families of color are exposed more and to a higher degree to child welfare systems.
- According to the [Fourth National Incidence Study of Child Abuse and Neglect \(NIS-4\)](#), incidents of child abuse and neglect was associated with poverty, single parenthood, and other related factors. Being so, low socioeconomic status (SES) black children are actually *less* likely to be referred for maltreatment, have their cases substantiated, or enter foster care than low SES white children. This means that poverty experienced by families and children of color may amplify their exposure to social service systems, such as financial and housing assistance, which increases their exposure to mandated reporters. This phenomenon is known as *visibility or exposure bias*.
- Although the relationship between poverty and maltreatment is strong, it does not fully capture the racial disparities in foster care. According to the [Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare](#), race, risk, and income all influence case decisions, even if African-American families tended to be assessed with a lower risk score than white families, they were *more likely than white families* to get their cases substantiated, have their children removed, or be provided with family-based safety services.

## **OUR BELIEFS**

### ***Our Vision***

Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services envisions an equitable and just children's services system that provides all children/youth in care with the resources to reach their eventual success.

### ***Our Mission***

TBD

### ***Our Beliefs about Social Justice and Anti-Racism***

Equity within children's services is one of many social justice issues, such as immigration, LGBTQ rights, equitable health care, etc. that affect the outcomes of millions of children. We believe that quality service that is informed by Anti-Racism, social justice, and the realities of historical oppression is a critical pathway toward eradicating other issues of social injustice and advancing equity for all. This is why we strive for racial equity through our pursuit of equity within children's services, which requires racial justice practices. We are working to create an equitable children's services system in which success is not predicted by race.

Given our core beliefs and understanding of historical and current societal disparities, Nuevo Amanecer Latino Children's Services commits to be an anti-racist equity organization. We are devoted to dismantling racism within the children's services landscape. Because the definition of anti-racism necessitates ongoing action, there is no achievable "end state," but instead a daily practice that we commit to upholding. Since we know racism plays out on multiple levels—internal, interpersonal, and systemic—we aim to understand, challenge, and combat racism at all levels. We believe that achieving our mission is a step toward dismantling racism, and it will require that we are the active embodiment of anti-racist practices.