



# Creating Inclusive Camps: Concepts and Strategies

# Introductions



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# Learning Outcomes



- Reflect on the ways that your program already creates inclusive spaces for young people.
- Learn about the four areas of influence and how you can advance DEI work in your community.
- Identify ways that your program can implement gradual changes that support better DEI practices at any level.



# WARM-UP

*How comfortable are you with talking about inclusion?*

EXPERT ----- BEGINNER

# WARM-UP

*When you are faced with sharing a new or different perspective with a colleague, how do you feel?*

I feel comfortable----- I want to crawl under a rock

# WARM-UP

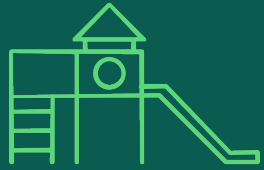
*Do you feel that you have control over creating equitable and inclusive experiences for your youth and staff?*

100% ----- 0%





# ACA's National Reach



15,000+  
Camps



26 Million  
Campers



1.2 Million  
Seasonal Staff



30,000+  
International Cultural  
Exchange Visitors



\$26 Billion  
Industry



10,000+  
Members



# Indiana Youth Programs on Campus

- 35 Colleges and Universities
- Over 150 unique camps
- Serving over 20,000 Hoosier Youth in grades K-12
- Focused on increasing post-secondary education rates from current level of 53%
- Prioritizes first generation college students, students of color, and students from families with limited resources.
- Community of Practice, Research, Education



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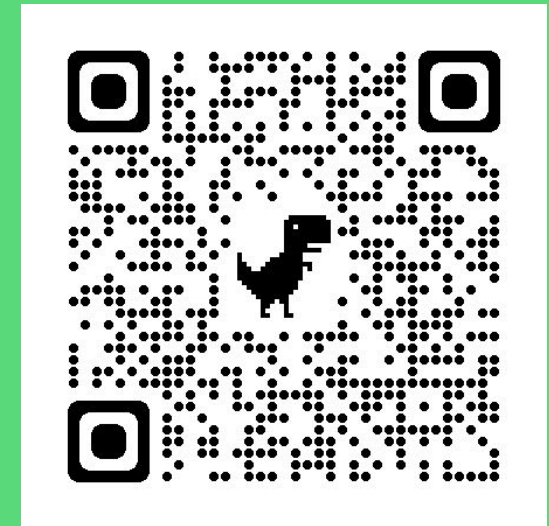
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# ACA Special Projects



“Equity is the felt and measured experience of thriving for all, achieved by eliminating barriers to success – whether individual, interpersonal, organizational, institutional, or systemic – and resourcing every individuals’ unique needs.

- Lily Zheng



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# How can youth programs promote equity?



## Access

All youth (and other stakeholders) have entrance into, involvement with, and full benefit of quality learning opportunities (Paris, 2012)

## Representation

Being present in decision-making and content (Mulligan & Kozleski, 2009)

## Meaningful Participation

All youth (and other stakeholders) have agency and are empowered to contribute in effective ways (Fraser, 1998)

## High Outcomes

Solutions benefit all youth towards self-determination and the ability to act as contributing citizens in a global community

# Creating Quality Camp Experiences



PROGRAM QUALITY ELEMENTS

OPPORTUNITIES

OUTCOME

Try New Things

Fun

Friendship

Sense of Belonging

New experiences

Time Away from Tech

Develop Skills

Meet New People

Social Awareness

Identity Development

Independence

Career Advancement

Thriving Adults

QUALITY CAMP EXPERIENCE



furthering learning  
supporting youth interests  
supporting plans and goals

**ENGAGING  
ENVIRONMENT**

fostering teamwork  
promoting responsibility and leadership  
cultivating empathy

