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Preface

The purpose of this book is to inform an approach to child welfare service delivery to African American children and families that is based on cultural adaptation as the mediating construct with the existing system of care. This approach requires identification of the current system’s limitations in meeting the needs of African American children and their families, and then using the needs and conditions of families to propose policy and program responses that make requisite cultural adaptations targeted to this population. The disparate experience of African American children and youths in the out-of-home child welfare system provides the primary rationale for considering an alternative approach to the study of child welfare.

The primary objective is to describe how cultural adaptations can be used in the delivery of child welfare services to African American children and families. To accomplish the objective, the book entails a review and evaluation of the three major child welfare goals: (1) protection; (2) permanency; and (3) well-being. Specifically, we explore the effect of these three goals on African American children and families. An important feature of the book is the recommendations for policy, practice, and research that can guide intervention with this population.

USING THE BOOK

The book is intended for use by people who have a basic knowledge of systems of care, human behavior theories, and social work practice skills. The practitioners who use it may be enrolled in a graduate program in social work or a graduate course of study, or be a participant in training directed to government bureaucrats, administrators, or program