

Juvenile Racial and Ethnic Disparities Analysis Plan

JUVENILE JUSTICE COORDINATING COUNCIL
JANUARY 2023



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Background

- Decades of studies have shown stark racial and ethnic disparities across the juvenile justice system.
- Local evaluation findings have shown disparate outcomes by race/ethnicity in Sonoma County's juvenile justice system:
 - 2019 IOYouth initiative found disparities in referrals have remained largely unchanged despite a decrease in the overall number of referrals.
 - A recent recidivism analysis of youth on supervision found Hispanic, Black, and American Indian youth experience considerably higher rates of recidivism compared to white youth on supervision.



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Purpose of the Assessment

- Develop a more comprehensive understanding of the racial and ethnic disparities that exist in the juvenile justice system.
- Identify the specific decision points in the system where these disparities are more prevalent.



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Methodology: Calculating a Relative Rate Index (RRI)

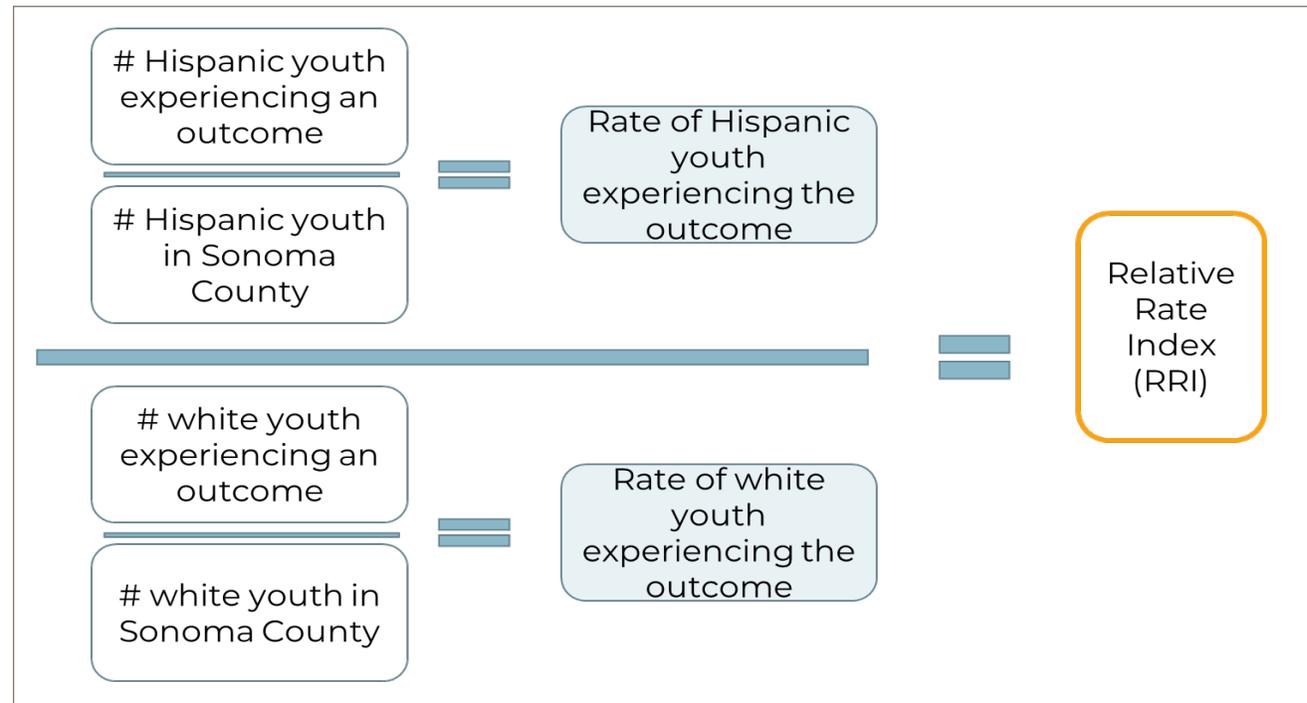
- We will calculate decision-specific relative rate indices (RRIs) to identify over- or under-representation of certain racial/ethnic groups in the juvenile justice system.
- The RRI compares the rate of occurrence of an event (e.g., a new case referral) among one group of youth with the rate of that occurrence in another group.
- RRIs are commonly used in juvenile and criminal justice research.
- Can provide a more targeted picture of racial/ethnic disparities in the juvenile justice system, by identifying particular decision points that contribute to the overall disparity in the system.



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Example: Calculating an RRI



- **An RRI below 1.0** indicates the rate of occurrence in one group (e.g., Hispanic youth) is less frequent than the occurrence in the reference group (e.g., white youth), indicating *under*-representation at a given decision point.
- **An RRI greater than 1.0** indicates the rate of occurrence is more frequent than the occurrence in the reference group, indicating *over*-representation at a given decision point.
- **An RRI of 1.0** indicates parity, with no over- or under- representation of at a given decision point.



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Decision Points for Inclusion

Decision Point	Description	Denominator
New Referral <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New case brought to detention New case sent in by paper 	Among the county population of youth, examines how new referrals vary by race/ethnicity. New referrals, or cases, reflect entry into the system.	Youth population in Sonoma County
Detention Intake Decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detain Release 	Among cases or youth brought to Juvenile Hall, examines how screening decisions vary by race/ethnicity.	Cases or youth screened at Juvenile Hall
Filing Decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Case filed Case dismissed Diverted/abeyance 	Among new cases received, examines how different filing decisions vary by race/ethnicity.	All cases received
Finding Decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> True finding Not true finding Dismissed 	Among cases filed and with a finding, examines how the different finding decisions vary by race/ethnicity.	All cases with a finding
Case Disposition <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 654.2(a) informal referral Deferred Entry of Judgement Formal Probation Wardship DJJ Commitment, SYTF Commitment 	Among cases with a true finding and a disposition, examines how different case dispositions vary by race/ethnicity.	All cases with any disposition
Placement and Detention Orders <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement orders Commitments to serve time (Juvenile Hall, Probation Camp) 	Among youth on supervision, examines how placement orders and detention commitments vary by race/ethnicity.	All youth on supervision
New Violation	Among youth on supervision, examines how the presence of a new 777 varies by race/ethnicity	Youth on supervision



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Limitations of demographic data

- Racial/ethnic data are not necessarily self-reported by youth and may not reflect how a youth self-identifies.
- Probation's data system collapses race and ethnicity into a single field, and only captures a single race field, masking multiple identities.
 - Conflating race and ethnicity has been shown to inflate the counts of white youth, and undercount Latinx youth and other youth of color.



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Questions?