**INTERACTIVE  
ENVIRONMENT**

emotion coaching  
scaffolding learning  
fostering growth mindset

**SUPPORTIVE  
ENVIRONMENT**

creating safe spaces

**SAFE ENVIRONMENT**

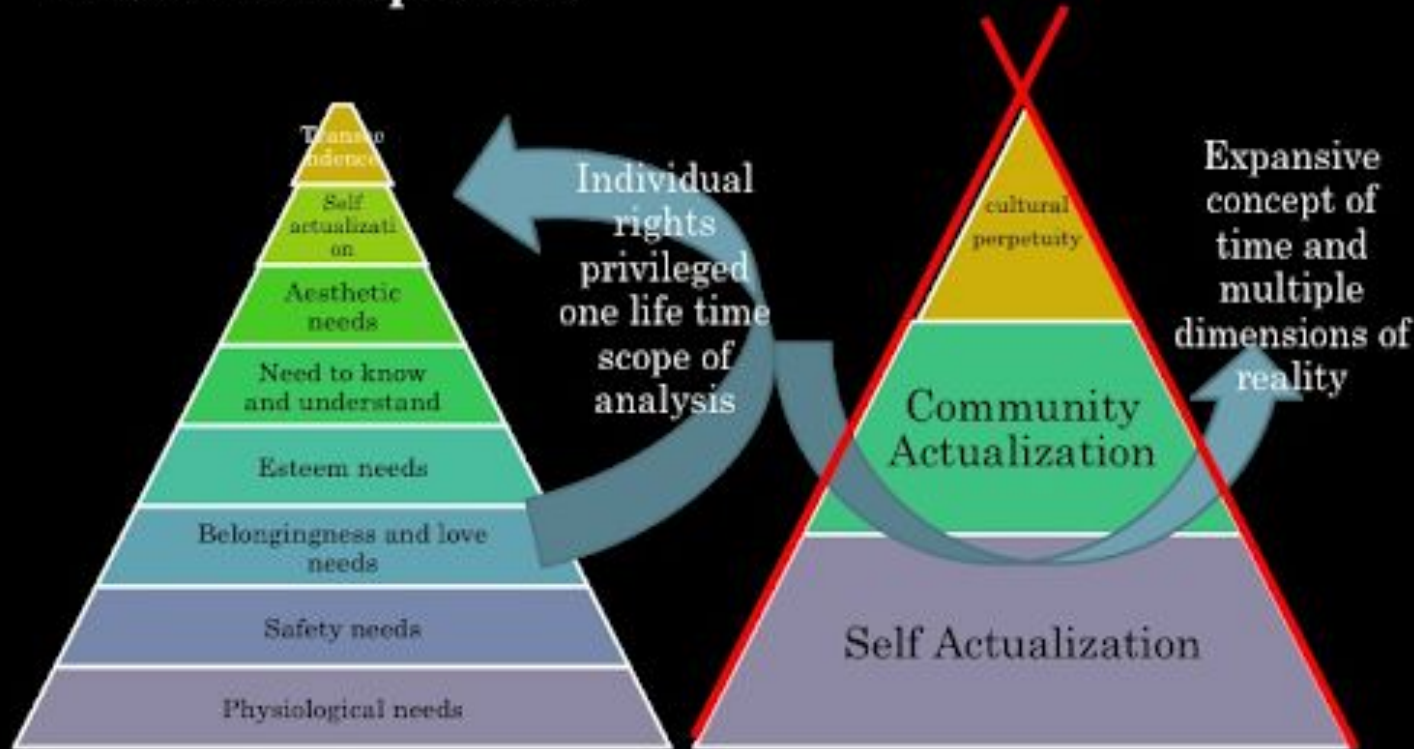




# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS (INFORMED BY BLACKFOOT NATION (ALTA))

## Western Perspective

## First Nations Perspective



Huitt, 2004; Blackstock, 2008; Wadsworth,



# Different Perspectives

## Western Perspective

- Social hierarchies are maintained by dominance of some people over others
- ‘positive deviants’ – unusually successful individuals
- ‘negative deviants’ – lawbreakers are dealt with dominance
- Children raised with strict, disciplinary approach
- Maslow asked “ How do we become self-actualized?” (earned).

