

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in Outdoor Education: A Perspective from the USA



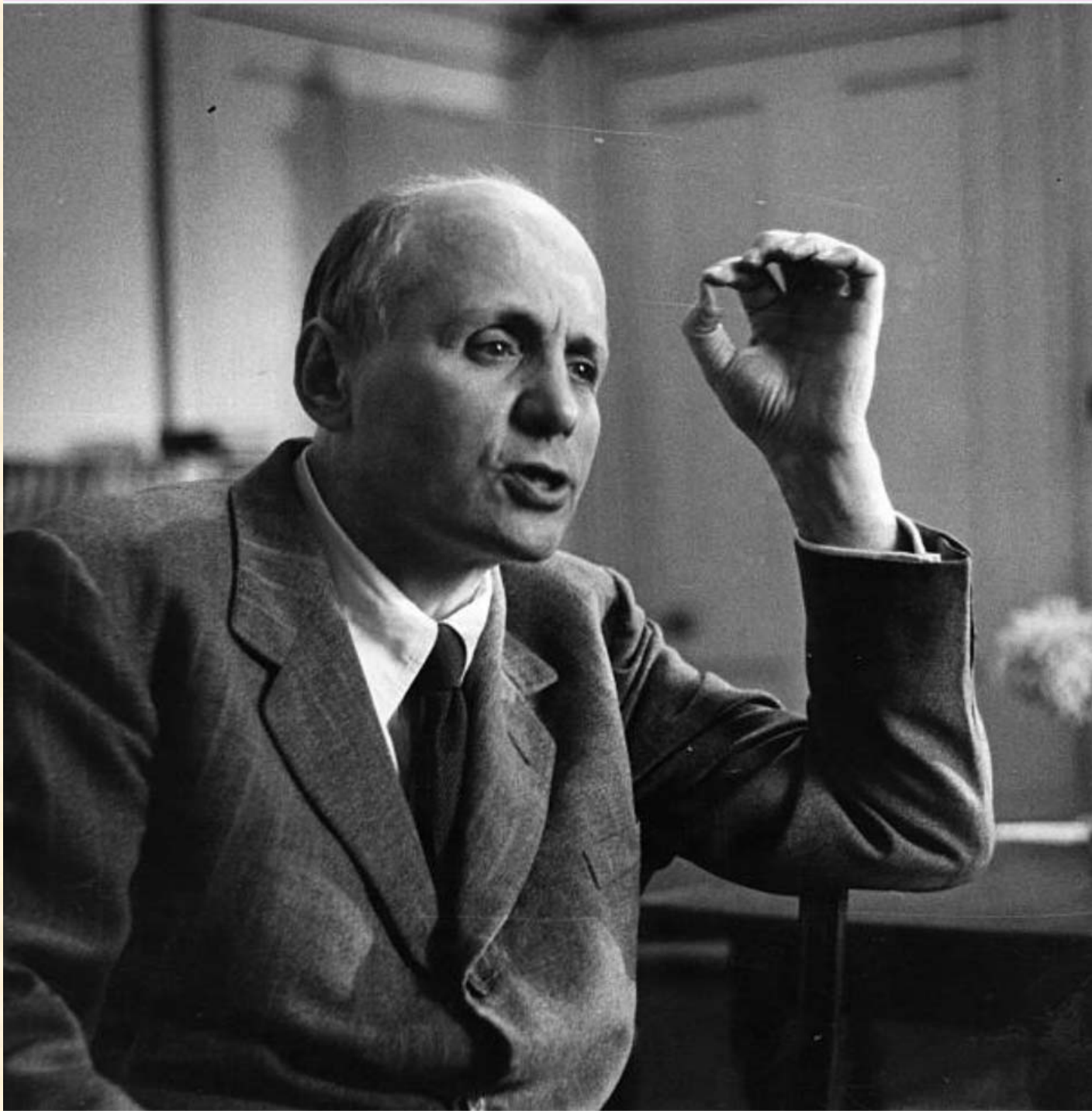
www.viristar.com/ob2020

Overview

- What is DEI?
- DEI as Complex Systems Issue
- Concepts and Issues
- Why is DEI an Issue?
- DEI in the USA
- DEI in USA Outdoor Education
- Obstacles
- Opportunities
- Additional Resources







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Boundaries

- A perspective from the USA
- Framed though American values & my personal values—you may not agree
- I will say what I believe to be true; some might be shown wrong
- An incomplete picture
- I'm still learning
- Not a prescription, or answers, but I humbly share ideas, challenges, failures and successes
- DEI work varies widely from region to region, country to country
- Use this in any way you might find helpful (or not at all)

What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?

