

An illustration featuring a person and a child standing on a set of orange steps that lead up to a building with an archway. In the foreground, there is a light blue building with a red roof and a large green tree. The background is a light blue sky with a few white circular lights.

Engaging Your Community With Data

Take-home tactics and interventions to foster data literacy

Agenda

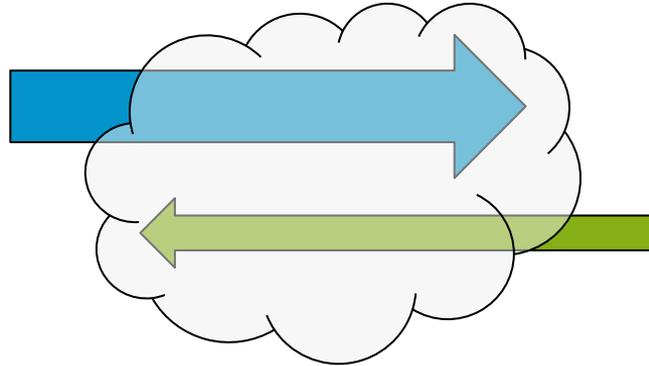
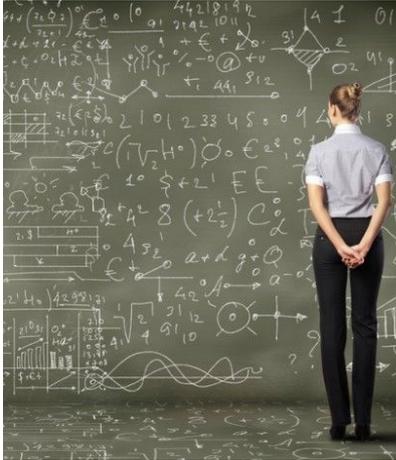
1. The power of intentional data communications
2. Exploratory Audiences
3. Explanatory Audiences
4. Data Support at BFZ



“Talking Data” with your community can be challenging

Everyone *knows* using data for quality improvement is important...

...but it can be hard to have engaging, reciprocal conversations with stakeholders who believe in a “**data people** and **non-data people**” divide.



"The data doesn't reflect what's actually going on"

"I'm not a numbers person, just tell me what I need to know"

What barriers to interacting with data do you see in your community?

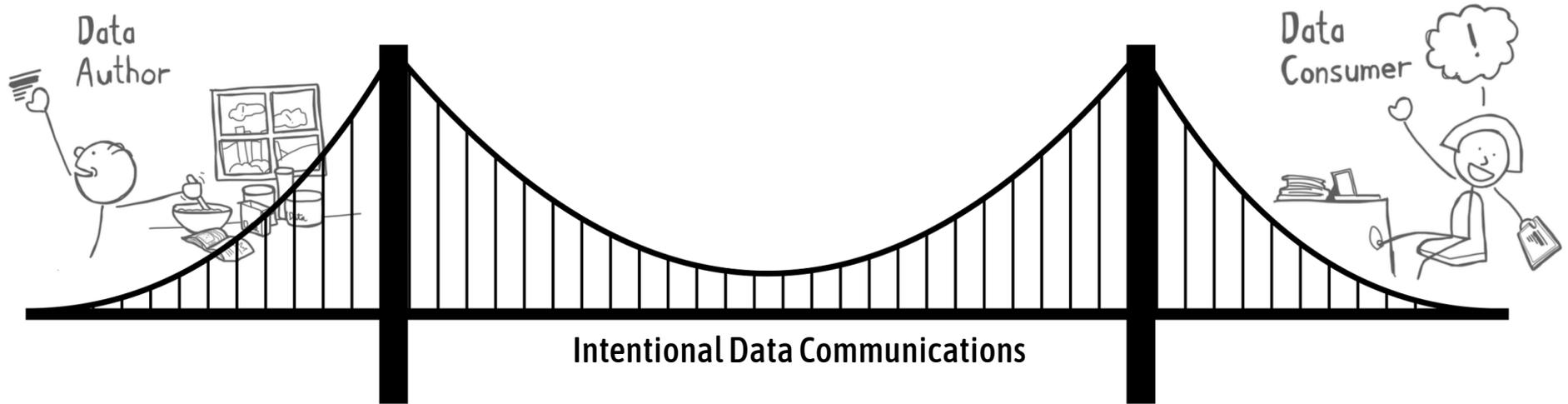
"I don't want to be evaluated"

Everyone is a data person!



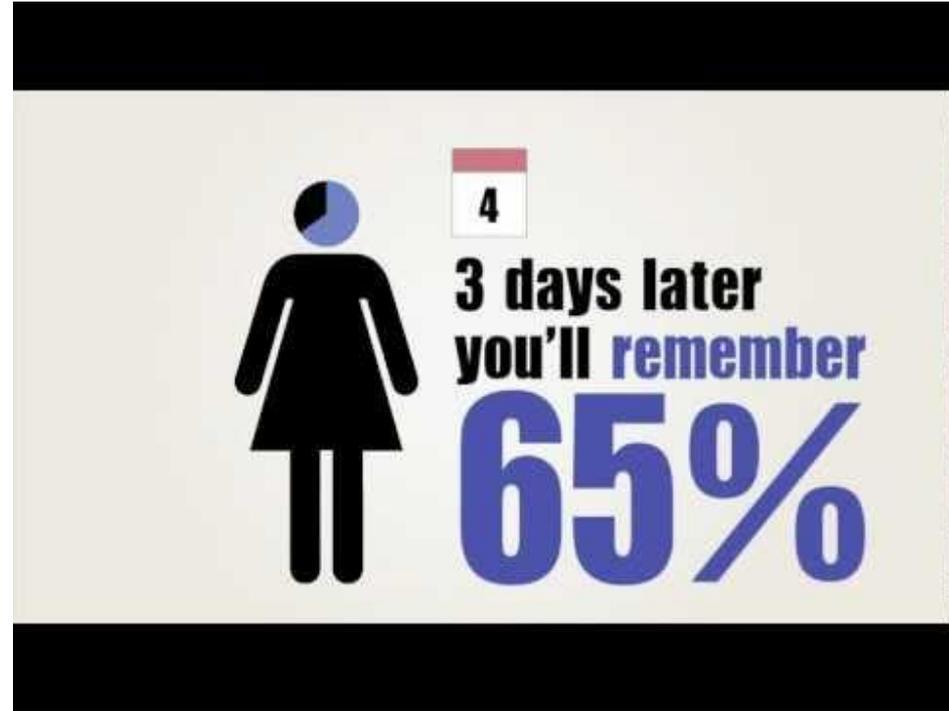
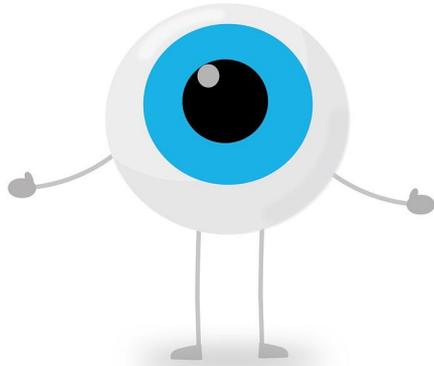
**Not everyone needs to be a data author -
develop a shared data language between author and consumer.**

