

# Chapin Hall Research Brief

## Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Mentoring

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**Doris Duke Fellowships**  
*for the Promotion of Child Well-Being*  
Seeking innovations to prevent child abuse and neglect

 **CHAPIN HALL**  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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## INTRODUCTION

The Doris Duke Fellowships for the Promotion of Child Well-Being were launched in 2010 to promote interdisciplinary learning and advance research that improves public policy and practice. For over 10 years, the program engaged 120 fellows representing diverse disciplines from across the United States. The fellowships formed a peer learning network that encourages interdisciplinary conceptualization and investigation of issues that affect child well-being. Each fellow identified an academic mentor to support their dissertation research and journey through their doctoral program; each fellow also identified a policy or practice mentor who assisted them in framing their work to maximize its policy and practice relevance. Both mentors were instrumental in supporting fellows through completion of their doctoral studies and advancing their careers.

The Doris Duke Fellowships Equity Study examined the perspectives of multiple key constituencies—academic and policy mentors, staff members, national advisory board members, and Doris Duke Fellows—to explore experiences of diversity, equity, and inclusion within the fellowships program. This research brief describes how diversity, equity, and inclusion were experienced in mentoring relationships between mentors (academic and policy) and fellows. This brief discusses the frequency of mentoring interactions, relationship quality, how similarities in personal identities influenced relationship quality, and how aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion were encountered in these mentoring relationships.

## KEY FINDINGS



Strong mentoring relationships were correlated with the **frequency of interaction** between mentees and mentors; the higher the frequency of contact, the higher the relationship quality.

Most mentors described the quality of the relationship with their mentee as **excellent**; no mentors described it as poor.



When differences in identities and experiences were identified and discussed, they **enriched** mentoring relationships.

Mentors were comfortable discussing some aspects of diversity, equity, and inclusion, although these issues were most often discussed as they related to **research efforts** rather than institutional environments or experiences.



Mentors identified **lack of access** to equitable resources and barriers to accessing professional networks as significant challenges to underrepresented researchers achieving equitable educational and professional outcomes.

Mentors suggest that **training** on institutional or systemic racism, as well as on how underrepresented groups navigate spaces that have traditionally been dominated by White individuals would be helpful to their development as mentors.



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## METHODS

Using a sequential mixed-methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), we collected data via online surveys and Zoom interviews. Doris Duke Fellows and their academic and policy mentors completed online surveys. We conducted interviews with fellowships staff, national advisory board members, and fellows. For this brief, we analyzed data gathered from fellows and their mentors. First, we reviewed online survey data so that prominent emergent findings could be considered in the development of an interview guide. Second, we completed virtual interviews with fellows to gather more in-depth perspectives about their experiences in the fellowships program. Interview audio recordings were transcribed and analyzed in Atlas.ti using a thematic approach (Braun & Clark, 2006). We gathered survey data using REDCap and analyzed the data using SPSS. Participation in the fellow and mentor surveys was anonymous, thus the number of unique fellows who completed both an interview and a survey is unknown. Group ratings were analyzed (for academic mentors, policy mentors, and fellows) because the anonymized nature of the data meant that matches could not be made across mentors and fellows. When possible, differences in responses by demographic identities were considered.

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## RESULTS

Online surveys were completed by 94 fellows (78%) and 69 academic and policy mentors (36%).<sup>1</sup> Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of survey participants by group. Among fellows and mentors, between 44 and 56% identified as a member of any underrepresented group.<sup>2</sup> Most participants identified as female (between 61 and 75%) and White (between 73 and 84%). The average age of participants was 36 years old for fellows and 57 years old for mentors. Most academic mentors (88%) were their fellow's dissertation chairs. Policy mentors were affiliated with universities or other institutions (52%), government agencies (19%), nonprofits (14%), and research organizations (10%). Demographic data were not gathered for interview participants.

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<sup>1</sup> All mentors ( $N = 209$ ) were invited to participate in the study. We could not find current email addresses for eight mentors, so 201 mentors were sent an invitation. Some mentors participated in the fellowships program up to seven years prior to the Equity Study, so motivation to respond may have been lower for those more removed from the program.

<sup>2</sup> Membership in an underrepresented group included those who self-identified as being in a disproportionately small group of researchers based on racial or ethnic identity, gender identity, sexual orientation identity, or having a disability.

