



# EVALUATING RACE EQUITY AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES TO REFORM THE DEEP END OF JUVENILE JUSTICE

# Welcome and Overview

---



Jeffrey Poirier  
Senior Research Associate  
The Annie E. Casey Foundation



**The Annie E. Casey Foundation develops solutions to build a brighter future for children, families and communities.**

# Agenda

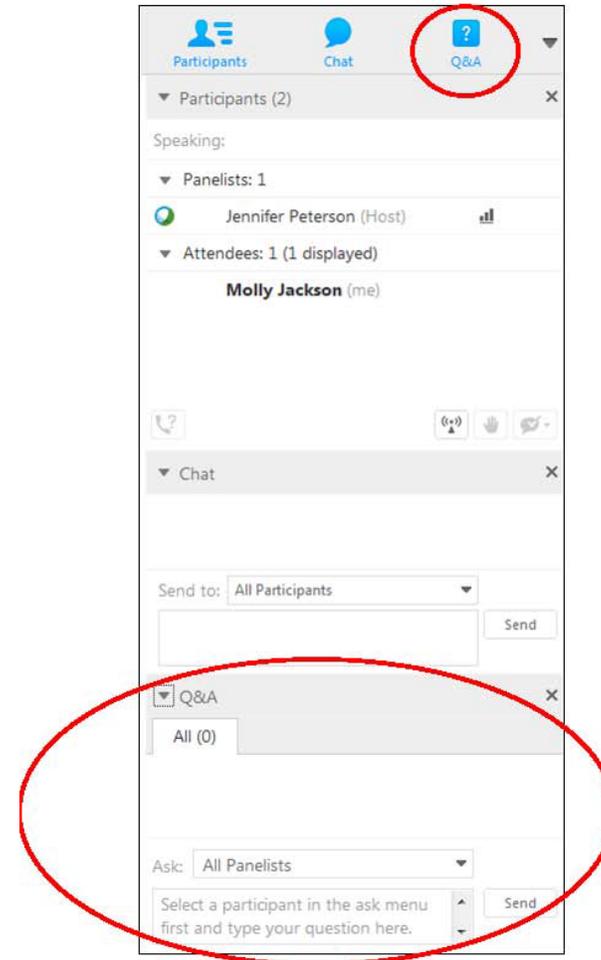
---

- Welcome and housekeeping
- What is deep-end work?
- Evaluation approach and methods
- Findings related to racial and ethnic equity and inclusion (REEI)
- Findings related to youth and family engagement
- Building equity and engagement into evaluation
- Questions and answers

# Communicating During the Webinar

Communicate with us using the Chat or Q&A window in the lower right corner of your screen.

- Type questions for the panel at any time during the webinar.
- Use the box to let us know if you are having technical difficulties.



# Today's Presenters

---



**Janine Zweig**  
The Urban Institute



**Leah Sakala**  
The Urban Institute



**Todd Honeycutt**  
Mathematica

# What is Deep-End Reform?

# What is Deep-End Reform?

**What is Deep-End Reform?**

- Funded and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as an extension of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative®
- Aims to safely and significantly reduce juvenile out-of-home placement, especially for youth of color
- Three key elements:
  - data use
  - racial and ethnic equity and inclusion
  - youth and family engagement

**Fundamental Aspects of Deep-End Reform**

The diagram consists of three circular icons in a row. The first icon is green and shows two hands shaking, labeled 'RACE AND ETHNICITY'. The second icon is orange and shows a bar chart with an upward-pointing arrow, labeled 'DATA'. The third icon is dark blue and shows a family of four (two adults and two children), labeled 'YOUTH AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT'. A yellow double-headed arrow is positioned below these three icons.

- Funded and supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation as an extension of the Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative®
- Aims to safely and significantly reduce juvenile out-of-home placement, especially for youth of color
- Three key elements:
  - data use
  - racial and ethnic equity and inclusion
  - youth and family engagement

## Fundamental Aspects of Deep-End Reform



# How Does the Foundation Support Deep-End Sites?

---

1. Provides individualized guidance and technical assistance
2. Facilitates communication and collaboration with other sites
3. Produces tools and resources
4. Offers support with data collection and analysis

# Reform Activities

---

1. Improving probation practices
2. Better decision making throughout the system
3. Expanding diversion and service options
4. Increasing avenues for youth and family engagement