Bridging the Gap



Communicating through visuals

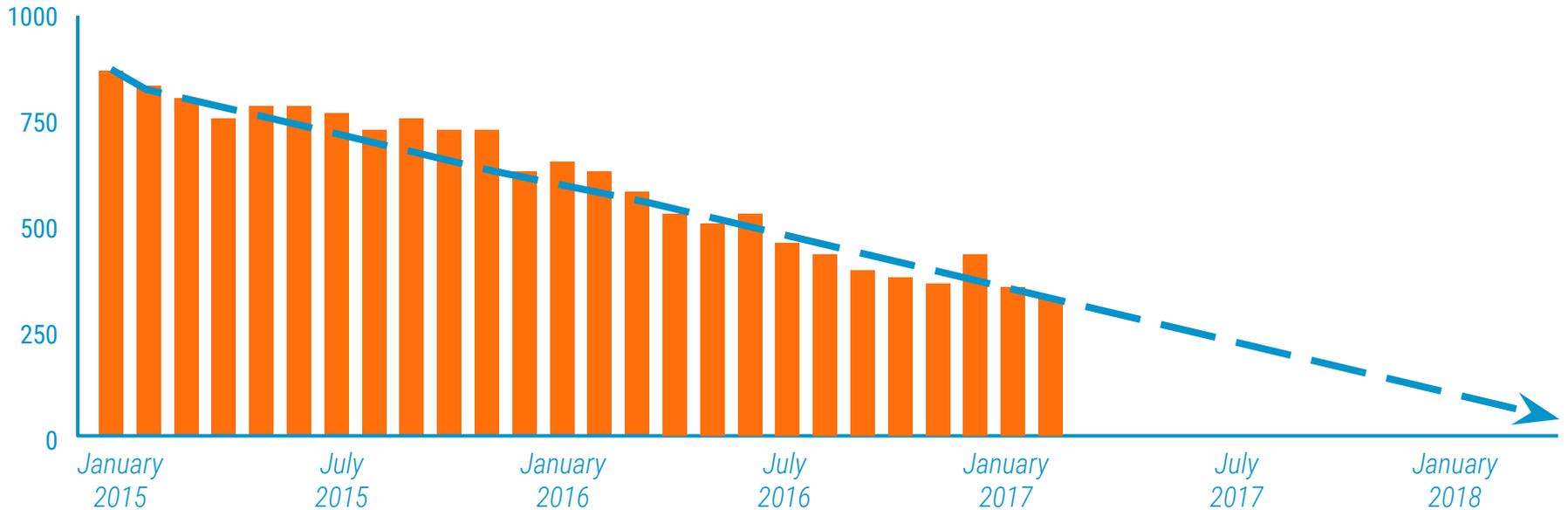
Pictorial Superiority Effect



Why Visualize Data?

“A good visualization **tells a story**, removing the noise from data and highlighting the useful information.”

Community A's journey to **functional zero** for all single adults.

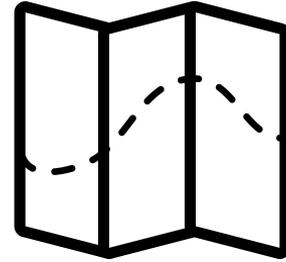


Audience Matters.



Exploratory

- Internal colleagues
- Focused on problem solving, engaging in open-ended conversations
- Audience interacts with and makes decisions from data



Explanatory

- It could be anyone!
- Focused on making decisions, advocacy, general knowledge
- Audience is looking at the big picture.



Exploratory Data Communication

What is Exploratory Communications?

- Focus is on the **process**
- The key output is **understanding**

“Exploratory analysis is what you do to get familiar with the data... [it] is **the process of turning over 100 rocks** to find perhaps 1 or 2 precious gemstones.”

<https://www.storytellingwithdata.com/blog/2014/04/exploratory-vs-explanatory-analysis>





Role Play - Interagency CC Meeting

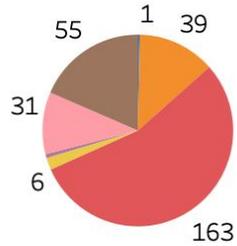
- Your CoC wants to use data to look at race disparities in housing LOT
- Setting is the beginning of a CoC-hosted bi-weekly interagency case conferencing meeting with program leads and case managers
- Personal goal of promoting the use of data for planning and decision-making

Rhode Island Ave. Mission	Shady Grove Friends, Inc.	U Street Future Vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Serves historically Asian immigrant neighborhood● Known need for access to broader language services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Serves downtown area● Large, well-resourced agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Recently established agency in rapidly changing part of town● Still training up new staff

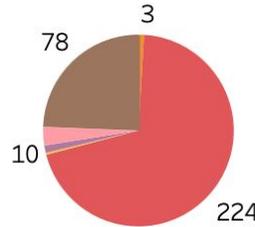
LOT Analysis in our CoC

Client Demographics

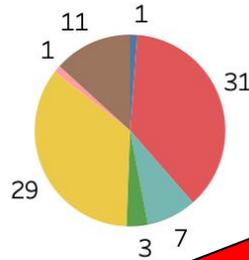
Rhode Island Ave Mission



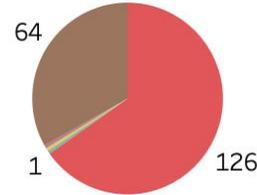
Shady Grove Friends Inc.



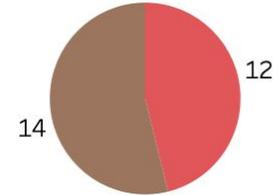
U Street Future Vision



Union Station Neighborhood Services

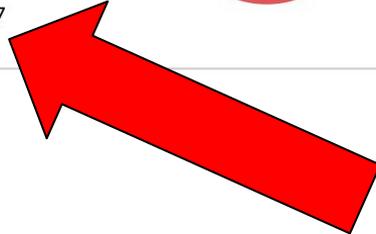


West Hyattsville Salvation Army



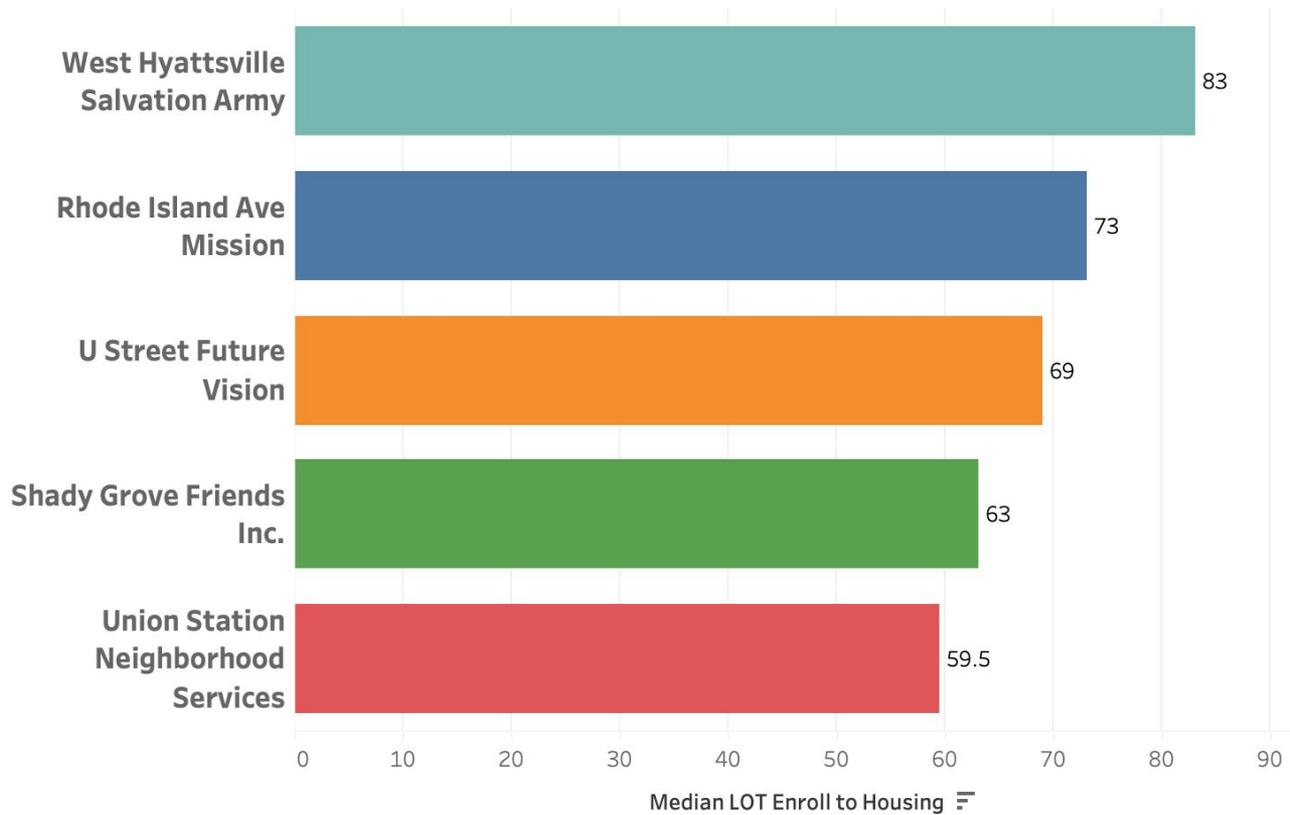
Race

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Client doesn't know
- Client refused
- Data not collected
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Two or More
- White