**Table 1. Demographics of Fellows & Mentors: Survey Completion**

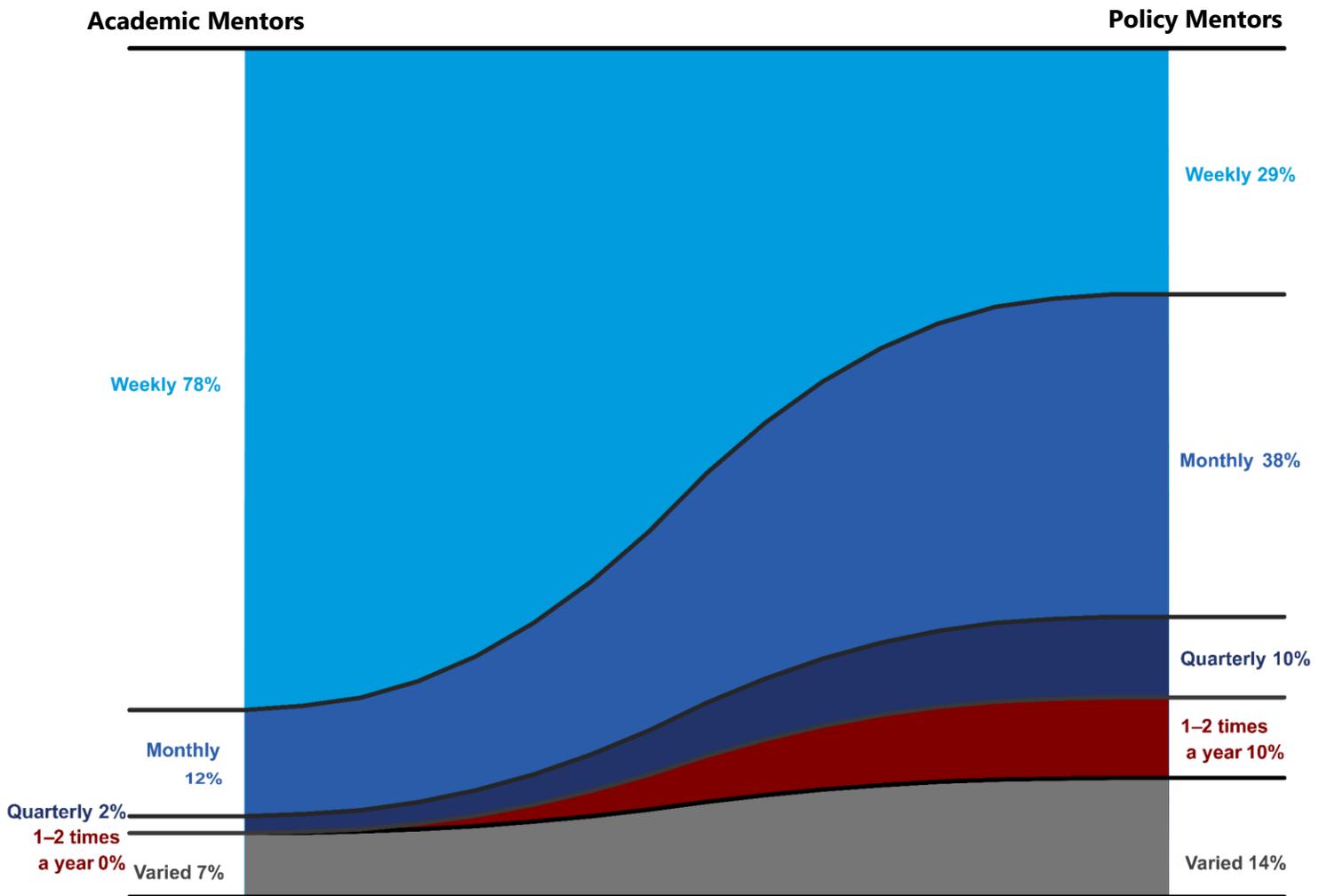
	Fellows (N = 94)	Academic Mentors (N = 41)	Policy Mentors (N = 21)
Race and Ethnicity			
White	73% (n = 69)	84% (n = 32)	80% (n = 16)
Black	5% (n = 5)	8% (n = 3)	10% (n = 2)
Latinx/Hispanic	7% (n = 7)	5% (n = 2)	5% (n = 1)
Asian	5% (n = 5)	0% (n = 0)	0% (n = 0)
Other	1% (n = 1)	3% (n = 1)	5% (n = 1)
Member of any underrepresented group	44% (n = 41)	31% (n = 12)	16% (n = 3)
Gender			
Female	75 % (n = 70)	61% (n = 25)	71% (n = 15)
Male	10% (n = 9)	39% (n = 16)	29% (n = 6)
Prefer not to answer	3% (n = 3)	0% (n = 0)	0% (n = 0)
Age (M, SD)	35.8 (5.7)	56.2 (10.4)	57.7 (13.4)
Cohort One (2011–13)	15% (n = 14)	15% (n = 6)	5% (n = 1)
Cohort Two (2012–14)	12% (n = 11)	2% (n = 1)	5% (n = 1)
Cohort Three (2013-2015)	12% (n = 11)	9% (n = 4)	(n = 0)
Cohort Four (2014-2016)	10% (n = 9)	2% (n = 1)	10% (n = 2)
Cohort Five (2015-2017)	17% (n = 7)	2% (n = 1)	5% (n = 1)
Cohort Six (2016-2018)	14% (n = 13)	17% (n = 7)	(n = 0)
Cohort Seven (2017-2019)	10% (n = 9)	10% (n = 8)	14% (n = 3)
Cohort Eight (2018-2020)	12% (n = 11)	24% (n = 10)	4% (n = 5)
Cohort unknown	10% (n = 9)	7% (n = 3)	4% (n = 8)

Note: Percentages that do not add up to 100% are due to missing data.

