



Using Research on Racially and Ethnically Diverse Populations to Inform Policy and Practice

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Where are policies made?

- Administration for Children and Families,
Department of Health and Human Services
 - Child Care Development Fund, Head Start Program, Title IV-E Foster Care program, Unaccompanied Alien Children program
- Legislation typically authorizes funding for a program and states program objectives
- Federal agencies oversee the implementation of the legislation
 - Develop standards and requirements for programs

Where do I sit?

- Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation
 - Advises agency leadership on increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of ACF programs
 - Conducts evaluations of existing programs, research syntheses, and descriptive and exploratory studies
 - Provides guidance, analysis, and technical assistance to ACF programs
 - Works to improve the quality, usefulness, sharing, and analysis of data on ACF programs

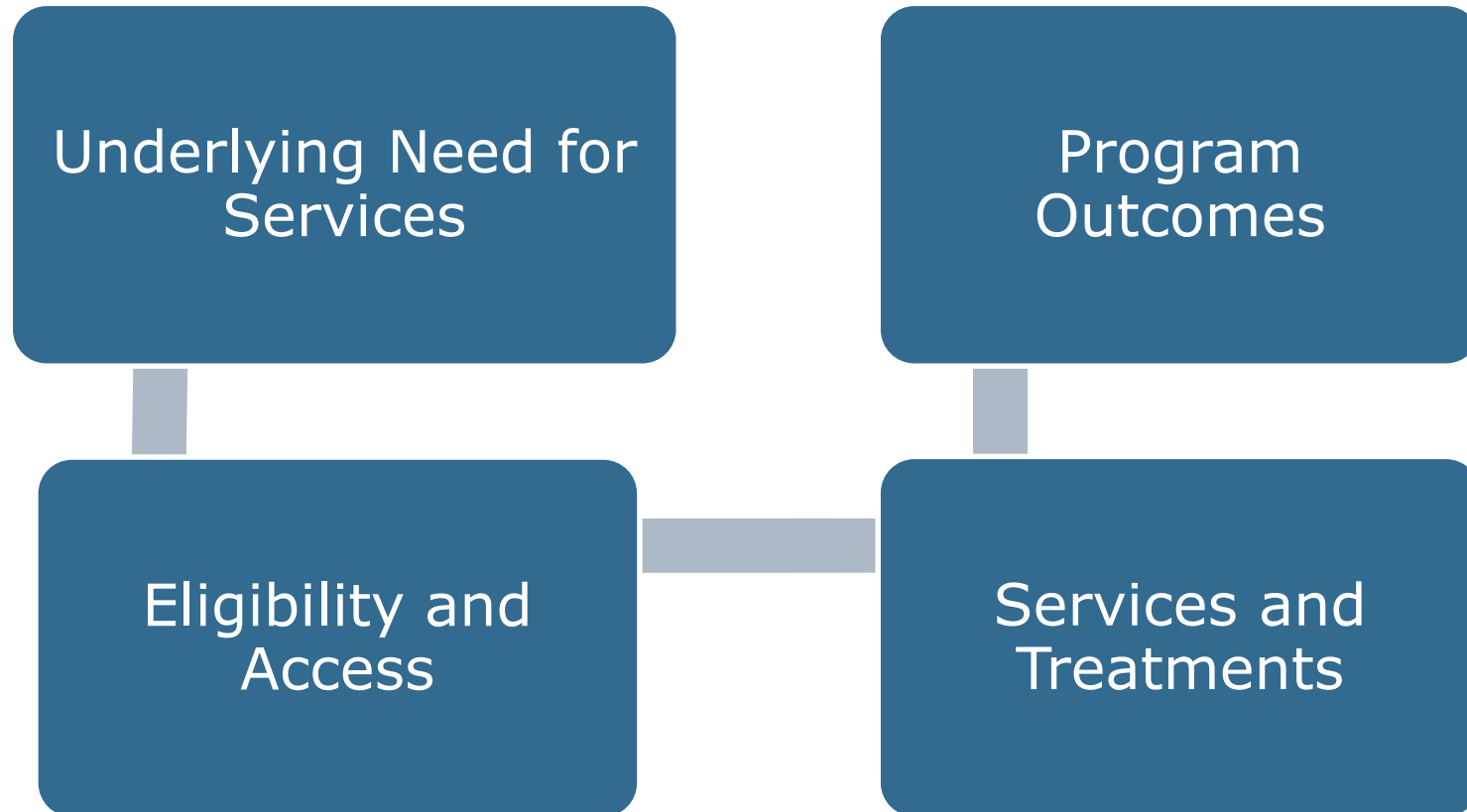
Key Questions

- **How can ACF programs be more effective at achieving outcomes related economic and social well-being (and reducing racial disparities)?**
 - *How do we identify and understand racial disparities in human services?*
 - *How do we tailor services to meet the needs of diverse families? How can programs be more culturally competent and responsive?*

