

# Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration

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Amy Hawn Nelson, PhD  
Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy

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THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION



# AISP'S Role



We are:	We are not:
Data evangelists	Data holders or intermediaries
Connectors, community builders, thought partners, cheerleaders, and data sharing therapists	A vendor or vendor recommender
Focused on ethical data use for policy change	Focused on academic research

# Chat Box Intros

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Current Role

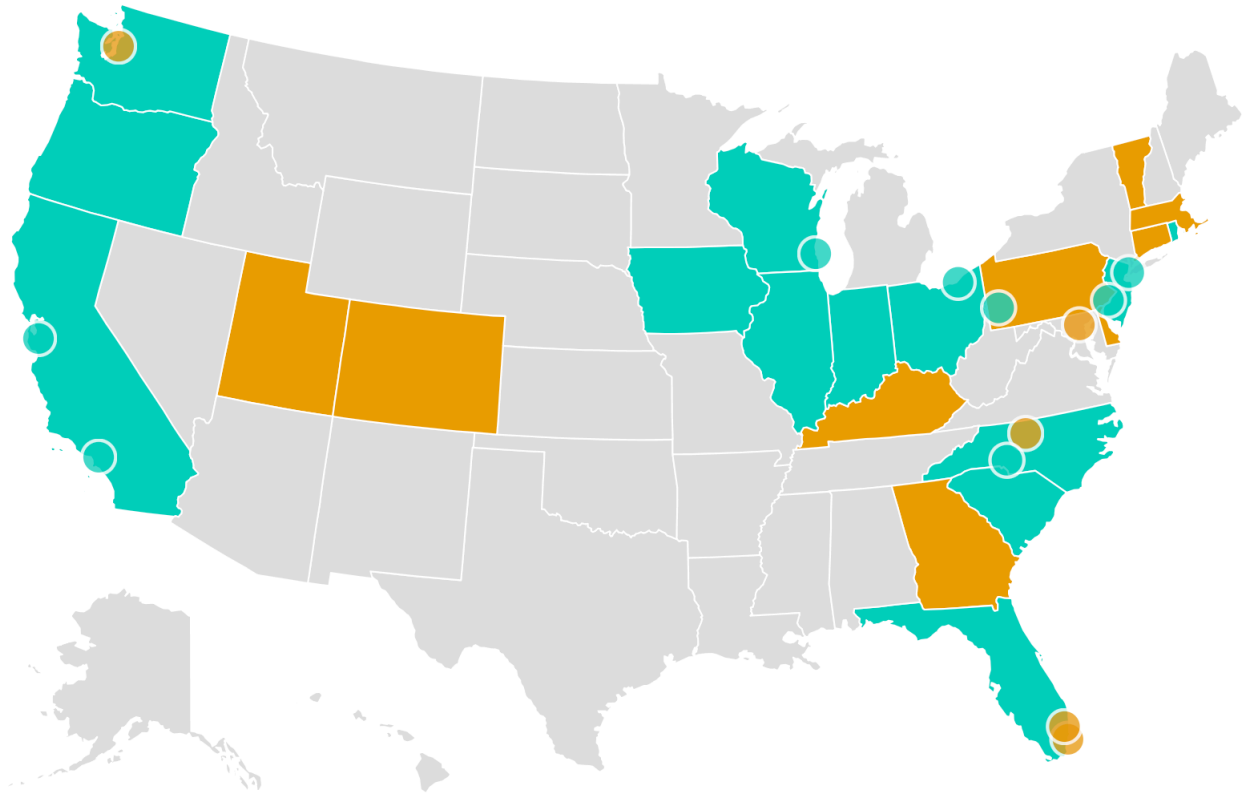
On a scale of 1-10 (1, lowest, 10 highest), how comfy are you with concepts related to racial equity?