## First Nations Perspective

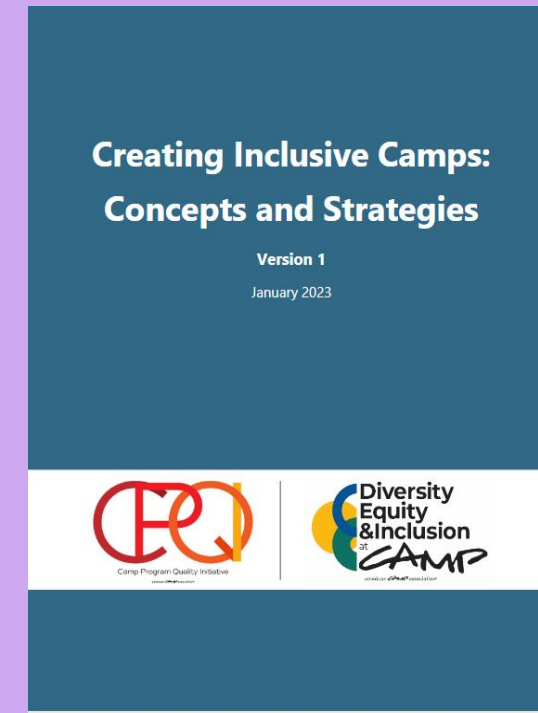
- Cooperation, minimal inequality, restorative justice, food security, high levels of life satisfaction
- ‘positive deviants’ – wealth defined via generosity
- ‘negative deviants’ – could redeem themselves with society if negative behavior was left behind
- Children raised with permissiveness and treated as equal members of society
- First nations communities believed we arrive on the planet self-actualized (innate).

“Relating to people as inherently wise involves trusting them and granting them space *to express who they are* (as perhaps manifested by the permissiveness with which the Siksika (Blackfoot) raise their children) rather than *making them* the best they can be.”



# What is the Creating Inclusive Camps Tool?

- Lexicon
- Continuous Improvement Guide
- Five Stages of DEI Advancement
- Reflection Tool





# Lexicon

- This lexicon is meant to create a shared understanding of terms throughout the tool.
- **Lexicon includes terms such as but not limited to the following:**
  - **Inclusion**
  - **Power**
  - **Privilege**
  - **Mental Models**

# What is Inclusion?

- Inclusion is actively creating spaces that not only represent diversity but create a sense of belonging and value. Unlike diversity, inclusion is about more than representation, it is about involvement and belonging (Camp Fire, 2021).
- Inclusion is authentically bringing traditionally excluded individuals and/or groups into processes, activities, and decision/policy making in a way that shares power (MP Associates, 2021).

SOURCES: National Headquarters 18-Month Strategic Plan. (2021); Camp Fire; Open Source Leadership Strategies.





# Power

- The ability to name or define.
- The ability to decide.
- The ability to set the rule, standard, or policy.
- The ability to change the rule, standard, or policy to serve your needs, wants, or desires.
- The ability to influence decision makers to make choices in favor of your cause, issue, or concern.

Each of these definitions of power can manifest on personal, social, institutional, or structural levels



# Types of Power

## Personal Power

- Self-determination.
- Power that an individual possesses or builds in their personal life and interpersonal relationships.

## Social Power

- Communal self-determination.
- A grassroots collective organization of personal power.
- Power that social groups possess or build among themselves to determine and shape their collective lives.

## Institutional Power

- Power to create and shape the rules, policies, and actions of an institution.
- To have institutional power is to be a decision maker or to have great influence upon a decision maker of an institution.

