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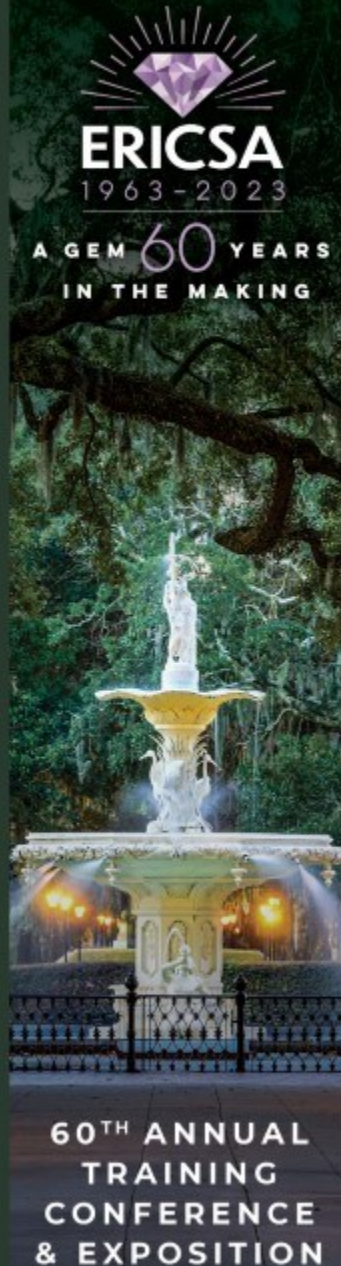
SAVANNAH

60TH ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION

MONDAY, MAY 22 - FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2023

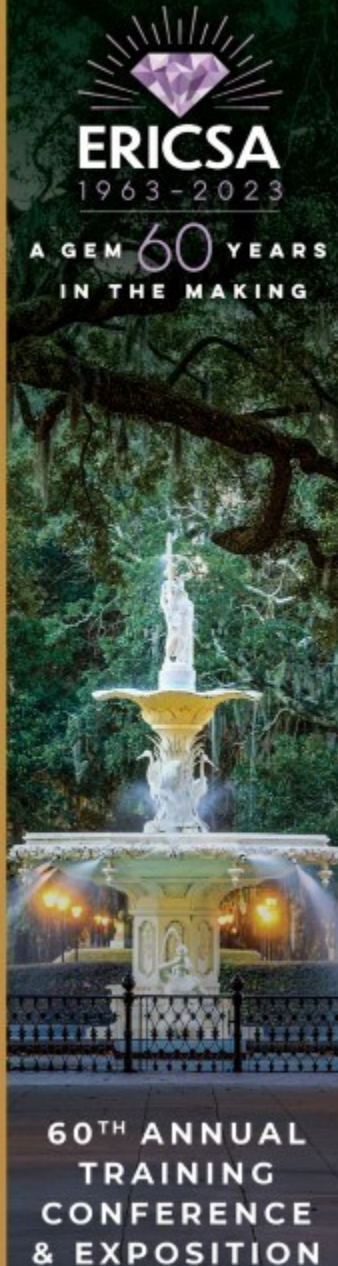
The Reality and Impact of Unintended Bias

Diane Potts, Director for Child Support, CGI
Wally McClure, Ravenwings Consulting LLC®



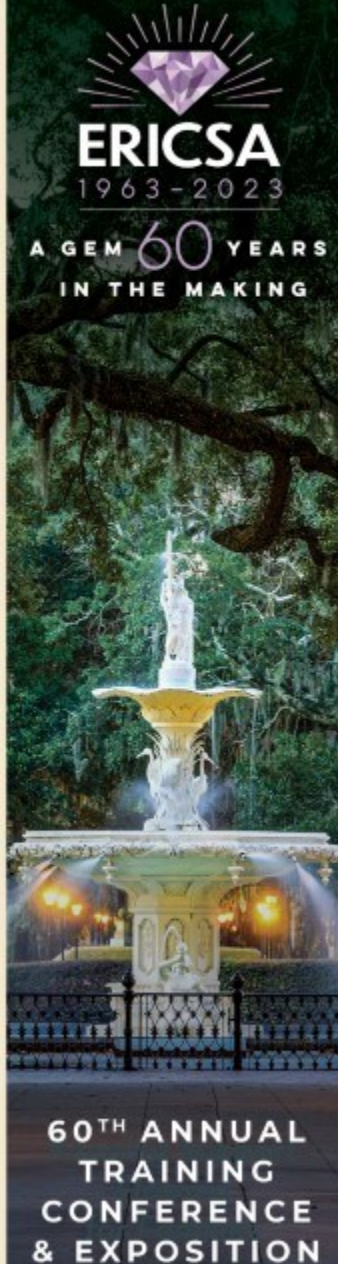
Session Description

What is unintended bias?
How does it affect society?
How do we know it's real?
What does it have to do with child support?
What can a child support professional do about it?



Bias

- Definition: An inclination or prejudice for or against one person or group, especially in a way considered to be unfair
- *“Whatever your mind believes influences you positively or negatively.”*
 - -- Bernard J. Luskin



Bias

- Primary types of bias
 - **Explicit bias:** conscious prejudice.
 - **Unintended bias:** unconsciously operating attitudes and stereotypes that affect our understanding, decisions, and actions



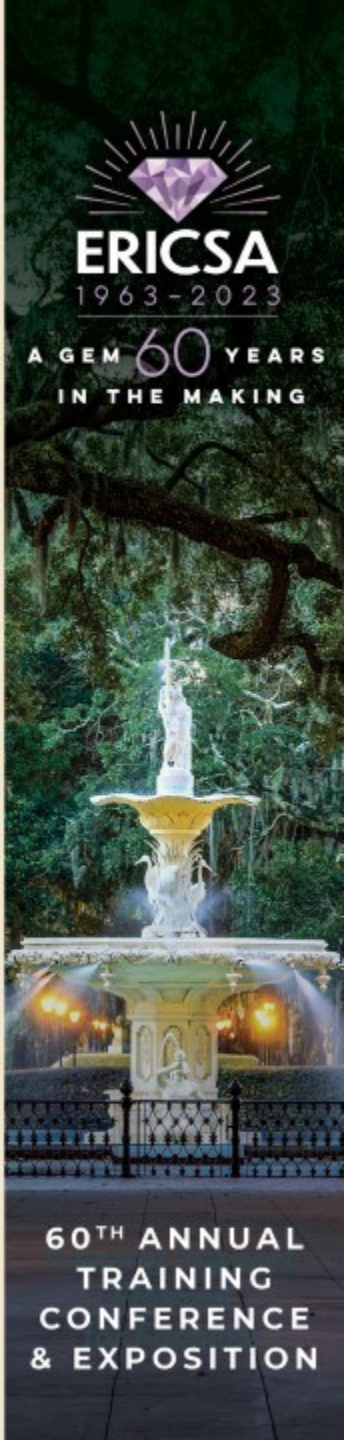
Unintended Bias



A tendency to believe that some people, ideas, etc., are better than others that usually results in treating some people unfairly.