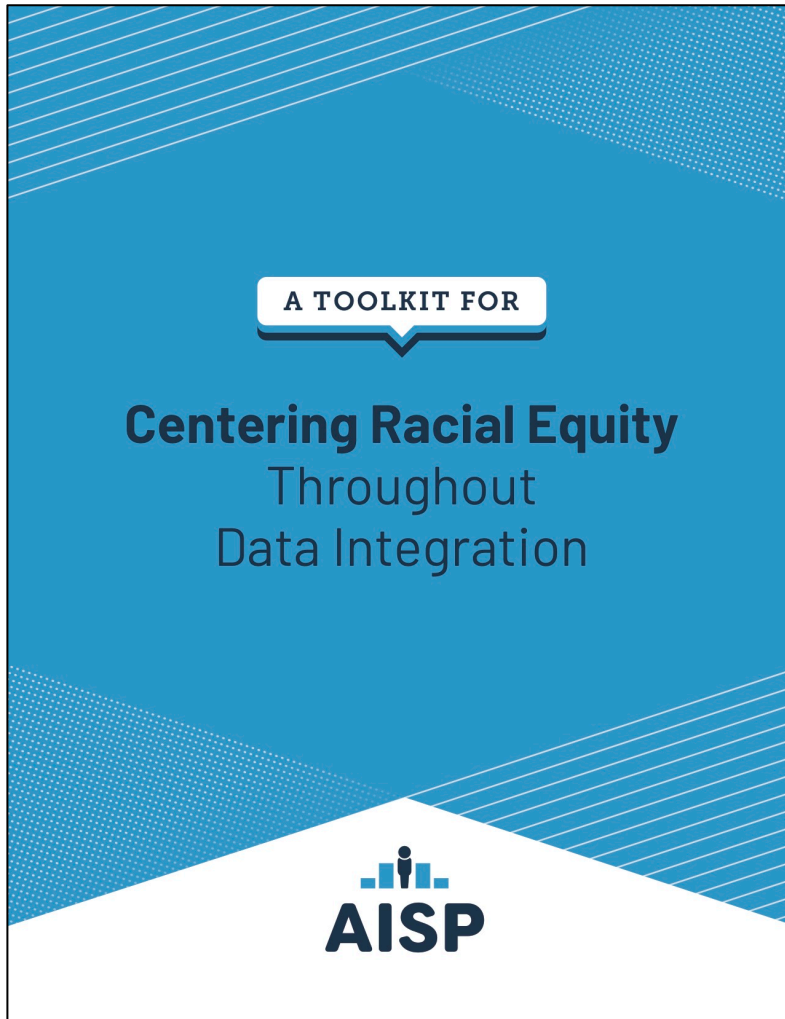
On a scale of 1-10 (1, lowest, 10 highest), how comfy are you with concepts related to data use?

Favorite part of COVID living

# AISP Network as of 2020

- Network of 22 operational state and local integrated data systems
- Between our three Learning Community cohorts and other sites we support, 14 more sites well on their way





<https://bit.ly/CenterRacialEquity>



Hawn Nelson, A., Jenkins, D., Zanti, S., Katz, M., Berkowitz, E., et al. (2020). [A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration](https://bit.ly/CenterRacialEquity). Actionable Intelligence for Social Policy, University of Pennsylvania.

# Process



# Workgroup Contributors

Niiobli Armah	My Brother's Keeper, Equity Intelligence Platform
Bridget Blount	Baltimore's Promise
Angela Bluhm	Chief Education Office, State of Oregon
Katy Collins	Allegheny County Department of Human Services
Sheila Dugan	GovEx, Johns Hopkins University
Sue Gallagher	Broward Data Collaborative, Children's Services Council of Broward County
Laura Jones	Writer and Community Advocate based in Minnesota
Chris Kingsley	Annie E. Casey Foundation
Ritika Sharma Kurup	StriveTogether
Tamika Lewis	Our Data Bodies
Rick Little	Utah Dept of Human Services, Management Information Center
Tawana Petty	Detroit Community Technology Project & Our Data Bodies
Raintry Salk	Race Forward and Government Alliance for Racial Equity (GARE)
Michelle Shevin	Ford Foundation

# Site-based Contributors

Allegheny County (PA), Department of Human Services,  
Office of Analytics, Technology, & Planning

Allegheny County (PA) Department of Human Services,  
Office of Equity & Inclusion

Automating.NYC

Birth through Eight Strategy for Tulsa (BEST)

Children's Services Council of Broward County (FL)

City of Asheville (NC)

City of Tacoma (WA)