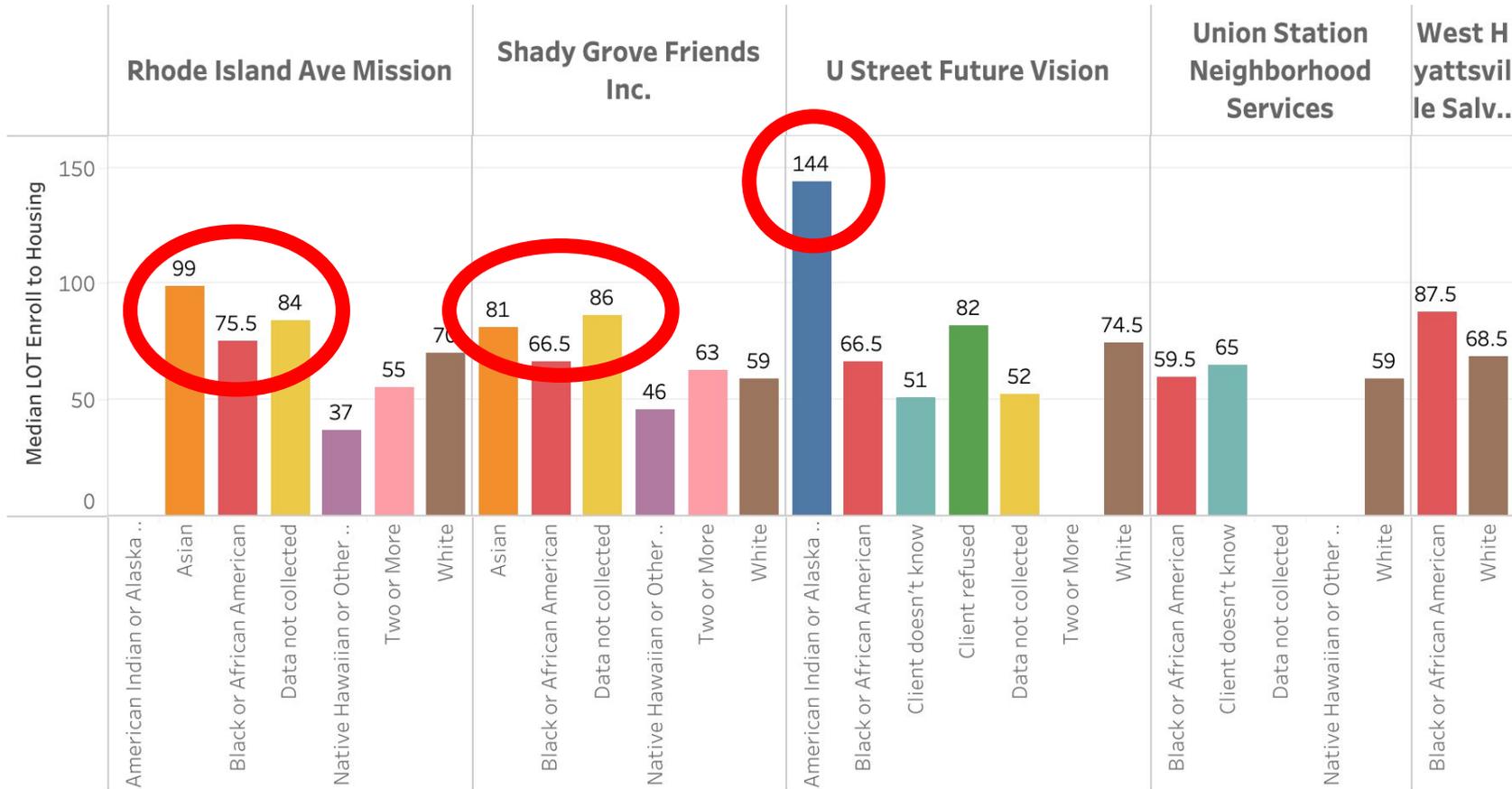


U Street Future Vision - 47% no data collected

LOT to Housing



LOT by Agency and Client Race



Conclusions

- Full, accurate analysis is held back by data completeness issues
- Union Station NS has successful strategies for reducing LOT
- Need to focus on Asian, AIAN, Data Not Collected populations

Questions?

Did you feel engaged in a data conversation?

- What did you take away from the presentation?
- How do you feel as representatives of your agency?
- To what degree do you better understand your client data?

What can we do differently?

Develop Common Ground Through Data



Invite everyone in[to] the data conversation



Make space for others' expert interpretation, criticism, doubt, curiosity, and excitement



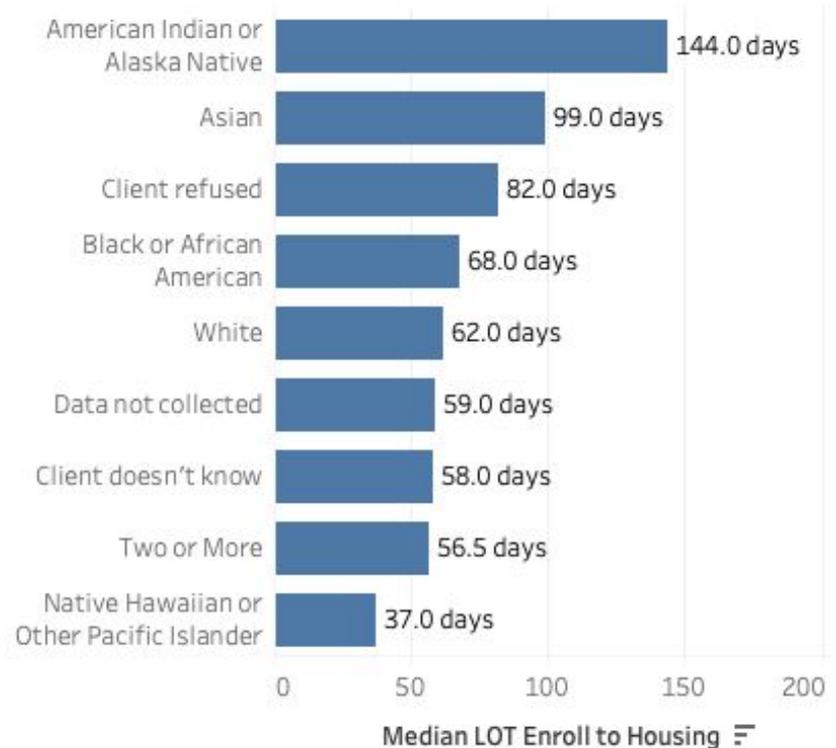
Highlight the humanity of data by showing the connection between the individual and the aggregate