- Resources are not distributed fairly



What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?



What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?

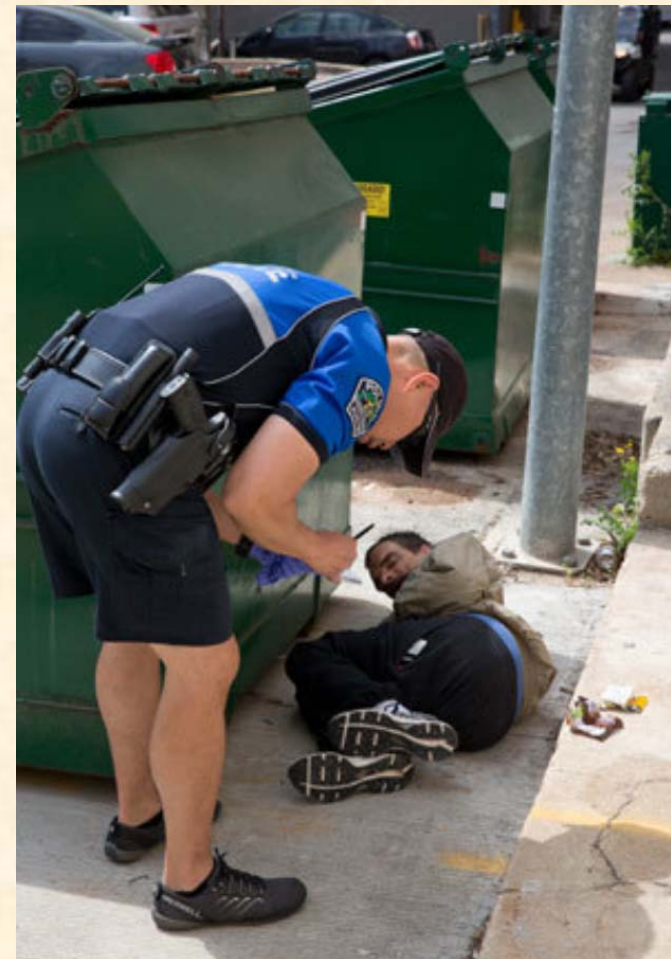


What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?



What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?

THE WORLD'S WEALTH INEQUALITY



What is Diversity, Equity, Inclusion?

The Seattle Times

King County councilmember proposes spending \$1 million to bus homeless people out of the region