DataWorks NC

Kentucky Center for Statistics

Mecklenburg County (NC) Community Support Services

New York City Administration for Children's Services &  
Youth Studies Programs at the CUNY School of  
Professional Studies

Take Control Initiative (OK)

Samantha Looney, Brian Bell, Ellen Kitzerow,  
Julia Reuben, Shannon Flynn, & Jamaal Davis

Shauna Lucadamo & Jessica Ruffin

Deepra Yusuf, Elyse Voegeli, Akina Younge, & Jon  
Truong

Jessica England & Dan Sterba

Sue Gallagher

Christen McNamara & Kimberlee Archie

Alison Beason

Libby McClure & John Killeen

Jessica Cunningham

Courtney LaCaria & Mary  
Ann Priester

Sarah Zeller-Berkman

Emma Swepston, Laura Bellis, & Brandy  
Hammons



# The Current Moment is Complicated.

Governments have more capacity than ever before to share and use longitudinal administrative data for analytics and decision-making.

This represents an improvement on:

- Hunches
- Doing what we've always done just because
- Limited surveys/small sampling

But administrative data and analytic tools are not:

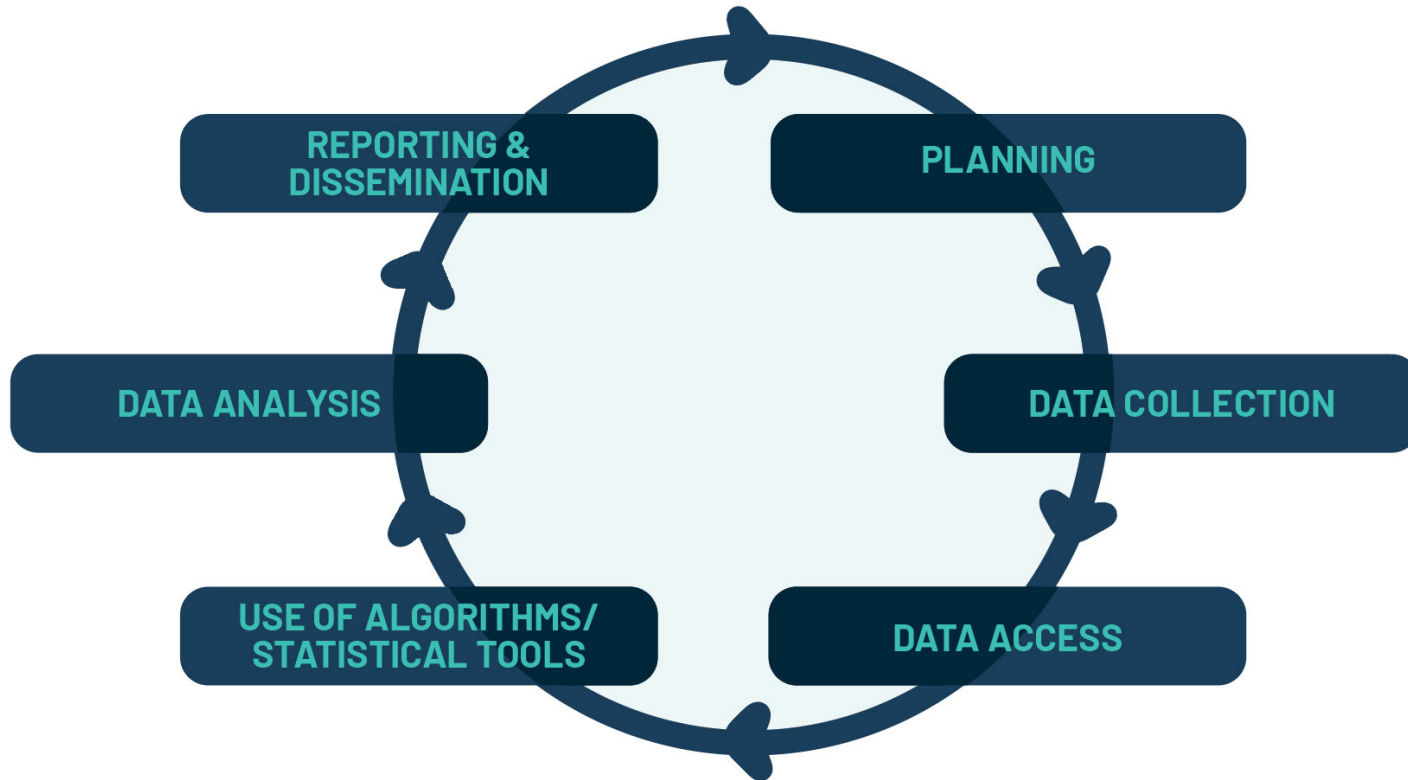
- Reflective of lived experience
- Historically contextualized
- Good at distinguishing correlation vs. causation
- A measurement of what matters most