## Structural Power

- To have structural power is to create and shape the rules, policies, and actions that govern multiple and intersecting institutions or an industry



# Privilege



- Unearned social power accorded by the formal and informal institutions of society to ALL members of a dominant group (e.g., white privilege, male privilege, etc.). Privilege is usually invisible to those who have it because we're taught not to see it, but nevertheless it puts them at an advantage over those who do not have it.
- There are a few different types of privilege in the US





# Mental Models

- Mental models are personal, internal representations of external reality that people use to interact with the world around them.
- They are constructed by individuals based on their unique life experiences, perceptions, and understandings of the world.
- Mental models are used to reason and make decisions and can be the basis of individual behaviors. They provide the mechanism through which new information is filtered and stored.



# Continuous Improvement Guide

## Four Priorities of Continuous Improvement

**Understanding/Learning** – Camps engage with youth and community with the intent to seek understanding of culture and history from others' perspectives, without judgement or defense.

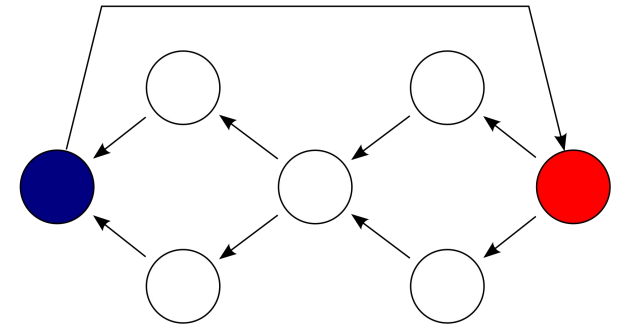
**Capacity Building** – Camps focus on a variety of methods to create change to structures and governing policies. Steps may include but are not limited to policy assessment and review, data utilization, and funding strategies.

**Measurement** – Impact measurement becomes the standard for implementing change. Collection of measurable data and qualitative observations are utilized when considering improvement.

**Sustainability** – Knowing initiatives need to be resourced (people, time, and money), sustainability is discussed to maintain both accountability and longevity



# Continuous Improvement Guide



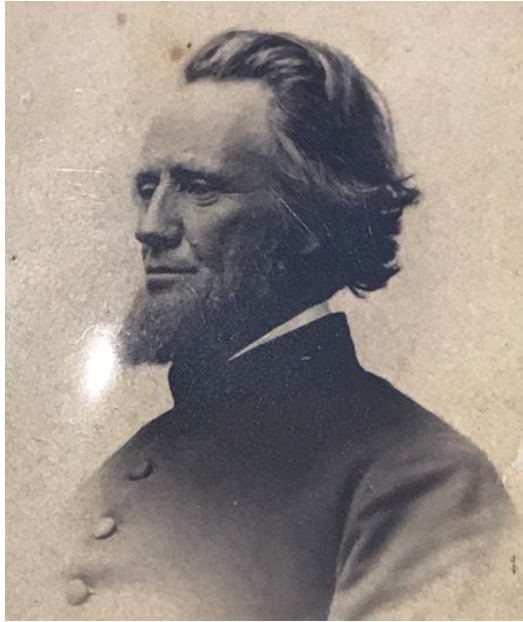
Understanding History

Policy & Practice

Systems Change



# Continuous Improvement Guide - History



If the first camp in the United States was established in 1861, years before Civil & Women's Rights, how might that have impacted woman of color, then and now, who participate in camp?

“Yet, the realities of racism sometimes hampered black girls’ access to these programs. When black girls joined troops and councils, they were often segregated along the color line, and black girls were often unable to enjoy camping trips, nature hikes, and impromptu boating races due to segregation in leisure facilities. In a 1944 report about the Chicago Commons day camp, a disappointed worker recorded, “Trips were not planned to the Forest Preserves because the swimming pools were not open to both Negro and white children.”