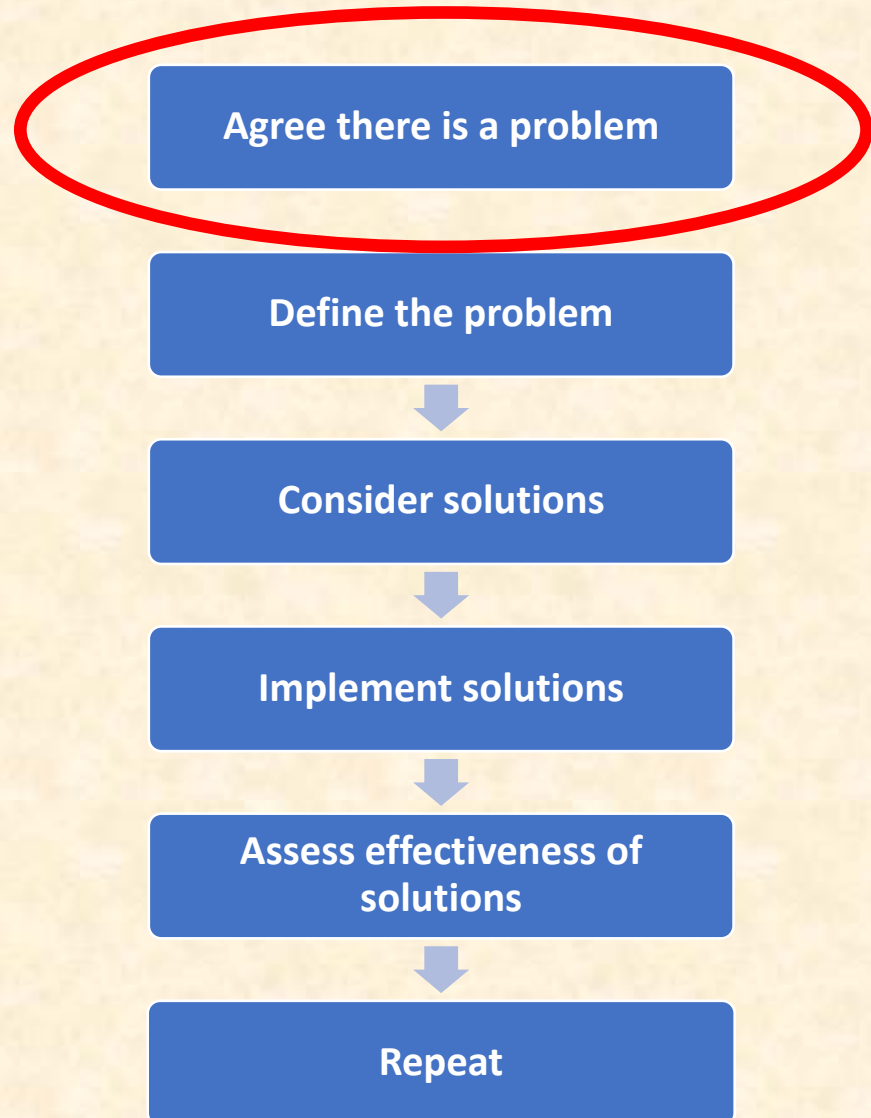


Metropolitan King County Councilmember Reagan Dunn says there's a substantial number of people who would take advantage of a Greyhound ticket as... (Ellen M. Banner / The Seattle Times) [More](#)



Inequity, Exclusion: A Complex System

- Not thoroughly described; no complete models
- Subjectivity: who gets how much help?
- Issues of morality, philosophy, economics, evolutionary biology and human behavior, sociology, anthropology, systems theory, &more





DEI: A Complex System

Effects at multiple levels. For example:



Society, culture--women undervalued



Workplace/school--racism



Family--LGBT exclusion



Individual—denial of role in privilege and oppression

- Concepts, practices, goals ever-evolving
- As complex as other systems issues like climate crisis, global refugee flows

Concepts and Issues

Definitions and standards are fluid; little universal agreement

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Equity work

Equity and Inclusion

+ Justice

+ Access

+ Belonging

Formerly: Equal Opportunity, Diversity, Diversity & Inclusion

Tomorrow: ??

Diversity

“Being composed of a variety of elements or qualities.”

Because of these differences, persons wrongly experience systemic advantages or disadvantages

Dimensions (incomplete list):

Ability, handicap	Family/parental status	Marital status	Race
Age	Gender	Military/veteran status	Religion, religious creed
Color (skin)	Gender identity, including gender expression	National origin	Sex
Culture	Genetic information	Nationality	Sexual orientation
Ethnicity, ethnic origin	Geographical location	Political affiliation	Socio-economic (class) status

Note: Diversity is a characteristic of a group, not a person



Equity

Fairness; justice; freedom from bias or favoritism.

Equity work recognizes historic and current systemic privilege and oppression (advantages and barriers)