# Overview of the Evaluation Approach and Methods

# Why Conduct a Developmental Evaluation?

---

1

Informing the initiative in real time

2

Documenting the evolution of the initiative

3

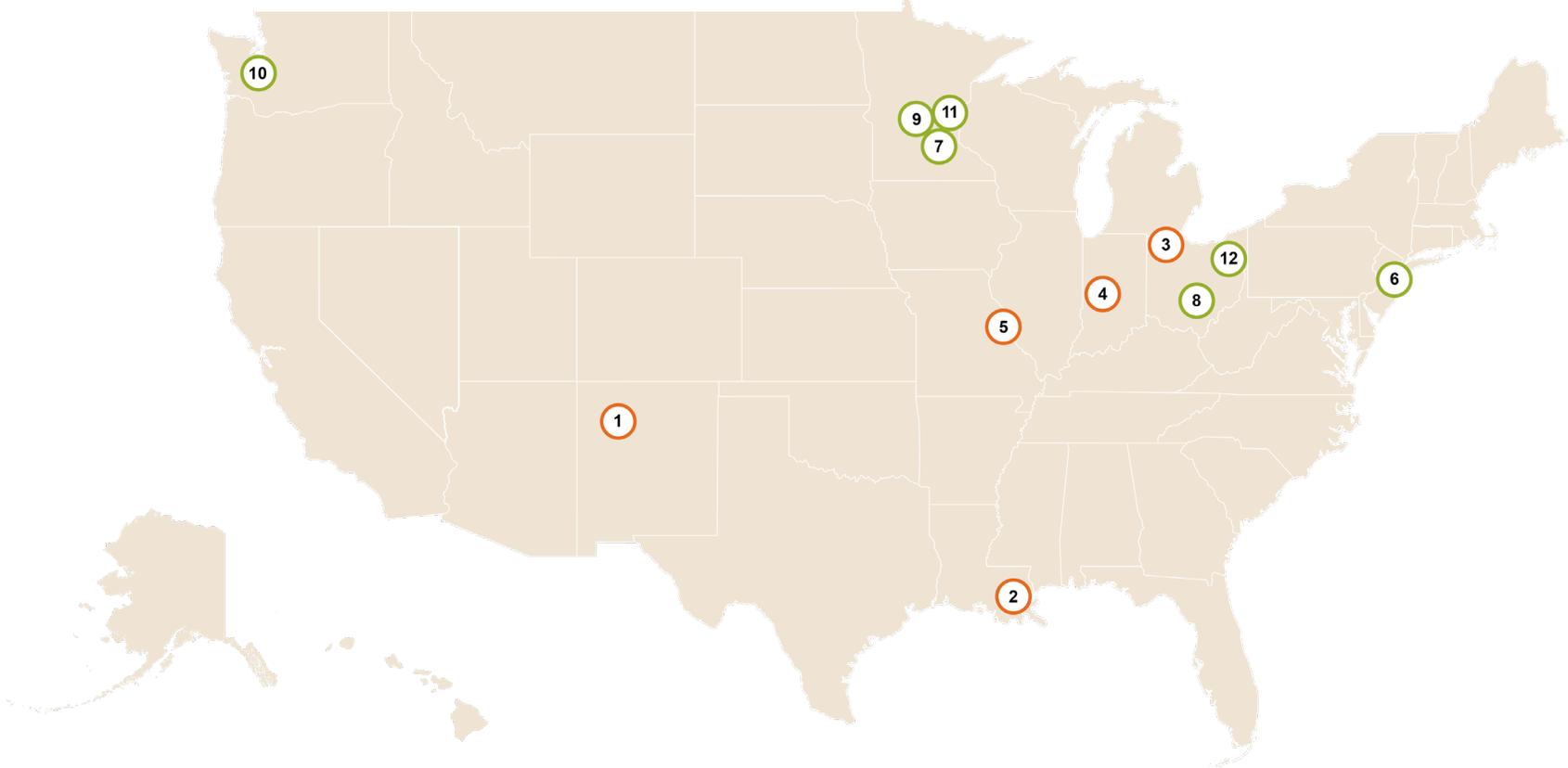
Sharing lessons with the field

# The Developmental Evaluation of the Deep-End Work

---

- Partnership between the Urban Institute and Mathematica, with Doug Young from the University of Maryland
- Six-year, mixed methods, developmental process evaluation
- Data collection occurred between 2014 and 2018
- Recently released a series of reports and other products