## Mentor–Fellow Interactions

During the 2-year fellowships program, most survey respondents reported that fellows met with their academic mentors weekly (78%), which was significantly more often than they met with their policy mentors (29% met their policy mentors weekly; see Table 2). Mentors and fellows communicated using a variety of methods, including in-person meetings, emails, phone calls, video calls, and texts.

**Figure 1. Frequency of Fellow and Mentor Contact**



## Mentor–Fellow Relationship Quality

The quality of the mentor–fellow relationship was positively associated with frequency of contact. Mentors who rated the quality of their relationship as *excellent* were more likely to have more frequent contact ( $p = .03$ ). Most mentors (79%) described their relationship quality with fellows as *excellent*, 16% said their relationship was *good*, and 5% said it was *fair*. There were no differences by type of mentor and relationship quality was not related to any demographic identities among mentors.

Fellows identified good mentoring relationships as those in which their mentors cultivated mutual respect. Fellows explained that it was important to feel like their voices were “heard and valued” and to have mentors who were open to questions. Being included in decision making and experiencing a collaborative team approach were highlighted as strategies that “didn’t make the power dynamic a big issue.” The ability to communicate openly was experienced in a transactional way; having meaningful conversations strengthened the relationship, and strengthening the relationship also made it more conducive to having conversations about uncomfortable topics or differences of opinion.

**Mentoring Impact**

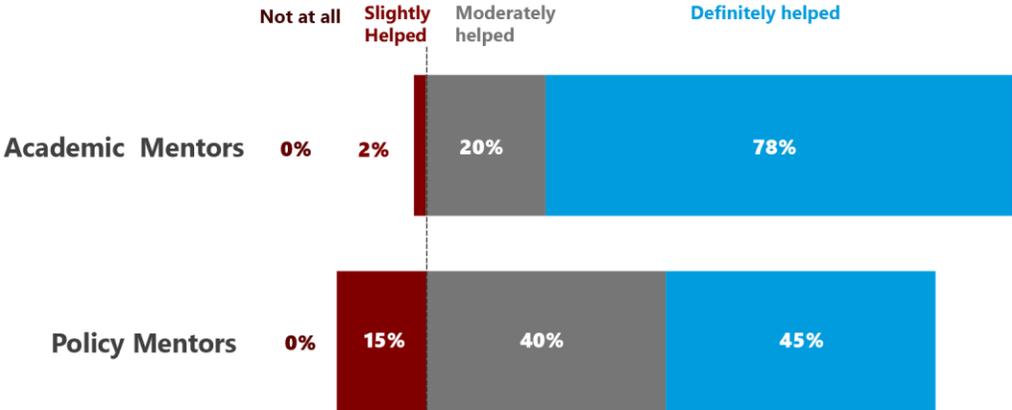
Academic mentors believed they helped fellows achieve their educational and career goals more than policy mentors did, as seen in Figure 2. Mentors described several strategies that helped fellows achieve their educational and career goals:

- Feedback on ideas and written work
- Advising about scholarly and professional development
- Role modeling
- Socialization into academia and the role of a researcher
- Networking
- Guidance about and opportunities for research and writing
- Offering alternative perspectives
- Providing encouragement and advocacy
- Supporting decision-making processes
- Translating research to policy and practice

A few mentors also noted that fellows were already driven toward success, but mentoring allowed an opportunity for amplifying that success or advancing the work. One mentor said:

 This young woman is strong and capable and would have succeeded without me. However, I think that having someone actively administering programs and policies, rather than in research only, helped her frame her research in more useful ways.

**Figure 2. Mentor Perceptions of their Mentoring Impact\***



\*p < .05

## Mentor and Fellow Identity Characteristics

Mentors reported personal identity characteristics that were similar or dissimilar between them and their fellows, based on their knowledge or perception, and reflected upon how these characteristics related to relationship quality. Due to small sample sizes of underrepresented groups for gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability, we were unable to analyze how similar identities may have related to relationship quality between mentors and fellows. Relationship quality between mentors and fellows did not differ based on whether they shared a race or ethnicity. However, having different socioeconomic statuses or immigration statuses did lead to differences in relationship quality.

Sixteen mentors reported dissimilar socioeconomic statuses compared to their fellows. These pairs were more likely to report high-quality relationships than the 32 pairs who were concordant ( $p = .02$ ). Similarly, the six mentors who reported dissimilar immigration status with their fellows said that this enriched their relationship. One mentor reported a similar immigration status with their fellow, and reported it as enriching their relationship ( $p < .001$ ).

In mentoring relationships where differences between the mentor and fellow were identified, many mentors talked about how having an awareness of differences increased understanding of each other's backgrounds and cultures. One mentor stated that it was "helpful to get a cross-cultural perspective on our work."

Mentors described being open to learning as a major driver for achieving the full benefit of diversity – advancing understanding of a problem and solutions through diversity in experiences and perspectives. Overall, differences were described as enriching the relationship; mentors and fellows learned from each other. One mentor said:

 I learn a lot from her given her background and experiences as a [identifying characteristic redacted] and first-generation student. It also helps inform our work to be meaningful outside academia.

