

The ACCOUNTABILITY DIALOGUES



Summary of Recommendations for the Children's Bureau

In the Fall of 2021, Futures Without Violence, Latinos United for Peace and Equity, The National Center on Violence Against Black Women (Ujima, Inc.), and Women Transforming Families, a project of Ujima, came together with survivors of domestic violence who were impacted by the child welfare system, along with state, tribal, and federal policymakers in the *Accountability Dialogues*. The Accountability Dialogues created a platform that elevated the voices of survivors and provided an opportunity for survivors, policymakers, advocates, and judges to listen to one another and advance policy solutions that would prevent further injustice to adult and child survivors of domestic violence. These recommendations and policy solutions offer a new framework: work diligently with care and compassion, and without bias, to keep families together; robustly support survivors and their children, in their community and with the resources and supports that they have identified, to meet their family's needs; and invest in communities and culturally responsive, community-based organizations to help families thrive.

1. Issue an Information Memorandum that provides guidance to state child welfare agencies on domestic violence (DV) practice and policy to advance their knowledge and commitment to effective and safe approaches to DV, including a clear statement that DV, in and of itself, is not child abuse and neglect.
2. Issue an Information Memorandum that recommends that states invest in families, communities, culturally responsive community programs and provide direct financial and other needed supports for families, kinship caregivers, and fictive (close family or friend) caregivers.
3. Integrate gender into the equity focus for Child and Family Service Reviews to advance the Biden Administration's commitment to an intersectional approach to responding to gender-based violence.¹
4. Increase federal resources to serve Native American children and families and rural children and families, who are disproportionately impacted by the child welfare system.
5. Convene and engage survivors and survivor-led organizations to define *active efforts*,² and require state child welfare agencies to document active efforts at all phases of each DV case.
6. Create a Task Force to review the role and scope of mandated reporting nationally and address how best to:
 - ensure that Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and state mandated reporting practices keep children safe in their families and communities;
 - transition from mandating reporting to a mandated supporting model.

1. National Strategy on Gender Equity and Equality, The White House, pg. 8. See also: the [Gender Strategy Report](#).

2. Active efforts is defined in federal regulations and involves tribal children and families. 25 C.F.R. Section 23.2. <https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/25/23.2>.

7. Foster innovation and cultivate collaboration at the state and local levels to co-design a new Family Assistance Pathway for families so that they can obtain services and supports without involving child welfare systems.
8. On an annual basis, host a convening to share ideas, identify problems, promote promising practices, and develop policies on how to strengthen families, reduce poverty, and transform the child welfare system into a child and family well-being system.