- MARCIA CHATELAIN ON THE RADICAL HISTORY OF BLACK GIRLS’ GROUPS

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# Continuous Improvement Guide - Policy & Practice

## Policy

- Widespread application
- Changes less frequently
- Usually expressed in broad terms
- States "what" and/or "why"
- Answers operational issues

## Practice

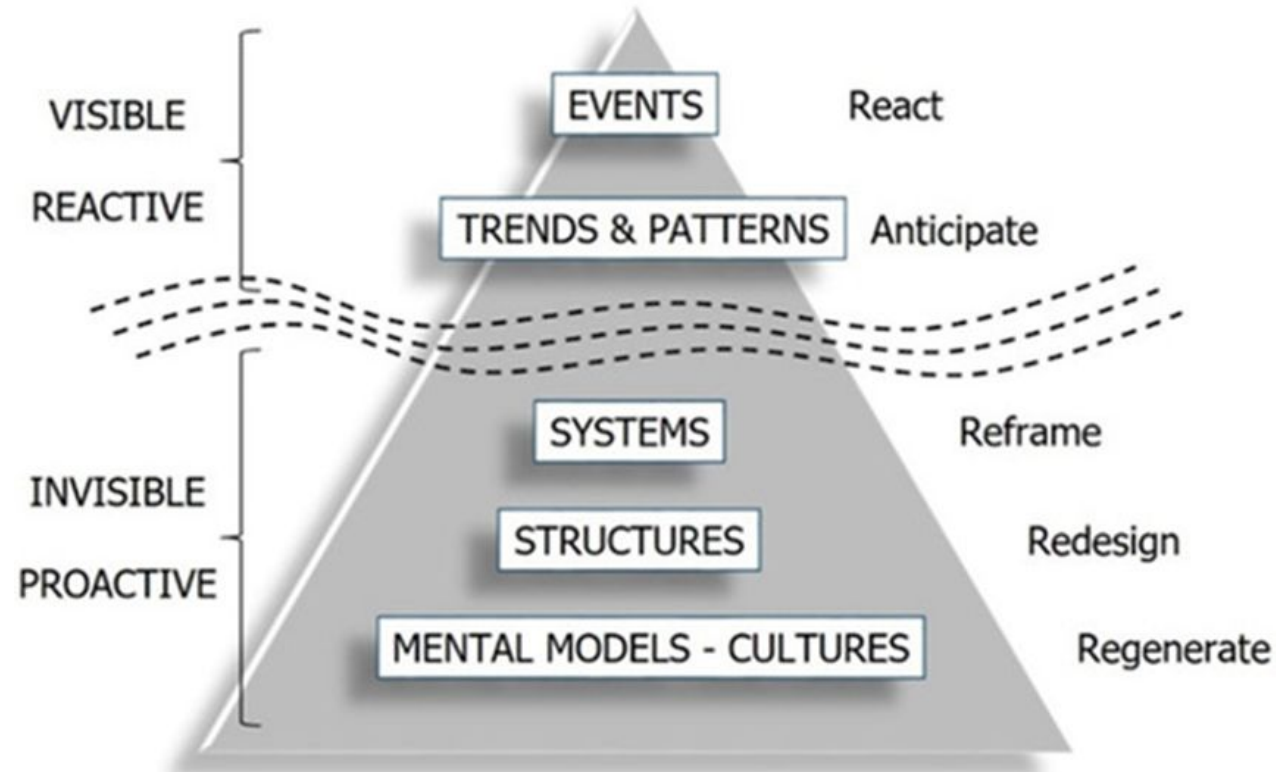
- Narrow application
- Prone to change
- Often stated in detail
- States "how", "when", and/or "who"
- Describes process

How can policies & practices support and reinforce exclusive behaviors within the organization?



# Continuous Improvement Guide - Systems Change

Moving toward looking beyond symptoms and diving into addressing the overall system.



How can we work to understand mental models that lead to behaviors and practices rooted in racism prejudice, xenophobia, homophobia, among many implicit biases?