Invite Everyone In - Describe the Graph

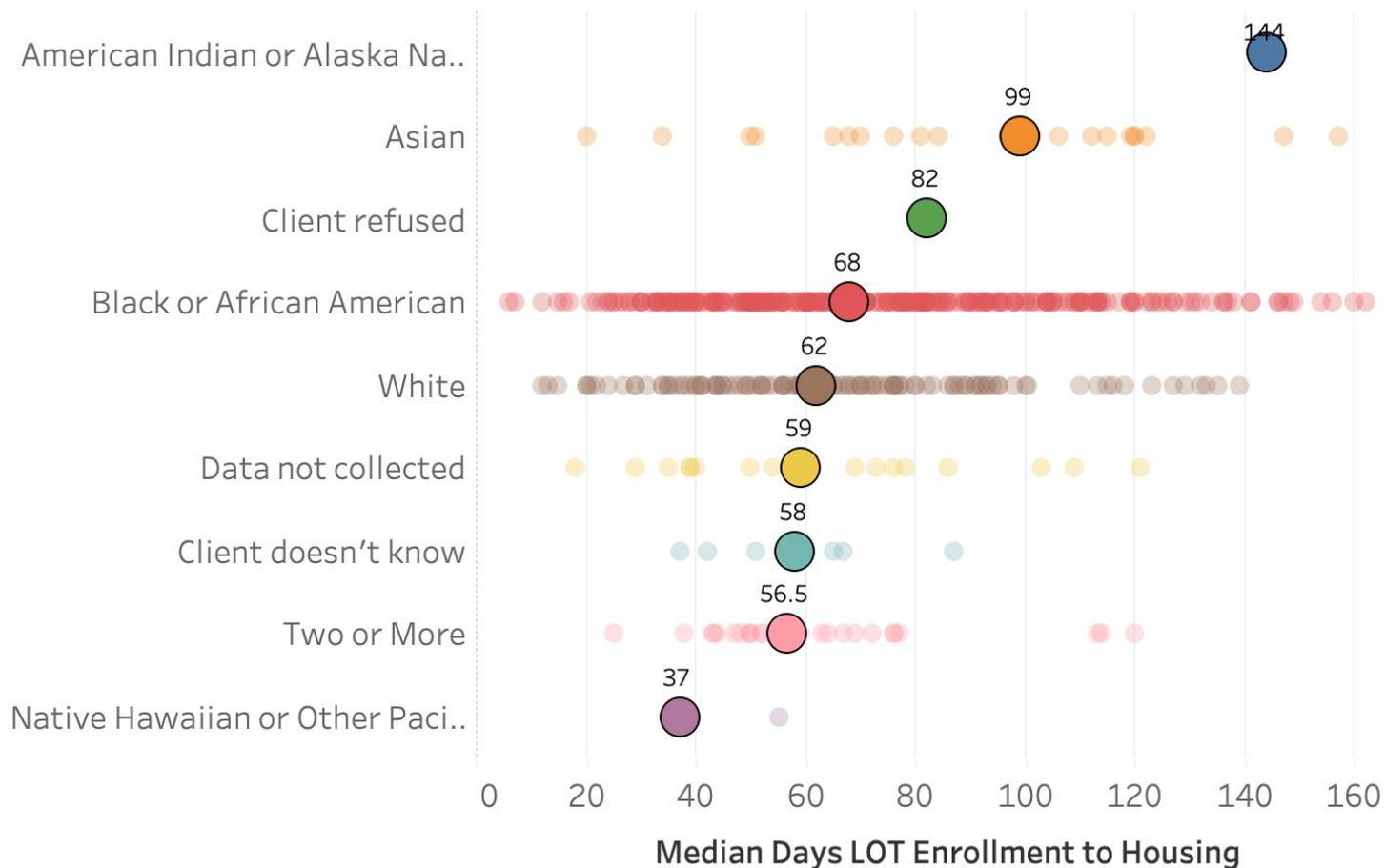
Spend the first moments describing what the graph is, how to read it, but **NOT** what it 'says'.

Take a few seconds to let everyone get comfortable with the graph and to find something that catches their eye.

Median LOT to Housing by Race



Median Client LOT to Housing by Race



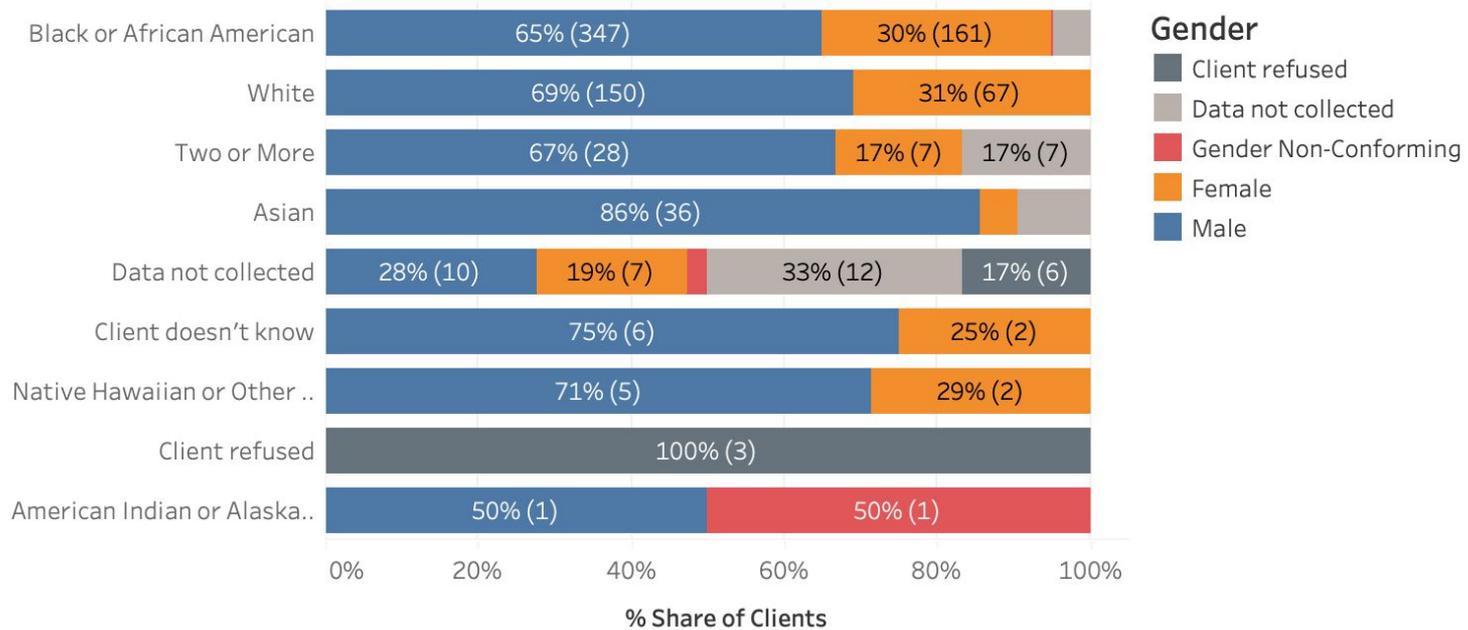
Make Space - Let Others Apply Their Expert Lens

Before offering your take, invite others to apply their own expert interpretation of the data, **especially** if the data doesn't align with their ground truth.

Fully engage with everyone's interpretation even if the conversation is different than you planned.



Share of Client Gender by Race (client count)



“Does this data feel right?”

“Does this align with what you're seeing on the ground?”

“Is there anything here we should take a second look at?”

Highlight the Humanity - Show Your Work

Have the client-level data that created your visualization ready to go on-hand.

If you have time (and you should **plan** for this!), enthusiastically go from aggregate to client-level data right there live.

Client ID <input type="text"/>	Household ID <input type="text"/>	Birthday <input type="text"/>	Gender <input type="text"/>
77611	53594	2/25/91	Male
123748	81954	9/14/87	Female
123958	82081	4/7/86	Female
123959	82081	1/13/08	Female
123960	82081	7/5/06	Female
9625	8007	8/9/78	Male
122632	81196	3/18/92	Gender Non-
120438	79613	9/21/04	Female

Data is personal. Data is intimate.

As we analyzed and coded our interviews, we were reminded of something that we often forget — **data can be intimate and personal**. If someone found a personal connection to any graph, it didn't matter the color, the style or the technique. **For the people we talked to, charts with personal connections superseded all other design dimensions.**

People who were impacted by alcohol were drawn to graphs with alcohol....

Information about alcohol [is the most important].

*I'm dealing with a functioning alcoholic. **The most important person in my life is an alcoholic.***

Right now, that's important to me.

