

**I AM**  
Acknowledging the Truth

I AM Group  
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### The Challenge

“The overrepresentation of African-American and Native American children in the child welfare system is a troubling and complex phenomenon. Thirty-three percent of kids in foster care are African-American, but they make up only 15 percent of the child population.” (National Conference of Legislators, 2015)

**CHILDREN BY RACE/ETHNICITY, 2011\***

White	933,246	73%
Black	94,556	7%
American Indian	17,354	1%
Asian	68,695	5%
Two or more races	58,445	5%
Hispanic or Latino	104,649	8%

Minnesota's child population did not grow during the last decade. More than two-thirds of Minnesota's counties have fewer children now than they did in 2000, with the majority of these counties in Greater Minnesota.<sup>7</sup>

**1.28 million children**  
in 2000<sup>8</sup>  
in 2010<sup>9</sup>

**CHILD POVERTY RATES IN MINNESOTA, 2011\*\***

In Minnesota, 34 percent of children are living below 200% of poverty, more than 1 in 3.<sup>10</sup>

Minnesota has the most unequal state income tax in the country.<sup>11</sup>

A child from a family in America's bottom quintile of earners is less likely than a child born into the top quintile to be ready for school at age five. He is less likely to graduate from high school with decent grades; he is more likely while still of school age to become a parent or be convicted of a crime. —THE ECONOMIST, 11/11/10 P. 2

Children's Defense Fund—Minnesota | KIDS COUNT DATA BOOK 2013

### The Difficult Journey to Adulthood

Families of color are overrepresented in the child welfare and juvenile justice system

Mass Incarceration

Men of color are impacted by institutionalized racism to a crippling degree

“A toxic cocktail of poverty, illiteracy, racial disparity, violence and massive incarceration is sentencing millions of children of color to dead end, powerless and hopeless lives and threatens to undermine the past half century of racial and social progress.” —THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC DEFENDERS

Children's Defense Fund

### Building an Equitable Boat

- Engage in root cause analysis of population served; quality engagement is rooted in community wisdom
- Black men and boys need to be an integral part of programming and design; not an afterthought or an add on to address compliance measures
- Create challenges and set the bar of expectations, many youth in foster care have stated that no one placed expectations on them; limited encouragement and belief enhances the cycle
- Black men and boys need to be recognized as assets to the community and given real leadership opportunities and the ability to openly advocate.
- Honor the need for brotherhood and create meaningful opportunities for its growth (a primary focus of I AM)



Who Determines the Value of a Man  
Changing the Narrative and Building a Movement of Empowerment

## Fatherhood and Youth Development Resources

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This presentation was developed by the I AM Group

For information on training, curriculum development, and programming aimed at engaging and reaching young men of color please contact [info@i-amproject.org](mailto:info@i-amproject.org)

For information on fatherhood program development or evaluation and system design contact Christine Keys, LMSW at [ckkeys@abovethepath.com](mailto:ckkeys@abovethepath.com)