# Creating Inclusive Camps: Concepts and Strategies



## Creating Inclusive Camps: Concepts and Strategies

Version 1  
January 2023





# Four Key Areas of Influence

- Youth/Community Engagement
- Organizational Culture
- Leadership Development
- Sustainability



# Five Stages of DEI Advancement

Not Yet Started	The camp does not yet prioritize advancing DEI work as an operational priority.
Ready to Start	The camp has recognized the importance of DEI work to their mission and is beginning the process by assessing the current state of the camp through audits.
Launched	The camp works toward improving youth representation while introducing elements that support individuals with diverse identities to mitigate risk. Youth and staff from underrepresented cultures are tokenized with minimal changes to existing policies.
On the Way	The camp is taking the steps to transform into a more equitable and inclusive space, in practice and policy. A culture of belonging is evident by youth and staff at these camps who value difference and contribute to the collective success internally and externally. At this stage, camps work to improve inclusion but sometimes fall back on the norms of the dominant culture.
Leading	The camp recognizes transformation is an ongoing process and holds the importance of DEI to its mission. Camps reflect and adjust to ensure the opportunities to be an equitable and inclusive space. As people with various identities (racial, ethnic, gender, etc.) enter these camp spaces, policies and practices work to eliminate barriers to inclusion by allowing youth to bring in experiences from their own cultures. Individuals who represent both privileged and oppressed groups work in solidarity to challenge exclusive behaviors. Using reflection, data, and in-depth engagement with youth and communities, these camps continually reduce marginalization while allowing youth to identify and utilize their social power.



# The Tool in Action

Engagement	Organizational Culture	Leadership Development	Sustainability
Historical DEI Perspective	Common Language	Leadership Pathways	Organizational Change
Recruitment & Retention	Understanding Culture	Recruiting and Hiring	Addressing Resistance
Impact Measures	Policy and Assessment Review	Board Recruitment	Volunteer Engagement
	Utilization (Data)	Capacity Building	Funding

# Camper/Community Engagement

When engaging with youth and community always remember to:

- Avoid prescriptive solutions but collaborate with community to identify needs
- Utilize input from both the organization and community to maintain accountability
- Discuss camper needs with families and community leaders to develop effective support systems
- Build organizational capacity that allows for building relationships beyond services

**Critical components we will analyze within this area of influence include:**

- Historical DEI Perspective
- Participant Recruitment and Retention
- Impact Measures



# Camper/Community Engagement

## Questions to consider while reviewing the five stages of advancement:

- **History** – Which community groups, In or Out, have you historically engaged with? Are some groups engaged at a higher frequency than others? Typically, how does the power balance exist in these relationships?
- **Policy & Practice** – When communicating with a new community, are your services based on previous communities or developed by those within that community?
- **Systems Change** – What are your organization’s beliefs about engagement with communities in the “Out” group?

# Camper/Community Engagement: Impact Measures

*“Your program has never measured impact because the program is running well with ‘no problems’.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp does not measure the youth experience.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	Youth voice is captured through quotes, often used for marketing. This data is not supported by quantitative data across underrepresented groups. The camp works to measure the youth experience but does not analyze to explore differences in experience for underrepresented identities.
<b>Launched</b>	Data is reviewed to identify gaps that may lead to exclusionary outcomes, measured and analyzed to explore the experience within underrepresented identities. Data is used to reduce assumptions and implement program improvements.
<b>On the Way</b>	The camp is transparent in sharing findings with youth and their community.
<b>Leading</b>	Commitment to an annual continuous improvement cycle is used to solve root problems and implement changes at a systems level.
Please use this space to write down your reflections on your own program and brainstorm next steps.	



