



*Strategies to Achieve Alignment, Collaboration, and Synergy
Across Delivery and Financing Systems*

**PACT-STL Evaluation: Culture, Context and Community
Participation**

*Research In Progress Webinar
Wednesday, June 22, 2022
12:00-1:00 pm ET/9:00-10:00am PT*

Agenda

Welcome: Carrington Lott, MPH – Program Manager, Systems for Action

Panelists: Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD – Washington University in St. Louis
Trish Kohl, PhD – Washington University in St. Louis

Q&A: Carrington Lott, MPH – Program Manager, Systems for Action



Melissa Jonson-Reid, PhD's work focuses prevention of child maltreatment through community partnered research and evaluation as well as advancing policy and services to promote positive behavioral, educational and health outcomes when maltreatment or other family trauma has occurred. She has practice experience in both domestic violence counseling and school-based program administration in California operating the Foster Youth Services program. Professor Jonson-Reid directs the NICHD funded Center for Innovation in Child Maltreatment Policy, Research and Training and serves as the Associate Dean for Transdisciplinary Faculty Affairs.

Contact info: jonsonrd@wustl.edu



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Patricia Kohl, PhD is an associate professor at the Brown School of Social Work at Washington University in St. Louis. Her scholarship is focused on children and families facing adversity including child maltreatment, violence, and other traumatic experiences, and on adapting, implementing and sustaining evidence-based family focused interventions to prevent child maltreatment and improve child and family well-being. In addition, Dr. Kohl evaluates sustainable multi-level strategies focused on the prevention and treatment of child maltreatment. She is Co-Director of the Community Education Core of the Center for Innovation in Child Maltreatment Research, Policy and Training. She teaches several courses at the Brown School including Social Work Practice with Children in Families, Social Work Practice in Early Childhood, International Child Welfare, and Policy and Services for Children and Families.

Contact info: pkohl@wustl.edu



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PACT-STL

- Prevention and early intervention focus
- Multi-level intervention that aims to prevent maltreatment, strengthen families and promote healthy child development
- Leverages existing child maltreatment prevention network and seeks to increase strategic collaboration among its member organizations
- Builds capacity to provide evidence-based interventions
- Implements parent empowerment and public health strategies



Strategies

Race Equity Lens

Family Level Activities

- Parent Cafés
- Vitality Cafés
- Evidence based parenting program
- Family Mentors

- Community Cafes
- Parent Advisory Councils

Centering
parent voice
in all
aspects of
project

System Level Activities

- Organizations trained to host parent, vitality, or community cafes
- Providers trained to facilitate evidence-based parenting programs
- Organizations trained in cultural competency
- Assessment of current funding streams and alignment of funding
- Collaborative meetings



Race Equity

- The process of eliminating racial disparities and improving outcomes for everyone. It is the intentional and continual practice of changing policies, practices, systems and structures by prioritizing measurable change in the lives of people of color.





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ENGAGING PARENTS



Lived Experience Defined

- Parent or caregiver with current or previous child protective service contact
 - Report
 - in-home services
 - children removed from the home





PACT-STL engages parents with lived experience

- Community Cafes
- Parent Advisory Council
- Traditional data collection methods
 - Focus Groups
 - Surveys



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- Engagement of families with lived experience in child welfare reform is not new² but is still not routinely used.
- Sharing stories can be both therapeutic and act as a form of empowerment for families who often feel disenfranchised and discriminated against by the child welfare system.^{3,4}





Community Cafes

- Community voice is needed in the development/redesign and evaluation of child welfare services and interventions.
 - But is often ignored, minimized or not sought
- Community Cafes empower community members to identify their unmet needs, work with them to develop solutions and action plans.





