



State of Florida
Department of Children and Families

Ron DeSantis
Governor

Shevaun L. Harris
Secretary

DATE: August 2, 2023

TO: Community-Based Care Lead Agency CEOs

FROM: Kate Williams, Assistant Secretary for Child & Family Well-Being

K. Williams

SUBJECT: Protecting Youth from Divisive Concepts

As a department whose mission is to "...protect the vulnerable, promote strong and economically, self-sufficient families, and advance personal and family recovery and resiliency," it is important to the Department that the environment for every child we serve is conducive to achieving this mission. Over the past two years, Florida has taken a nation-leading approach in education to ensure content that is divisive or would cause harm to students is removed from classrooms. This approach includes enacting several new laws and rules since July 1, 2022. Today, the Department is issuing this directive to ensure our compliance with these new laws and rules, and to ensure youth in our care are not exposed to inappropriate material by contracted or subcontracted partners or their employees.

In line with sections 760.10 and 1000.05(4)(a), Florida Statutes, Department staff, contracted and subcontracted providers of services, and their employees, shall not state, imply, suggest, proffer, communicate, or espouse any of the following under any context or circumstance that:

- Members of one race, color, sex, or national origin are morally superior to members of another race, color, sex, or national origin.
- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, is inherently racist, sexist, or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously.
- An individual's moral character or status as either privileged or oppressed is necessarily determined by his or her race, color, sex, or national origin.
- Members of one race, color, sex, or national origin cannot and should not attempt to treat others without respect to race, color, sex, or national origin.
- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears responsibility for, or should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment because of, actions committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, sex, or national origin.

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Mission: Work in Partnership with Local Communities to Protect the Vulnerable, Promote Strong and Economically Self-Sufficient Families, and Advance Personal and Family Recovery and Resiliency

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- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, should be discriminated against or receive adverse treatment to achieve diversity, equity, or inclusion.
- An individual, by virtue of his or her race, color, sex, or national origin, bears personal responsibility for and must feel guilt, anguish, or other forms of psychological distress because of actions, in which the individual played no part, committed in the past by other members of the same race, color, sex, or national origin.
- Such virtues as merit, excellence, hard work, fairness, neutrality, objectivity, and racial colorblindness are racist or sexist, or were created by members of a particular race, color, sex, or national origin to oppress members of another race, color, sex, or national origin.

It is incumbent upon each contracted partner and their employees to undertake a thorough review of all material and resources including curriculum, instruction, treatment, guides, therapy, books, workbooks, articles, or any other form of content provided to youth to ensure its appropriateness and compliance with Florida law.

If you have questions regarding this directive, please contact Susan Hetrick, Deputy General Counsel, at Susan.Hetrick@myflfamilies.com or (850) 717-4465.

cc: Community Directors