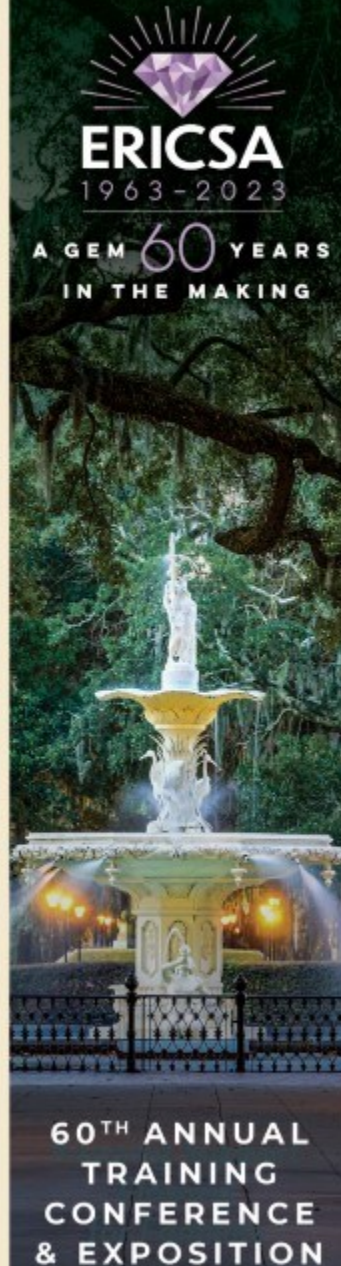
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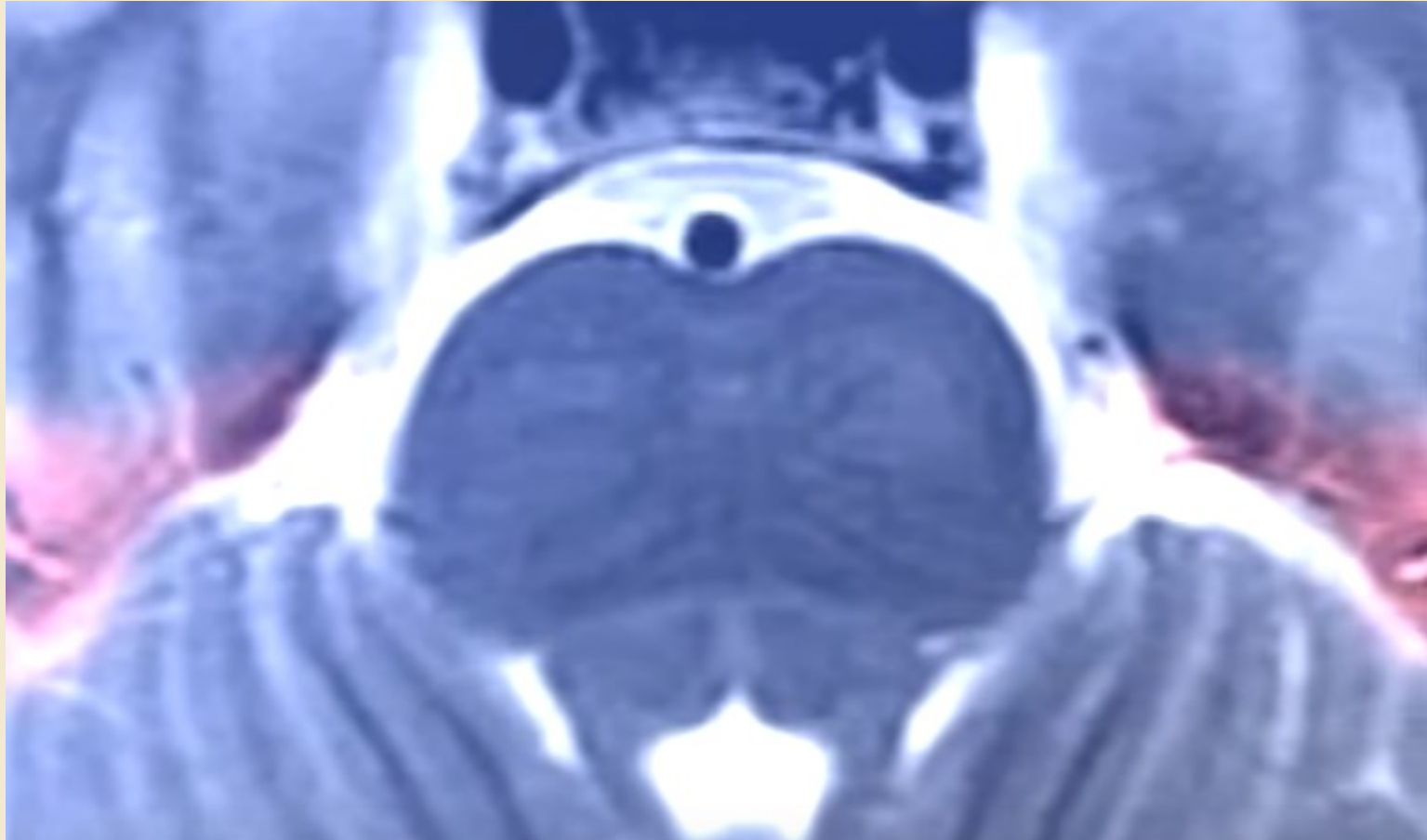
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Unintended Bias

- Also called unintended or unconscious bias
- Ingrained part of our actions and reactions
- Brain's auto-pilot system reacts quickly and automatically with no effort and no voluntary control
- Auto-pilot system processes 200,000 times more information than conscious frontal lobes – only **5%** of our “thinking” is conscious



Amygdala Study – Unconscious Bias



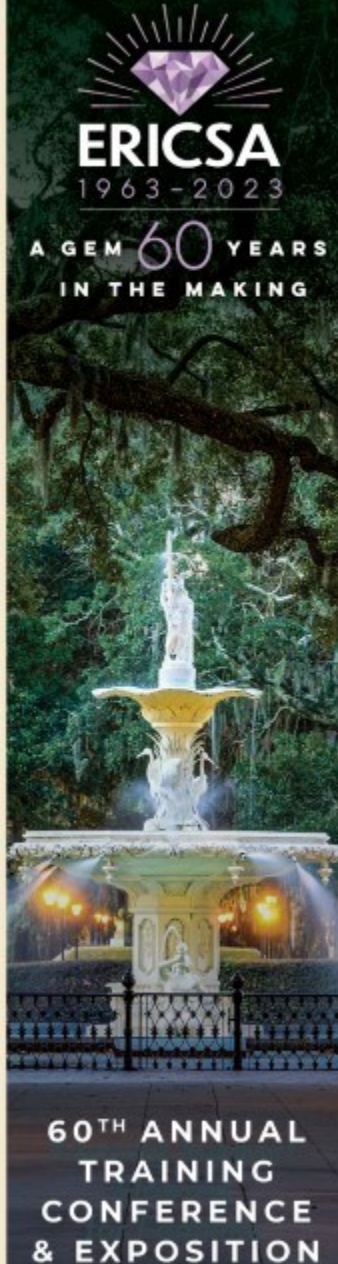
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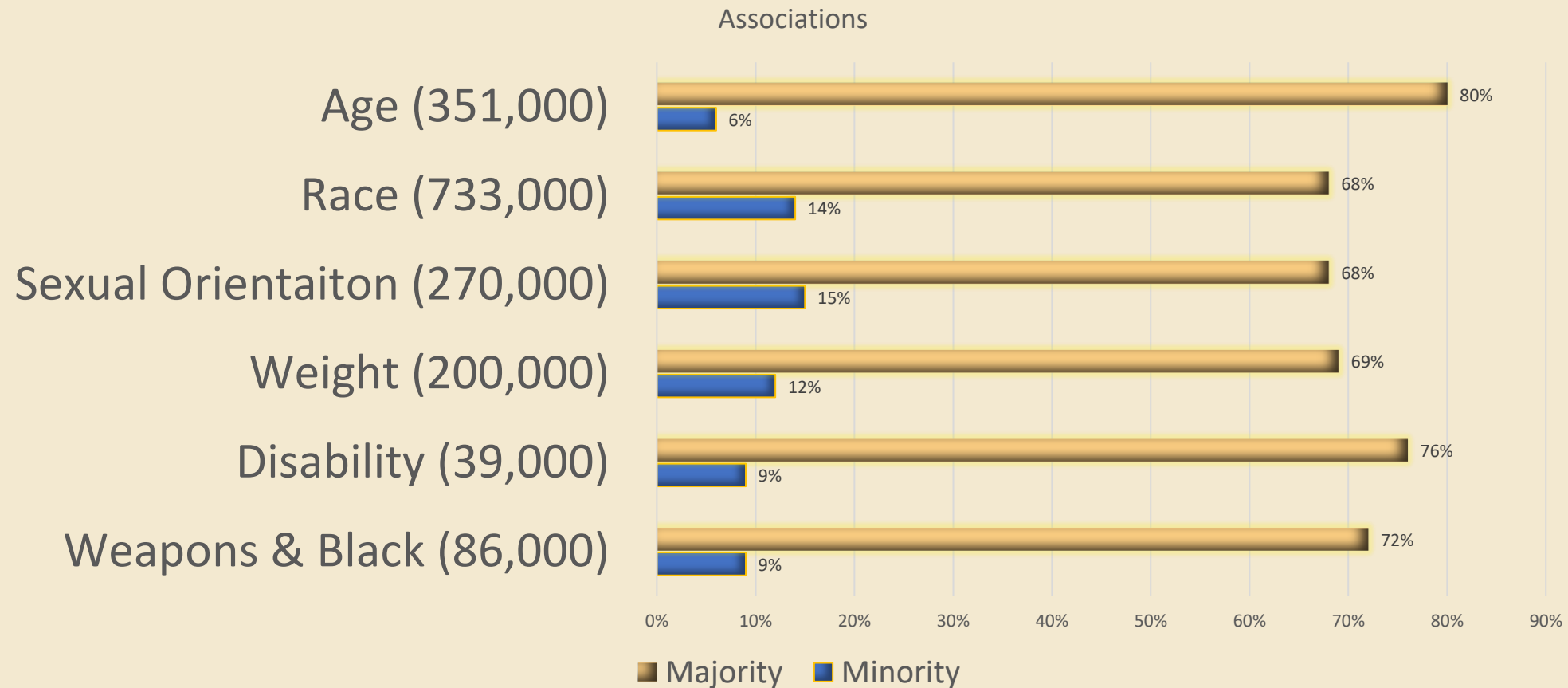
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Unintended Bias

