



## **FRCSA Social Justice and Racial Equity Policy**

Family Resource Center South Atlantic (FRCSA) realizes that to fully achieve our mission, “to help families acquire the social and economic skills to be self-sufficient” we must advance social justice and racial equity that is critical to our work with families, as well as within the agency. We recognize that there is a shift in local, state, and federal practices, policies, and beliefs that seeks to address inequities and disparities necessary to create and sustain equitable opportunities that help all persons thrive.

We are often required to collaborate, access, and rely on other systems and institutions to engage with our families. This is crucial to meet program performance outcomes and ensure that families have received the benefits and opportunities necessary to successfully be self-sufficient. It is an expectation that our families will have positive outcomes regardless of race, gender, age, sexual orientation, religious belief, or familial status. Our programs have sought to work with families who are victims of social injustice, who struggle with getting a good education, the right job opportunities, and access to resources that can lift them out of poverty and create a more equitable experience.

Racial disparities, discrimination, and segregation are widespread and continue to undermine our social and economic fabric. Economic and social instability will continue to increase, and far too many families and children will continue to fall behind. Many are marginalized economically and culturally, facing bias and barriers when seeking basic opportunities for advancement.

Therefore, FRCSA is committed to the development and application of a social justice and racial equity framework and to foster dialogue about advancing social justice and racial equity in systems and policies, both internal and external, that seeks **“to reform systems in order to provide a fair, just and impartial delivery of resources according to the needs of each individual and community so that opportunities afforded are truly equitable and without bias.”**

The following expectations, adapted from Bryan Stevenson’s “*Just Mercy*” guides FRCSA’s service delivery, organizing, and community capacity building. We expect the following of ourselves to become effective change agents:

- 1. Get proximate to the problem.**

- *We can’t work collectively on a problem unless we have a common understanding of what it is.*

## **2. Change the narrative.**

- *What are our narratives about the people we serve?*
- *How are these narratives played out in our systems and institutions?*
- *How have we internalized these narratives?*

## **3. Expect inconvenience and discomfort.**

- *Discomfort must become a part of the journey and something to be welcomed because it signals our growing edge.*

## **4. Stay committed and engaged.**

- *This isn't a sprint but a journey, one that we need to engage with curiosity and commitment and persistent long-term work.*

## **5. Respect the process.**

- *We need to cultivate a new way of seeing and working together that may seem cumbersome, puzzling, slow and even conflictual at times. We need to trust, study, and analyze before action.*

## **6. Listen respectfully and respect confidentiality.**

- *In our work we must also respect those we are working with by listening to each other deeply, for meaning and respecting confidentiality of thoughts, ideas and experiences offered by all individuals.*

## **7. Maintain hope, even in the face of the brutal facts.**

- *It is the sense that our efforts are meaningful and will lead us forward toward a desired outcome.*

### **Staff Expectations**

FRCSA staff will be expected to complete the REI Groundwater Presentation, IDDEA training, and participate in at least 1 additional professional development social justice and racial equity activity annually. FRCSA staff will also be expected to demonstrate behaviors and skills in their work performance and interactions with program participants and community partners. These will be measured and evaluated each year during their annual employment performance evaluation.

A Racial Equity Action Team composed of five FRCSA staff, two Board members, two community partners and two past program participants will develop a social justice and racial equity 3-year strategic plan that will build FRCSA's capacity for each of the following key components:

1. **Research** (identify existing sources of research publications and articles) for funding, collaboration, partnership, and information
2. **Data engagement** (surveys, polls, collaboration with other anti-racist groups, community, etc.) for program enhancement, community capacity building, storytelling
3. **Policy development activities** (for systemic and organizational reform)
4. **Promotion of Diversity, Inclusion and Equity** among FRCSA programs and partners.
5. **Healing and reconciliation** from the effects of racism and disparate treatment
6. **Educational opportunities and advocacy training** to staff, program participants, youth, and young adults (ages 16-24), and other marginalized populations to organize and address systems of oppression.

The team will conduct an organizational assessment annually to measure the level of staff and organizational effort in meeting program performance outcomes in alignment with the Social Justice and Racial Equity Strategic Plan.

**Rationale:**

- a. Since its inception in 1995 FRCSA has primarily served people of color in 20 counties to date.
- b. FRCSA was founded by and for people of color. Though now diverse in the populations served, its governing body, administrators, program staff, and benefactors continue to be majoritically people of color.)
- c. 2006 – 2010 FRCSA staff co-organized and led the Way-Out Giving Circle designed to increase the capacity of grass root African American organizations through philanthropic support and technical assistance.
- d. In 2014 FRCSA received a grant from the North Carolina Governor’s Crime Commission to address disproportionality and disparities in the Juvenile Justice system creating the IDDEA (Impacting Disproportionality, Disparities, Equity and Access) curriculum that has trained over 400 individuals in 4 North Carolina counties.
- e. In 2015 FRCSA supported the establishment of Raleigh Organizing Against Racism (ROAR) hosting REI trainings and ROAR meetings.
- f. Early 2021, in response to the many incidences that led to racial protest and unrest, federal, state, and local agencies, non-profits, and philanthropic groups

have embraced Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and, in some cases, Racial Equity to address the current and historical impacts on people of color and marginalized groups. In doing so, programs and services funded by these entities are requesting grantees to include a plan to address racial equity as part of their program performance outcomes.