

Southern PCWTA Fairness and Equity Update
Children of Color in Foster Care: What does disproportionality look
like in the five southern counties?

Tilisha Martin

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Presentation Summary

Using her experience as an attorney and social worker, Tilisha Martin conducts research on placement issues with the Southern Public Child Welfare Training Academy (PCWTA). Though the issue of disproportionality is well documented in California, it is important to evaluate how disproportionality is expressed differently at the county level and to tailor solutions based upon local strengths and needs. Ms. Martin presented results from a research study within the five southern counties to look at how issues vary between them. In interviews with social workers, Ms. Martin discussed social worker responses to questions about defining children of color, explaining issues of disproportionality and the meaning of culturally competent practice. Common themes emphasized the need for consistent definitions for social workers to apply regardless of county demographics, further investigation of the impact of socioeconomic status and to take culturally competent practice beyond self-awareness and to dig deeper into understanding cultural differences to better meet the needs of families.