A NEW DEAL FOR CHILDREN

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REIMAGINING EQUALITY

A New Deal for Children of Color

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Children’s Hierarchies

- **Universal**: Innocenti Report Card 13

- Fault lines: race, gender, class

- Constructed not “natural”
3 critical data points about Black Boys

- Rate of poverty: 1 in 3 (highest rate under 5, 34%)
- High school graduation: 50% (40% dropout rate)
- Juvenile justice system involvement: 1 in 3 (or higher)
BLACKBOYSMATTER
USING THE LIFE COURSE OF BLACK BOYS TO CONSTRUCT A MODEL OF EQUALITY FOR ALL
Development: Linear Progression
Childhood Matters
Urie Bronfenbrenner, Ecological Model
CHILDREN’S HIERARCHIES creating challenges and barriers funnelling to failure v. supporting equality and equity
DEVELOPMENTAL EQUALITY

- DEVELOPMENT AS A EQUALITY RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD
- Using DEVELOPMENTAL FRAMEWORKS CRITICALLY
Developmental Equality: STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Use race and gender identities (and other markers of hierarchy) to monitor/correct/dismantle structures and policies that create developmental challenges

- A responsive, supportive state to enhance development
Children’s Rights

- **AFFIRMATIVE RIGHTS** based on dependency, vulnerabilities, needs, and preparation for equal social citizenship
Strategies

■ (1) Litigation: disability statutes

■ (2) Constitutional rights: children’s rights

■ (3) Legislation: A New Deal for Children
A “NEW DEAL” for CHILDREN

- Systemic reform of existing systems (education, health, juvenile justice)
- Constructing new affirmative systems (early childhood)
- Addressing overarching problems that require multisystemic responses (poverty, racism)
System change

- **Health**: prenatal health, children’s health, and family health, focusing on health equity and the social determinants of health

- **Education**: high quality, equal/equitable schools, beginning with early childhood education through post-secondary college or other training; mental health screening and early identification and support for learning disabilities and other disabilities;

- **Parental support**: economic support, education, skills, services, paid leave, work-family balance

- **Housing and neighborhoods**
System change

- **Anti-poverty**, economic stabilization measures including cash transfers, in kind transfers, services and support;

- **Public safety**, including positive relationships between police and children, and peaceful neighborhoods.

- **Anti-racism**, structural and cultural

- **Resilience support** for sources of toxic stress or episodic stress to children, families, and communities;
System Change

■ Universal high quality childcare and afterschool programs

■ Adolescent youth services, including work, skills, enrichment, and well being; fostering positive identities of race and gender; safety, nonviolence, positive sexuality; juvenile justice as a system of well-being and rehabilitation, not incarceration

■ Prevention to the extent possible of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect by effective interventions after minimizing factors that contribute to these behaviors, and providing effective systems for children who go into foster care
System creation: early childhood example

- Prebirth support*
- Importance of the first 1000 days
- Healthcare* (child and family)
- Work/family policy*
- Income support* linked to meaningful work
- Fostering parental care in development of children even if nonresident*
- Early childhood developmental support for parents*
- High quality childcare*
- High quality early childhood education*
- Resilience services for trauma*
- Early identification of disabilities and support for disabled children and their families*
Challenges/questions

1. avoiding domestication of radical change

2. can the intrusive state become a responsive state

3. justifying maximum support versus a minimum or adequate level

4. supporting families/parents v. privatizing responsibility and explaining or blaming families for structural inequalities
“WE WANT A WORLD FIT FOR CHILDREN, BECAUSE A WORLD FIT FOR US IS A WORLD FIT FOR EVERYONE.”

The Children’s Statement, UN General Assembly’s Special Session on Children, 8 May 2002