**As railroads and highways  
both developed and  
decimated communities, so  
too can data infrastructure.**

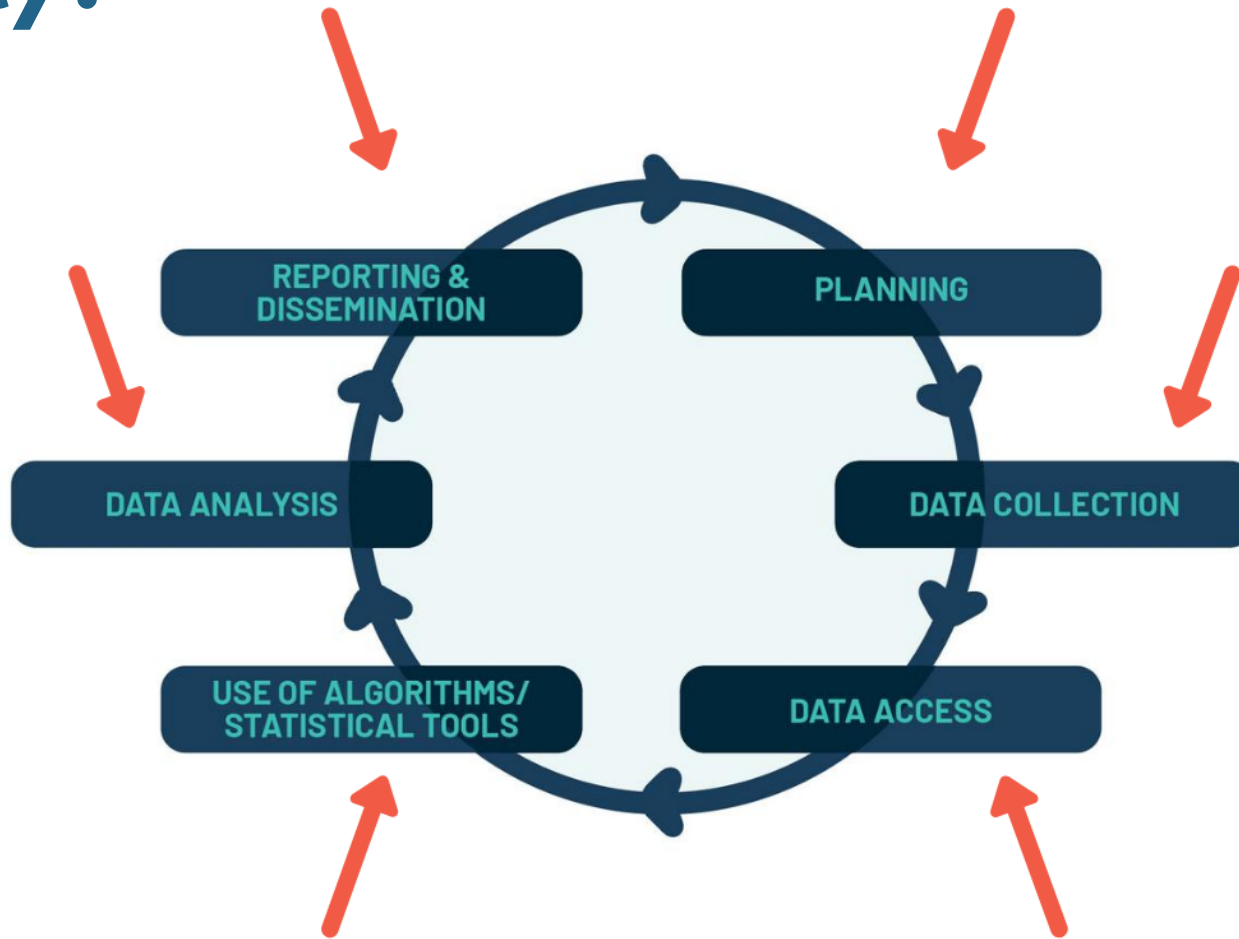
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We can co-create data infrastructure to promote racial equity and the public good, or we can invest in data infrastructure that disregards the historical, social, and political context.

