

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL

LIVE WEBINAR

RACIAL EQUITY IN DATA

The Criminal Justice Coordinating Council is hosting a webinar on racial equity in Data. Dr. Hawn Nelson, Director of Training and Technical Assistance at Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) will present on racial equity at all points in the data lifecycle. She will discuss the toolkit developed by AISP including recommendations for positive practice that help center racial equity across six stages of the data life cycle.

**Thursday,
June 16, 2022**

01:00 pm - 2:30 pm

[Registration Link \(MS Teams\)](#)



**Dr. Amy Hawn-
Nelson**

Introduction

On June 16, 2022, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (CJCC) hosted a juvenile justice webinar themed “Racial Equity in Data Integration.” The presentation was conducted by Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson, Director of Training and Technical Assistance for Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy (AISP) with the University of Pennsylvania.

Toni Lemons, CJCC Juvenile Justice Compliance Monitor and Racial and Ethnic Disparities Coordinator, welcomed attendees to the webinar. Ms. Lemons provided an overview of Dr. Amy Hawn Nelson’s background and biography on integrating data for social change, including her work to help government agencies use data to improve lives responsibly.

The session began with a grounding discussion on micro, mezzo, and macro level understanding of individual perspectives as they relate to personal identity, internal dimensions, community, life experiences and institutional dimensions. Dr. Hawn-Nelson shared that perspectives are shaped by our life experiences. She explained that her vantage point as a middle-aged white woman may be different from others who do not have that experience. There is an intersection of personal identity and how one may enter the work of racial equity. It is important to be grounded in your personal identity, which includes geography, as you enter the work of discussing racial equity. While individual experiences at the micro level inform our experiences, it is important to understand that individual experiences also inform the mezzo and macro pieces of the work. All elements of micro, mezzo and macro systems are important in dismantling racism. Dr. Hawn Nelson explained that the presentation will primarily focus on macro and mezzo systems to identify unjust norms, influence, and privilege to identify and address practices and policies that can help dismantle racism and get to equity in information and data integration.

Defining Racial Equity

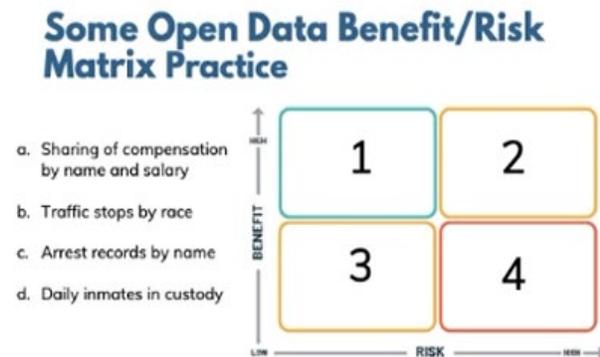
Participants were surveyed via a poll during the session and asked to define racial equity from their individual perspective in a few words. Some examples of how participants described their thoughts on racial equity included:

- Fairness and liberation;
- Equitable access to resources and opportunities;
- Equality in process and outcomes; and
- Elimination of disparities.

Racial equity is...



The Risks & Benefits to Data Sharing



Dr. Hawn Nelson explained that data has a historical, social and political context. There is a need to acknowledge the context and role that racism has played historically in infrastructure development. This same context plays a role in the infrastructure development for data. As governments develop data infrastructures, people and racial equity need to be at the center. The integration and use of data is both technical and relational, which means that it is important to co-create data infrastructure and

include people and equity as data is collected and analyzed to promote racial equity and public good.

Dr. Hawn Nelson provided some examples of types of data that have been shared publicly to review the risk and benefit to sharing the data. Data sharing can fall into a high or low risk category and high or low benefit. As data is used, it is important to weigh the risk and benefit and try to fit it into the low risk, high benefit category.

Participants moved into breakout groups to discuss levels of risk and benefits of sharing various types of data, such as salary and compensation by name, arrest records by name, and daily inmates in custody, to determine their potential impact, including unintended consequences.

Data Life Cycle

There are multiple stages of the data lifecycle. Some individuals may use data at various touchpoints. The various states of the data cycle include: planning, collecting, data access, use of statistical tools or algorithms, analysis, and reporting and disseminating data. While algorithms and statistical tools are typically the primary methods under discussion surrounding racial equity in data, it is important to understand how racial equity can be integrated throughout the data cycle.

Dr. Hawn Nelson expressed that it is important to use public sector data in an ethical manner, which requires centering racial equity to do so. Dr. Hawn Nelson explained that not incorporating racial equity in the data cycle can have implications and unintended consequences as seen in other areas in history.

Positive and Problematic Practices

Dr. Hawn Nelson closed the presentation by providing an overview of positive and problematic practices. Positive practices include: collaboration on developing shared data collection agendas, collecting only necessary data, and including qualitative stories to contextualize quantitative data. Dr. Hawn Nelson encouraged participants to move away from practices that reinforce bias rather than inform practice and policy change, explain and document data integrity issues, and to stop ignoring risks associated with the collection and disclosure of data.

Closing

Dr. Hawn Nelson encouraged participants to continue to use the Jamboard that was shared during breakout sessions. Ms. Lemons, CJCC, thanked attendees for their participation in the Juvenile Justice Webinar and provided a link in the chat to the survey for participants to complete.

Key Takeaways

- It is important to be mindful of the micro, mezzo and macro implications of addressing racial equity in data integration;
- History matters – not including people and centering racial equity at the forefront of data integration can have unintended consequences;
- Whether you are a data owner, data steward, data custodian, or case worker - everyone has a role in centering racial equity in data no matter at what stage you connect with the data; and
- Open data can have benefits and risks – it is important to try to get to a sweet spot of low risk/high benefits.