

The ACCOUNTABILITY DIALOGUES



Summary of Recommendations for the Judiciary and Family Courts

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.

Summary of Recommendations for the Judiciary and Family Courts

1. Educate judges on domestic violence (DV) in child abuse and neglect proceedings, including:
 - The impact of children's exposure to violence;
 - The importance of preserving the child's relationship to a protective parent;
 - The array of supports that mitigate exposure to violence;
 - Promising practices for abuser interventions;
 - The influences of poverty, race, and substance use on families in need of support.
2. Ensure that judges' actions and demeanor reflect a comprehensive understanding of DV in child abuse and neglect proceedings to enhance children's resilience and safeguard their access to a non-abusive parent.
3. Encourage judges to use their leadership position to convene stakeholders to improve the policies, practices, and responses to families involved with the court, legal, and child welfare systems and to build a more just and equitable family and child well-being system.