Communications Tools and Tips to Advance Racial Equity
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Rachael DeCruz, Vice President of Policy

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Objectives

• Understand importance of leading with race in conversations about health

• Review basics on framing and dominating narratives

• Hear about CSI’s message testing work and how talking about race can lead to more racially equitable policies

• Learn about a communications framework for talking about race: ACT tool

• See examples of messages using the ACT tool and examples involving Invest Health teams
Agenda

• Introduction

• Presentation: *Communications Tools and Tips to Advance Racial Equity*
  - Why lead with Race in Health Equity?
  - Framing and Dominating Narratives
  - Center for Social Inclusion’s Message Testing
  - Communications Framework for Talking About Race
  - Examples of Messages Using the ACT tool

• Q & A

• Closing
Shawna Davie is the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) South and East Regional Project Manager at the new Race Forward which is the union of two leading racial justice non-profits: Race Forward and Center for Social Inclusion (CSI).

Prior to joining the new Race Forward, Shawna led efforts to develop strategic relationships and implement internal operations at Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Healthy Communities.

Shawna founded and served as executive director of Alignment Jackson at United Way of the Capital Area in Jackson, Mississippi, where she raised startup funds, implemented a regional drop-out prevention campaign, and led a team that significantly increased graduation rates at a low-income high school. Her work with in Jackson brought cross-sector service providers, families, advocates, and city leaders together to make a difference in communities of color.

Shawna’s career began as a community organizer and lobbyist, focusing on reproductive health and justice, youth development, and juvenile justice. She earned her MPA from Baruch College, City University of New York (CUNY).
Rachael DeCruz

Rachael DeCruz is the Vice President of Policy at the new Race Forward.

Previously, she was the Racial Equity Project Manager and Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) Network Manager at CSI. She is deeply committed to racial justice and has a background in communications, multiracial coalition building, and organizing.

Prior to joining CSI, Rachael was the Communications Manager at Pride Foundation—a community foundation focused on advancing LGBTQ equality. She has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Seattle King County NAACP for nearly five years.

From 2012-2013, Rachael was the primary author of Washington Community Action Networks’ annual “Facing Race” report, which highlights the impact of budget and policy decisions on communities of color in Washington.
Communications Tools and Tips to Advance Racial Equity
WE HAVE UNITED

race forward
&
CSI CENTER FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION
Our Five Functions

Narrative Shift
Institutional and Sector Change
Movement and Capacity Building
Research
Policy Development
Race Forward and Invest Health

• Provide content related to racial equity
• Quarterly Meetings with equity subcommittee
• Pre-convening and Concurrent Workshops
• Webinars on Selected Topics
• Technical Assistance and Workshops coming in December!
Government Alliance on Race and Equity

- A national network of government working to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all.

  ✔ Lead network – 55 members
  ✔ Expand network – 30 states / 150+ cities
  ✔ Provide tools to put theory into action
Government Alliance on Race and Equity

**Washington**
- Seattle
- King County
- Port of Seattle
- Tacoma
- WA Early Learning

**Oregon**
- Portland
- Multnomah County
- Metro

**California**
- Alameda County
- BAAQMD
- Long Beach
- Oakland
- Marin County
- Merced County
- Richmond
- San Francisco
- San Francisco Public Utility Comm.
- Santa Ana County
- Solano County

**Minnesota**
- Bloomington
- Dakota County
- Hennepin County
- Metropolitan Council
- Minneapolis
- Minneapolis Park Board
- Saint Anthony
- Saint Paul
- Woodbury

**Wisconsin**
- Dane County
- Madison

**Michigan**
- Ottawa County
- Washtenaw County
- MI Dept of Civil Rights
- Grand Rapids

**Massachusetts**
- Boston
- Brookline

**Pennsylvania**
- Philadelphia

**Kentucky**
- Louisville

**Virginia**
- Fairfax County

**North Carolina**
- Asheville
- Durham

**Ontario**
- Province of Ontario

**New Mexico**
- Albuquerque

**Texas**
- Austin
- San Antonio

**= Active GARE Members**
**= Current GARE Engagements**
**= Racial Equity Here Members**
National effective practice

Normalize
- A shared analysis and definitions
- Urgency / prioritize

Organize
- Internal infrastructure
- Partnerships

Operationalize
- Racial equity tools
- Data to develop strategies and drive results

Visualize
Review of Core Concepts
Why we lead with race

- Racial inequities deep and pervasive
- Racial anxiety on the rise – race is often an elephant in the room
- Learning an institutional and structural approach can be used with other areas of marginalization
- Specificity matters
Equity? Equality? What’s the difference?
Explicit bias

- Expressed directly
- Aware of bias / operates consciously
- Example – Sign in the window of an apartment building – “whites only”

Implicit bias

- Expressed indirectly
- Unaware of bias / operates sub-consciously
- Example – a property manager doing more criminal background checks on African Americans than whites.
Three Levels of Racism

**Individual racism:**
- Bigotry or discrimination by an individual based on race.

**Institutional racism:**
- Policies, practices and procedures that work better for white people than for people of color, often unintentionally or inadvertently.

**Structural racism:**
- A history and current reality of institutional racism across all institutions, combining to create a system that negatively impacts communities of color.
Health Equity vs. Racial Equity

Health equity

• All community members have the opportunity to reach their full health potential.