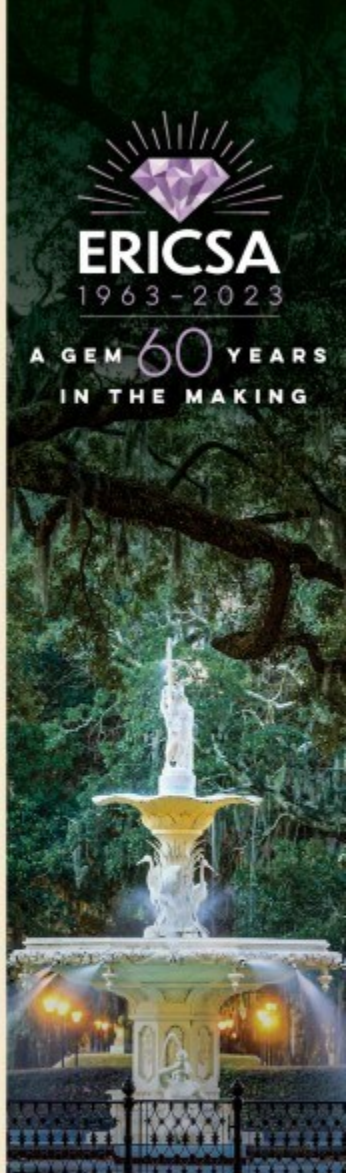
- Unintended biases work like
 - **Shortcuts:** Faced with massive amounts of input, our brains rely on gut instincts to make decisions
 - **Filters:** Our experience tells us that some information is not important and so our brain filters that information out
 - **Autopilot:** Biases operate unintentionally, unconsciously, silently, and quickly to influence our perception and behavior
- Without awareness, action based on biases will continue even though may be counter to conscious beliefs and attitudes



Harvard Implicit Association Test



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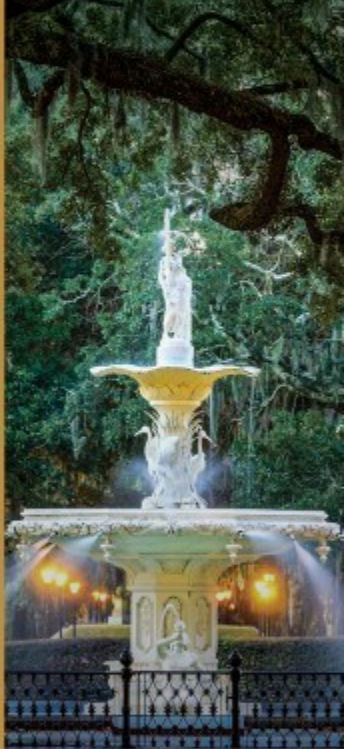


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Types of Unintended Bias



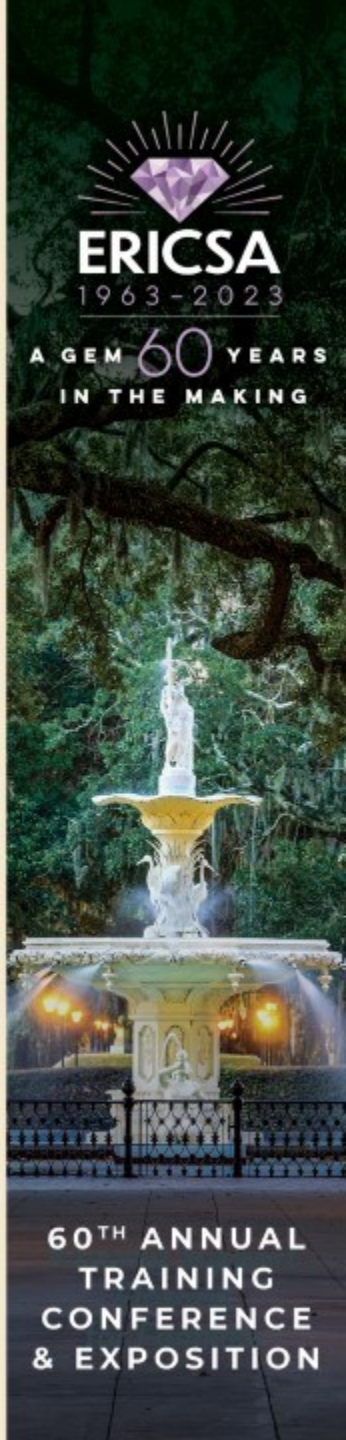
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Types of Unintended Bias: Stereotypes

- Stereotypes are traits we associate with a particular group.
 - From our own limited impressions, or
 - Taught by our own culture
- Examples?



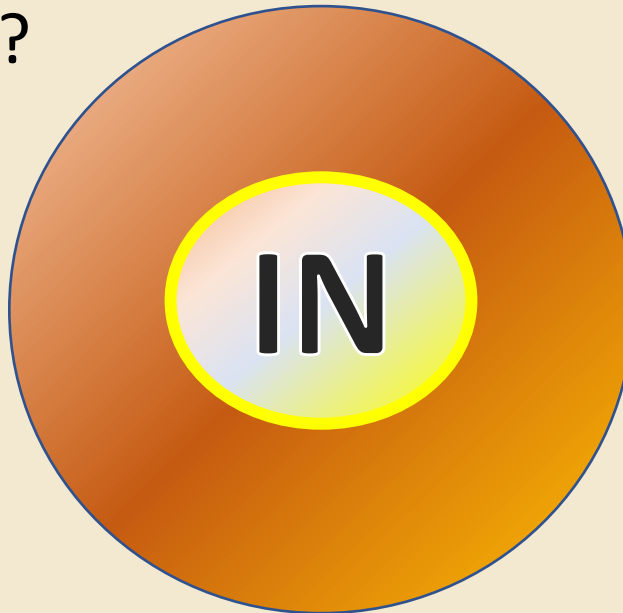
Types of Unintended Bias: Conformity Bias

- Conformity Bias is when we form or adjust our attitudes based on peer pressure
- Examples?



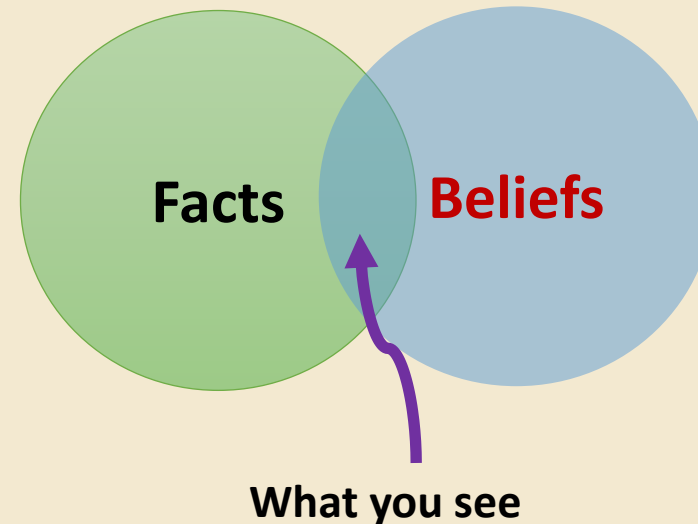
Types of Unintended Bias: Affinity Bias

- Affinity Bias is tendency to feel more empathy toward people in our “in-group”
- You physiologically think about them differently than others – your “out group”
- Who is in your circle of trust?
- Examples?



Types of Unintended Bias: Confirmation Bias

- Confirmation Bias occurs when:
 - Subconscious looks for facts that support established attitudes, beliefs, and biases
 - Subconscious disregards facts that do not support established attitudes, beliefs, and biases
- Examples?