— 65–74 year old, college graduate

<https://medium.com/multiple-views-visualization-research-explained/data-is-personal-what-we-learned-from-42-interviews-in-rural-america-93539f25836d>

Role Play Re-do

- Personal goal of promoting the use of data for planning and decision-making
- Note the tactics used to engage in a data conversation

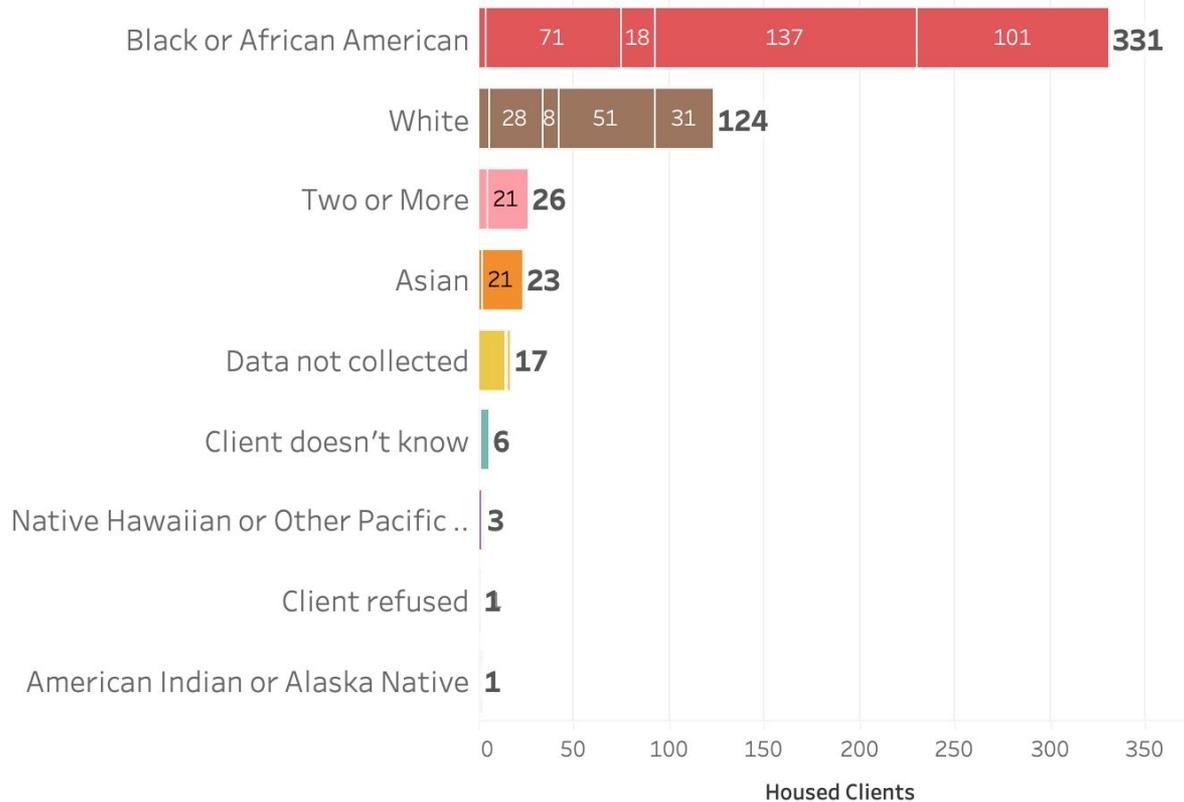
Rhode Island Ave. Mission	Shady Grove Friends, Inc.	U Street Future Vision
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Serves historically Asian immigrant neighborhood● Known need for access to broader language services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Serves downtown area● Large, well-resourced agency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Recently established agency in rapidly changing part of town● Still training up new staff