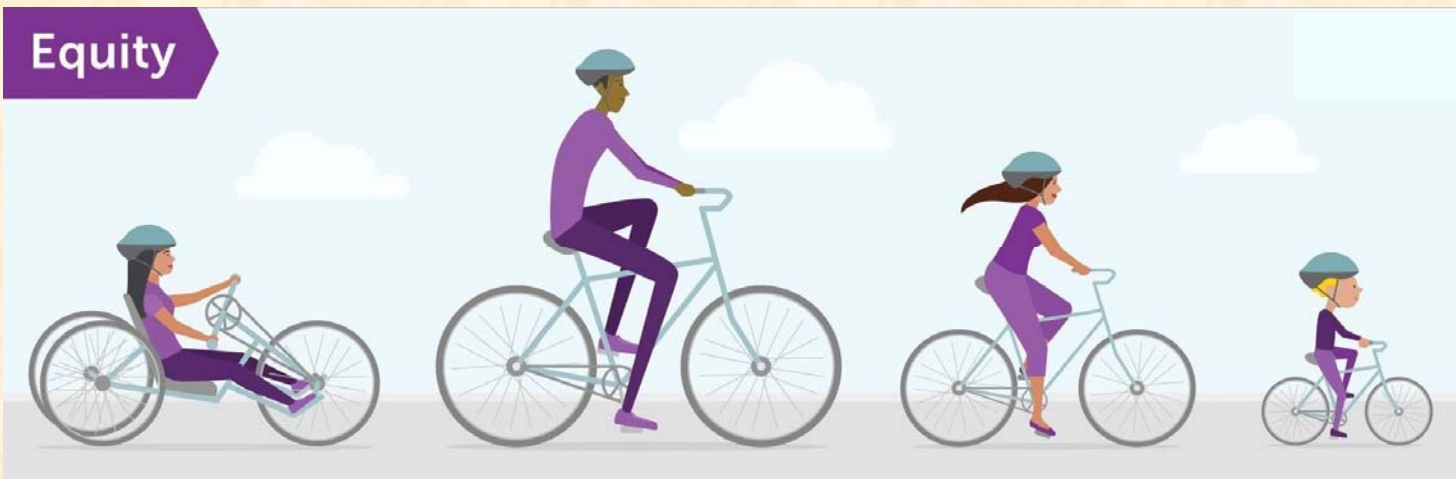


Image credit: RWJF

Inclusion

Being open to and not excluding members or participants, particularly those historically disenfranchised, on the grounds of certain characteristics.

“What you do with the diversity you have.”

“Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance.”



Elements of Inclusion

Cultural competence. The ability to work effectively with others from different backgrounds or cultures.



Implicit Bias. Unconscious prejudice and stereotyping

- Pervasive
- Usually favor one's in-group
- May not align with one's declared beliefs

WHAT WE DON'T
THINK WE THINK



Privilege and Oppression

Individuals are systematically excluded from access to resources based on absence of in-group characteristics, without moral justification.

Benefits of access are unearned and sometimes unrecognized or denied.

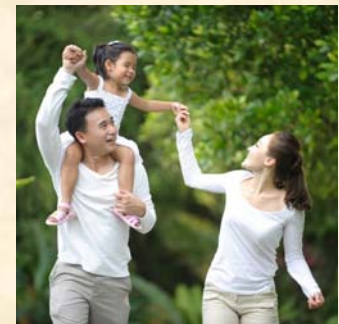
When USA formed,
to be able to vote:

- White
- Male
- Property-owning
- Protestant



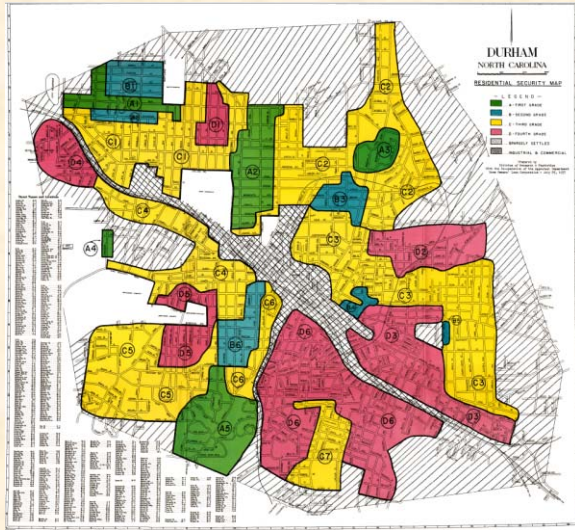
Some characteristics that confer
privilege in USA today:

- White
- Male
- Heterosexual
- Able-bodied
- American
- Christian
- High financial security
- Married
- Native English speaker





Privilege and Oppression



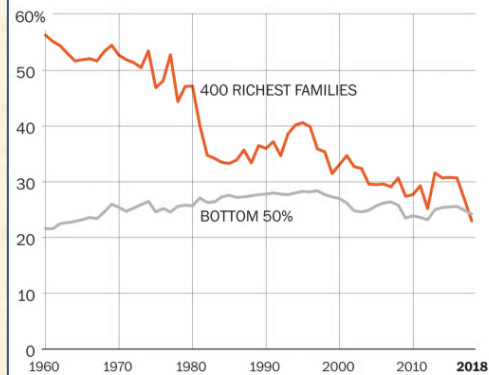
Red-
lining



Border
wall

In 2018, the super-rich paid a lower tax rate than the bottom 50%

Average effective tax rates of the 400 richest families and the bottom 50 percent of U.S. households



Source: Emmanuel Saez and Gabriel Zucman

THE WASHINGTON POST

Tax
cuts
for
the
rich

The New York Times

Doctors Could Face Criminal Charges for Treating Transgender Teens

In South Dakota and other states, lawmakers are considering bills that would restrict access to hormone treatment and surgeries for young transgender people.