# Communities Participating in the Evaluation



### Cohort 1

- 1. Bernalillo County, New Mexico
- 2. Jefferson Parish, Louisiana
- 3. Lucas County, Ohio
- 4. Marion County, Indiana
- 5. St. Louis City, Missouri

### Cohort 2

- 6. Camden County, New Jersey
- 7. Dakota County, Minnesota
- 8. Franklin County, Ohio
- 9. Hennepin County, Minnesota
- 10. Pierce County, Washington
- 11. Ramset County, Minnesota
- 12. Summit County, Ohio

# Mixed-Methods Approach

---

## Qualitative

- Regular interviews with coordinators and technical assistance providers
- One or two visits per site to interview a broad range of deep-end participants and observe site activities
- Review of site workplans, products and other materials

## Quantitative

- A single-wave survey of deep-end stakeholders
- A two-wave survey specifically focusing on probation, and including JDAI sites as well as deep-end sites

# Benefits and Limitations of our Approach

---

- Quantitatively measure change over time for stakeholders and progress in activities across sites
  - But unable to track changes in juvenile justice administrative data or changes for youth
- Contextualize quantitative findings with data from system stakeholder and community partner interviews, site activity observations, and document reviews
- Measure an initiative that evolved during the evaluation
- Make process the priority, not outcomes

# Findings Related to Racial and Ethnic Equity and Inclusion (REEI)

# Evaluation Analysis Framework for REEI

## Level 1: Awareness

- Leaders and stakeholders acknowledge that REEI problems and disparities exist.
- Leaders and stakeholders work to take personal responsibility to address REEI.
- The site works toward cultural change, which may include a designated REEI committee and/or engaging with external facilitators.

## Level 2: Data Engagement and System Analysis

- The site goes above and beyond the initial Foundation assessment and stakeholders consistently assess REEI data or examine cases with an equity lens.
- The site includes and engages youth, families and community representatives in identifying problems, diagnosing causes and developing solutions.

## Level 3: Actions

- The site advances targeted actions, policies and/or program changes to addresses issues or challenges specific to youth of color.
- The site uses specific inclusion and engagement strategies.

# Level I: Awareness

---

- Sites varied in their familiarity with REEI when they began deep-end work
- Some sites newer to REEI work focused on building a shared understanding and cultivating buy-in among staff
  - Sharing information (e.g., via trainings)
  - Culture change
- Developing strategies to overcome resistance
  - Using data
  - Developing trainings
  - Using tools

**Awareness spotlight:**  
Justice for Families  
trainings

## Level II: Data Engagement and System Analysis

---

- Data can be a useful strategy for launching discussions about REEI
- Implementing data systems and processes focused on REEI strategies throughout an agency can require targeted efforts, and technical assistance (TA) can help
- Sites are required to disaggregate juvenile justice data by race and ethnicity for the initial assessment and for regular progress reporting
- Additional activities that support data use included:
  - conducting systematic case file reviews
  - developing and sharing new performance measures
  - implementing regular internal reporting practices

**Data spotlight:**  
Case file review

## Level II: Actions

---

- Tailored to the needs and priorities of the individual sites
- Equity strategies aim to reduce the number of youth of color in the deep end
- Inclusion strategies aim to:
  - Involve youth and families in case planning
  - Involve youth and families in juvenile justice decision making more broadly.

