“The ultimate tragedy is not the oppression and cruelty by the bad people but the silence over that by the good people.” – Martin Luther King Jr.

At Child Advocates, we stand in solidarity with those who are impacted by racial violence and injustice, among our clients, colleagues, and community. With so many others, we are concerned about the well-being of our communities, and especially those who have been marginalized for too long. And with so many, we are struggling with how we might respond effectively to the events of the last week. We want to be the solution we seek.

We want to be part of the community that honors the lives of those lost to racial violence. We hold up in memory Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and George Floyd, while also remembering Mike Brown, Trayvon Martin, Sandra Bland, Emmett Till, and countless other valuable lives lost to prejudice, brutality and injustice. How many more whose names and stories are not known? As a community, we kneel and mourn together.

We want to be part of the community that embraces those who are hurting. We feel and are heartbroken by these losses which affect all of us. We believe that ... Black Lives Matter. Black Experiences Matter. Black Voices Matter. There is so much listening and so much healing to be done. As Dr. King taught us, the “riot is the language of the unheard.”

We acknowledge the suffering that is inherent in these losses and challenge the systems and actions that allowed them to happen. Racism is evident in our country in both overt acts of violence and covert systems that oppress lives of color and need while protecting the privileged lives of white and rich. As advocates, we cannot ignore this reality.

We want to be part of the community that makes the world different, and better. We imagine our agency and a child welfare system that empower children, families, and communities to thrive. In the last several years, we have begun a process of introspection and education to better understand our own racism. We still have much to do. We must be just, holistic, and actively anti-racist, anti-classist, and anti-oppressive. We have been entrusted with a special set of duties and care, for vulnerable children and families, and so we must act. Our mission stands so importantly inside the larger need for justice that we see challenged in our community, nation and world.

In sadness and in hope, we stand together,

Frank P. Cervone                        Deborah F. Cohen
Executive Director                      Board Chair

June 1, 2020