# Camper/Community Engagement: Impact Measures

*“Your leadership has decided that your program must use feedback from all individuals, even if something ‘just happened once’.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp does not measure the youth experience.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	Youth voice is captured through quotes, often used for marketing. This data is not supported by quantitative data across underrepresented groups. The camp works to measure the youth experience but does not analyze to explore differences in experience for underrepresented identities.
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# The Tool in Action

Engagement	Organizational Culture	Leadership Development	Sustainability
Historical DEI Perspective	<b>Not Yet Started</b> – May never measure impact because the status quo is “running as desired”.		
Recruitment & Retention			
Impact Measures			
	<b>On the Way</b> – Starts to use feedback from all individuals, even if something “just happened once”		

# Organizational Culture

**Below are examples of how inclusive cultures transform:**

- Individual Power to Collective Power – Power goes from a few in senior leadership to seeing value in individual positions and expertise. See definition of power in Lexicon.
- Avoiding Conflict to Constructive Feedback – Individuals move from blaming individuals for their own discomfort to holding each other accountable while continuously learning from each other.
- Competitive to Collaborative – Focus moves from how an individual can be successful on their own to how can we all support each other and our collective efforts.

**Critical components we will analyze within this area of influence include:**

- Common Language
- Understanding Culture
- Policy and Assessment Review
- Data Utilization

# Organizational Culture

Questions to consider while reviewing the five stages of advancement:

- **History** – As new identities and cultures have entered your camp space, has the camp historically reacted by creating accommodations or working toward redefining culture?
- **Policy & Practice** – Are changes in practice and policy based on state and federal standards? How is youth voice incorporated?
- **Systems Change** – Have changes to your inclusive practices been a method to mitigate risk or develop a more inclusive and accountable culture?





# Organizational Culture: Common Language

*“Your program has decided not create a DEI statement for their website and has not created a language guide. Leadership has decided that words can be used meaning different things to each person without being grounded in one universal definition.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp has not made a statement explaining their position on DEI or provide a guide for inclusive and diverse language relevant to their context.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	A single department, leader, or staff member is tasked with leading a DEI evaluation of language, mission statement, goals, etc.
<b>Launched</b>	The camp creates or adopts a language guide, develops a DEI statement, and gathers feedback from stakeholders on what should be included.
<b>On the Way</b>	The camp creates or adopts an inclusive style guide, recruits diverse leaders to design an inclusive approach to building a DEI statement and organization-wide initiative, and provides training opportunities for all stakeholders.
<b>Leading</b>	The camp consistently evaluates their efforts, improving and updating their work. They create opportunities for diverse stakeholders to provide feedback on language and its use across the entire organization and its systems.

Please use this space to write down your reflections on your own program and brainstorm next steps.

# Organizational Culture: Common Language

*“Your organization gathered a few Individuals who have different dimensions of identity develop a common language guide.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp has not made a statement explaining their position on DEI or provide a guide for inclusive and diverse language relevant to their context.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	A single department, leader, or staff member is tasked with leading a DEI evaluation of language, mission statement, goals, etc.
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# The Tool in Action

Engagement	Organizational Culture	Leadership Development	Sustainability
Historical DEI Perspective	Common Language	Leadership Pathways	Organizational Change
Recruitment & Retention	<p><b>Not Yet Started</b> – Words can be used meaning different things to each person without being grounded in one universal definition.</p> <p><b>On the Way</b>– Individuals who have different dimensions of identity develop a common language guide (but not consistently evaluate their efforts).</p>		
Impact Measures			

# Leadership Development

## **Inclusive Leadership allows for:**

- Individuals at all levels to learn from and hold each other accountable
- Critical thinkers to ask questions that improve the organization, and
- All leaders to be successful in their roles without limitations

## **Critical components we will analyze within this area of influence include:**

- Leadership Pathways
- Recruitment and Hiring
- Board Member Recruitment
- Sustainability





# Leadership Development

Questions to consider while reviewing the five stages of advancement:

- **History** – Where have your leaders traditionally been recruited from? Why is this the case?
- **Policy & Practice** – What practices do your hiring managers/human resources team use when selecting new leaders to join the organization? How are the “right people” selected for the job? And what are the characteristics of the “right people”?
- **Systems Change** – When was the last time you reviewed your hiring/recruiting process? Is it based solely on state/federal regulations?