While congruency offered a "shared understanding of experiences in the population of study, given our common experiences as members of the same racial group - no need to explain to one another," many mentors identified opportunities to be curious and discover something new regardless of congruency. One mentor said:

 We were from two very different cultural groups [within the same broad ethnic group] and I think we learned from each other about how cultures influence parenting and child outcomes.

For mentors who identified as having many of the same characteristics as their fellows, inferences often led to the mentoring pair not having explicit conversations about differences. The following quotes from two mentors illustrate this:

 In retrospect, I realize that NOT having to address these issues makes the mentoring process feel straightforward, but creates no language/history for when things break down.

I have no idea because most of this is implicit. It feels very strange to answer how similarities or dissimilarities helped or hurt our relationship. The question deserves more nuanced answers. We had a lot of similarities which I assume means that there were less opportunities for misunderstandings.

Having an opportunity to make the implicit explicit did seem to enhance mentoring relationships, not only in discovering a different perspective, but in promoting common interests. One mentor said:

 We were able to connect around similarities—first-generation college, women of color, and the importance of being a vehicle for change to ensure safety, permanence, and well-being of vulnerable children.

In general, mentors described having fulfilling relationships with fellows, pride in seeing fellows advance in their careers, shared interest in the work, and, according to one mentor, “excellent working relationship[s].” Fellows also recognized how having similar identities as their mentors opened up the conversation to issues of racism or microaggressions, gender inequality, and parenting. A fellow said:

 [We discussed] how even as a successful [racial identity redacted] woman, some of the microaggressions do have an impact on health and well-being.

Fellows further identified how each mentoring relationship is an important spoke on a wheel, a network of support. Collectively, each mentoring relationship provides instruction, feedback, and various forms of encouragement to support a fellow, even in the development of fellows’ mentoring skills with their own students. One fellow said:

 I still think though it’s important for us to recognize that we can’t be everything to our students. Make sure that they have other mentors that represent who they want to become in their careers and to look for somebody who can work with them, whether it’s about finding another [person of color] female scholar that has a career trajectory that my students want, right? Or finding another, a mentor who can talk to them about parenting or find another mentor that represents the career path that they want to go, which may be outside of academia, right? I think we need to think about how to create a network that will support our students, particularly our students that don’t look like us and don’t have the same lives that we do to go in the direction that they want to go.

## **Conversations about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

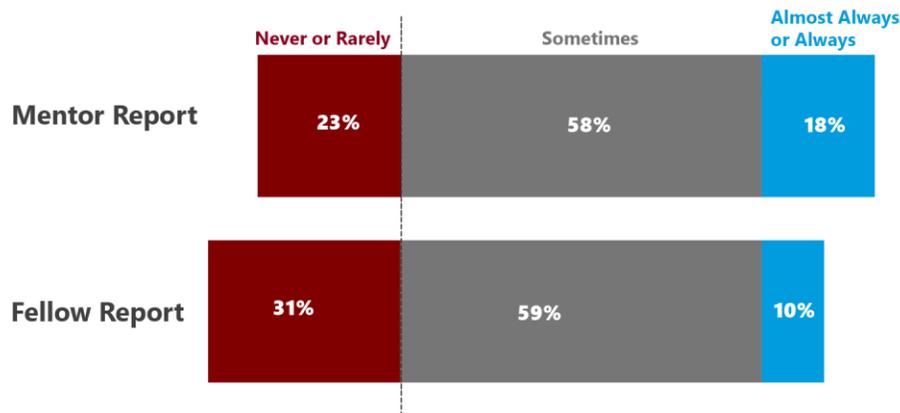
In order to better understand how conversations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion occurred within the context of the mentoring relationships, mentors and fellows were asked 1) who initiated those conversations, 2) how frequently they occurred, and 3) their comfort level with the conversations. Conversations around potentially sensitive topics like diversity, equity, and inclusion can be difficult,

particularly when power differentials exist within the relationship. On the other hand, when conversations do take place in a safe and respectful manner, they can enrich the mentoring relationship.

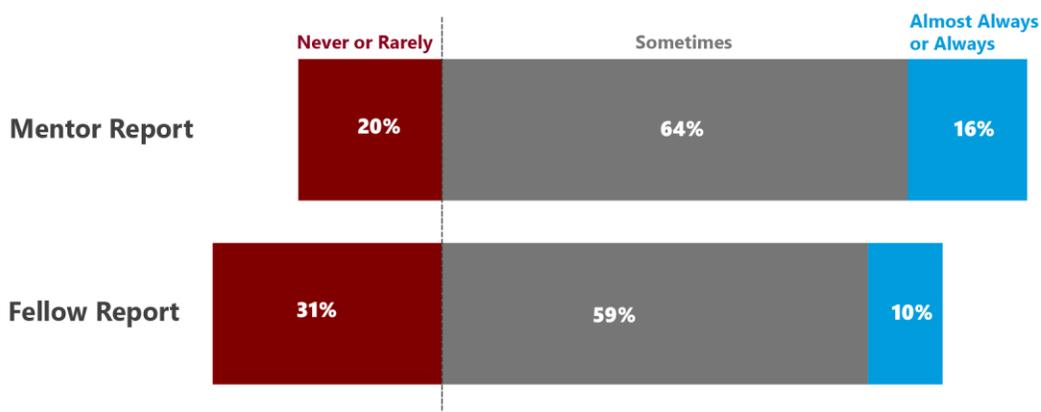
### Frequency and Initiation of Conversations

Fellows reported having discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion more frequently with academic mentors (55%) than with policy mentors (36%,  $p = .01$ ). Most fellows reported that they *never* or *rarely* discussed diversity, equity, and inclusion with their policy mentors (64%); most fellows reported that they *sometimes* (48%) had these discussions with their academic mentors. Mentor and fellow reports of who initiated conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion topics were consistent, revealing no significant differences. Figures 3 and 4 show how mentors and fellows each rated the initiation of conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion.