Trans-
phobia



Your Turn

How have you personally been affected by—positively or negatively—systems of privilege and oppression?



Why Do These Issues Exist?



POWER



NO

DOGS

NEGROES

MEXICANS

LONESTAR RESTAURANT ASSN.
Dallas, Texas

How Can These Tendencies Be Moderated?

- High quality character education
- By all aspects of society: parents, teachers, political leaders, activists, religious leaders, business leaders, public figures
- Which leads to laws and policies that institutionalize respect and inclusion

POLITICO

Outward Bound for senators?

By ANDIE COLLER | 01/06/2009 04:29 AM EST

Q: Ever think about organizing a program for members of Congress?

A: ...We had some Outward Bound programs offered...I think sailing would be a phenomenal way to do it...but you have to be willing to work in a team...we could try for an easy Outward Bound experience, where we're sailing somewhere but we get others to help us...



Freshman Colorado Sen. Mark Udall, seen here on Election Day, is a former instructor, course director and decade-long executive director at the Colorado Outward Bound School.

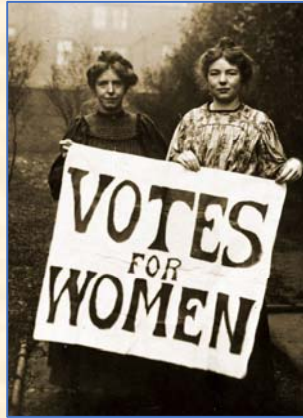


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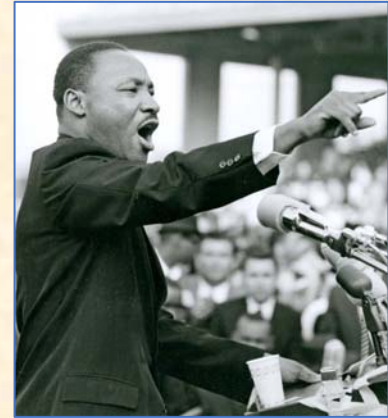
How is this being addressed in the US?



1865



1920



1960's

**TIME'S
= UP**

2018



2016

What's Happening in OE in the US?



What's Happening in OE in the US?

- A variety of efforts
- What follows is not comprehensive
- Efforts focus on LGBTQ, racial, and some other issues
- Some groups doing a lot, others nothing

General Best Practice Topics:

- Staff
- Application & Introduction
- Program Structure
- Participant Orientation
- Equipment
- Curriculum
- Trans* Inclusivity
- Cultural Inclusivity
- Religious Inclusivity
- Ability Inclusivity
- Sleeping arrangements
- Privacy
- Continuous Improvement

Including content from: Inclusion Tips for Outdoor Program Staff,
theoutdoorinclusion.com

Staff

- Train staff on DEI issues, practices
- Training can include mental health, psychological first aid
- Train on attributes, needs of all populations, including scholarship students
- Admin and field staff diversity can match participant diversity



Application & Introduction

- Materials in native language of participants/parents
- Provide support in filling out paperwork such as application medical forms
- Include mental health questions in medical screening
- Ask about cultural needs, including attire & prayer
- Ask about race/ethnicity & gender; use information to improve experiences
- Provide non-binary gender option on forms
- Provide hygiene information to all participants, regardless of gender
- Refer to caregiver/guardian, not mom/dad
- Scholarships can perpetuate exclusion by creating barriers and limits
- A focus on international/independent school participants can perpetuate exclusion

The image shows two overlapping medical forms. The top form is titled "Medical Information and Release for Treatment" and contains various fields for patient information, including name, address, phone number, and date of birth. It also includes a section for "Medical History" with checkboxes for conditions like "Allergies", "Chronic Illnesses", and "Current Medications". The bottom form is partially visible and appears to be a continuation or a related document, also containing medical information fields.

