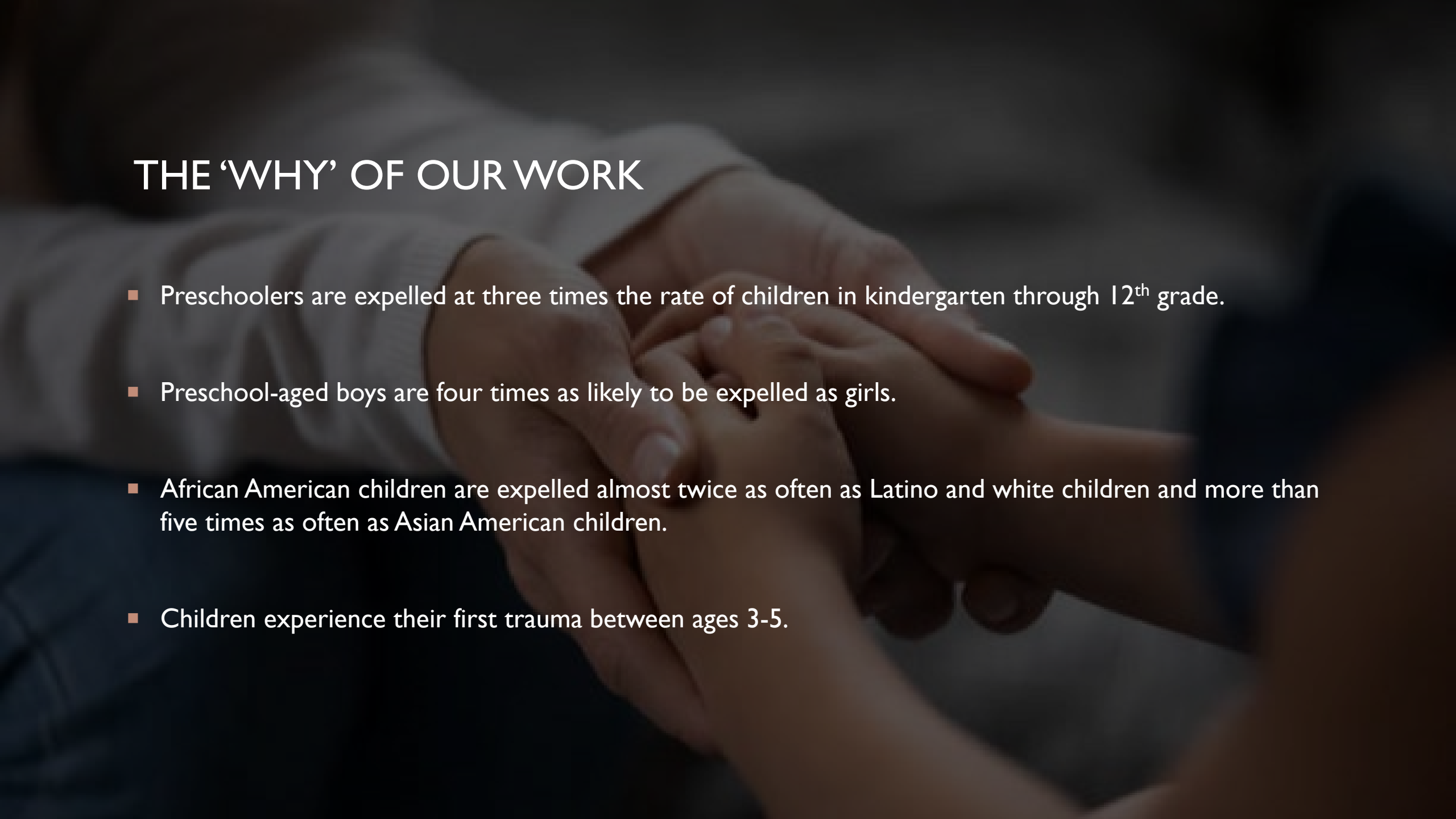


IMPACTS OF EQUITABLE INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

- TAMEKA THOMPSON, LPC &
- ELISHA GANDHI, LCSW
- **AUSTIN CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER**
- *AUSTIN, TEXAS*



THE 'WHY' OF OUR WORK

- Preschoolers are expelled at three times the rate of children in kindergarten through 12th grade.
- Preschool-aged boys are four times as likely to be expelled as girls.
- African American children are expelled almost twice as often as Latino and white children and more than five times as often as Asian American children.
- Children experience their first trauma between ages 3-5.