LOT Analysis in our CoC

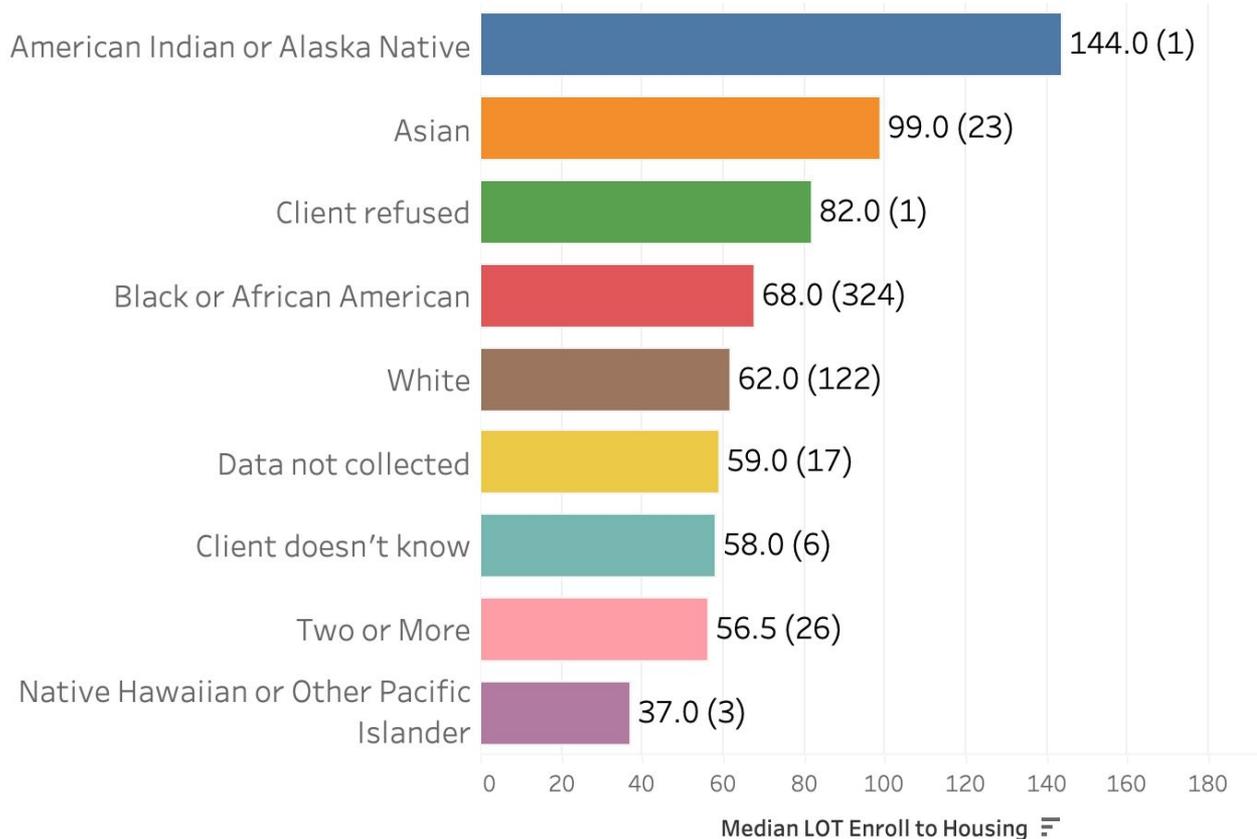
Data Notes

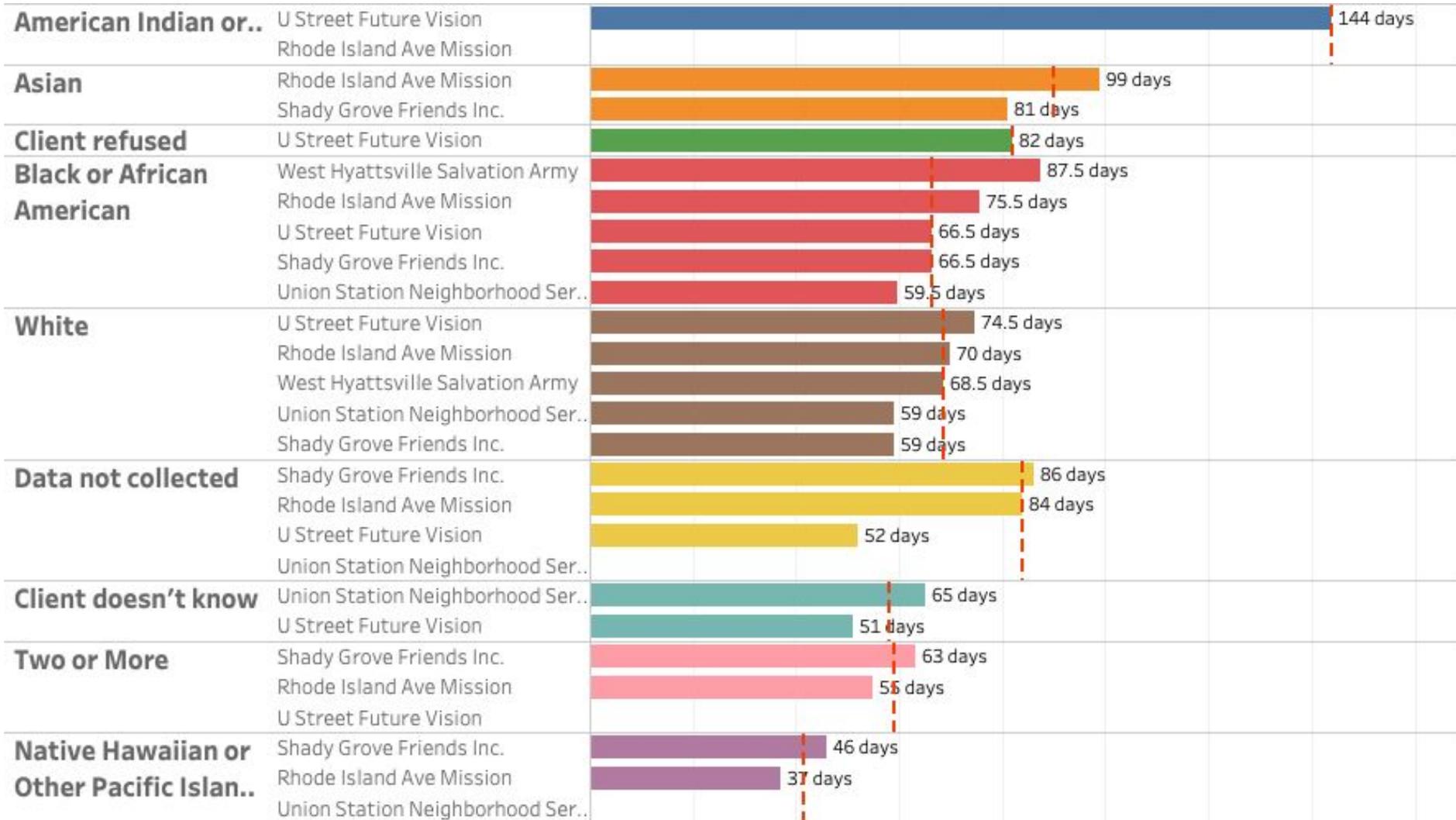
- Data is from CoC-level BNL
- LOT calculations ONLY includes clients who enrolled AND exited between January 1, 2021 and April 30, 2022
- [Click here](#) for interactive version with client-level drill-down
- Contact Lenny Pierce (lpierce@community.solutions) for any questions or follow-ups

Housed Client Count by Race



Median LOT to Housing by Race (Client Count)





Observations and Next Steps

- Asian clients seem to have longer LOTs
- Next steps
 - Following up with “no data” clients
 - Calculate LOT by housing phase and race

Did you feel engaged in a data conversation?

- What did you take away from the presentation?
- How do you feel as representatives of your agency?
- To what degree do you better understand your client data?

What was done differently?

Engaging Stakeholders with Exploratory Analysis

Invite Everyone in

- Don't assume everyone knows how to interpret the graph - explain what the graph is and how to read it but NOT the story it tells
- Set an expectation of feedback, interpretation, and interaction

Make Space for Others

- Don't immediately dive into your analysis - give others a chance to apply their own expert lens before offering your take
- Ask if this data aligns with others' experiences and perceptions

Highlight the Humanity

- Have the client-level data used to generate your analysis on-hand
- Plan time to dive into other analyses and data questions and explore them live, if possible

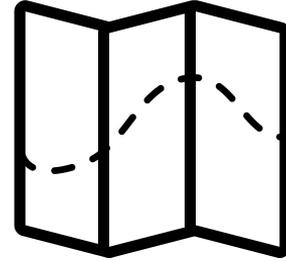
If you see your clients, you see yourself!

Audience Matters.



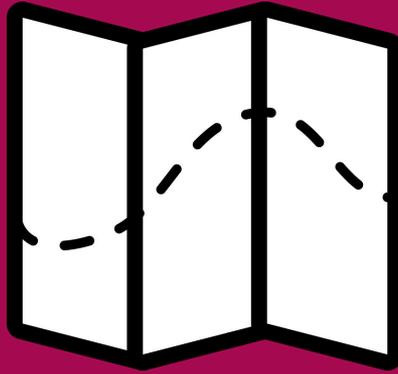
Exploratory

- Internal colleagues
- Focused on problem solving, engaging in open-ended conversations
- Audience interacts with and makes decisions from data



Explanatory

- It could be anyone!
- Focused on making decisions, influencing stakeholders, advocacy
- Audience is looking at the picture from a zoomed out lens.



Explanatory Data Communications

What is Explanatory Communications?



- Focus on the **BLUF**
(bottom-line-up-front)
- The key outputs are **insights**

“When we’re at the point of communicating our analysis to our audience, we really want to be in the explanatory space, meaning you have a specific thing you want to explain, **a specific story you want to tell.**”

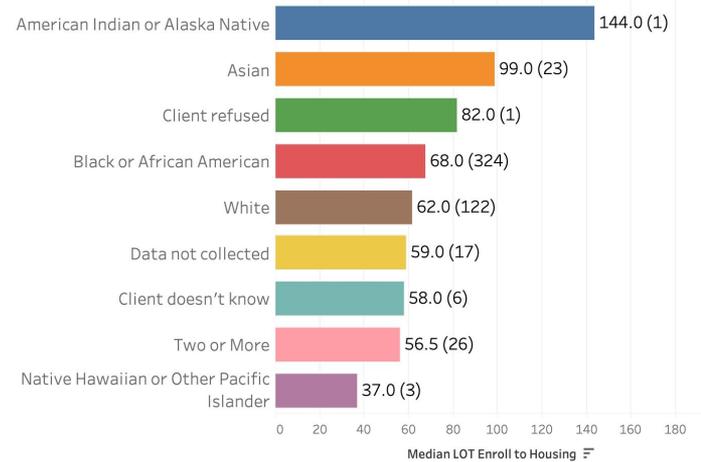
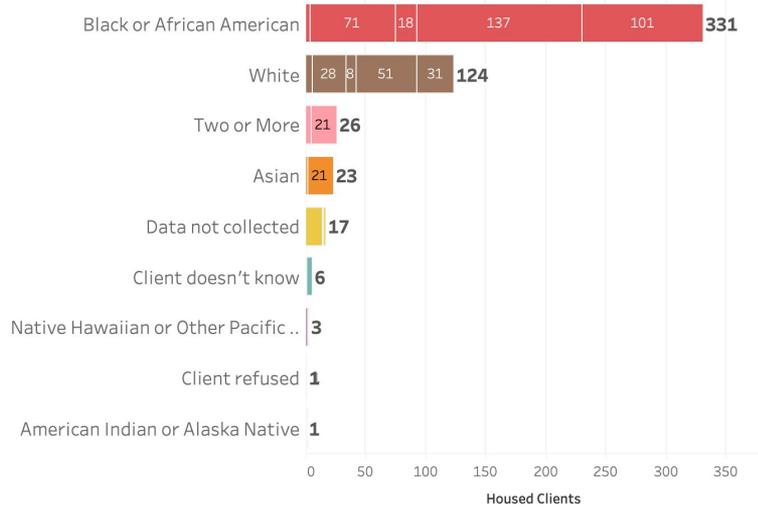
<https://www.redandyellow.co.za/blog/exploratory-vs-explanatory-data-analysis/>

Let's Continue the Example

After finishing a successful interagency meeting, you synthesize the group's observations and next steps. Your boss found the results meaningful and wants to share the takeaways at an upcoming city council meeting. They would like some visualizations to share for a short presentation and asks you to create some content.

Before Example

Same Visuals, Different Audience



Set Your Aim

What is your goal?



What does your audience care about?

What do you want people to learn?

What actions do you want people to take?

Clarify Your Story

What does the data mean and why does it matter?

