



# Speaker Introductions



Stephanie Campbell, Director  
of the Office of Sexual Health  
and Youth Development



Beth Buxton, Director,  
Maternal Health Initiatives



# Racial Equity Initiative

- Racial Equity Initiative aims to:
  - To convene leaders from across the Department who are passionate and committed to racial equity.
  - Eliminate structural (and Institutional) racism in policies, programs, and practices
  - Foster a healthy and equitable work environment
- Begin in two bureaus that comprise the majority of Title V programming
- Evolved to the Cross Departmental Racial Equity Committee (C-DREC)
- Focus internally on the Title V program within the Department of Public Health



# Leading with Race and Racism to Address Health Inequities

“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.” – Lilla Watson

Learn about:



Why we lead with race and racism, explicitly, but not exclusively

The role of public health institutions in dismantling systems of oppression



New ways to use data

Racial justice tools and materials





# Racial Justice Tools

Training

Introductions

Window of Tolerance

Racial Justice Re-framing Tool

Trauma Informed Systems/Moving towards a Healing Organization

Brown Bag Lunches, Affinity Groups & Racial Equity Workgroups



# Introductions

**Name**

**Race**

**Ethnicity**

**Pronouns**

**Window**

**Question**



# Window of Tolerance

LAURA K. KERR, PhD

[www.laurakkerr.com](http://www.laurakkerr.com)

## Living Within The Window of Tolerance: The Different Zones of Arousal

### HYPERAROUSAL ZONE



*Sympathetic "Fight or Flight Response"*  
(Too much arousal)

### SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

- Tension, shaking
- Emotional reactivity
- Defensiveness
- Racing thoughts
- Intrusive imagery
- Emotional overwhelm
- Feeling unsafe
- Obsessive/ cyclical cognitive processing
- Hypervigilance
- Impulsivity
- Anger/ Rage

### OPTIMAL AROUSAL ZONE

*Ventral Vagal "Window of Tolerance"*

### SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

- Feel and think simultaneously
- Experience empathy
- Feelings are tolerable
- Present moment awareness - "Right here, right now"
- Feel open and curious versus judgmental and defensive
- Awareness of boundaries (yours & others)
- Reactions adapt to fit the situation
- Feel safe

### HYPOAROUSAL ZONE



*Parasympathetic "Immobilization Response"*  
(Too little arousal)

### SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

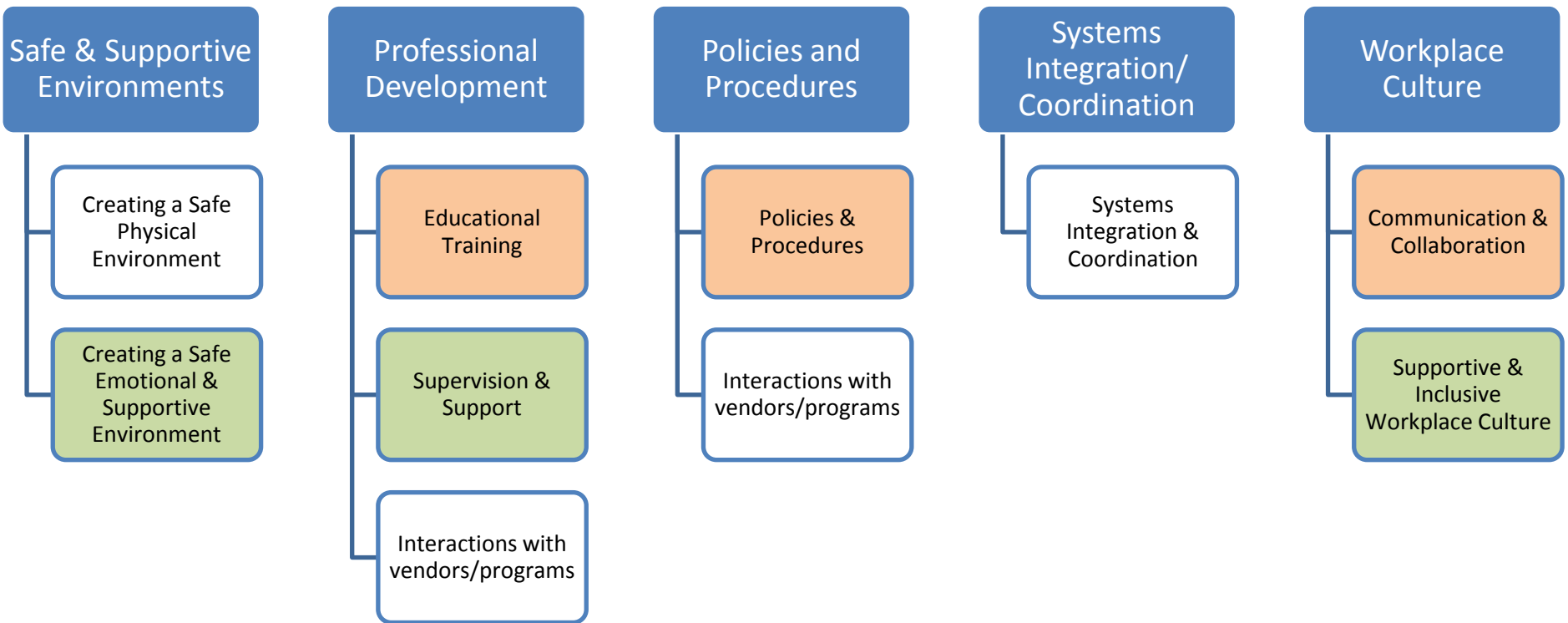
- Relative absence of sensation
- Feeling 'dead'
- No energy
- "Not there"
- Can't defend oneself
- Disabled cognitive processing/ "can't think"
- Numbing of emotions
- No feelings
- Disconnected
- Ashamed
- Flat affect
- Reduced physical movement
- Passive
- Shut down
- Can't say no