Program Structure

- Provide short and close-to-home programs to increase accessibility
- Provide transportation assistance
- Provide programming for intact groups
- Provide culturally relevant food



Participant Orientation

- Use inclusive language
- Employ gender-neutral pronouns (“they”) and adjectives (“Latinx”)
- Encourage participants to give you and others feedback on inclusive behavior (or lack of)
- Use language “As a self-identified man/woman...” early on
- Use “...whom I perceive to be male/female (or girl/boy)” rather than “man,” “woman,” “girl,” “boy” unless you know how person identifies.
- Use “any gender” rather than “either gender,” “girls and boys,” “female and male.”
- Use “women” rather than “girls” to refer to adult females
- Provide hygiene training (e.g. menstruation hygiene) to all, without assuming who is female.



Equipment

- Provide gear for students without their own
- Don't assume clothing preference based on apparent gender, e.g. offer female-presenting person pink apparel.
- For gendered equipment like backpacks, ensure participants can use any gear that fits.
- Provide supplies for culturally specific hygiene needs (e.g. hair, skin)
- Gender-neutral bathrooms good



Curriculum

- Include DEI curriculum, if you are prepared to do so
- Don't ignore quiet, female etc. voices, especially over loud, assertive males from dominant race/culture
- Confront stereotypes: e.g. male instructors teach cleaning & cooking; female instructors teach technical skills
- Make programming culturally appropriate—relevant to participant experiences, including multiple perspectives, and congruent with different learning styles
- Not all students need “challenge” and to build “resilience”—some already come with life challenges, and instead need community and safe spaces
- Don't expect a participant to represent their entire cultural group
- Discourage microaggressions (subtle or implicit put-downs)
- Use readings from not just those from the dominant culture
- Leave No Trace: being loud and leaving offerings to honor ancestors can be culturally appropriate behaviors
- You can be an ally to others even if you are of the dominant culture
- Use land acknowledgements to recognize indigenous history and land ownership



Trans* Inclusivity

- Ask for all participants' gender pronouns
- Do not refer to people as “transgendered”—gender does not happen to a person
- Remember not all persons who identify as trans* have made physical changes
- Physical transition is referred to as “gender confirmation surgery” not “gender reassignment” or “sex change”
- Medical protocols should distinguish between gender identity and sex



Cultural & Religious Inclusivity

Cultural Inclusivity

- Consult, get permission, get to know another culture before using cultural elements

Religious Inclusivity

- Remember ethnicity is not the same as faith
- Honor reasonable needs (e.g. attire, prayer times)



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Ability Inclusivity

- Honor the terms people use to self-identify (Deaf person, person who is deaf)
- Don't assume a person with a disability needs your assistance
- Ensure all participants can be part of activities; avoid excusing participants
- Don't touch assistance devices (wheelchair, cane, prosthetics) without asking first
- Don't finish sentences for those with speech impairments
- Use “accessible” rather than “handicapped”



Sleeping arrangements

- Provide single-gender and gender-neutral sleeping options
- Ask about sleeping preference: people you feel comfortable sharing sleeping space with
- Optional self-identify gender, so staff can see if mixed gender group needed
- Ask kids, not just their parents
- No one answer for every situation



Privacy, Continuous Improvement

Privacy

- Useful to provide for changing, showering, using bathroom

Continuous Improvement

- Use Inclusion Incident Reports to track and respond systemically to issues

Inclusion Incident Report

Attach a complete sheet of the subject's Medical History Form to this report. Attach SOAP Note as applicable. Use additional sheets for documentation if necessary. Fill this form out completely and neatly in blue or black ink.

Subject Name: _____ ☐ Staff ☐ Student Sex: ☐ M ☐ F ☐ Other Age: _____ Program Type: _____
Primary Caregiver's Name: _____ Course Director's Name: _____
Client Organization: _____ Day of Course Incident Occurred: _____
Incident Date: _____ Time: _____ a.m. / p.m. Geographical Location of Incident: _____
Course Location: _____ Course Dates: _____ # Staff _____ # Participants _____ # Program Days _____

Type of Incident: (check all that apply) ☐ Injury ☐ Illness ☐ Motivational/Behavioral ☐ Property Damage
☐ Near Miss ☐ Evacuation ☐ Missing Person ☐ Fatality

Course Format: ☐ Residential ☐ Basecamp ☐ Backpacking ☐ Canoeing ☐ Kayaking ☐ Challenge Course ☐ Other: _____

