

**// Foundations**

What Works Centre for Children & Families

# SPEAKING OUT

What evidence and practice  
leaders can do to tackle racial  
disparities for families in England





# Goals for this session



Understand



Explore



Develop

# **BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS**





## **BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS**



“There are substantial racial disparities in early intervention and children’s social care that cannot be explained by deprivation alone.

.. some groups don’t receive the support they need, resulting in poorer outcomes, while others are more likely to have a higher level of intervention.

A lack of data limits the research that can be done, but we will consider what can be learnt about racial disparity in every study we carry out.

We will speak up for families who experience racial discrimination and use evidence about what works to call for change.”



EARLY  
INTERVENTION  
FOUNDATION

Race  
Equality  
Foundation



# SpeakOut


Improving the way family support  
services work for minority ethnic families



# SPEAKOUT

## Key findings

1. Experiences of discrimination and racism were commonly reported, both in trying to access services and in the support that families received from services.




*“There were clear disparities. There were clear differences in the way that my family were treated, my son in particular, and there were racial overtones that were clearly defined.”*

*“I had been stigmatised by systematic racism within the NHS and social care services as the crazy Black woman. I have been called a lot of negative things [and] had accusations and allegations thrown at me.”*

# SPEAKOUT

## Key findings

2. Minority ethnic families were proactively seeking help, but encountered multiple barriers, including finding appropriate services, issues with service capacity and long waiting lists, and negative experiences of the first point of contact with services.




*“Nobody tells us what support we can get and how to get it.”*

*“They recommended I speak to a GP with a paediatric specialism. The GP basically said there is nothing she can do, but she did make a referral to CAMHS – but also said she didn’t hold out any hope they would accept the referral. They did not.”*

# SPEAKOUT

## Key findings

3. More than 40% said the support they then received **made no difference or made things worse**. Parents and young people said they did not feel heard, understood, validated or empowered, and **some even felt judged** by the practitioner working with them when seeking help.



*“The people who ended up trying to help me were not helpful at all and just made me feel like my problems aren’t really problems. CAMHS didn’t help at all and made me feel worse, and the same with the family support worker”*

*“Sometimes it felt as though I was being judged as though I’m a bad mum even though I reached out for the help to begin with.”*



# SPEAKOUT

## Policy and practice implications



1. Children and family services must embed effective approaches to **eradicate racist and discriminatory practices**.
2. Initial interactions with support services are critical. Local areas must make the idea of **'no wrong door'** a reality for minority ethnic children, young people or families who reach out for help.

# SPEAKOUT

## Policy and practice implications



3. Early help and wider family support services must be designed to better respond to the needs of minority ethnic families.
4. Workforce planning in relation to early help and wider family support services must include a focus on the skills needed to build trusting relationships with minority ethnic families.

# ACHIEVING EQUITABLE FAMILY SUPPORT

Developing local approaches to improve services for minority ethnic children & families



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What Works Centre for Children & Families

# ACHIEVING EQUITABLE FAMILY SUPPORT

## Theme 1: Local communities

*“[Our local area] is very diverse and there's different needs in different areas. So what? It's almost like one shoe doesn't fit all [...] So we want to get the right services for people in the right places.”*



# ACHIEVING EQUITABLE FAMILY SUPPORT

## Theme 2: Workforce



*“When I tell you something happened to me, it's not an attack on you.”*

*“When you work with a disclosure, you listen. You don't make excuses.”*

# ACHIEVING EQUITABLE FAMILY SUPPORT

## Theme 3: Using evidence



*“We have a service user forum... which is obviously really important for us in terms of feedback on how we're doing as a service, which challenges what we're doing right, what we're not doing right, where we may be accessible for others where we may not be, and that's where we get a bulk of our information from.”*

# ACHIEVING EQUITABLE FAMILY SUPPORT

## Policy & Practice recommendations



### National Government

- Profile
- National leadership
- Local capacity
- Incentivise data

### Research Organisations

- Synthesis
- Generation
- EDIE lens

### Local Authorities & partners

- Understanding current provision
- Responsive support offer
- Evaluating improvements



IMPROVING THE WAY  
FAMILY SUPPORT  
SERVICES WORK FOR  
MINORITY ETHNIC  
FAMILIES

<https://www.eif.org.uk/report/improving-the-way-family-support-services-work-for-minority-ethnic-families>



## Improving the way family support services work for minority ethnic families

June 2022

Stephanie Waddell, Miriam Sorgenfrei, Grace Freeman, Montel Gordon, Milly Steele and Hannah Wilson



<https://foundations.org.uk/our-work/reports/developing-local-approaches-to-improve-services-for-minority-ethnic-children-and-families/>



[https://foundations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Foundations\\_Our-Strategy-2023-2027.pdf](https://foundations.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Foundations_Our-Strategy-2023-2027.pdf)



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