Racial equity

• Race cannot be used to predict success. To achieve racial equity, we must target strategies to eliminate racial inequities and advance success across all groups.
Communicating About Race
The Unconscious Mind

Schemas: the “frames” through which our brains help us understand and navigate the world:

1. Sort into categories
2. Create associations
3. Fill in the gaps
Dominant Narratives
Examples of Dominant Narratives in Health

• Individuals are making poor choices related to food and exercise

• Communities of color don’t prioritize their health

• Lack of access to health care is the only reason we see health disparities
Our Power, Our Narratives
What is framing?

Framing is simply the way in which one chooses to present a story or issue.
Examples of Frames

Two residents wade through chest-deep water after finding bread and soda from a local grocery store after Hurricane Katrina came through the area in New Orleans, Louisiana. (AFP/Getty Images, Chris Graythen)

Associated Press

A young man walks through chest deep flood water after looting a grocery store in New Orleans on Tuesday, Aug. 30, 2005. Flood waters continue to rise in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did extensive damage when it...
How framing creates race wedge:

Explicit and Implicit Biases + Racial frames = Race Wedge
White Racial Anxiety: Fear of a growing new majority

2010: Majority of new births are people of color

2030: Majority of people age 20-34 are people of color

2042: Majority of all Americans are people of color

- People of Color
- White People

Population

0 50,000,000 100,000,000 150,000,000 200,000,000 250,000,000

2010 2015 2020 2025 2030 2035 2040 2045 2050

INVEST HEALTH
Strategies for Healthier Cities

race forward & CSI CENTER FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION
Messaging on healthcare and housing:

1. Chose policy debates where race has played a big role
   - Healthcare reform
   - Subprime Lending

2. Developed 1-minute storyboards/commercials
   - Emotional, visual, and ready to deploy

3. Pitted the race-wedge message against the following progressive messages:
   - Racism-obscured messages - Messages using an all-White cast that don't name race.
   - Racism-implicit messages – Messages using a racially diverse cast that don't name race.
   - Racism-explicit messages – Messages using a racially diverse cast that name race.

4. Gave the test online to 900 registered voters using a dial-test
What we learned:

• Messages that **specifically name race** are successful with the general public.

• **Talking about race does not elevate individual implicit bias.** In fact, without it, you allow individual implicit bias to go unchecked.

• **Multiracial cast of spokespeople** are better received than White-only cast of spokespeople.

• **Naming disparity alone is not sufficient.** We must explain HOW disparity came to be to address the race wedge.
POC as assets
Let’s Talk About Race Toolkit
Communicating about race

It’s more than just talk – ACT

**Affirm**
- Start with the heart
- Explain why we are all in this together

**Counter**
- Explain structural roots and realities
- Take on race directly

**Transform**
- Reframe winners and losers
- End with heart and a solution
Communicating about race

It’s more than just talk – ACT

Affirm

- Start with the heart
- Explain why we are all in this together

The health of our children, families, and loved ones depends on the environments in which we live.

People of all races want to live in clean environments with decent housing, good jobs, and high-quality schools.
“Affirm” Tips:

• Be evocative. Emphasize shared humanity.

• What are the values you want to name or allude to that would speak to your audience?

• TALK TO HUMANS - How can you couch your message in goals and real-life experiences that speak to your audience?

• What’s your vision?

Artists: (L to R)
Micah Bazant
www.micahbazant.com

Just Seeds
www.justseeds.org
Communicating about race

It’s more than just talk – ACT

Counter

- Explain structural roots and realities
- Take on race directly

For decades, low-income communities of color have been the dumping grounds for environmental hazards.

Having access to neighborhoods that support success shouldn't be determined by your race.
“Counter” Tips:

• Be clear about the structural story
• Are you dismissing the race wedge?
Transform

• Reframe winners and losers
• End with heart and a solution

Corporations that contaminate our environment need to be held accountable. For our collective good, we need to value the quality of all of our neighborhoods above the profits for a few.

Join me in supporting legislation that will bring accountability to corporations. They need to pay their fair share so that all of us can have healthy environments in our communities.
“Transform” Tips:

• In what ways can you redirect to root causes?
• Are you showing choice points and a solution?
• In what ways are you inviting people to be more engaged?

Ad Source:
The California Endowment
Potential Question/Statement:

“Invest health is about making changes in low income neighborhoods, why are you focusing on race? You all are making the problem worse by focusing on people’s differences.”
Response:

A- Everyone deserves to live the healthiest life possible.

C- Unfortunately, we know that race predicts a person’s health outcomes. The conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age are all deeply tied to race in this country, as a result of historical and current policies. That’s why it’s so important that we address race & income with specific strategies.

T- Will you join us in ensuring that all people regardless of their race or income experience a state of well-being and good health outcomes?
Questions

• How have you been racially explicit in your messaging related to Invest Health?
• What are some of the challenges that you’ve encountered in naming race?
• What have you found to be effective communications strategies for advancing racial equity?
Additional Resources


Contact Us!

Stay Connected: centerforsocialinclusion.org  Racialequityalliance.org
Contact us: Shawna Davie – sdavie@thecsi.org  Rachael DeCruz- rdecruz@thecsi.org

SOLUTIONS THAT WORK FOR EVERYONE
Thank you!

www.investhealth.org