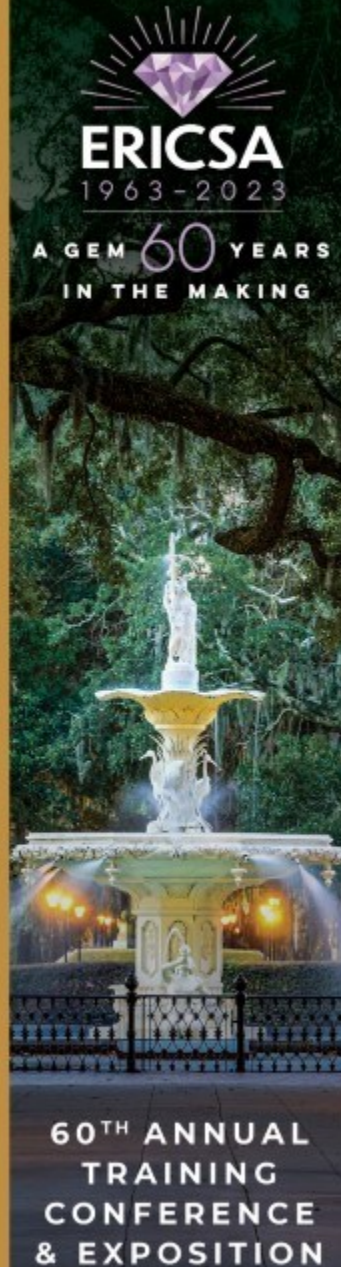


Types of Unintended Bias: Halo & Horns Effect

- Anchoring is human tendency to rely heavily on first piece of information when making decision
- *Halo effect* is when we excuse bad behavior of people we have positive attitude toward
- *Horns effect* is when we discount good behavior of people we have negative attitude toward
- Examples?



Effects of Unintended Bias



Effects of Unintended Bias

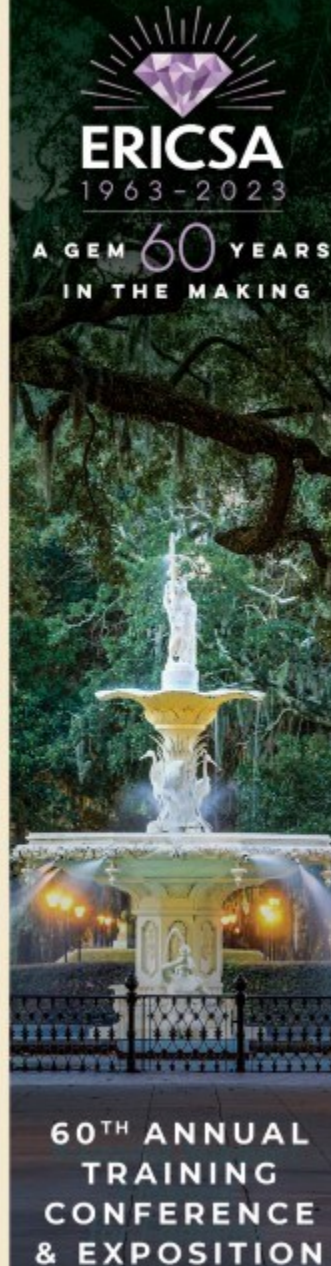
- Doctors in studies made the following treatment decisions:
 - More likely to prescribe pain medication to white patients
 - More likely to provide treatment for depression and suicide-tendencies to young people
 - More likely to aggressively treat young people than elderly
 - Less likely to prescribe blood thinners to black patients with atrial fibrillation



Unintended Bias = Unequal Justice

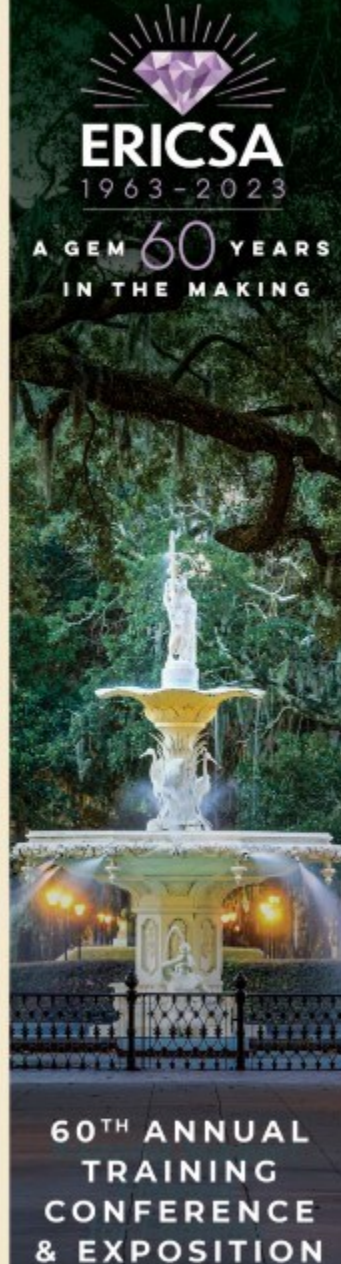


- Black men are significantly more likely than white people to:
 - Be stopped and questioned by police
 - Be arrested
 - Receive a harsher sentence – twice as likely to be sentenced to death
- Black women are four times more likely than white women to be sentenced to prison and for longer term
- In crime simulations, with a mix of black and white participants, black suspects were much more likely to be shot than white suspects regardless of whether the suspects were armed or not



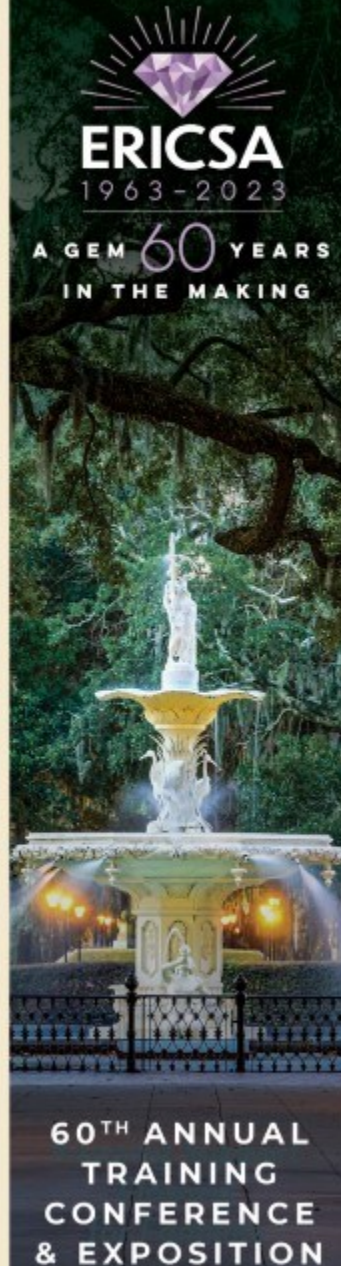
Unintended Bias = Unequal Education

- Studies show that unintended bias impacted:
 - Whether a professor responded to an email from a student
 - “Brad Anderson” received the greatest number of responses
 - “Mei Chen” received the fewest number of responses
 - Grades
 - Teachers gave higher grades to students perceived to be in higher economic class and lower grades to students perceived to be in lower economic class
 - Perception
 - Teachers believed that students perceived to be in higher economic class had more motivation than students perceived to be in lower economic class



Unintended Bias = Unequal Child Protective Services Treatment

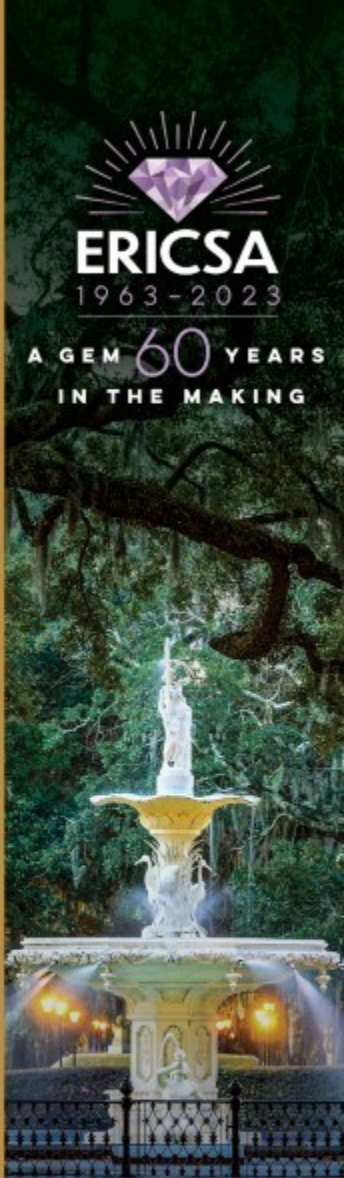
- Studies show ethnicity is the strongest predictor of length of time a child spends in out-of-home placements and whether returned home
- Studies show:
 - Black and Latino children more likely than white children to be removed from home
 - Black families more likely to be reported for suspected maltreatment
 - Caseworkers are more likely to substantiate abuse and remove child in cases involving *neglect* in black families than those involving *physical* or *sexual* violence in white families