Framing Element	Traditional Approach	Racial Justice Approach
<b>1. What's the Problem?</b>	Teenage Black and Latina girls getting pregnant at an early age draining public resources such as welfare.	Youth of color receive inequitable access to sexual health education and opportunities for a successful transition into adulthood resulting in poorer access to health, employment and other SDOH.
<b>2. What's the Cause?</b> <b>What/Who's Responsible?</b>	Lack of sexual health education Generational impact of teenage pregnancy Cultural acceptance and norm of teenage pregnancy  <i>Individuals</i>	Historical and current transit medical racism, eugenics movement  Federal, state and local government, schools, businesses and other decision makers.
<b>3. What's the Solution?</b>	Increase sexual health education Long acting reversible contraception	Equitable economic and other resource investment in community stabilization and schools, clinics, using a racial equity impact assessment.  Acknowledge that teen pregnancy is not the problem- however a symptom of structural racism
<b>4. What Action is Needed?</b>	LARC awareness, sex education in schools, shaming of teen parents,	Engagement of adolescents in creating solutions Ensuring clinics are youth friendly  Address the systemic racism that limits opportunities for adolescents of color in schools
<b>5. What Values are highlighted?</b>	Personal responsibility	Equity; Justice; Fairness; Shared Responsibility



# Trauma-Informed Organizational Assessment Tool

## 5 Domains:







# Racial Equity Initiative Lessons Learned

- Lead with race and racism explicitly, and not exclusively
- Systems that are failing communities of color, are actually failing all of us.
- Investment and buy-in from staff at all levels, including leadership
- Sit and learn from discomfort
- Our path is not linear

Success



what people think  
it looks like

Success



what it really  
looks like



# Acknowledgements

- Jennica Allen, Alison Brill, and Javier Gutierrez, MDPH
- Elizabeth Janiak, PhD, Brigham and Women's Hospital
- Racial Equity Leadership Team, MDPH
- Southern Jamaica Plain Health Center, Racial Reconciliation and Healing Program

Beth Buxton, LCSW

[beth.buxton@state.ma.us](mailto:beth.buxton@state.ma.us)

617-624-5910

Stephanie Campbell, MPH

[stephanie.campbell@state.ma.us](mailto:stephanie.campbell@state.ma.us)

Phone 617-624-6057





# Racial Justice & Implicit Bias Training

- The Racial Equity Institute:  
<https://www.racialequityinstitute.com/>
- Implicit Bias On-Line Training (Harvard University - Free):  
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>



# Racial Equity Initiative

- **Brown Bag Discussions**
  - Monthly sessions, one hour long
  - Topic specific discussions/presentations
- **Affinity Groups**
  - Weekly sessions, one hour long over 7 weeks
  - White Affinity Groups use the “Me and Whites Supremacy Workbook” by Layla Saad to explore personal role challenging racism
  - People of Color Affinity Groups goals are to build to solidarity among marginalized groups and promote racial healing
- **Racial Equity Town Hall Meetings**
  - Quarterly sessions, 2 hours long
  - Discussions on agency RE Initiative progress, organizational culture, and opportunities to share the RE movement