Racial Disparities in Human Services

- No systematic definition or body of research focused on understanding racial and ethnic disparities in human services
- Define, measure and calculate disparities in a systematic way
- Identify and measure the mechanisms that may lead to racial disparities
 - Institutional and programmatic features may contribute to disparities

Racial Disparities in Human Services



Needs, Experiences and Outcomes for Diverse Groups

- Sociocultural, structural, and contextual factors that relate to families' needs, service experiences, and outcomes
 - Language, residency status, identity, neighborhood conditions, racism
- Which constructs are feasible to measure in large-scale federal studies or capture through administrative data?

Needs, Experiences and Outcomes for Diverse Groups

Research Methods Brief



Survey Data Elements to Unpack Diversity of Hispanic Populations

The Hispanic community represents the nation's largest ethnic minority group, accounting for more than half of the nation's growth over the past decade. According to the 2010 Census, there were 50.5 million Hispanics in the United States, making up 16.3 percent of the total population. There were 17.1 million Hispanic children ages 17 and younger, or 23.1 percent of this age group. It is predicted that one out of every four Americans will be of Hispanic heritage by the year 2050.

The Hispanic population is quite diverse in terms of national origin and history, racial identification, reason for migration, and proficiency in the English language. These differences create intercultural variation across different Hispanic groups as well as considerable intracultural variation within groups. Given the extraordinary diversity of Hispanics, it is important that service systems increase their capacity and understanding of this population.

The mission of the Administration of Children and Families (ACF), a division of the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), is "to foster health and well-being by providing federal leadership, partnership and resources for the

The grouping "Hispanic" often makes it challenging to observe important social experiences that relate strongly to the needs, service experiences, and outcomes of interest to ACF for various Hispanic subgroups.

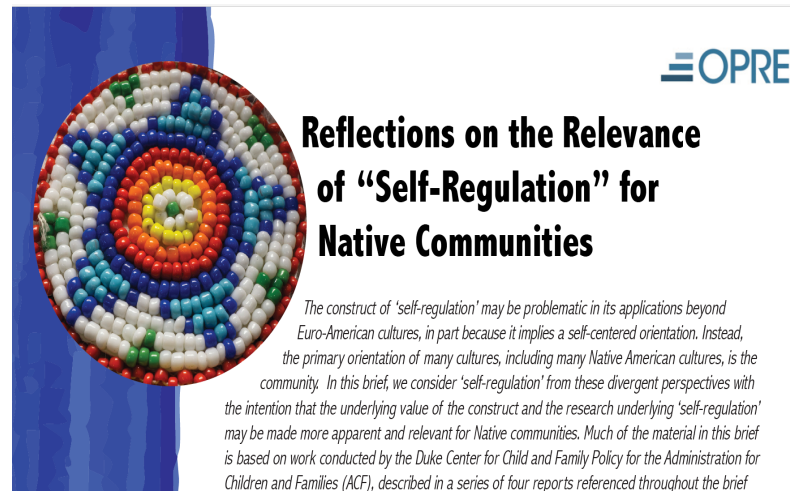
Why do we need additional demographic survey items?

Many Hispanic families and individuals are either being served by ACF programs or are in need of ACF services. Among children enrolled in Head Start, 34 percent are of Hispanic origin.² In the child welfare system, about 21 percent of the children in foster care are of Hispanic origin³ and 21 percent of the children confirmed as victims of maltreatment are Hispanic.⁴ Approximately 30 percent of families who are TANF recipients are Hispanic.⁵ Outcomes relevant to ACF – which span a full range of health, behavioral, economic,

- Develop standard survey questions
- For large-scale studies across content areas, including descriptive and evaluative research

Needs, Experiences and Outcomes for Diverse Groups

- Critically examine assumptions about “key” developmental processes
- Explore culturally-rooted practices and behaviors that may promote outcomes of interest



Using Participatory Approaches

- Involves consultation and collaboration with the communities you are studying
- Commitment to allowing research to be driven by the needs of individuals affected
- These approaches necessitate that research teams be open to various methods or designs
- Consider designs that let you understand *what* works for *whom* under *which* conditions

Broadening Dissemination Efforts

- Dissemination is a strategic communications process
- Partner with experts in framing and communicating research
- Select dissemination channels and outlets that reach policymakers and program implementers
 - Training and technical assistance centers
 - Conferences that cater to researchers and practitioners



Stay Connected



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