



Prevention Mindset Institute: *Embracing Prevention Across Systems*

This edition of the Prevention Mindset Newsletter has been edited by Corey Best, a consultant and founder of Mining for Gold, Inc. and Dana Fields-Johnson, an Associate Program Director with the Prevention Institute. Three ideas, four quotes, and one question are centered on racial justice, families, and child welfare practices. Mining for Gold and the Prevention Institute are partner organizations with FRIENDS' Prevention Mindset Institute.

A future issue is planned for July, 2021.

The format, 3-2-1, is based on James Clear's newsletter that shares ideas related to developing effective habits, drawing from his book, [Atomic Habits](#).



Three Ideas:

Years ago, I stumbled across a book entitled "***Jim Crow Wisdom—Memory and Identity in Black America Since 1940***." In this fascinating depiction of America's adoration with othering, denial, marginalization, power and regulating families, IT was revealed. The IT being our country's child welfare system is only a relic of the peculiar institution of slavery. And many of us who work to transform, advance racial justice, and preserve families through preventive approaches, are completely unaware that we support a system that consistently advantages those who have become known as white. While over-surveilling, separating, and creating prolonged trauma for Black and brown families.

Since the 1960's, Black children and their loving families have been given credit for their collective resilience, fortitude, and strength in the face of adversity. But not their collective humanity. It is time to level-UP. Families are growing weary of having to be knocked down, cut, wounded, and scarred because of white-dominant ideology that tolerates the "presumption of guilt". Black families demand to be viewed as human beings and treated equitably. And it takes courageous leadership to cultivate a culture that recognizes how "***history is perpetually suspicious of memory, and it's true mission is to suppress and destroy it.***" Race no longer must be the number one proxy for negative outcomes. Through courageous leadership, we can get closer to the aspiration of justice within our child welfare system by always telling the truth.

Book referenced: *Jim Crow Wisdom—Memory and Identity in Black America Since 1940*,
Jonathan Scott Holloway, August 2015.

Idea #1:

Build relationships with communities and staff most harmed by the system of racial oppression. And vet all strategies and plans through their lens.

Idea #2:

Develop core guiding principles and measure authentic family engagement.

Idea #3:

Focus on process. Not projects

~Corey Best, Consultant, Founder, Mining for Gold, Inc.



"Race continues to play a defining role in one's life trajectory and outcomes. A complex system of racial bias and inequities is at play, deeply rooted in our country's history, culture and institutions. This system of racialization—which routinely confers advantage and disadvantage based on skin color and other characteristics—must be clearly understood, directly challenged and fundamentally transformed. If our nation is to live up to its democratic ideals—that all people are created equal and treated fairly—then racial equity and inclusion must be at the forefront of how we shape our institutions, policies and culture."

~ Race Equity and Inclusion Action Guide: Seven Steps to Advance and Embed Race Equity and Inclusion in Your Organization. Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2014. Accessed at: http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF_EmbracingEquity7Steps-2014.pdf

"The new politics of child welfare threatens to intensify state supervision of Black children. In the past several years, federal and state policy have shifted away from preserving families toward "freeing" children in foster care for adoption by terminating parental rights. Welfare reform, by throwing many families deeper into poverty, heightens the risk that some children will be removed from struggling families and placed in foster care."

~Dorothy E. Roberts, 2002
George A. Weiss University Professor of Law and Sociology and the Raymond Pace and Sadie Tanner Mossell Alexander Professor of Civil Rights, University of Pennsylvania, Carey Law School

“In order to create policies that support children and youth of color, anti-racist policy approaches should focus on whole families. In the past, public policy has too often been siloed, and policies intended to support children have failed to address the larger struggles their families face. Policy has even actively undermined families in the name of protecting children—as we see with the child welfare system, which disproportionately threatens and separates Black and Indigenous children from their loved ones. Anti-racist policy must be designed to support and strengthen the whole family and ensure family economic security, so that families can thrive together. This requires supporting not just parents and siblings but also grandparents and other caregivers and loved ones who constitute a child’s family. It requires affirming children and families, building on their strengths, honoring and deepening their social connections, and connecting them to the basic supports they need.”

*~Principles for Anti-Racist Policymaking, Center for the Study of Social Policy, December 2020.
Available here: <http://bit.ly/Anti-Racist-Policymaking>*

“Do people really think that somehow the child welfare system targets Black people but targets them in a good way?” If we can agree that implicit bias and racism are at least part of why our society is more likely to shoot a Black person, call the police on Black people, or profile a Black body, why do we believe that there are more noble reasons for the disproportionate reporting of Black mothers and removal of Black children? The reality is that both the criminal, legal, and the foster systems are rooted in deeply violent historical narratives about Black bodies that do more to promote punishment than safety.

~Joyce McMillan, 2020, child welfare advocate



One Question:

What are three tangible benefits for white people to advance racial justice?