



center for
CHILDREN & YOUTH
JUSTICE | *Better systems. Better lives.*®

“The beauty of anti-racism is that you don’t have to pretend to be free of racism to be an anti-racist. Anti-racism is the commitment to fight racism wherever you find it, including in yourself. And it’s the only way forward.”
— Ijeoma Oluo

Ending systemic racism in the youth justice system is intrinsically embedded in CCYJ's mission. And yet, we simply have not done enough. Recent events have prompted us to examine ourselves and publicly acknowledge that we have not centered anti-racism in our work. We are making a public commitment to you—our partners, supporters, and most importantly, the young people for whom we advocate.

Today, we unequivocally commit to the principle that Black Lives Matter.

Today, we unequivocally commit to:

- Listening to the voices of Black youth, Black-led organizations, and Black leaders in our community
- Identifying immediate actions and creating long term solutions that center these voices and include all stakeholders, including law enforcement
- Condemning the use of violent, militaristic policing
- Using our leverage to support the reallocation of law enforcement and other government funding to community-led organizations, allowing them to determine where resources are most needed¹ -- those closest to the issue know the best solutions
- Continuing to examine our own internal structures, policies, and culture, identifying and eliminating those aspects that promulgate racism and impact our ability to attract, hire, retain, and empower a team that is reflective of the communities whom we ultimately serve

Today, we unequivocally commit to doing better--measuring our progress by the impact we make. We recognize that good intentions are not enough. And while we will make mistakes, we commit to learning from them. We will keep you informed on the actions that we take in this process, from hiring practices to changing organizational culture to building mutual accountability mechanisms for ourselves and our partners.

We are listening.

We are learning.

We are committing to take *the only way forward*.

In solidarity,

Rachul

¹ These include increasing: social workers as first responders; mental health services; access to basic needs; and, affordable housing.