Unintended Bias in Child Support



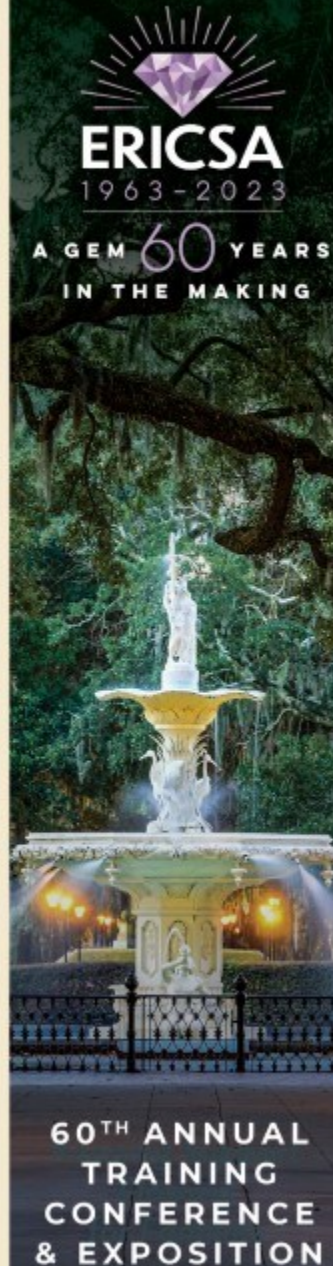
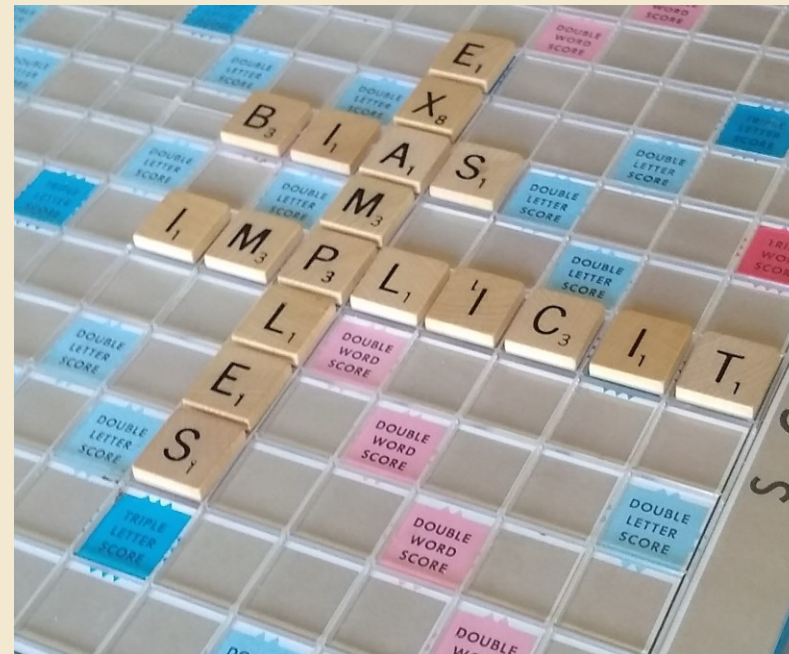
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Unintended Bias in Child Support

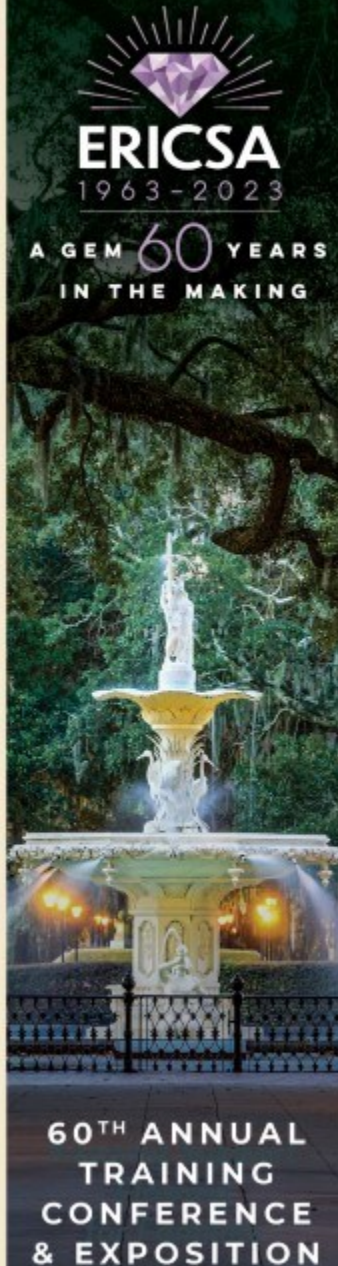
- Example in Parentage Establishment Case
- Example in Support Establishment Case
- Example in Enforcement Case
- Example in Modification Case



Unintended Bias & Child Support – License Suspension

- Black and Latinx are more likely to have their license suspended
- 75% of those with suspended licenses continue to drive
- 42% of those with suspended licenses lose their jobs

Question: Do automated license suspensions really help families?

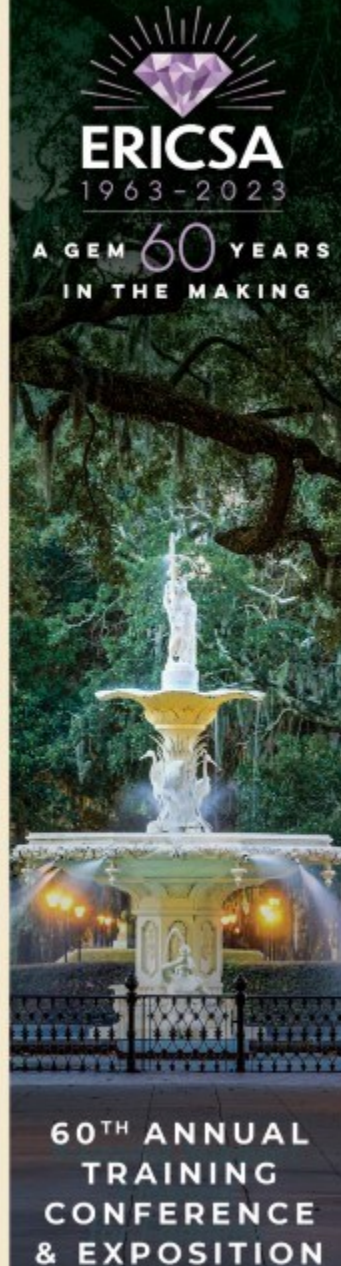


Unintended Bias & Child Support – Ability to Pay

Average household income 2020 by Race

Asian -	\$94,903
White -	\$74,912
Hispanic -	\$55,312
Black -	\$45,870

Question: What implications should this information have on imputing income?