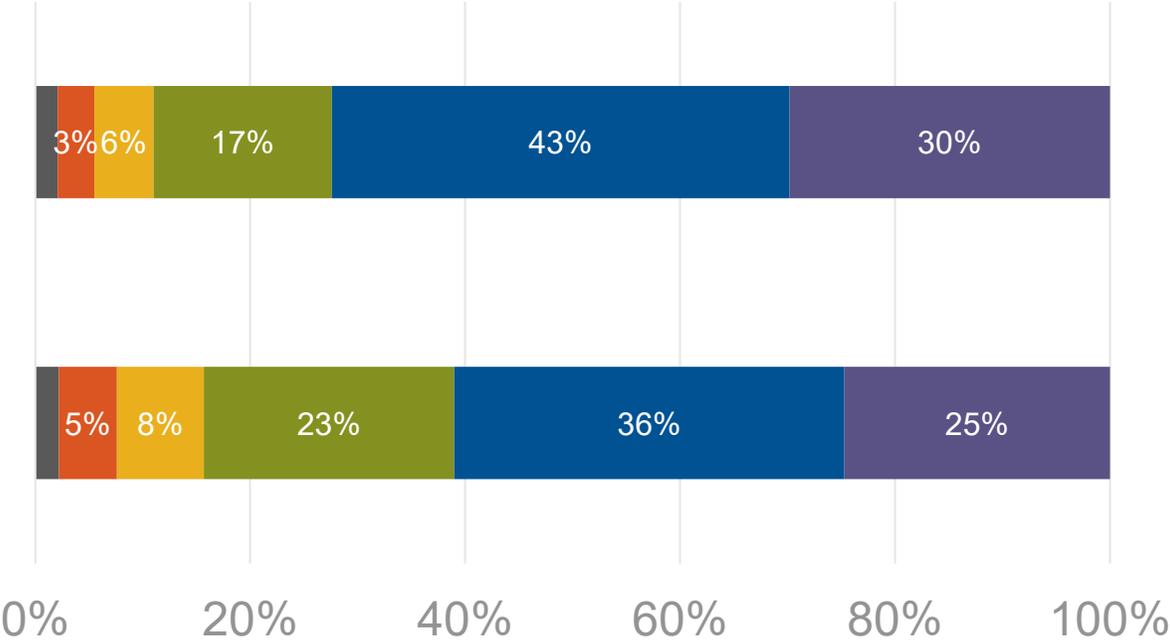
**Actions spotlight:  
Stress Pass  
Program**

# Survey Data Suggest Actions Can Be Challenging, Despite Commitment

Juvenile justice leaders...

...are committed to identifying and addressing any racial and ethnic disparities in youth outcomes.

...have conducted activities to identify and reduce racial and ethnic disparities in decision making and/or youth outcomes.



■ Strongly Disagree ■ Disagree ■ Slightly Disagree ■ Slightly Agree ■ Agree ■ Strongly Agree

Stakeholder Survey of Juvenile Probation Policies and Practices

Notes: Data collected in 10 sites (Bernalillo County, Jefferson Parish, Lucas County, Marion County, St. Louis City, Camden County, Pierce County, Ramsey County, Summit County, and Hennepin County). Data collected summer to fall 2017; n=242; 79% response rate.

# Takeaways on REEI

---

1. Conversations about REEI can be sensitive, and trust-building among participants can require both patience and persistence.
2. Collecting and reporting data disaggregated by race and ethnicity can help catalyze and advance REEI conversations and measure progress.
3. Strong leadership and strategic staffing can facilitate culture change and progress on REEI outcomes.
4. Communicating with a wide range of stakeholders across the juvenile justice system and the broader community about REEI work can foster a sense of collective responsibility.

# Reflections on Evaluating REEI Efforts

---

1. Connecting with a wide range of stakeholders is key for understanding different perspectives on REEI priorities and accomplishments.
2. The survey instrument allowed for more impersonal data collection, but data may still be skewed by self-report and social desirability biases.
3. Tracking TA activities related to REEI opened opportunities to ask specific questions regarding attitudes, reactions and follow-up activities.
4. Jurisdictions had varying capacity levels to collect and use data on race and ethnicity.

# Findings Related to Youth and Family Engagement

# The Role of Engagement

---

## What?

By **engagement**, we mean that youth and families have a **meaningful voice** in the decision-making process at the **individual case level** and **the juvenile justice system level**.

## Why?

- Engagement is a fundamental part of race equity work.
- Families are central to young people's development.
- Youth perspectives might not be taken into account by juvenile justice system staff.

# Three Primary Engagement Approaches

---

## Developing resources

- Including navigating the court process and connecting with resources

## Involvement in decision making at the individual level

- Including recommendations on how best to handle cases

## Involvement in decision making at the system level

- Including developing family councils or advisory boards

- All nine sites participating in qualitative data collection pursued activities related to youth and family engagement.

# Resources

---

## Newsletters

- Such as a periodic newsletter for families with resources, news and upcoming events

## Gatherings

- Such as a family dinner program, organized by a local nonprofit, in which agency staff share a meal with parents and caregivers of system-involved youth

## Family Navigator Programs

- Making staff available to support families and caregivers and answer their questions about juvenile justice processes

## Resource Guides

- Such as printed information about the juvenile justice system, the role that youth and families can expect to play and additional community support

# Engagement in Individual-Level Decisions

---

## Spotlight: Team Support Approach

- The court in one site created a program called the Team Support Approach to support youth on probation by working with caring adults in their lives to:
  - discuss a youth's strengths and needs;
  - identify and provide resources;
  - make plans to increase the youth's access to well-being; and
  - repair harm to the victim and support accountability.
- The team can be leveraged before pursuing a probation violation.
- A nonprofit organization coordinated meetings and offered advice on effective family engagement.