**Figure 3. Fellow Initiation of Conversations about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**



**Figure 4. Mentor Initiation of Conversations about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**



## Comfort Having Conversations about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

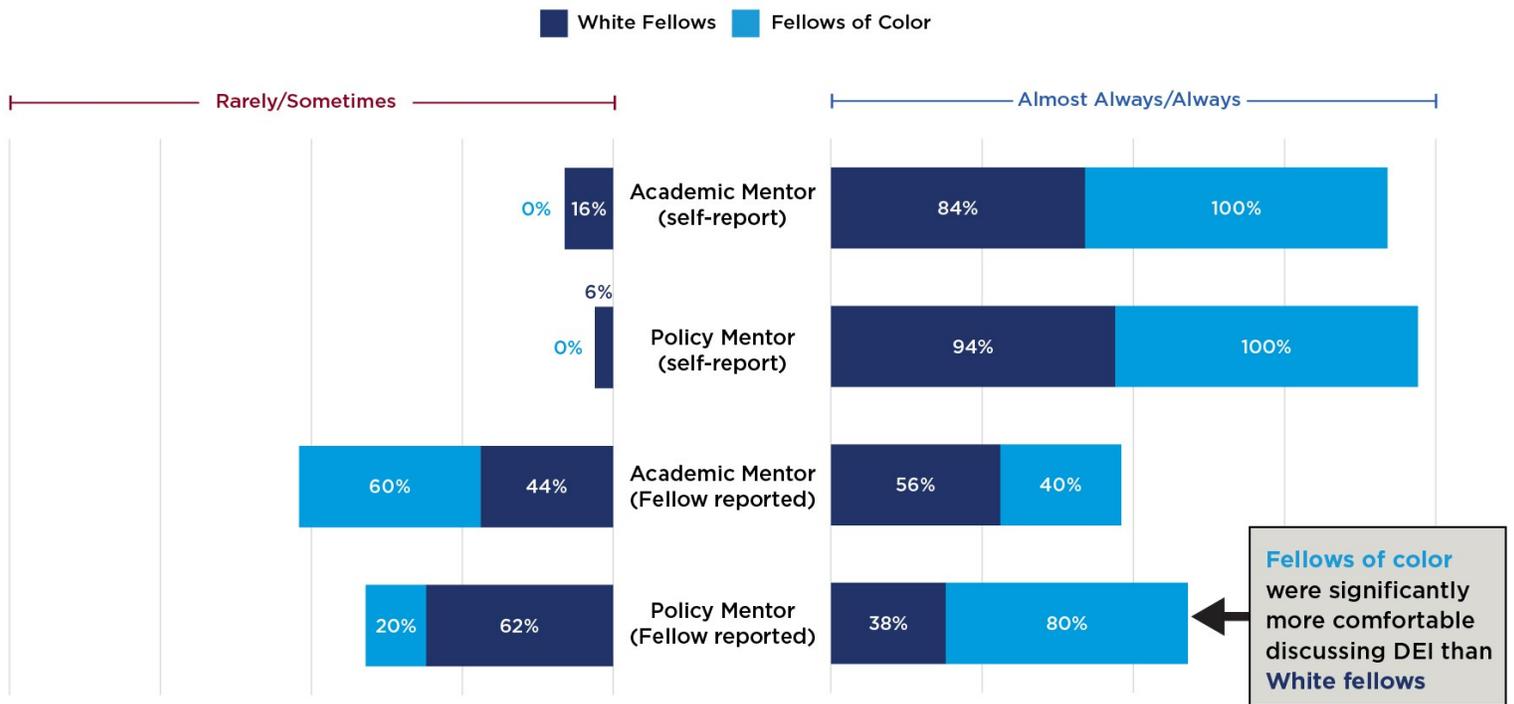
Mentors reported a much higher level of comfort discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion than fellows reported, as seen in Figure 5. This was true for both academic mentors and policy mentors. In fact, 90% of mentors reported feeling *almost always* or *always* comfortable talking with their mentees about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), whereas 49% of fellows reported feeling that comfortable ( $p < .001$ ). Comfort level with these conversations did not differ by mentor race, ethnicity, or gender. Fellow comfort having these conversations with their academic mentors did not differ by gender, race, or ethnicity. Fellow comfort having these conversations with their policy mentors did not differ by gender but did differ by race or ethnicity.