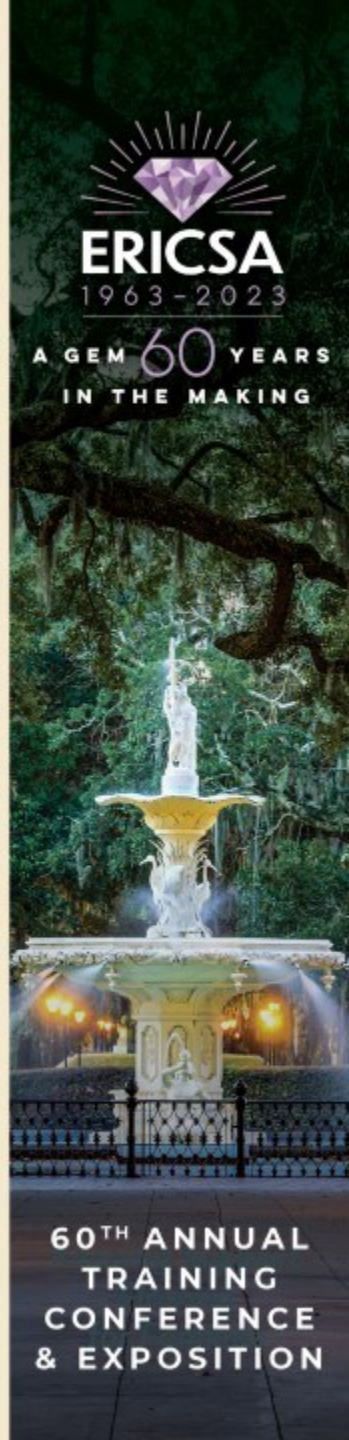


Unintended Bias & Child Support – Credit Reporting

Credit Scores by Race

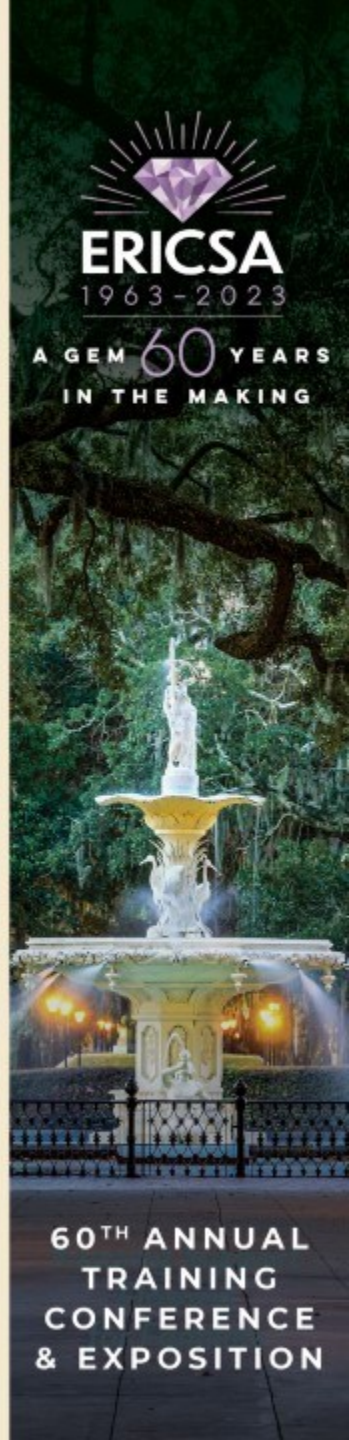
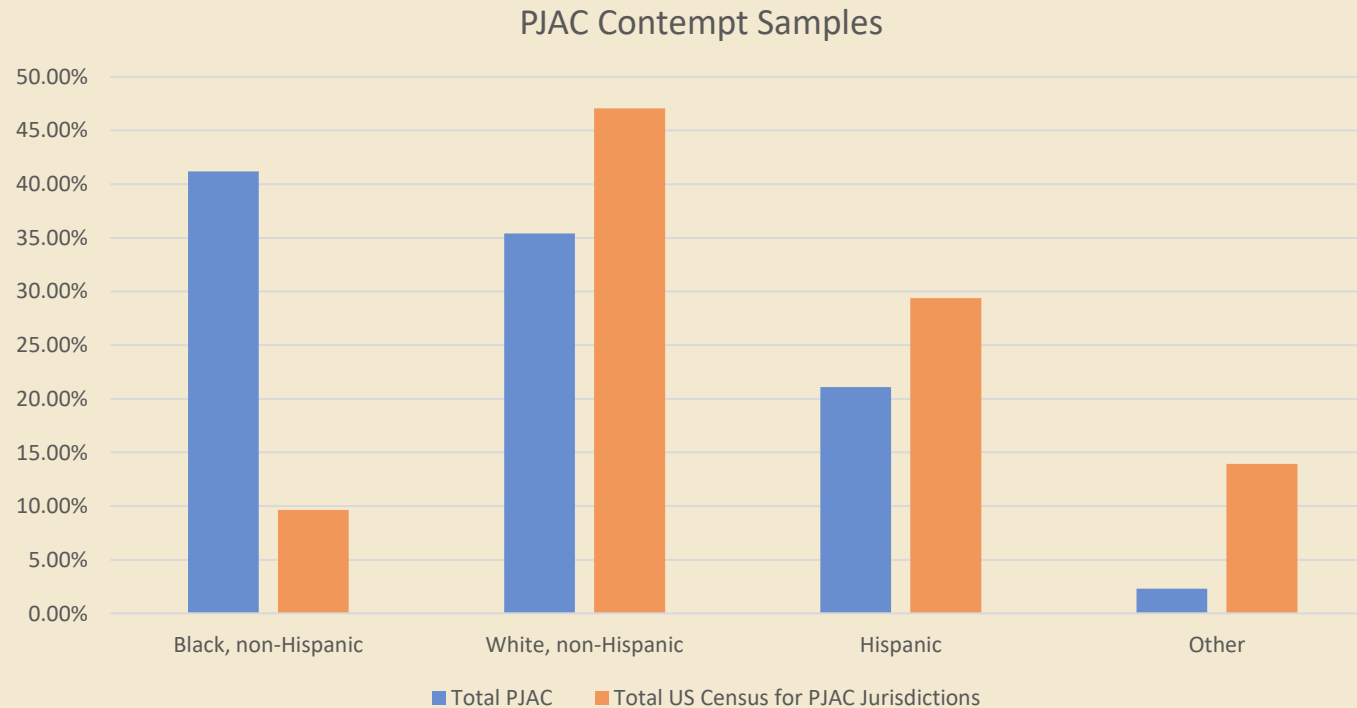
- Asian 745.
- White 734.
- Hispanic 701.
- Black 677.

Question: Does automated credit reporting help or hurt families?



Unintended Bias & Child Support – Contempt

PJAC sample (blue) and US Census data for same jurisdictions (orange)

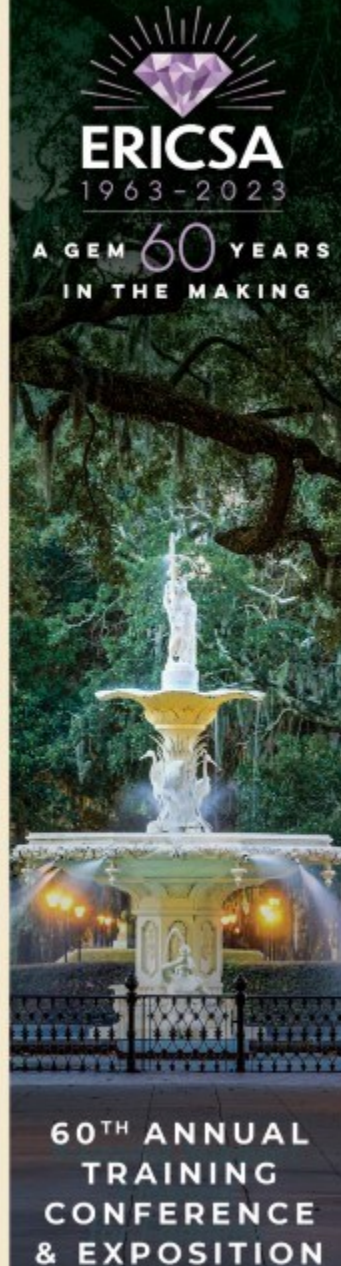


Unintended Bias & Child Support – Interest

Understanding the policy's racial and economic effects

- We reviewed the interest policy's effect along racial and economic lines and determined that low-income families and families of color were disproportionately affected by automatic interest charges.

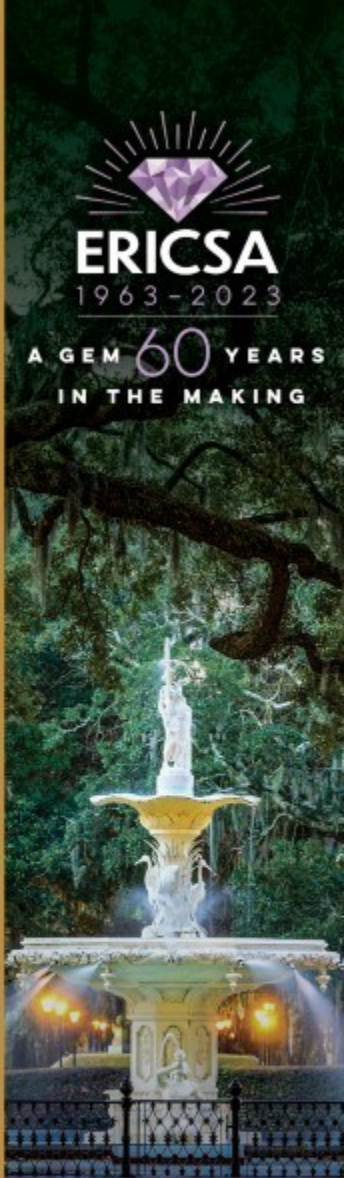
Racial identity of family served	% of Total Caseload	% of Interest Owed	Low Income Zip Codes
Black	41%	45%	75%
Latino	13%	12%	11%
Other	14%	12%	10%
White	32%	31%	4%



Combating Unintended Bias in our Professional and Personal Lives



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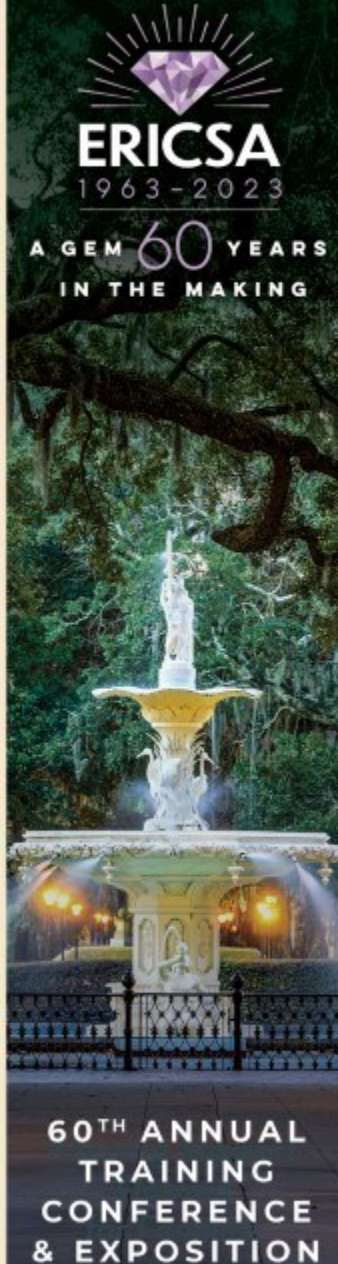
Challenge Our Thinking

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

– Socrates

“The unchallenged brain is not worth trusting.”

