



**Contact Information:**

Child Welfare League of America  
Christine James-Brown, President and CEO  
[cjamesbrown@cwla.org](mailto:cjamesbrown@cwla.org)

**NEWS RELEASE**  
For Immediate Release

**Equity and Justice for Children and Families**

Over the last few days, as we watch events unfold in this country after the murder of an African American man and resulting protests and further violence, we have felt anger, hurt, fear, despair, and a distant hope that maybe this could somehow result in a turning point. We are sure that this inner turmoil has been the same for many of you.

As people who work with children, youth, and families who are vulnerable, we are often firsthand witnesses to the consequences of inequity and injustice. We know that the families that we serve are disproportionately African American, Latino, and Native American. Those of us who are working in or advocating for families and children who may come into contact with the child welfare system can see directly the impact that all forms of violence have on children and families.

Our children are seeing images of a man murdered on television by officials who are supposed to protect and safeguard our well-being. All of this is happening during a global pandemic in which our employees, children, and families have been challenged like never before, and children and youth were just venturing out into their changed world.

We know that there are no easy solutions to these problems. We have significant work to do to ensure that our children and families have access to quality services and supports in their communities. There will have to be a long-term response to this assault on families and on children. We must commit to reexamining our policies and practices to ensure that they are equitable and just for all of the families and children who need services. In the short term, we need to:

- Look deep into our own hearts and at our attitudes on issues of color and race.
- Speak out and fight for justice and a better life for children and their families.
- Join our calls for better housing, child care, mental health services, health care, and an economy that gives everyone an opportunity.

- Think deeply and recommit to rooting out any vestiges of racism in your own work and the work done by your organization, and address it as a component of continuous improvement and excellence.
- Find ways to listen to each other and to the children and families you work with to better understand their fears, hopes, and what you can do to help them.

At CWLA, we know that we have a lot of listening and learning to do. We need your help in understanding your needs and the needs expressed by the children, families, and communities you serve. We are not going to assume that incremental change will be enough to prepare for “the new normal” but our commitment will be to organize our change around what we hear from you and our core values.

The anger that we are seeing is not just about the murder of one person. It is the outcome of the continued accumulation of injustices leveled against the African American community. We can hope and pray that this will be a transformative moment that inspires leadership at all levels of our government and society that seeks to bring us together. We need leadership that speaks without hatred, but with purpose and love for our country and all who live here—purpose that brings us together in dialogue, education, and honest conversation on how we can achieve true equality under the law and in the lives of all people.

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CWLA advocates for a vision of an America in which families, neighborhoods, communities, organizations, and federal, state, and local governments work together to ensure that all children have the opportunity to grow up healthy and strong. CWLA reshapes priorities, one community at a time, by bringing people together around common goals, sharing ideas that have been shown to work, and facilitating collaboration.