Fellows of color were more comfortable discussing diversity, equity, or inclusion topics with policy mentors than White fellows ( $p = .02$ ). The majority of fellows of color (80%) reported *frequently* feeling comfortable discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion with policy mentors, whereas only 38% of White fellows reported feeling *frequently* comfortable discussing DEI with their policy mentors.

↑ The majority of **fellows of color** (80%) reported *frequently* feeling comfortable discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion with policy mentors.

↓ 38% of **White fellows** reported feeling *frequently* comfortable discussing DEI with their policy mentors.

**Figure 5. Mentor and Fellow Reports of Comfort Discussing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion with Each Other**



Although there was no relationship between fellow comfort and fellow initiation of conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion, mentors who were more comfortable with these topics initiated more conversations about them ( $p = .01$ ). Additionally, mentors who reported greater comfort discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion also reported having higher quality mentoring relationships ( $p = .02$ ) and interactions with fellows who would initiate these conversations more often ( $p = .001$ ).

Mentors and fellows all reported that the top two experiences that influenced their comfort with discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion were having conversations with colleagues and personal experiences (see Table 2 for full list).

**Table 2. Experiences that Prepared Mentors and Fellows to Discuss DEI (% [n]) who endorsed each)**

	Mentors % (N = 62)	Fellows % (N = 94)
Conversations with peers/colleagues	76 (n = 47)	73 (n = 69)
Personal experience	71 (n = 44)	82 (n = 77)
Self-study	58 (n = 36)	59 (n = 55)
Training	55 (n = 34)	57 (n = 54)
Other	11 (n = 7)	14 (n = 13)

Note: "Other" responses for mentors included current research on DEI, current teaching experiences, professional development, and DEI embedded in their work. "Other" responses for fellows included comfort talking with mentor, classes on DEI/cultural sensitivity, research experiences, and institutional support.

Some differences existed between the groups. Academic mentors credited personal experiences as the reason they were comfortable discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion ( $p = .03$ ), while policy mentors credited participation in professional trainings for their comfort discussing these issues ( $p = .02$ ). Fellows reported that several experiences most influenced their having greater comfort discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion with academic mentors. These experiences included personal experience ( $p < .001$ ), conversations with peers ( $p = .005$ ), training ( $p < .05$ ), and self-study ( $p = .01$ ). However, only personal experience related to greater comfort talking to policy mentors about such topics ( $p = .02$ ).

There were some demographic differences reported for factors that influenced comfort. White mentors reported more often than mentors from underrepresented groups that participating in professional training ( $p = .01$ ) and frequent conversations with colleagues ( $p < .01$ ) were helpful in developing comfort with these topics. Female mentors were more likely than males to report that frequent conversations with colleagues were helpful in preparing them to feel comfortable discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion topics ( $p = .001$ ).

When mentors had positive conversations with fellows about diversity, equity, and inclusion, fellows noted that these discussions featured openness, direct talk, a willingness to discuss various identities and positionality, and candid conversations about the academy.

## Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Verbal and Nonverbal Communication

Fellows described having direct conversations with their mentors about topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion and observing their mentors in action reflecting these priorities. Most of these conversations focused on conducting research with underrepresented communities. However, fellows reported that these conversations sometimes felt like they were just “touching the surface.” Further, fellows occasionally noted tensions between what a mentor might perceive to be “prominent” or “scientific” research and researchers’ efforts to engage the community’s voice in their work to promote inclusion and equity. Additionally, fellows reported noticing when their mentors engaged in positive practices that reflected strong diversity, equity, and inclusion principles, such as considering diversity in hiring decisions or taking the time to learn about their mentee’s backgrounds and experiences. The following quotes from fellows illustrate this:

- ☒ I think diversity came up a lot, especially with my academic mentor in particular, but not necessarily in certain ways. It came up in academic discipline or research interests, but not in a comprehensive way. I don’t think it ever translated into applying an equity lens to my work or my profession.
- ☒ [Mentor] really [devalued] work that’s done with and for community partners and community agencies. So, anything that couldn’t lead to an academic publication . . . [Mentor] didn’t say this, but the underlying message was this is a waste of time . . . So, I think there’s a real devaluing of that type of work that I think drives many often-marginalized scholars. It’s the work that fulfills people. So, I think that is an important way [that] mentors in the field can better support the interests of all students would be to value in job applications and promotion and tenure those kinds of community partnership projects or work.
- ☒ I think behaviorally, I saw my academic mentor in particular, because that's who I had the most exposure to, behave in ways that were trying to be equitable or inclusive, especially of certain groups, but it was never explicitly drawn out or discussed with me in that way.
- ☒ And I think, and I often tell her this when we meet, that what she has done and how she’s approaches us as her mentees. . . it’s something that I’ve always aimed to emulate with my

students. And so, not just in terms of bringing about those issues in the research that we do, but also understanding our own students' experiences, especially if they come from diverse backgrounds, to see how that might give them a different experience in graduate school. And so, that's something we've talked about with some of the grad students that she's had, it's the same issues I'm bringing up in my role as a mentor now.