Type of Injury or Property Damage: (check all applicable)
☐ Muscle sprain ☐ Ligament sprain ☐ Dislocation ☐ Fracture ☐ Tendonitis ☐ Laceration ☐ Puncture ☐ Blister
☐ Avulsion ☐ Sunburn ☐ Burn ☐ Frostbite ☐ Skin ☐ Eye injury
☐ Dental ☐ Bruise, contusion or similar soft tissue trauma ☐ Head injury (without loss of consciousness)
☐ Head injury (with loss of consciousness) ☐ Near drowning ☐ Other: _____
☐ If property damage, describe: _____

Anatomical Location of Injury:
☐ Head ☐ Shoulder ☐ Wrist ☐ Upper Back ☐ Thigh ☐ Foot/toe ☐ Face ☐ Knee
☐ Upper Arm ☐ Neck ☐ Hand/finger ☐ Eye ☐ Chest ☐ Pelvis ☐ Lower Leg ☐ Forearm
☐ Abdomen ☐ Hip ☐ Ankle ☐ Lower Back ☐ Elbow ☐ Other: _____

Type of Illness: check all applicable
☐ Abdominal or other gastrointestinal problem (without diarrhea) ☐ Diarrhea
☐ Allergic reaction (to: _____) ☐ Apparent food-related illness
☐ Mild or localized ☐ Skin infection
☐ Severe, generalized or anaphylaxis ☐ Eye infection
☐ Upper respiratory illness (runny nose, congestion, "cold") ☐ Chest pain or cardiac condition
☐ Lower respiratory illness (asthma, bronchitis) ☐ Altitude illness
☐ Hypothermia (specify core temperature if known _____ °C) ☐ Nonspecific fever illness
☐ Heat illness (specify core temperature if known _____ °C) ☐ Urinary tract infection
☐ Heat cramps ☐ Heat exhaustion
☐ Heat stroke ☐ Other

Environmental Conditions at Time of Incident:
Temperature: _____ °C Precipitation ☐ None ☐ Rain ☐ Snow ☐ Other: _____ Wind Speed: _____ kph
Visibility: ☐ Clear ☐ Limited to _____ meters or _____ km

Surface & Conditions: check all that apply
☐ On trail ☐ Off trail ☐ Even ☐ Uneven ☐ Sloped ☐ Wet ☐ Dry
☐ Grass ☐ Sand ☐ Dirt ☐ Rock ☐ Mud ☐ Snow ☐ Ice

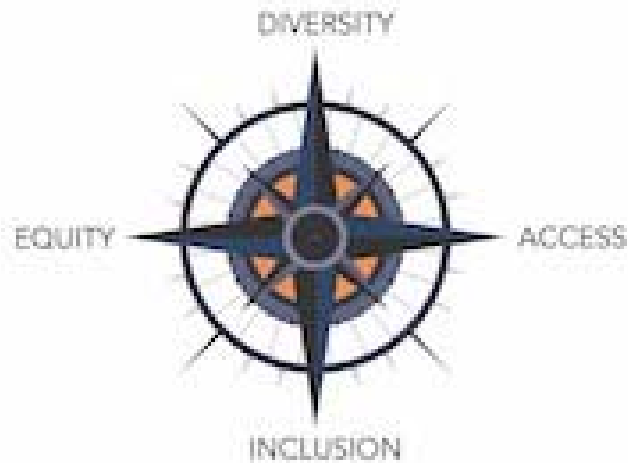
Immediate Cause: Prioritize major applicable categories 1, 2, 3 etc.

_____ Altitude	_____ Avalanche	_____ Carelessness	_____ Cold exposure
_____ Dark/poor visibility	_____ Dehydration	_____ Exceeded ability	_____ Exhaustion
_____ Fall/slip on trail	_____ Fall on rock	_____ Fall on snow	_____ Falling rock
_____ Failure to follow instructions	_____ Falling tree/branch	_____ Hazardous animal/insect (specify _____)	
_____ Hostile bystander	_____ Immersion/submersion	_____ Improper screening	_____ Inadequate equipment
_____ Inadequate instruction	_____ Inadequate supervision	_____ Inexperience/poor judgment	_____ Intoxication (alcohol/drugs)
_____ Lightning	_____ Misbehavior	_____ Missing/lost	_____ Overuse injury
_____ Plant poisoning/toxicity	_____ Poor hygiene	_____ Poor technique	_____ Preexist. medical condition
_____ Psychological	_____ Sunburn	_____ Tech. system failure	_____ Unfit
_____ Unknown	_____ Weather	_____ Other (explain) _____	

Specific Examples

GAP YEAR ASSOCIATION

Evolving the Gap Year Movement begins with DEIA.