– Dr. Helen Turnbull, CEO, Human Facets



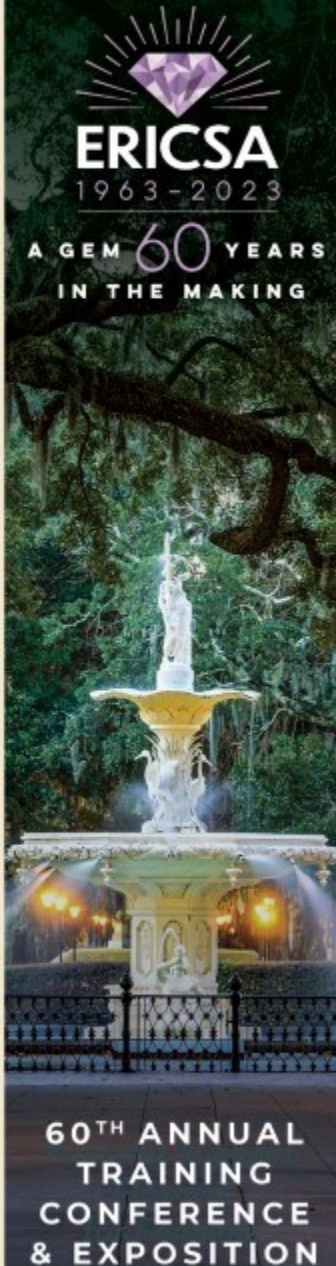
What can we do about our unconscious bias?

- Combat your own stereotypes ... and those of others.
- Get educated.
- Widen the circle.

“... with the combination of motivation, awareness, strategies and effort, you can learn to regulate the expression of these stereotypic biases.”

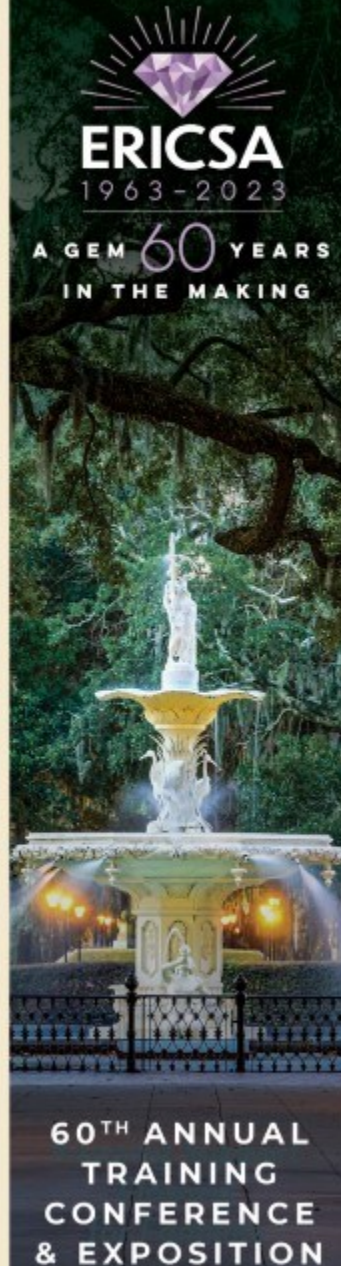
-Patricia Devine, PhD

University of Wisconsin-Madison



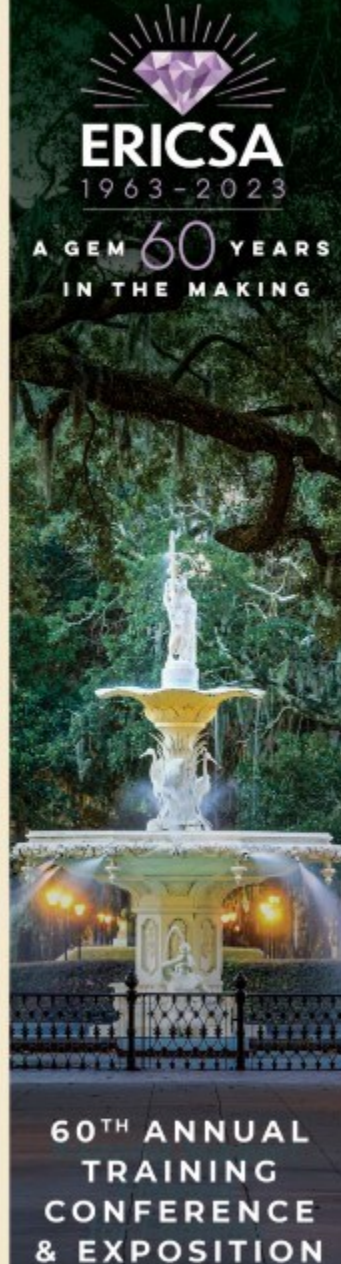
Combat Stereotypes – Start with your own

- Find celebrities that don't fit stereotypes. Learn about them.
- Identify friends and acquaintances who don't fit stereotypes and learn about them.



Get Educated

- Learn more about groups you might feel bias toward
- Listen carefully when acquaintances talk
- Make effort to understand what they are saying



Walk In Their Shoes

"First of all,' he said, 'If you can learn a simple trick, Scout, you'll get along a lot better with all kinds of folks. You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view-'

'Sir?'

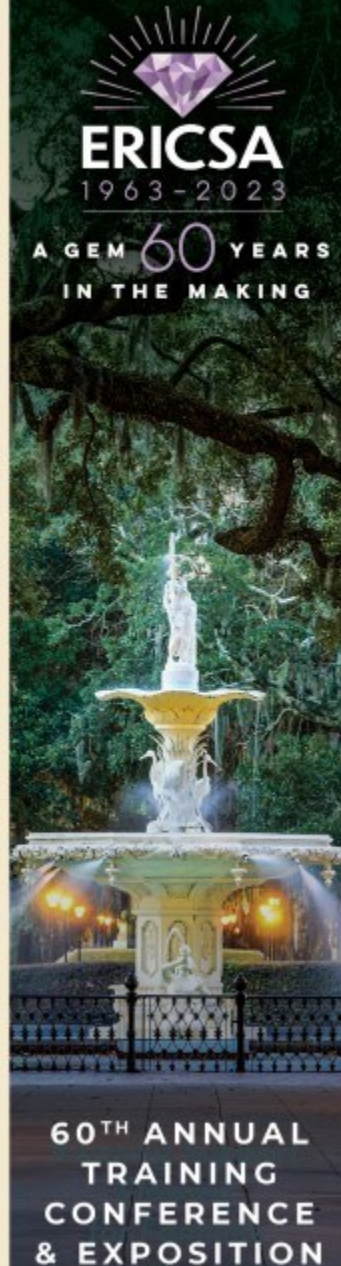
'-until you climb into his skin and walk around in it.'"