Community Cafés

- Promising participatory engagement strategy for system reform
 - *Power, safe space, and voice*
- Based on World Café model
- Community Cafés — unique participatory model engaging participants in conversations about questions that are meaningful to them
 - Hosted by vision for children at risk with
 - Caregivers with lived experience



Community Cafes

- Evaluated the utility of Community Cafés to engender a safe space for participants to share their lived experiences regarding child welfare involvement to inform the development of a child maltreatment prevention intervention.¹



Sharing Our Story in a Safe Space: Using Community Cafés to Empower African American Voices in Child Welfare Intervention Research (in press)

Helen Robinson, Maria Gandarilla Ocampo, Katies Shires, Grace Newton, Melissa Jonson-Reid, Sanaria Sulaiman, and Patricia L. Kohl

- Cafés are structured in a way that fosters constructive, authentic dialogue, allowing for patterns of collective intelligence and wisdom to emerge through the sharing of experiences (Brown & Isaacs, 2005)
- Support the unfolding of organic, self-organizing process centralized on a designated topic (Steier et al, 2015).
- Small table discussions
- Harvesting
- Group consensus on potential next steps

Brown, J. with Isaacs, D. (2005): The World Café: shaping our futures through conversations that matter.

Steier, F., Brown, J., & Mesquita da Silva, F. (2015). The World Café in action research settings. *The SAGE handbook of action research*, 3, 211-219.

World Cafe Method. (2019, November 25). World Cafe Method. Retrieved from <http://www.theworldcafe.com/key-concepts-resources/world-cafe-method/>



Community Cafes



- Community Cafés are a derivative of world cafés. a unique participatory model engaging participants in conversations about questions that are meaningful to them.
- 4 series of 2 cafes were held over 4 days with 101 participants
 - 4 in-person
 - 4 virtual



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Conclusions....

- Community Cafés have the potential to serve as a promising model to engage community members and produce knowledge on how to improve and shape systems and services in a way that is responsive to the community's needs.
- The use of cafés as a participatory method in the child welfare research space can shift power dynamics and provide an opportunity for harm reduction and healing for the communities most affected by child welfare systems.



Family Mentors

- Two-thirds (63%) of hot line calls in the St. Louis region are diverted to the Family Assessment track by Children's Division (CD).
- Although many families would benefit from connections to services, too often
 - they chose not to participate,
 - are unable to access services to which they are referred, or
 - are so overwhelmed with meeting basic needs that they do not have time to access services.
- The Family Mentor is a parent with lived experience navigating CD.
- Family Mentors help parents understand CD's processes, access services, and self-identify additional supports.



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Data Sharing

ADMINISTRATIVE DATA



- Original goal was to include de-identified data at the zip code level consistent with the zip code targets of PACT STL
- A comparison area was to come from Kansas City, MO- the only other comparable large urban setting in Missouri

Challenges

- One of the agencies felt zip code was too easily identifiable
- So zip codes were reformatted into 3 groups according to whether zip codes fell within city only, within county only or on the border. We are still awaiting approval for the new approach for CPS reporting data.
- Matching challenge due to unique context

