



## Black History Month and Racial Inequality in the Child Welfare System

February is Black History Month, and this year it focuses on a critically important topic - **The Black Family: Representation, Identity and Diversity**. The Black family provides the foundation for African American life, yet it has been stereotyped and vilified throughout history. Children growing up in black families continue to face a mountain of inequalities, including the child welfare system.

The 2020 **Kids Count Data Book** notes that racial inequities remain deep in the child welfare system. As a nation, the report notes, we have failed to provide African

American children and families with the support necessary to thrive, and states have not gotten rid of barriers facing all children of color. Even when risk factors are the same, white families are more likely to receive family and home support, whereas **Black families are more likely to have their children removed**. Plus:

- ▶ In Pennsylvania, **Black children are 4.5 times more likely to be in foster care** and 5 times more likely to re-enter foster care than white children.
- ▶ In Michigan, children of color were more likely than white children to be investigated, removed, age out, and die in the system.
- ▶ Nationwide, the Commission to Eliminate Child Abuse and Neglect Fatalities noted an extraordinarily high rate of maltreatment fatalities among African American children

as well as finding evidence of caseworkers' implicit bias, bias, and racism in the child welfare system.

The Commission stated, "The research on child welfare involvement broken down by race indicates that African American children are more likely than white children to be reported to child protective services (CPS) as possible victims of abuse or neglect, more likely to be investigated, and more likely to be removed from their families and placed in foster care. African American families are less likely to receive in-home services or to be reunified than are white families."

What can we do to tackle these issues while supporting the Black family? Significant changes need to be made in the current system to address implicit bias and racism so that all children and families receive equitable treatment.



In Pennsylvania, DHS Secretary Teresa Miller says change is underway and promises a continual, intentional focus after a recent report on Racial Equity in Pennsylvania revealed **systemic racism in the child welfare system**. Acknowledging the issue and making intentional changes are steps in the right direction, but it will take years to undo systemic racism at all levels within the child welfare system.



THROUGHOUT THE MONTH OF APRIL

In recognition of National Child Abuse Prevention Month in April, PFSA will honor Blue Ribbon Champions from across the commonwealth in a virtual format. These individuals are recognized for their exceptional contributions and efforts as we strive to prevent child abuse and neglect. This recognition is also a reminder to us all that every child needs a champion, and anyone can be a champion for a child.

Additionally, PFSA will host a variety of virtual activities throughout the month of April to raise awareness and educate others about child abuse prevention in Pennsylvania. Activities include an interactive map representing child abuse data across counties and spotlight presentations from experts in the field. Other activities will include messages from special guests throughout the month, as well as a memorial for the children lost in Pennsylvania last year due to child abuse and neglect.

We invite you to connect with us in April to learn more about what can be done and how you can help prevent child abuse and neglect in your community and across the commonwealth. Please consider joining us in April by raising two thumbs up to #ProtectPAKids!

Visit our website at [pafsa.org](https://pafsa.org) for more details in the coming weeks!

# UPCOMING PFSA TRAININGS

## NEW TRAINING NOW AVAILABLE

### Child Residential Facility Staff as Mandated Reporters

**Title of Training:** Reporting Requirements for Children Served in Residential Care Facilities

**Training Hours:** 3 Hours

**Training Summary:** PA Family Support Alliance has created a training for providers and other child-serving entities that clarifies what allegations must be reported to ChildLine as suspected child abuse and/or HCSIS as a reportable incident and further clarifies when an alternative plan of supervision must be put into place.

This training also teaches minimal-facts interviewing skills to better determine when to make a report and then explains how those reports of suspected child abuse are categorized and handled at ChildLine. Lastly, internal follow-up recommendations and communication are discussed.

This training mirrors the information outlined in the OCYF Bulletin # 3800-21-01 issued 1/19/2021 and is meant as additional training (not a replacement for the mandated reporter training).

#### Training Goals:

► Participants will understand what are and are not reportable incidents and what allegations must be reported to ChildLine as a CPS and/or HCSIS as a reportable incident.

► Participants will learn minimal facts interviewing skills to better determine when to make a report of suspected child abuse.

► Participants will understand how reports are categorized and handled at ChildLine, to include the identification of an alleged perpetrator.

► Participants will understand the roles and responsibilities of the DHS Regional Office of Children, Youth, and Families in a CPS report or complaint.

► Participants will understand the requirements for alternative plans of supervision.

► Participants will learn recommendations that ensure proper reporting, internal follow-up, process for modifications, and communication at the conclusion.

**Register:** Contact PFSA to schedule this training by calling 800-448-4906 or emailing [training@pa-fsa.org](mailto:training@pa-fsa.org).

### Families in Recovery

In late April, PFSA will host a two-day train-the-trainer (TTT) session for our Families in Recovery program. This research-based program is a great resource for parents, guardians, and caretakers recovering from substance use disorder. The goal of this program is to teach healthy coping and parenting skills while balancing the needs of recovery.

Organizational trainers will be fully prepared to provide training after attending a two-day comprehensive session consisting of content,





education, and application instruction of the curriculum. TTT contracts include ongoing technical assistance, program development, coaching webinars, and assistance with outcomes-driven data collection. TTT cohorts remain in contact with each other to share program implementation experience, ideas, and insights following initial training.

**Cost:** \$1,000 per trainer per year, entering into a three-year contract with PFSA.

**Date:** April 20 & 21, 2021 (*Virtual*)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.  
(half-hour lunch break)

**Register:** You must pre-register for this virtual training by emailing Justin Donofrio, Program Services Manager, at [jdonofrio@pa-fsa.org](mailto:jdonofrio@pa-fsa.org).

## Mandated Reporter Training

PFSA has several options for you and your staff to receive training on how to recognize and report suspected child abuse. This training is for those mandated by law to report suspected child abuse, as defined in the Child Protective Services Law.

Curriculum is approved by the Departments of Human Services, Education, and State and meets all requirements for mandated reporters to receive training in recognizing and reporting child abuse (including ACT 126). Certificates are provided to the participants, and (upon request) we will upload confirmation of your training to the Department of State or Education for CE

fulfillments under ACT 31 and/or ACT 48. New this year — this curriculum has also been approved for CLEs for attorneys!

### LIVE IN-PERSON/VIRTUAL

**Cost:** Free

**How to Register:** Find and register for a virtual session here: [www.pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training/](http://www.pafsa.org/mandated-reporter-training/)

### INDIVIDUAL ONLINE, ON-DEMAND

**Cost:** \$30

**Take Anytime:** [www.pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training/](http://www.pafsa.org/on-demand-online-training/)

### TRAIN-THE-TRAINER (TTT)

This is an opportunity for organizations to develop their own quality, cost-efficient, in-house training program for employees on child abuse recognition and reporting. With the three-year contract, PFSA provides two days of initial instruction for approved applicants, reports CEs directly to the PA Departments of State and Education, and offers ongoing technical assistance.

**Cost:** \$1,000 per trainer entering into a 3-year contract with PFSA (payment can be broken down by year — \$400/year 1, \$300/year 2, and \$300/year 3)

**How to Register:** You must pre-register for this training. Email Haven Evans at [hevans@pa-fsa.org](mailto:hevans@pa-fsa.org) for the paperwork or to answer any questions.

**Date:** March 8 & 9, 2021 (*Virtual*)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. both days  
(half-hour lunch break)

**Date:** May 25 & 26, 2021 (*Virtual*)

**Time:** 8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m. both days  
(half-hour lunch break)