

The following tips can help you communicate effectively about health inequity, racial equity and social justice.

# Race to Justice Communications Tips



**1 ▶ Use language that is respectful and culturally sensitive.**

Avoid stereotypes or reinforcing stereotypes. See the “Glossary” and “Language Use Guide” for additional information.

**2 ▶ Listen to communities and use language that acknowledges their strengths.**

Communities are best positioned to define themselves, so ask. Prioritize the voice, expertise and leadership of people of color and other marginalized groups in your communications.

**3 ▶ Use the “r” word: racism, racial equity or racial inequity.**

Often other topics such as class, ethnicity or place are used as a shorthand for race or racism. But race and racism involve a distinct and powerful dynamic that require dedicated attention to dismantle. When we fail to name the problem accurately, we fail to develop solutions that truly address the root causes. Racism often affects health in the United States and as a result, naming race and racism needs to be a significant part of the program goals, conversations, solutions and strategies. However, avoid reinforcing stereotypes when naming race and racism. See the “Language Use Guide” for more information.

**4 ▶ Use the term “health inequities.”**

This term should be used when describing unjust and avoidable differences in health outcomes by race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and religion. The term “inequity,” instead of “disparity,” more accurately and explicitly draws attention to the injustice of the difference.

**5 ▶ Name the specific inequities you want to address.**

Be specific about the gap and who it affects. The inequity might be a gap in health or a gap in operations, such as an inequity in hiring or contracting. Identify by how much you want to reduce the gap and over what time period. Using racially disaggregated data can help reveal important inequities, needs or patterns that you can address in your work. See the “Language Use Guide” for information on how to specifically name inequities.

**6 ▶ Go beyond interpersonal racism and describe how institutional and structural racism affect health outcomes.**

If there is an inequity, name the social, institutional or structural systems that maintain inequities over time and provide background information on these systems.

**7 ▶ Introduce and define any terms related to racial equity and social justice.**

See the “Glossary” for the most current terms.