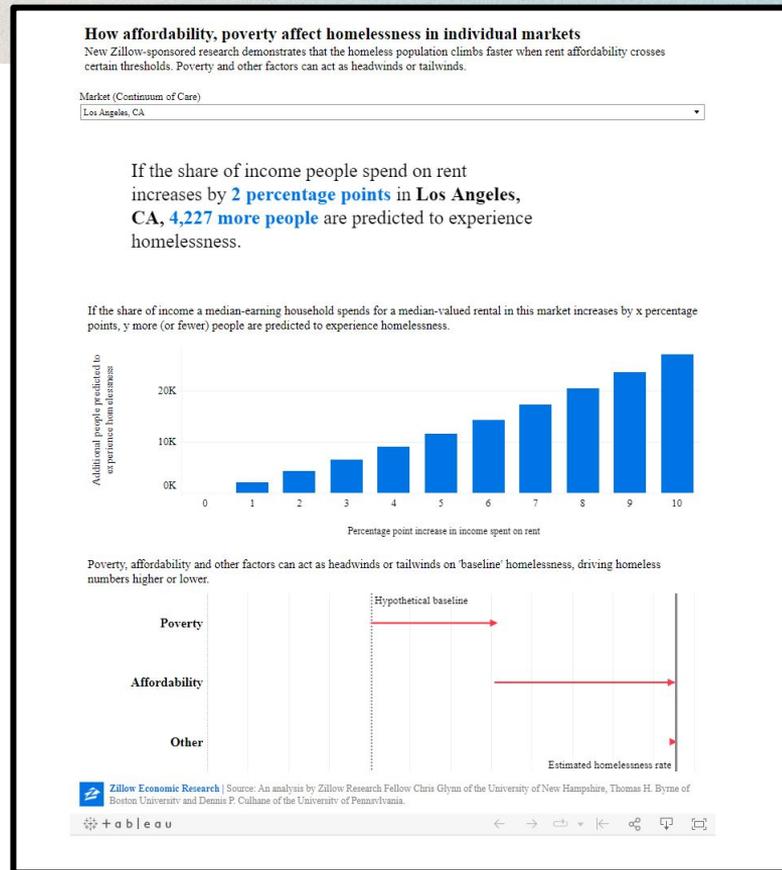
1. Explore the data

- What question do you want answered?
- What is standing out?
- Anything surprising?
- Revisit your question.

2. Outline the story

3. Iterate, Iterate, Iterate.

- What are your blind spots?
- The more feedback the better!



Time to Create Your Visuals!



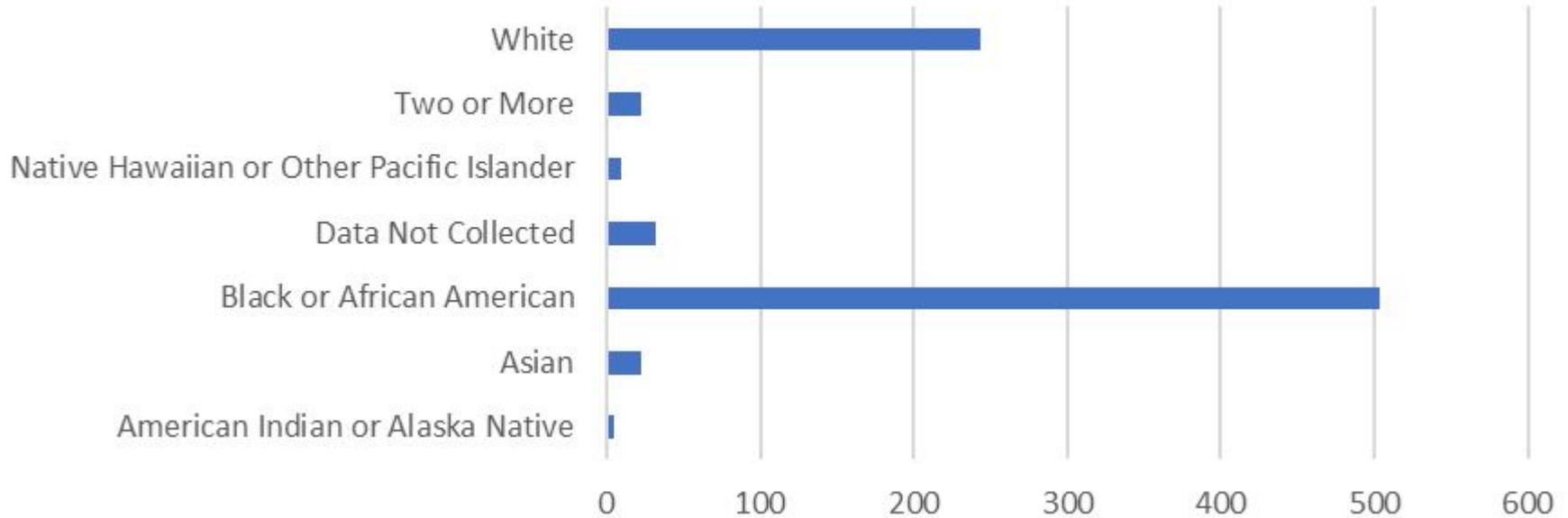
Six steps to transform standard graphs into eye-catching visuals.

1. Choose a graph
2. Order you data
3. Minimize grid and axis lines
4. Label intentionally
5. Use color
6. Create an active title

A graph your audience will remember.
Move from the "standard" Excel graph to

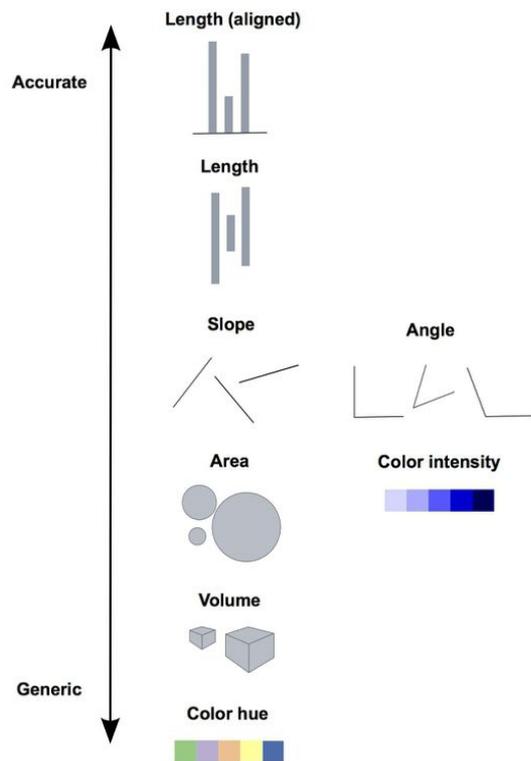
Most People Engaging with the Homeless Response System

Count of Clients by Race



American Indian or Alaska Native | 5

Step 1: Choose a Graph



Not all graphs are created equal.

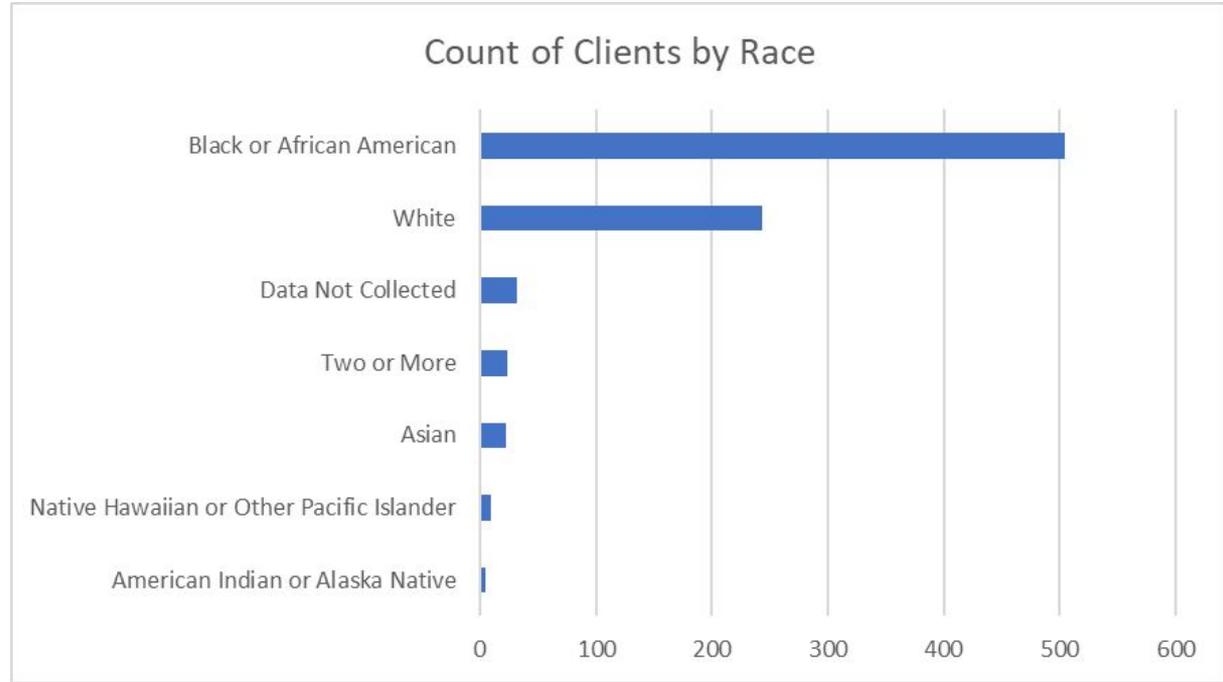
Intentionally choosing a graph type makes it easier for your audience understand your data.