# Where do we need to center racial equity?



# Where do we need to center racial equity?



## **WE STRONGLY ENCOURAGE:**

- Inclusive participatory governance around data access and use
- Social license for data access and use
- A developmental approach to data sharing and integration—start small and grow

## **WE DISCOURAGE:**

- Broad access to individual-level linked data
- Data use for enforcement or investigation actions against residents
- Use of predictive algorithms without determining responsibility, explainability, accuracy, auditability, and fairness\*
- Use of linked data across institutions that have patterns of institutional racism, specifically, law enforcement, which has demonstrated significant racialized harm without sufficient safeguards in place

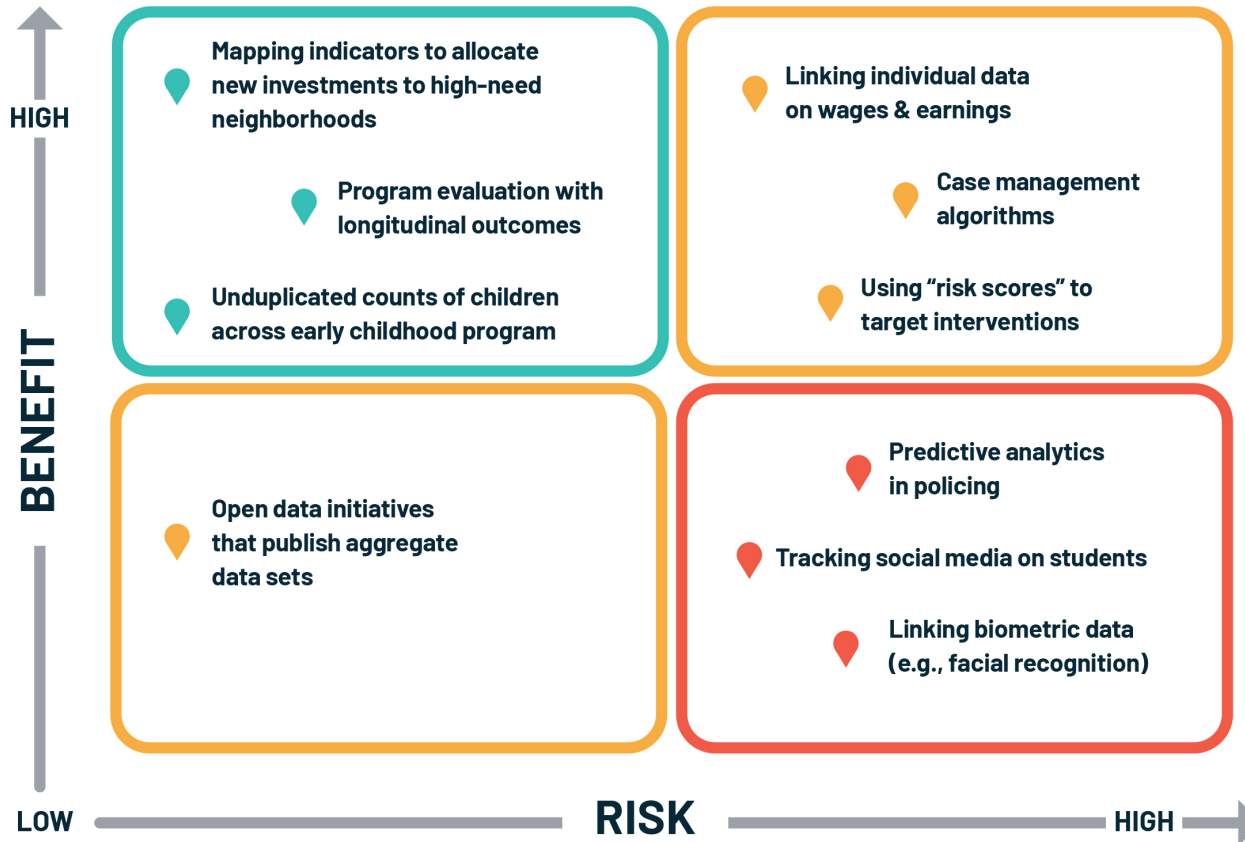
A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity  
Throughout Data Integration



