



RACIAL EQUITY PROMISING PRACTICES PROFILE FORM

Working title for your promising practice: Monthly Equity Conversations during the First Staff Meeting

Your name, HDC member organization, title, email address, web address, and telephone number: Community Homes Inc

Best method / time to contact you?
vicki@community-homes.org

Do you give permission for HDC to contact your organization for an interview?

Yes No

Overview of Practice

What is the essence of the promising practice?

Community Homes is committed to learning about cultural diversity and equity. Conversations on equity help CH staff to understand the root causes of systemic racism.

Where is it being implemented or considered for implementation?

Equity Conversations are held during all -staff meetings once a month. The goals for having equity conversations are to level staff understanding of racial equity, assess organizational practices, and develop a plan to guide the entire organization toward racial equity.

History

How did the practice get started?

In 2017 CH delivered a series of housing readiness workshops for individuals with disabilities in collaboration with a non-profit organization that serves families of color in the south end of King County. Then, staff identified differences in working with families of color vs. families from the dominant culture. Staff, led by the Executive Director, decided to have in-house sessions to learn about cultural competence and diversity.

When was it first implemented or when will it be fully implemented?

In October 2017, staff started monthly conversations around equity.

Results

What are the expected results and impacts?

Create a learning space to talk, analyze, and reflect upon racial and equity issues.

What have you achieved so far? What do you plan to achieve?

Having intentional conversations around race, equity, and culture at the staff level helps us to unify knowledge, share experiences, and explore personal bias and privileges. The conversations have opened our minds and hearts to increase awareness to institutional racism and sources of inequity. Future conversations will guide our work towards planning, holding us accountable, and expanding individual and collective learning.

How could it impact racial equity? Has it affected day-to-day practices in the organization?

Monthly equity conversations have prepared staff to strengthen their knowledge and to feel confident in advocating for those who are underrepresented and oppressed. We are developing a CH equity plan to execute within in the next 2-3 years. This equity plan has direct impact on how the organization is present in the community through its programs and services.

Keys to success

List the action steps followed in carrying out the practice.

CH had an organic order to establish the equity conversations; these are some of the steps or actions taken:

- Understanding the WHY
- Establishing a specific date and time that worked for everyone
- Starting from the basics: language, discovering self, being aware of differences
- Keeping the as part of the workday so there are no additional meetings
- Having a facilitator

What measures have been taken to make this effort a success?

- Include the conversations during the time when we usually meet
- Dedicated time that is part of our workday
- Assume best intention
- Create a learning environment; no one is an expert

What are important factors of implementation?

- Commitment from organization's leadership
- Willingness to learn new concepts
- Honest/ authentic conversations
- Recognizing personal bias
- Being patient with self and others
- Going outside the organization to learn about different perspectives and experiences to bring back in.

What makes this practice attractive and worth trying? How could this work for other member organizations?

Monthly equity conversations lead us to:

- change organization's outreach and formats of delivering workshops
- collect additional demographic data
- inquiry to understand underrepresented people's needs
- develop authentic engagement with people from diverse backgrounds
- have an equity lens in day to day work

Resources

How much? - What are the anticipated total resources (people, money, time) necessary for this practice and are there likely sources of external support?

CH has undertaken this effort to have four full-time employees invest one hour during the first staff meeting of each month for an equity conversation; some sessions require prep

time that involves readings, watching videos, or reviewing audio. Currently, CH full time staff also attend HDC quarterly cohort meetings as part of professional development.

Submissions will be reviewed for fit with the HDC Racial Equity Project mission, goals and principles. Profiles will be posted on the Racial Equity Project webpage and will be considered for use in other HDC publications. Approved and disseminated partnership ideas are not necessarily suitable for all contexts and those interested should discuss implementation with their supervisors, HDC support staff and/or boards.