THE 'WHY' OF OUR WORK IN TEXAS

-
- Texas has lost more than 25% of its childcare centers since 2020
 - Investing in our children (our future)
 - Demolishing the lack of awareness of/turning a blind eye to racial disparities
 - Equitable trauma-informed practices
 - Equality in the schools/home

THE INCREASED NEED FOR SEL

- *School Mental Health Journal* in 2022 found that teacher stress predicted a higher expulsion risk for children of color.
- In 2021, the Dept. of Education reported that as early as preschool, 17,000 children are suspended or expelled across the country each year
 - Approximately 50% of these children are Black boys, despite Black boys representing nearly 20% of the preschoolers enrolled



SIGNS OF IMPLICIT BIAS AND UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN CHILDCARE CENTERS

-
- Children from different backgrounds or social groups, different intellectual abilities
 - Not wanting to talk to certain families
 - A certain child is more frustrating than others
 - Difference in label praise of certain children
 - Praising looks
 - Difference in consequences/punishment
 - Halo/Horns Effect (Putting a child on a pedestal)
 - Stereotyping

WHAT IS SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

- "Broadly speaking, social emotional learning (SEL) refers to the process through which individuals learn and apply a set of social, emotional and related skills, attitudes, behaviors, and values that help direct their thoughts, feelings and action in ways that enable them to succeed in school, work and life. (pg. 14 wallacefoundation.org) -November 2022

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING



Able to manage
emotions/feelings



Stress
management



Maintain positive
relationships



Show empathy
for others



Helps make good
choices/decisions

- Academic improvement
- Increased future success
- Reaching goals in life (positive)
- Apply knowledge skills
- Understand/manage emotions

DAY TO DAY IN INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD

Check-in with the
Director
(Provides support)

One to One
(Teacher)

Observation

Assessments

Goals/Objectives
(Classroom)

Create a Plan

Implementation
(One at a time)

GAMES AND ACTIVITIES



Self-awareness (How to build)

Self-management (Ways to work through emotions)

Social awareness (Observation)

Relationship skills (Connection)

Responsible decision making (Understanding how to make choices)