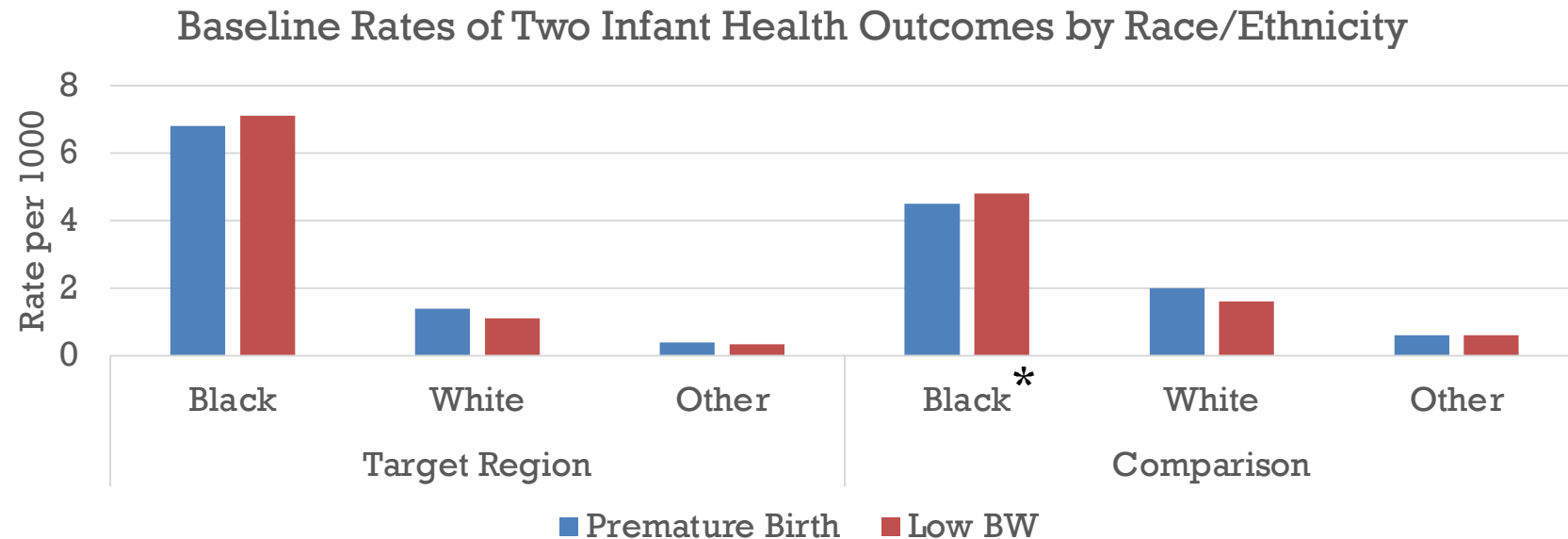


Drawing Comparisons?

- Few of the zip codes in the comparison metropolitan region had comparably low median household incomes meaning the comparison number of zip codes was smaller for 2 of the 3 groups
- St Louis has a long history of segregated housing by income and race.
 - Group 1 in PACT STL was 87% Black while the comparison group was only 70.1% Black
 - Group 2 in PACT STL was 60.8% Black compared to 44.6%
 - Group 3 in PACT STL was 58.9% Black compared to 30.1%
- While the comparison areas were still majority under-represented minority groups and a relatively close match on income could be achieved- the comparison area had a much larger representation of Latinx individuals.



A Look at Baseline Differences



* $p < .0001$ for Black in target region versus comparison region



Unique History

While generalizability and comparison is foremost in the mind when doing research, sometimes our context is unique in a way that challenges this.

- <https://www.stlmag.com/news/the-color-line-race-in-st.-louis/>



Commentary

Yolanda West, Director of PACT-STL
Vision for Children at Risk

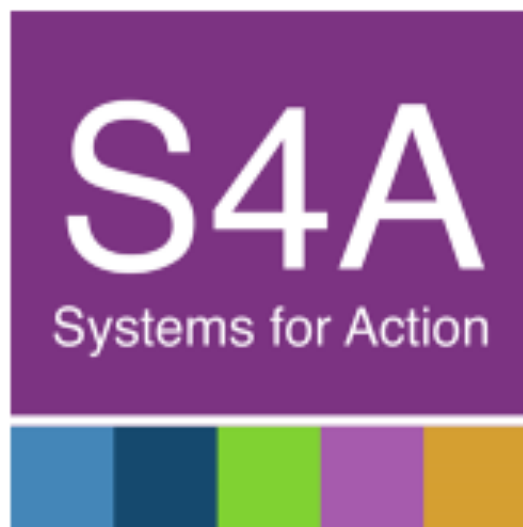




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2. Marcenko, M., Brown, R., DeVoy, P. R., & Conway, D. (2010). Engaging parents: Innovative approaches in child welfare. *Protecting Children*, 25(1), 23-34.
3. Merritt, D. H. (2020). How do families experience and interact with CPS?. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 692(1), 203-226.
4. Merritt, D. H. (2021). Lived experiences of racism among child welfare-involved parents. *Race and social problems*, 13(1), 63-72.

Questions?



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