

The King County Play Equity Coalition is saddened, despondent, enraged, and in despair at this time. Recent murders of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd, and Breonna Taylor, alongside the racism directed towards Christian Cooper are at the front of our minds now, but they are not surprising nor isolated stories. These individuals and other past, present and future victims deserve our ongoing attention.

As an organization committed to equity we take it upon ourselves to champion drastic shifts for social transformation that are rooted in anti-racist principles. The youth sports and physical activity community lags behind other youth development and educational spaces in discussions and enactments of inclusive and anti-racist policies and practices.

Physical activity is one of the most important predictors and protectors of overall health and well-being. Unfortunately, inequity is profoundly present here, too, and is predictable by race. Black youth do not participate in physical activity - free play, organized sport, or outdoor recreation - as often as their white peers. When they do, sport can be a vehicle to promote equity and integration, but it has also perpetuated stereotypes, racism, tokenism, inequity, and further harm. Going for runs or bird-watching can elicit racist behavior and language, police activity or death.

Black youth, adults and their families lack safe access to the outdoors. Denying youth the benefits of physical activity and the outdoors enables oppression. However, explaining these disparities and citing statistics is not enough to secure equity for these youth and their families. To be part of the solution, we must identify and address the deep-rooted reasons why these disparities exist and put all our force behind eliminating barriers. These inequities, the tragic killings of Black Americans, and the racist acts against members of our community each day are intimately connected to one another. This requires swift action.

We express our support and commitment to do our part to enable safe and equitable access to physical activity across our region and to specifically support Black Americans in doing so.

We stand in solidarity with Black Lives Matter, Black community and leadership, and echo demands for police accountability and ending state-sanctioned violence against Black bodies.

KING COUNTY  
**PLAY EQUITY**  
COALITION