### **Support for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Mentoring: Training Topics of Interest**

Mentors and fellows identified several diversity, equity, and inclusion training topics that would be beneficial for supporting mentoring relationships. The two most desired training topics selected by mentors were learning to address institutional or systemic racism, and learning about working in and supporting others in predominately White institutions (see Table 3). One significant difference existed between academic and policy mentors: A greater number of academic mentors selected "neutralizing power differences" as a preferred training topic when compared to policy mentors, perhaps reflecting the hierarchical nature of academic institutions. One mentor reflected how trainings alone may be ineffective if not focused on promoting research and actions that are responsive to inequity, specifically racism:

 I really wish discussions. . . were more appropriately focused on ensuring the proper research focus on policies and knowledge gaps that would be responsive to inequities, systemic racism, etc. Instead, we choose to focus on ourselves by trying to tease out power dynamics among those of us who are already so privileged. We are fellows and mentors in academia.

Fellows also emphasized the importance of training extending beyond performative attendance. They recommended several key elements of a strong approach to mentor training, including:

- intentional trainings that are supported by an institution, are ongoing, and permeate the culture and environment of an institution;
- clarity about terms related to DEI;
- explicit instruction about steps to take if a DEI-related issue arises, such as a microaggression or overt act of discrimination;
- engagement in the material through reflection, discussion, and experiential activities like role-play, rather than strictly didactic presentations;
- a system-wide valuing of DEI and a commitment to supporting the principles; and

**Table 3. Training Topics Desired by Mentors (N = 69)**

	% (n)
Institutional or systemic racism against individuals from underrepresented groups	42 (n = 29)
Learning and working in a predominantly White institution as a student, faculty, or staff member who is not White	41 (n = 28)
Implicit/unconscious bias	33 (n = 23)
Neutralizing power differences*	32 (n = 22)
How to create an inclusive environment	25 (n = 17)
Intersectionality	22 (n = 15)
Other	13 (n = 9)

\*A greater proportion of academic mentors indicated interest in this training topic, compared to policy mentors ( $p < .05$ ).

### Barriers for Underrepresented Researchers

Mentors were asked to consider what barriers exist that impact the ability of underrepresented researchers to achieve success in the child well-being research field. As seen in Table 4, the most commonly cited barrier was the lack of access to equitable resources, such as funding and mentorship. In fact, 57% of all mentors cited this as the number one impediment to success for researchers from underrepresented groups. After that, 51% explained that there were barriers to accessing professional networks that limited success.

**Table 4. Barriers Impacting Researchers from Underrepresented Groups, Mentor-reported (N = 69)**

	% (n)
Lack of access to equitable resources, such as funding and mentorship	57 (n = 39)
Barriers to accessing professional networks	51 (n = 35)
Microaggressions from colleagues	32 (n = 22)
Parental/familial responsibilities	32 (n = 22)
Absence of emotional or moral support and encouragement	30 (n = 21)
Discriminatory admissions, funding, and hiring policies and procedures	28 (n = 19)
Other	10 (n = 7)

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## DISCUSSION

Mentoring has long been recognized as a formative approach to helping scholars develop in both professional and personal capacities to advance in their careers and achieve success (Eby et al., 2008; Lovitts, 2008; Sambunjak et al., 2006). Indeed, mentoring was a critical component of the Doris Duke Fellowships structure. Each fellow entered the program with two identified mentors—one academic and one policy—who were central to the development of the fellow’s dissertation research and professional growth. Identification of a policy mentor was a novel requirement that aimed to connect fellows with practice and policy experts who provided on-the-ground perspectives about applicability, interpretation, and translation of the research. Collectively, the cultivation of a community that includes mentors created a large professional network that expanded mentees’ access to researchers across the United States. Leveraging such a resource is important for addressing inequities in the field of child well-being, where access to social networks may be limited for scholars of underrepresented groups (see Norman et al., 2021).

Through the Doris Duke Fellowships Equity Study, fellows and mentors considered how issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion were incorporated into mentoring relationships. Both mentors and fellows described how important relationship contact and quality were to promoting discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion topics. The interplay between frequency of contact, relationship quality, and diversity, equity, and inclusion conversations suggests that each of these elements influence the mentoring relationship, but any one of them can promote development in the other areas. Having frequent contact strengthens the relationship, but so does having meaningful conversations. Since mentors had more conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion when they were more comfortable with discussing those topics, and comfort related to relationship quality, building strong mentoring relationships is integral to promoting greater consideration for diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Mentors should be intentional about initiating conversations related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. Because of the inherent power existing within mentoring roles, mentors should be aware of these dynamics and lead conversations about important topics (Louie & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2018) such as those concerning diversity, equity, and inclusion. By taking the initiative to learn about one’s mentee (Montgomery, 2017) and being committed to effective mentoring, mentors have an opportunity to mentor across differences by deliberately discussing differences and finding common ground in similarities (Louie & Wilson-Ahlstrom, 2018). In particular, because mentors reported greater comfort discussing diversity, equity, and inclusion than fellows, structuring purposeful mentor-led conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the mentoring exchange may be a way to strengthen the mentoring relationship. Although mentoring pairs entered the fellowships program in prearranged relationships, the fellowships program missed a powerful opportunity to provide training on mentoring and the promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion in mentoring relationships. It is clear from the participants in this study that training on these topics would be beneficial and could enhance mentoring interactions, considerations, and actions around diversity, equity, and inclusion. Trainings should connect mentors to the topic of diversity, equity, and inclusion in meaningful ways that resonate with them.