<https://bit.ly/CenterRacialEquity>  
#CenterRacialEquity

\*<https://www.fatml.org/resources/principles-for-accountable-algorithms>

# Benefit/Risk Matrix



OPEN DATA	RESTRICTED DATA	UNAVAILABLE DATA
<p>Data that can be shared openly, either at the aggregate or individual level, based on state and federal law. These data often exist in open data portals.</p>	<p>Data that can be shared, but only under specific circumstances with appropriate safeguards in place.</p>	<p>Data that cannot or should not be shared, either because of state or federal law, lack of digital format (paper copies only), or data quality or other concerns.</p>

### Data Classification Matrix

<p><b>Data can be shared with agreement and approval through governance</b></p>	<p><b>Open data; can be shared without an agreement</b></p>
<p><b>Not shareable</b></p>	<p><b>Technology and/or data structure limits ability to share data</b></p>

# Planning

## Racial Equity in Planning: Positive & Problematic Practices

POSITIVE PRACTICE	PROBLEMATIC PRACTICE
Including diverse perspectives (such as community members with lived experiences and agency staff who understand the data) on planning committees	Using only token “representation” in agenda-setting, question creation, governance, or IRB review
Building capacity for researchers, administrators, and community participants to work together on agenda-setting	Using deadlines or grant deliverables as an excuse to rush or avoid authentic community engagement
Researching, understanding, and disseminating the history of local policies, systems, and structures involved, including past harms and future opportunities	Using only historical administrative data to describe the problem, without a clear plan of action to improve outcomes
Building data literacy among organizations and community members, which could range from light engagement through public activities like data “gallery walks” to more intense involvement, such as community-based participatory action research	Failing to manage expectations around what the data are capable of telling or how long it will take to see marked changes in data, actions, and outcomes
Establishing a common language and agreed upon sources and methods for reporting on community-based indicators	Failing to revisit indicator and outcome metrics regularly and revise when necessary
Clearly discerning who decides how to frame the problem or determine what questions to ask	Relying on academic institutions to frame the problem and research questions while failing to engage community-based organizations
Planning that includes the use of an asset; creating a framework that aims to clarify how to improve policy, services, and outcomes	Planning that includes the use of a deficit; creating a framework to describe outcomes
Lifting up the research needs of community to funders; helping shape funding strategy with funders to support community-driven research	Accepting grant/philanthropic funding for a project that is not a community priority or need



# Planning

## Positive practice

- Including diverse perspectives (such as community members with lived experiences and agency staff who understand the data) on planning committees
- Researching, understanding, and disseminating the history of local policies, systems, and structures involved, including past harms and future opportunities

## Problematic Practice

- Using only token “representation” in agenda-setting, question creation, governance, or IRB review
- Using only historical administrative data to describe the problem, without a clear plan of action to improve outcomes

# Now it's your turn:

Problematic Practices:

Positive Practices:

## Racial Equity in Planning: WORK IN ACTION

### Broward Data Collaborative by Sue Gallagher

Created in 2017, the Broward Data Collaborative (BDC) seeks to improve the outcomes by integrating data from multiple sources to inform evaluation, research, and care. The BDC consists of Broward County Public Schools, Broward County Human Services, Broward Behavioral Health Coalition, Florida Departments of Children and Family Justice, Early Learning Coalition of Broward, and the Children's Services Council of Broward County (which acts as the BDC backbone organization). In planning the BDC, the Council of Broward County used a Community Participatory Action Research (CPAR) to operationalize their core values of equity and transparency and account for the structural racism perpetuated by the community's systems and organizations. The BDC aims to help the BDC create racially equitable structures by involving system participants in the process of governance, research, evaluation, and solution creation to address the social and spatial gaps that are all too common between the predominantly White community governing integrated data systems and the BIPOC using public services.