DEIA Self-Assessment



DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PLAN 2020



INCLUSION GOALS

- » NOLS will become more accessible to primarily Spanish-speaking families of current and prospective students.
- » NOLS will continue to grow its pool of multilingual instructors and staff so we can run more courses in the native language of the countries in which we operate.
- » We will make administrative language more gender inclusive.
 - Forms collecting demographic information, will ask for gender and not sex.
- » tactics on page 7 for measurements of success).
- The inclusion index, *i.e.*, whether NOLS is becoming more inclusive for people from target demographics will increase.
- By 2016, we will ascertain whether we have challenges retaining employees in target demographics and subsequently set appropriate goals related to their retention.
- » We will make our classroom and field environment more inclusive.

NOLS D&I Plan (nols.edu)



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OUTWARD BOUND CALIFORNIA

- Plans still in development
- Hired a Director of Equity (part time)
- Equity Advisory Council—staff, Board give advice
- Hired consultant to do audit
- Equity in risk management: emotional safety briefings, staff training
- Ask what students' gender identity is, starting in screening
- Hold organizational cultural assessments with staff
- Expectations that staff are doing personal work
 - Readings and discussions
 - Monthly brown bag lunch, “article club”
 - Staff hold each other accountable for engaging
- Offer LGBTQ-specific open enrollment programming
- Student experience analysis: follow-up with students, parents
- Looking at Board diversity
- Personal development for staff: call-to-action emails to staff on issues
- Removing bias from hiring practices, staff retention:
 - Job announcements, interview questions not creating barriers to access
 - Paid internship to recruit and train diverse staff pool
 - Subsidize staff housing
- Offering scholarships
- Building local ropes course to make programs accessible
- Invite all students to write appreciation letters, not just scholarship students
- Provide gear as needed

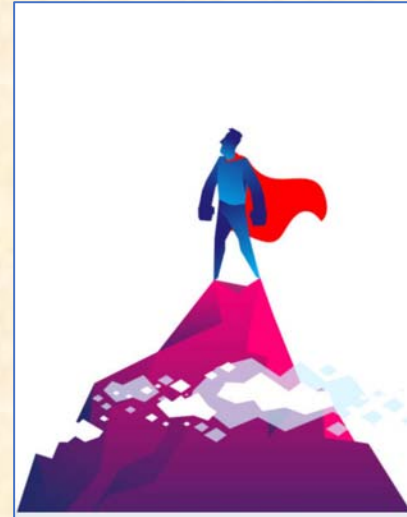
Your Turn

What things is your Outward Bound school or community doing to support diversity, equity and inclusion?



Obstacles

- No agreed-upon strategy
- No unified effort
- Limited motivation
- Internal resistance
- Self-deception
- OE structurally linked to perpetuating systems of privilege and oppression
 - Male archetypes (hero's journey, conqueror)
 - White male leaders
 - Built for middle/upper classes of dominant culture
- Impractical to escape all elements of society built on privilege and oppression



Opportunities





Action Steps

- Consider how privilege and oppression has benefited you
- Explore your own unconscious bias
- Work to change culture by your actions every day
- Work to change culture by voting, donating, activism
- You can't change everything, but you can change something
- Managers: build, implement a DEI strategy
- Instructors: advocate for attention to DEI



Your Turn

What are some things you can do to address issues of diversity, equity and inclusion?



Further Resources

(US-centric)

- Community
 - The OB community—UK, Singapore, others
 - Your participants, staff, stakeholders
- Online resources
 - People of the Global Majority, pgmone.org
 - National Service Inclusion Project, serviceandinclusion.org
- Consultants
 - Experienced DEI consultants who know your culture
 - The Avarna Group, theavarnagroup.com (USA)
- Written resources
 - White Fragility, Robin DiAngelo
 - Black Faces, White Spaces, Carolyn Finney
 - Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?, Beverly Tatum
 - Blindspot, Anthony Greenwald & Mahzarin Banaji
 - White Privilege and Male Privilege, Peggy McIntosh
 - Diversity Is Useless Without Inclusivity, Christine Riordan







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