Most discussions between mentors and fellows about issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion focused on research, but fellows expressed a desire for these conversations to be expanded. Thus, mentors could plan to initiate regular and ongoing discussions about diversity, equity, and inclusion in research as one clear direction for sustaining such dialogue. Andrews et al. (2019) recommend that researchers evaluate the landscape for conducting research, the design and data collection process, data analysis procedures, and dissemination practices as a way of implementing a racial and ethnic equity perspective in research. Further, since being a mentor who expressed comfort talking about diversity, equity, and inclusion issues was related to mentees who initiated more DEI-focused conversations, having an area of focus, such as research, to begin these conversations can lead to further discussion about diversity, equity, and inclusion in professional and personal contexts.

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the experiences of fellows and mentors, we recommend several actions to support positive mentoring exchanges that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion between researchers.

1. **Provide professional training opportunities that reflect a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion:** Programs and organizations can advance their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts by providing ongoing training opportunities for mentors. Specifically, these trainings should offer content about how mentors can incorporate intentional dialogues about diversity, equity, and inclusion with their mentees and how individuals can encourage practices and policies in institutions and the field that promote equity. Trainings should also discuss practices such as shared decision making in promoting equitable relationships. Training is optimized when it includes dynamic opportunities to practice developing a mentoring plan that includes DEI topics, uses role playing or other active learning strategies, and provides an opportunity to discuss challenges and strategies within a small group setting.
2. **Promote regular contact:** Frequent opportunities for interacting can create high-quality relationships and enhance positive experiences. Establishing a regular schedule for meeting (in person or virtually via phone, email, or text) and a culture of mutual respect and open communication can build trust that is important for promoting comfort with initiating conversations about a wide variety of topics, including sensitive issues.
3. **Encourage direct conversations about diversity, equity, and inclusion:** Mentors are encouraged to develop skills in initiating and sustaining direct discussions with mentees that introduce concepts of diversity, equity, and inclusion. These conversations should begin with statements about interest in DEI and reflections on personal and professional intersectional identities as a way of demonstrating a willingness and openness to engaging in such topics. Mentors can talk about their professional practices for incorporating diversity, equity, and inclusion; current areas of learning; and ongoing challenges. Mentees can be open to direct conversations, set boundaries as needed, and identify DEI goals that are important to them.

4. **Discuss diversity, equity, and inclusion principles in research:** How diversity, equity, and inclusion is applied in research should be the focus of many mentoring conversations. Diversity, equity, and inclusion can be applied throughout the research process from design to dissemination and should include questions, methods, analyses, and interpretations. Mentoring pairs should consider: How does this research promote equity? What are the underlying causes or associated factors influencing disparate outcomes? Research should also promote community or key constituent engagement throughout the research process, and strategies for how to accomplish this should be a part of mentoring.
5. **Facilitate wider network access:** Mentors and fellows should recognize that each mentoring relationship is but one connection in a larger network of relationships. No single mentor is expected to, or can, meet all the needs of a mentee. Mentors should help connect mentees to other mentors who can support their unique interests. For example, mentors can support introductions to other professionals with particular areas of expertise, experiences, or identity characteristics.
6. **Advocate for equitable resources:** Mentors and institutions can promote more equitable outcomes among mentees by supporting scholars from underrepresented populations in accessing the same resources as majority group mentees. Mentors can promote mentees' work, seek funding to support the work of underrepresented researchers, improve the diversity of incoming students, and build inclusive communities. Mentors can advance mentees' professional skills by offering research and writing opportunities and making introductions to colleagues and networks that will enhance their training and scholarship. In particular, an important practice for promoting equity in the child well-being research field is for mentors to help their mentees build their social networks.

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## CONCLUSION

The Doris Duke Fellowships for the Promotion of Child Well-Being has now transitioned to the Child Well-Being Research Network. The Child Well-Being Research Network is committed to applying the lessons learned from the Doris Duke Fellowships Equity Study to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the child well-being research field. Network activities include a mentoring program, writing retreats, learning and networking activities, support for strategic research translation and dissemination, and leadership development opportunities. The mentors and fellows who participated in the fellowships program indicated that mentoring was a valuable resource in which high quality relationships were developed. Mentoring relationships present a critical opportunity for assuming the mindset of a learner in discovering how different life experiences and identities influence perspectives about child well-being. While the fellowships program did not provide training to mentors, the Child Well-Being Research Network is committed to doing so. Most importantly, the Child Well-Being Research Network recognizes the potential to promote equity by facilitating trainings about how to implement diversity, equity, and inclusion in research; serving as a high-quality professional network to help members build important connections; and promoting access to resources such as mentoring, writing retreats, and collaborative opportunities.

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The opinions, findings, and recommendations expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, Inc., the Doris Duke Fellowships for the Promotion of Child Well-Being, or the Child Well-Being Research Network.

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