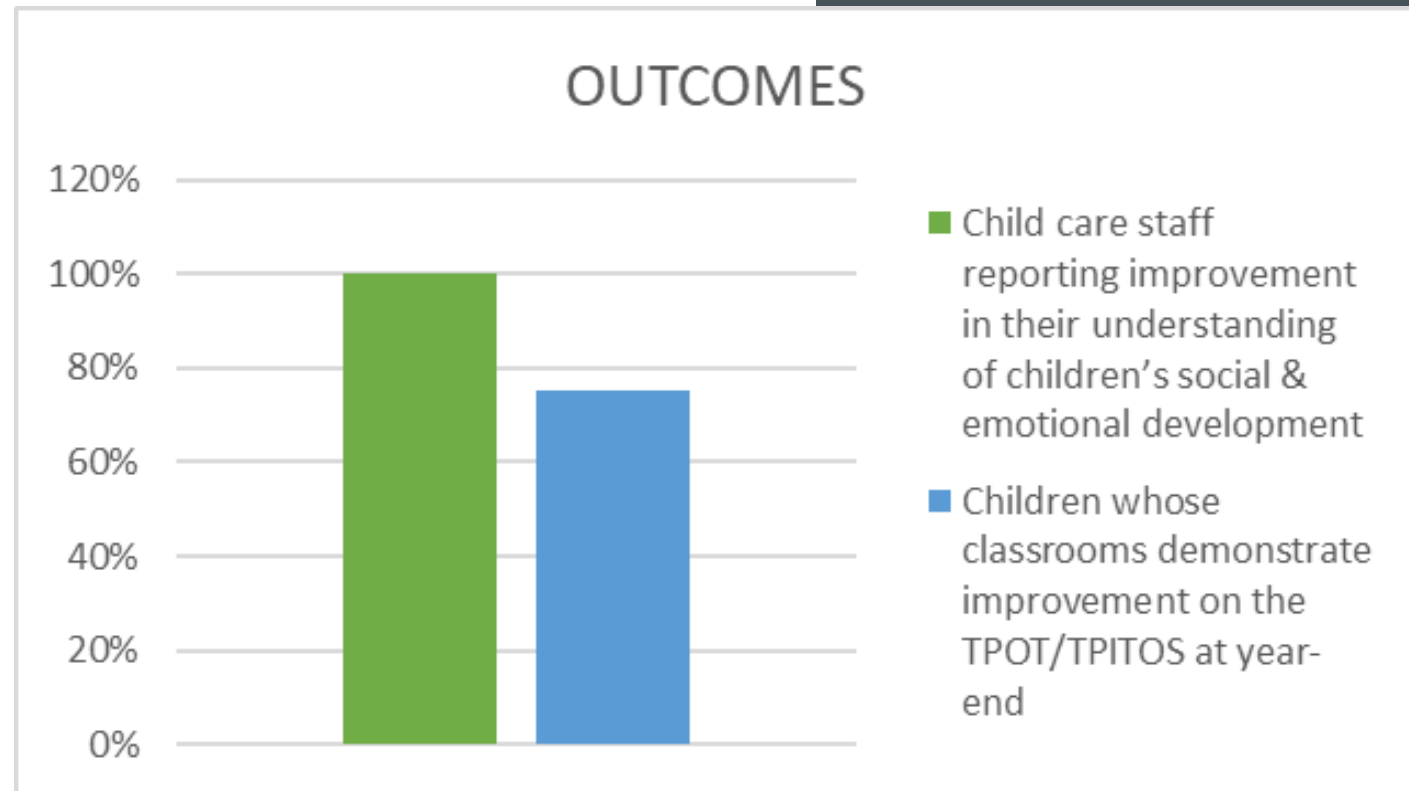
INCREASING DIVERSITY IN CHILDCARE CENTERS

- Expanding awareness of differences, etc. songs, books, games, holidays-celebration
- Celebrating differences
- Provide education among staff and families
- Monthly inclusion activities