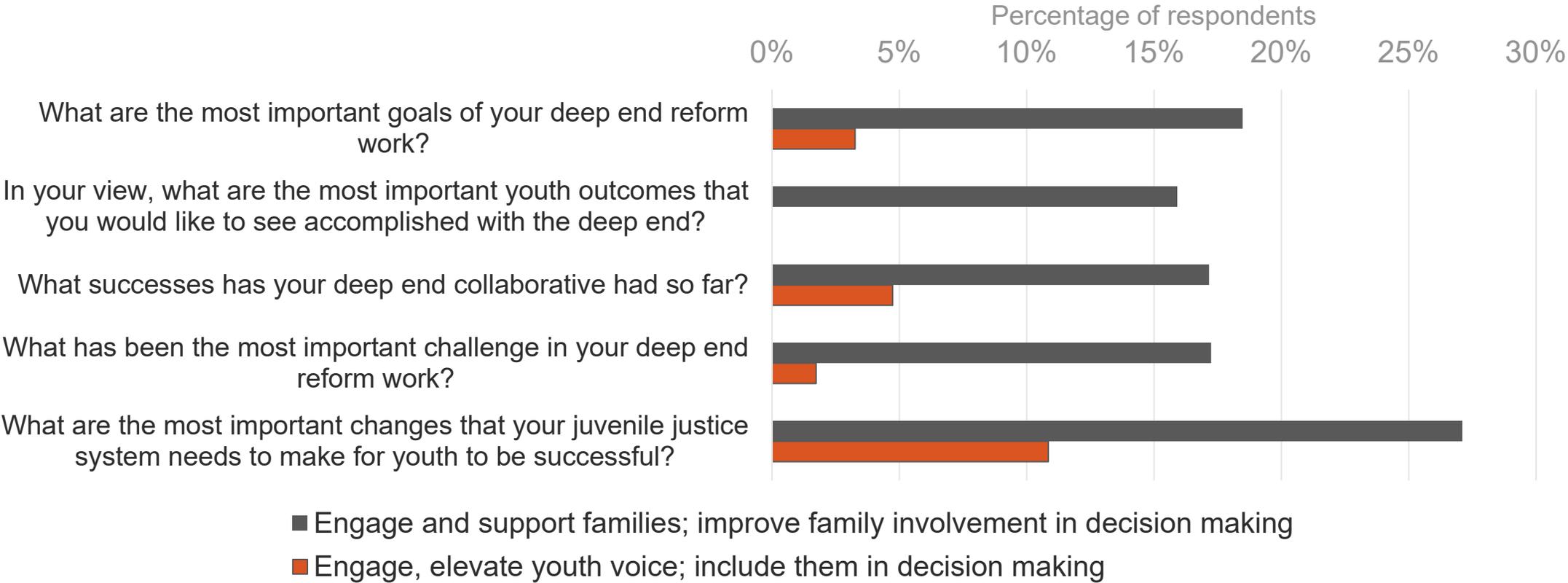
# Engagement in System-Level Decisions

---

## Spotlight: Family Council

- One site created a council designed to allow parents and youth with probation experience to provide input on probation practice and policy.
- The council includes three family members and three youth, as well as court staff representatives. A local nonprofit community partner facilitates the council meetings.
- Youth members are required to be age 18 or older, have completed their court responsibilities and have a desire to use their voices and perspectives for change

# Youth Engagement May Require Targeted Attention



Stakeholder Survey of Juvenile Probation Policies and Practices

Notes: Data collected in 10 sites (Bernalillo County, Jefferson Parish, Lucas County, Marion County, St. Louis City, Camden County, Pierce County, Ramsey County, Summit County, and Hennepin county), data collected summer to fall 2017; n=242; 79% response rate. The percent refers to the percentage of respondents answering the question. Respondents for each question ranged from 166 to 184.

# Takeaways on Youth and Family Engagement

---

1. Valuing the involvement of both youth and families requires planning and deliberation.
2. Engaging youth and family at the individual level might be easier than doing so at the system level.
3. Bringing in external resources can facilitate activities related to youth and family involvement.