- *To Kill a Mockingbird*



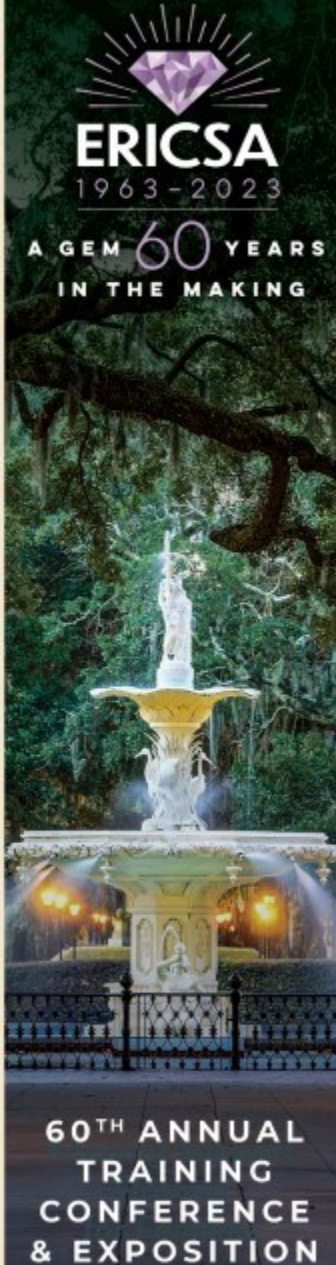
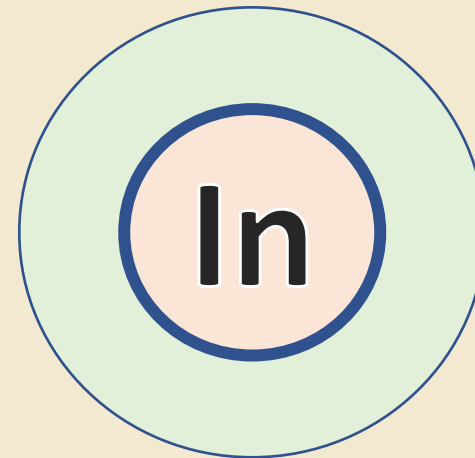
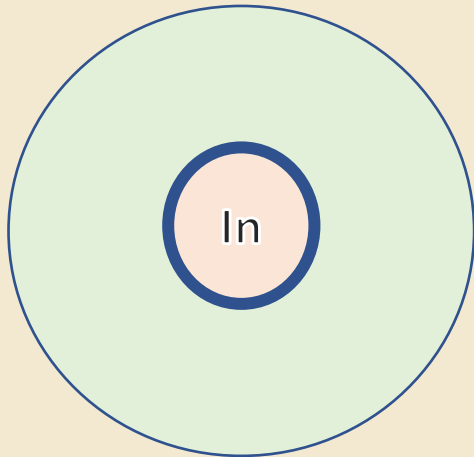
Change the Messages You Receive

- Learn from tolerant people
- Learn from different perspectives
- Alter media that you listen to



Widen Your Circle

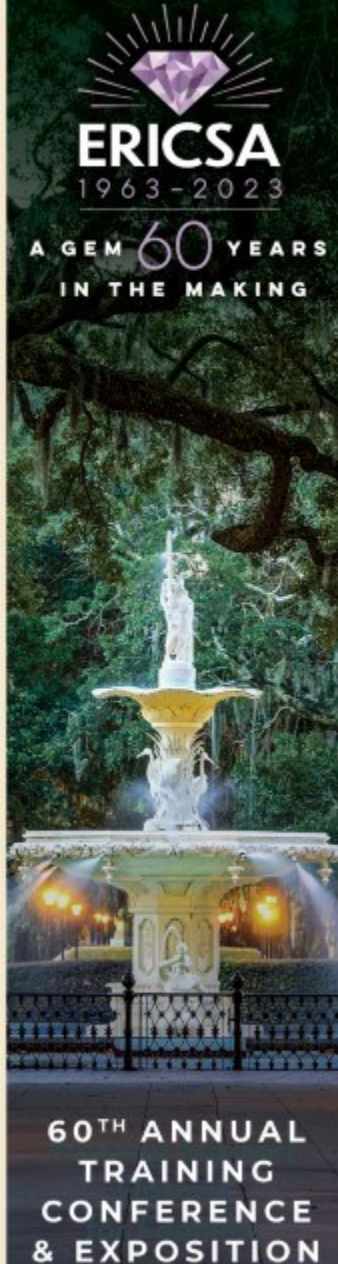
- Look at your “In Group”
- Make friends with different kinds of people
- Diversify your “In Group”
- Broaden your circle of trust



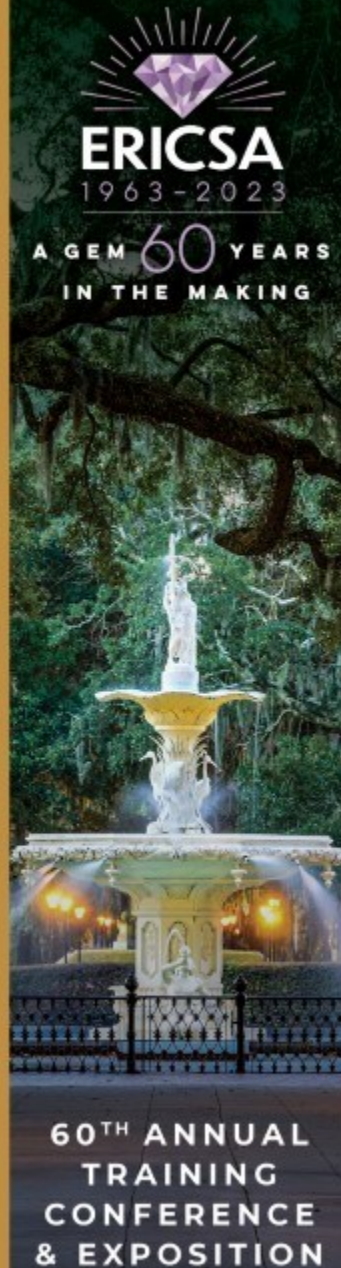
You Better Think! —Aretha Franklin

Reflect on decisions – Skip the shortcut!

- Take time to think consciously – Focus on the facts!
- Act on concrete, measurable reasons instead of gut feelings

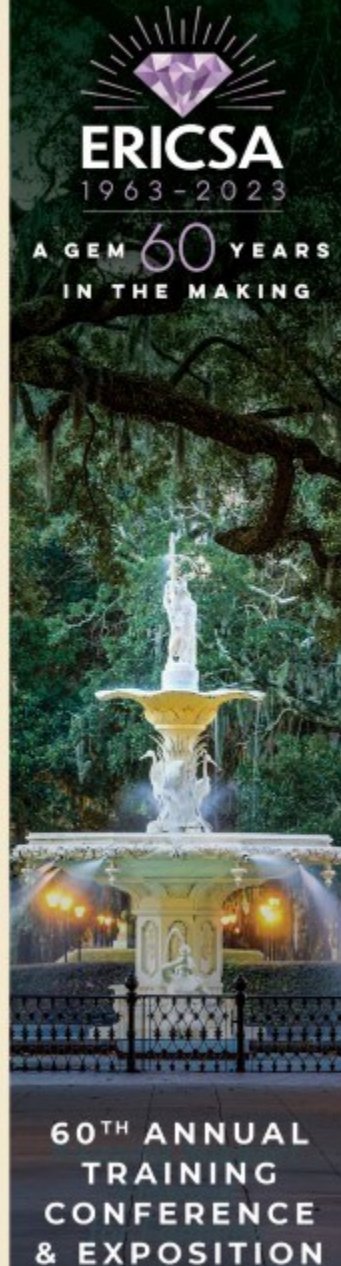


What can Child Support Professionals and Agencies Do?



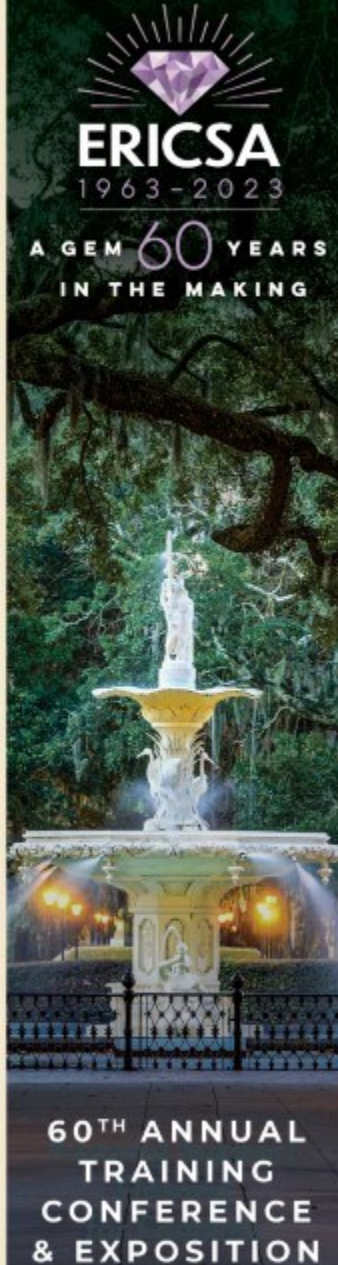
Challenging Child Support Assumptions

- Set orders based on actual income.
 - Reassess imputation standards and the assumptions they're based on.
- Find alternatives to Incarceration for delinquent support.
- Forgive child support debt owed to the state for struggling parents.
- Re-examine automated “punitive” actions like license suspension, interest, and credit reporting.
- Help parents find and maintain employment so they can support themselves and their children.
- Connect them to services to address other needs.



Challenging Child Support Assumptions

- Listen.



Questions?

Thank you!



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