Through this planning process, the BDC has worked to provide a seat at the proverbial table for youth and residents whose data are represented in the child-serving integrated data system (IDS). The BDC's recognition that their county-level systems produce racially disparate outcomes has guided them to build nonhierarchical relationships between the community and professionals. The BDC is creating an integrated data system that allows them to share strengths and use data to co-create system and

## Appendix I: Work in Action Throughout the Data Life Cycle

The following section includes site-based examples of Work in Action throughout the data life cycle, expanding upon the briefs included within the main part of the Toolkit.

### Racial Equity in Planning: WORK IN ACTION

#### Broward Data Collaborative by Sue Gallagher

**Who:** Broward Data Collaborative, Children's Services Council of Broward County

**Where:** Broward County, Florida

**Organization Type:** Government Agency, Community-Based Organization

**Domains:** Child welfare, behavioral health, juvenile justice, early learning, school, human services, prevention programs.

**Goal/Impact:** Through equitable collective action, diverse research strategies, and the use of high-quality data, to generate actionable intelligence that improves quality-of-life outcomes and community conditions.

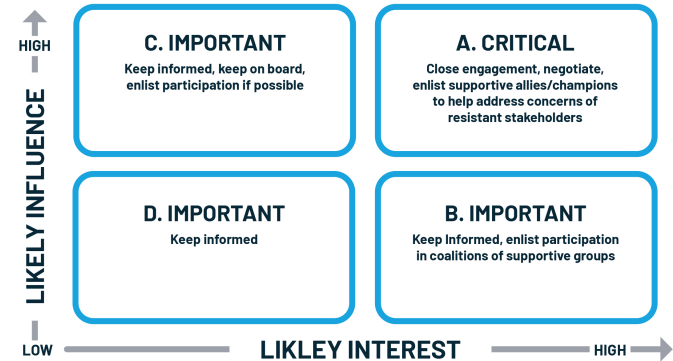
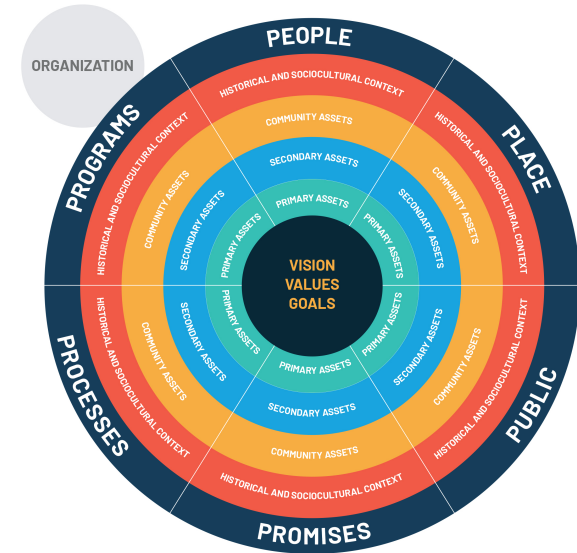
The Broward Data Collaborative (BDC) has worked to provide a seat at the proverbial (and literal) table for residents whose data is represented in the child-serving integrated data system (IDS). The BDC's recognition that their county-level systems produce racially disparate outcomes has guided their work to begin building nonhierarchical relationships between the community and professionals, inviting system participants to tell strengths-based stories about themselves and their community and use data to co-create system and policy improvements.

The BDC was created in 2017 with support from AISP through the AISP Learning Community initiative. The BDC seeks to improve the outcomes of residents in Broward County by integrating child-serving data from child welfare, behavioral health, juvenile justice, schools, early learning systems, county human services, and prevention programs. Data uses for the BDC include evaluation, research, and care coordination. The Children's Services Council of Broward County, the BDC's backbone organization, is an independent special taxing district that funds prevention programs for children and families in Broward County and has led the Broward Children's Strategic Plan for 20 years. Currently, the BDC's partners include senior leadership, researchers, and technology professionals from the human services agencies providing data to the BDC.