# Reflections on Evaluating Youth and Family Engagement Efforts

---

1. Mixed-methods approach allowed us to observe youth and family participation in leadership and work groups.
2. Interviews and materials reviews provided rich data on activity development.
3. Survey data measured attitudes and perspectives on youth and family engagement.
4. Not incorporating youth and family perspectives was a significant limitation for the evaluation.

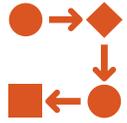
# Considerations for Building Equity and Engagement into Evaluation

# Casey's Perspective: Now is the Time to Embed Equity in Evaluation

---



Evaluation practices that embed equity align with Casey's mission and result in more relevant insights.



Evaluation field is evolving; this is an opportunity moment.



Evaluators should work to engage community more directly in all phases of an evaluation.



Engaging young people in evaluation builds on what we know from brain science, too.

# Resources for Incorporating Equity in Evaluation

---

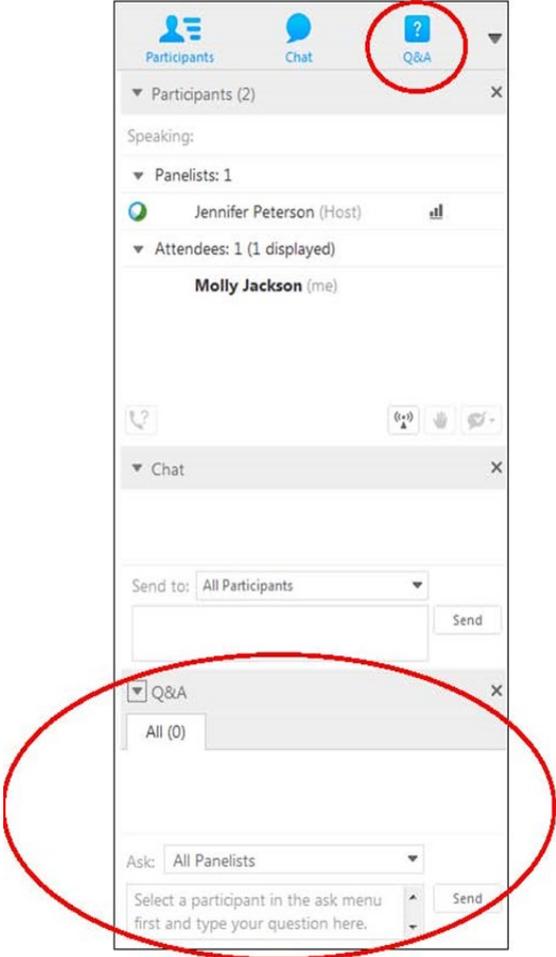
- <https://www.childtrends.org/publications/embedding-racial-equity-perspective-positive-youth-development-approach>
- <https://chicagobeyond.org/researchequity/>
- <https://www.equitableeval.org/>
- <https://expandingthebench.org/>

**Questions?**

# Questions?

**Please use the Chat or Q&A function on your screen to submit questions.**

A recording of this webinar will be posted at [www.aecf.org/webinar](http://www.aecf.org/webinar).



# Learn More

- See the package of deep-end evaluation products at <https://www.aecf.org/resources/keeping-youth-out-of-the-deep-end-of-the-juvenile-justice-system/>
- Learn more about the deep-end approach and strategies in the Casey Foundation report [\*Leading With Race to Reimagine Youth Justice.\*](#)

The screenshot displays the website for The Annie E. Casey Foundation. At the top right, there are navigation links for 'TOPICS' and 'PUBLICATIONS'. Below these, there are links for 'STRATEGIES', 'BLOG', and 'ABOUT US'. The main header features the foundation's logo and name. A breadcrumb trail shows 'RESOURCES'. The central focus is a large article titled 'Keeping Youth Out of the Deep End of the Juvenile Justice System', which is a developmental evaluation overview of the foundation's deep-end reform. It is authored by Urban Institute and dated September 8, 2020. To the right of this article is a smaller report titled 'LEADING WITH RACE TO REIMAGINE YOUTH JUSTICE', part of the 'JDAI's Deep-End Initiative'. Below the main article, there is a green button that says 'DOWNLOAD THIS REPORT ON IMPLEMENTING DEEP-END REFORMS'. At the bottom right, there is a photograph of a young man in a dark t-shirt and cap, sitting on a large metal ring structure at what appears to be a park or community center. The text 'In This Report, You'll Learn' is visible above the photo, and 'The three pillars of Casey's approach to' is partially visible below it.



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

*Developing solutions to build a brighter future  
for children, families and communities*

[www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)