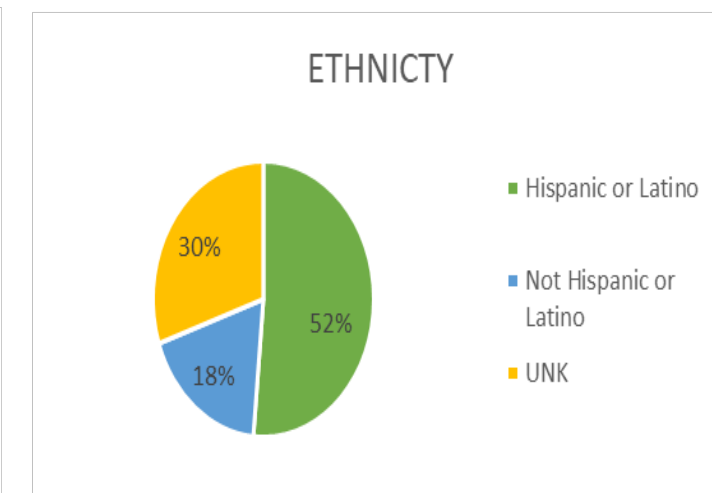
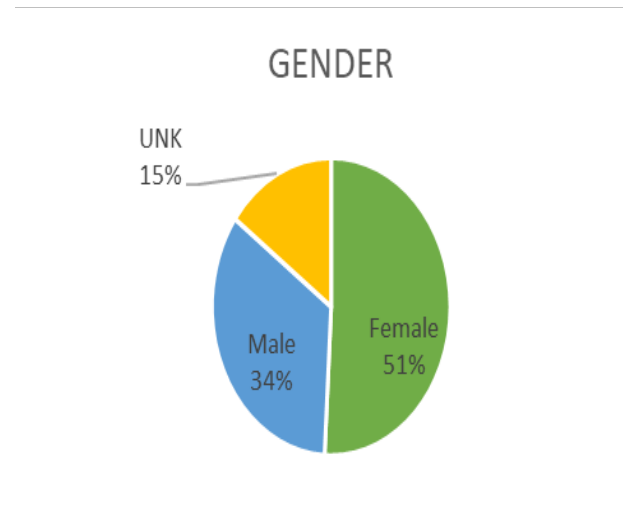
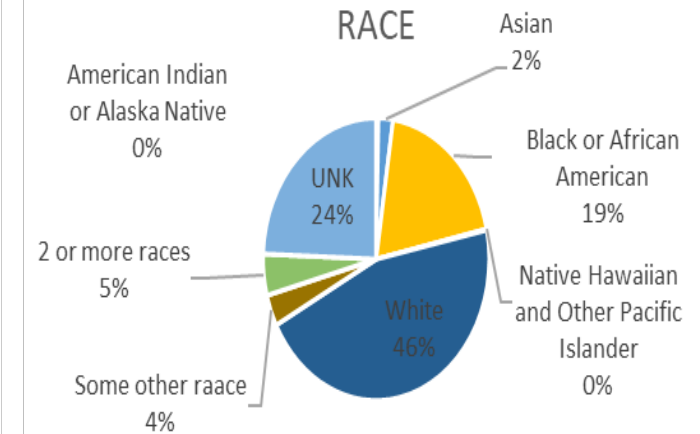
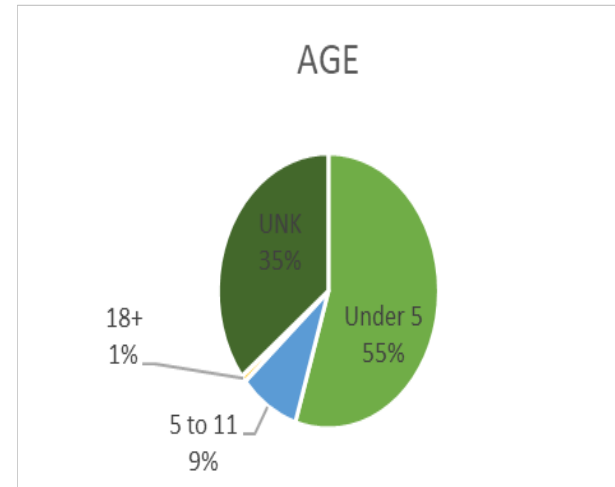


ASSESSMENTS & OUTCOMES

End of Year Survey



FY22 IEC CHILDCARE STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS



CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

- Issues of identity arise in every center
- 3-step process when conflict arises around identity:
 1. Mediate between staff members/director when safe
 2. Provide training for the individuals and staff
 3. Involve the director in planning with HR when necessary



CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES

Trainings on identity and bias

- Unconscious bias and unlearning prejudice
- Developmental considerations of children's understanding of identity
- The importance of having these conversations early



BARRIERS FACED AS MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTANTS

Teachers feeling overwhelmed

Childcare centers not ready for training/implementation of goals

Staff participating in conscious/unconscious biases

Lack of communication among staff

Ratio concerns

Lack of support

Knowledge of behaviors

NEW IDEAS FOR INFANT AND EARLY CHILDHOOD IMPLEMENTATION

Counseling (support for staff)

Support groups for directors

Wellness workshops for teachers

Direct connection to nurse practitioner,
diagnostician, psychologist, etc.



Q & A

UNDERSTANDING AND ELIMINATING EXPULSION IN EARLYCHILDHOOD
PROGRAMS | ECLKC (HHS.GOV)

WWW.NCBI.NLM.NIH.GOVWWW.VERYWELLMIND.COM/WHAT-ARE-
THE-EFFECTS-IF-CHILDHOOD-TRAUMA.COM

(TEXASCHILDRENSCOMMISSION.GOV)

TRAUMA-INFORMED ATTITUDES,TEACHER STRESS,AND EXPULSION
DECISION RISK IN PRESCHOOL CLASSROOMS | SPRINGERLINK

WWW.WALLACEFOUNDATION.ORG PUBLISHED NOVEMBER 2022

WWW.NU.EDU

CITATIONS

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