



## *CWLA Equity Statement*

The vision of CWLA's *National Blueprint for Excellence in Child Welfare* is that all children will grow up safely, with loving and supportive parents, caregivers, families, and communities, with everything they need to flourish. Every person should be respected and honored for who they are in terms of their culture, ethnicity, race, Tribal heritage, religion, national origin, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, socioeconomic status, and immigration status. This vision is grounded in a commitment to the infinite value of children, youth, parents, families, caregivers, and communities, and to a just society with the foundational rights to integrity, fairness, dignity, honesty, and social justice.

We recognize the special challenge of realizing this vision for children, parents, caregivers, and families who are Black, Brown, and Indigenous because of the insidious and intersectional ways in which racism perpetuates inequities in all human service systems, including child welfare. This racism exists within systems, agencies, and programs and within the broader society through racist laws and policies that drive and perpetuate inequities. The resulting failures of the social safety net bring those who are the most marginalized to the attention of child welfare systems.

These children, parents, caregivers, families, and communities compel CWLA and its member and partner organizations to create and advance an equitable child- and family-serving system by being accountable to those we serve. This requires deliberately focusing on the identification and elimination of all forms of racism, dismantling all policies and practices rooted in White privilege, and centering the voices and power of children, parents, caregivers, families, and their communities. This also requires acknowledging and addressing the impacts of historical and contemporary trauma, both from chronic racism and from the unnecessary removal of children from their families. And this requires urgent advocacy for a social safety net that helps prevent deprivation and supports stability. This is our moral imperative.