The BDC has rejected a race-neutral or colorblind design for data access and use. Instead, the BDC is intentionally designing an IDS framework that accounts for the historical and ongoing structural racism in the community, human services system, and service organizations. Too often, data infrastructures exist as racialized hierarchies with predominantly White researchers/policy makers and system professionals yielding power over participants represented in the data who are disproportionately BIPOC. Additionally, there is typically social and spatial segregation between users of the IDS, the system professionals, and people

# Toolkit Activities

ORGANIZATIONAL		
Mission/vision, values, goals of the organization overall and in the context of the relationship		
	OVERALL	RELATIONSHIP-SPECIFIC
MISSION / VISION	What is the overall mission/vision of the organization?	Is there a specific mission/vision for the relationship/project?
VALUES	What values structure the work of the organization?	How do these values manifest in this project?
GOALS	What are the stated and implied goals of the organization?	What are the goals specific to this relationship?



(adapted from Bryson, J., 2004)

**Now it's your turn  
Imagine its 2025. You are summarizing your efforts that  
allowed you to Center Racial Equity throughout your  
agency's data practices**

What's the headline of your  
annual report?

How did you get there?

# Biggest Takeaway?

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**Whether you're a data owner, a data steward, a data custodian, a caseworker — no matter where you are, there is something you can do, today, to center racial equity.**

"We are working to create a new kind of data infrastructure - one that dismantles 'feedback loops of injustice'\* and instead shares power and knowledge with those who need systems change the most.

Will you join us?"

-The authors of A Toolkit for Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration

<https://bit.ly/CenterRacialEquity>  
#CenterRacialEquity



\*Eubanks, V. (2018)

**Peer Reviewed Article:**

A Framework for Centering Racial Equity Throughout the Administrative Data Life Cycle, by Hawn Nelson & Zanti. International Journal of Population Data Science, Vol. 5 (3), October 2020. <https://ijpds.org/article/view/1367> \*Important to note that this peer-reviewed journal article is open access

**Peer Reviewed Presentation:**

Online presentation of International Population Data Linkage Network (on YouTube), Centering Racial Equity Throughout Data Integration, November 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GZ4uLFVvEpM>

**Short Article:**

Applying a Race Equity Lens to Build Thriving Communities: Centering Racial Equity Across the Lifecycle. American Public Human Services Administration (APHSA) Magazine, Zanti, Katz, & Hawn Nelson, August 2020

<https://www.aisp.upenn.edu/resource-article/applying-a-race-equity-lens-to-build-thriving-communities-centering-racial-equity-across-the-data-lifecycle/>

**Webinar Series:**

All In and the Network for Public Health Law, 3-part series on Racial Equity.

Part 1: Is it legal? Is it ethical? Is it a good idea? An Introduction to cross-sector data sharing, Amy Hawn Nelson & Emily Berkowitz,

<https://vimeo.com/454517262>

Part 2: How do you center racial equity throughout the data life cycle? Amy Hawn Nelson & Bridget Blount, <https://vimeo.com/460717054>

Part 3: Successfully engaging stakeholders to center racial equity across the data life cycle, Tawana Petty, Sue Gallagher, & Amy Hawn Nelson, <https://vimeo.com/468297266>

**Webinar:**

Urban Institute, coordinator of the National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership, and AISP event, “Centering Racial Equity in Data Use”:

<https://www.urban.org/events/centering-racial-equity-data-use>. You can also access presentation slides & Urban’s [Principles for Advancing Equitable Data Practice](#) document at that link

**Panel Presentations:**

Canada School of Public Service Digital Academy’s *Removing Bias and Building Trust in Your Data*, <http://collaboratevideo.net/csps-efpc/2020-09-02r/>

**Podcast:**

Personal Data Day, <http://www.personaldataaday.com/>; "Racial Justice in Data, a Toolkit," Tawana Petty & Amy Hawn Nelson, <https://link.medium.com/1Gdydkphlab>





# Questions?

Amy Hawn Nelson, PhD

[ahnelson@upenn.edu](mailto:ahnelson@upenn.edu)

And check out,

<https://bit.ly/CenterRacialEquity>

<https://bit.ly/DataIntegrationIntro>