# Leadership Development: Recruitment and Hiring

*“Your program's hiring practice is for individuals who already represent the organization to utilize the same channels to hire.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp follows traditional methods of recruitment, depending on traditional markers of success (such as a well-written resume without typos, cover letters, the burden of follow-up on the candidate). When the camp has an opening, leadership hand-picks who to interview and the job posting is not opened to everyone.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	The camp reviews the applicant experience and begins to analyze who their usual applicants are and if they typically fall in the “In” or “Out” group.
<b>Launched</b>	The camp begins to question long-standing beliefs about what defines a quality applicant.
<b>On the Way</b>	The camp removes barriers to employment that reduce the hiring pool of individuals from underrepresented and “Out” groups.
<b>Leading</b>	The camp’s commitment to recruiting underrepresented individuals results in continuous improvement plans, increased diversity, and long-term leadership training plans for all stakeholders.
Please use this space to write down your reflections on your own program and brainstorm next steps.	



# Leadership Development: Recruitment and Hiring

“At your program, ‘Diverse’ individuals who are hired, are provided opportunity to add options to decisions being made and are affirmed when sharing systematic issues.”

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
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Historical DEI Perspective	Common Language	Leadership Pathways	Organizational Change
Recruitment & Retention	Understanding Culture	Recruiting and Hiring	Addressing Resistance

**Not Yet Started** – Individuals who already represent the organization utilize the same channels to hire.

**Leading** – ‘Diverse’ individuals who are hired, are provided opportunity to add options to decisions being made and are affirmed when sharing systematic issues.



# Sustainability

**Critical components we will analyze within this area of influence include:**

- Organizational Change
- Addressing Resistance
- Volunteer Engagement
- DEI Funding Strategies

# Sustainability



Questions to consider while reviewing the five stages of advancement:

- **History** – How your camp implemented change? Was it out of need or in preparation for what is to come?
- **Systems Change** – When your camp is addressing change, is it adopting new language or shifting ideas and behaviors?
- **Policy & Practice** – When change is implemented, do policies change as well? Does practice?

# Sustainability: Addressing Resistance

*“At your camp, when tense conversations arise, individuals who have the most power/influence can resist and maintain the status quo.”*

Stage of Advancement	Opportunities for Advancement
<b>Not Yet Started</b>	The camp has not begun to think about or implement strategies to address resistance to focusing and improving the inclusivity of their camp.
<b>Ready to Start</b>	In preparation to begin inclusive practices, the camp has identified resistance (pushback from community and organizational stakeholders) in four categories (avoidance, contesting, biased processing, and empowerment) <sup>3</sup> .
<b>Launched</b>	The camp begins to utilize tools that counter forms of resistance while working to educate during onboarding.
<b>On the Way</b>	The camp employs strategies (e.g., conversations, trainings, tools) to reduce resistance from their internal community (staff, board, and volunteers).
<b>Leading</b>	The camp’s internal community values improvement and supports changes when implemented with an understanding of approach and intention
Please use this space to write down your reflections on your own program and brainstorm next steps.	



# Sustainability: Addressing Resistance

“At your camp, conversations, trainings and tools are initiated to deepen understanding of resistance and individual mental models.”

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# The Tool in Action

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Historical DEI Perspective	Common Language	Leadership Pathways	Organizational Change
Resistance to DEI Initiatives	Unlearning Old Habits	Resistance to Training	Addressing Resistance
Engagement			
g			

**Not Yet Started** – When tense conversations arise, individuals who have the most power/influence can resist and maintain the status quo.

**On the Way** – Conversations, trainings and tools are initiated to deepen understanding of resistance and individual mental models.

**Share at least one way that you will use the concepts and strategies we talked about today to improve the experiences of your youth, families, and community?**





# Thank You!



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