There are many resources out there for choosing graphs:

- <https://www.data-to-viz.com/>
- <https://stephanieevergreen.com/handouts/>
- <https://depictdatastudio.com/charts/>

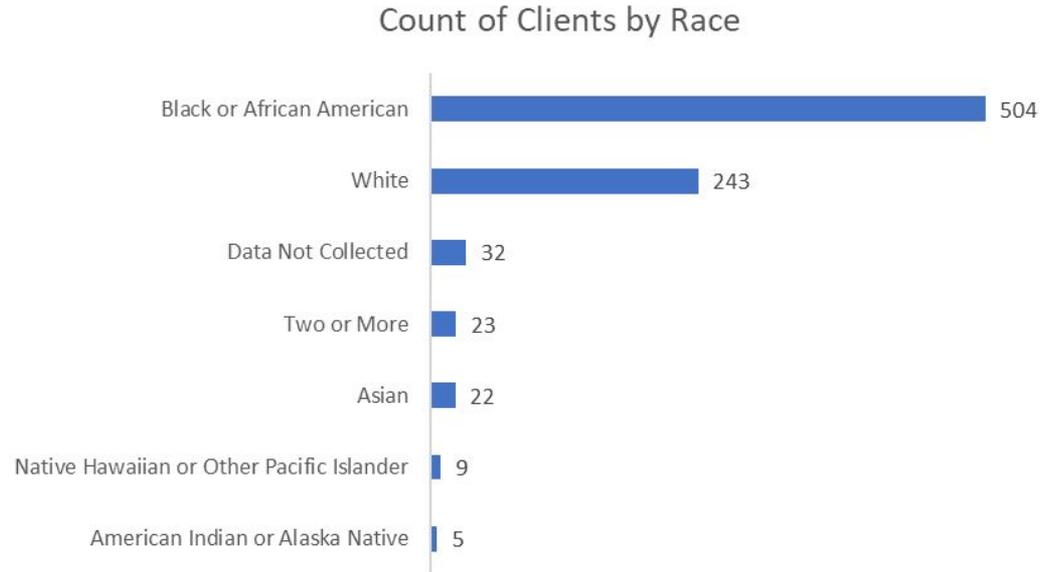
Step 2: Ordering

- Intentionally order your data!
- You can group by:
 - Frequency
 - Time Period
 - Alphabetically



Step 3: Minimize Gridlines and Axis Lines

- Delete or minimize lines.
 - This includes borders!
- Consider deleting your axis line and instead use numeric labels.
 - Even if you need axis lines, you can use data labels to annotate important points.



Step 4: Labels

1. Think about label placement

- Should be horizontal

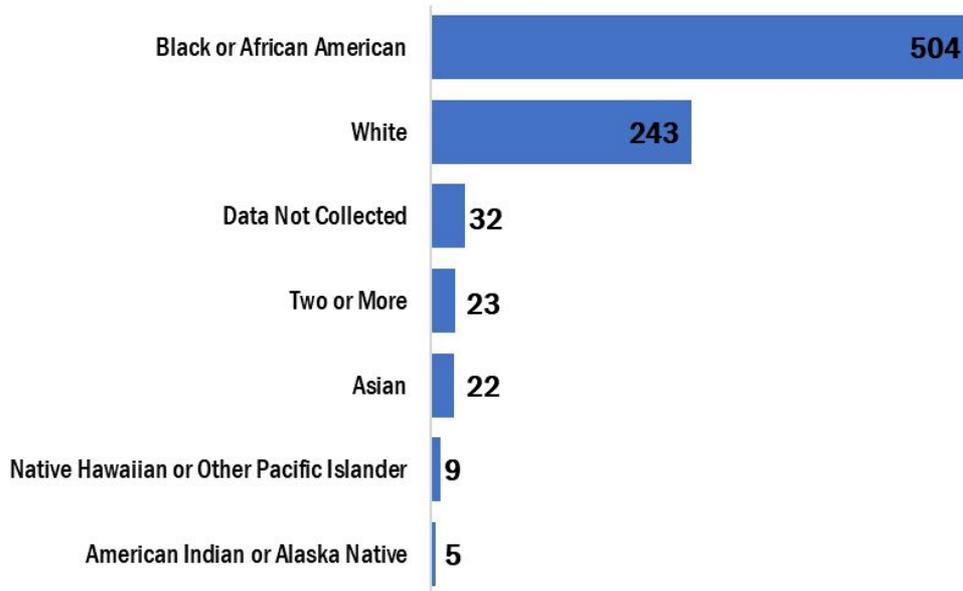
2. Minimize to the extent possible.

- Place legend at the top of the chart
- Use as few decimal points as possible, but be consistent
- Avoid redundancy

3. Some other tips

- Make your bars thicker
- Use a Narrow font
- Use a font size hierarchy

Count of Clients by Race



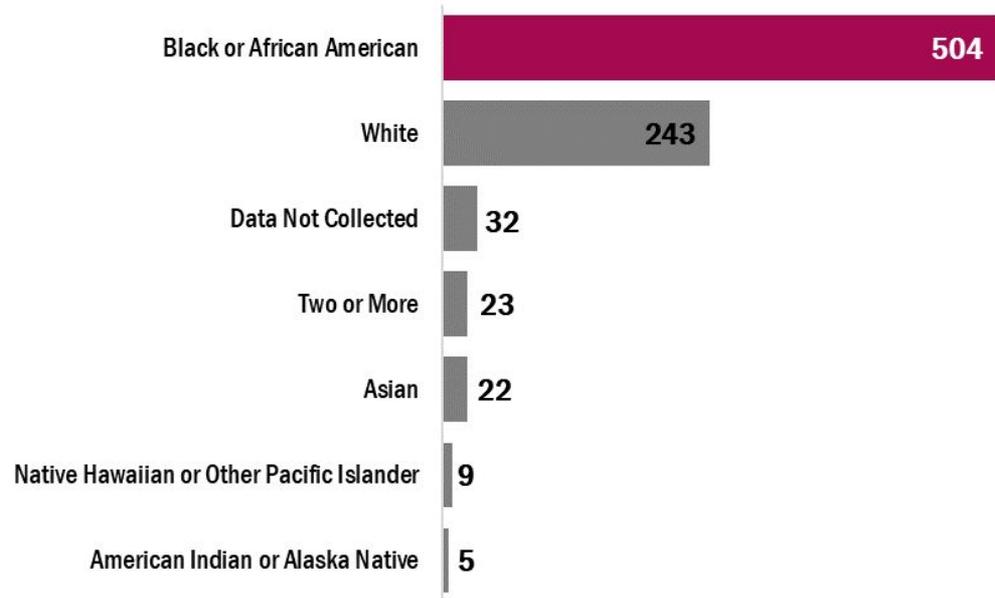
Step 6: Color

Color is an powerful way to set the tone and draw attention to a key point.

Choosing Color:

- When in doubt use branding colors.
- Consider greyscale and color blindness.
- Color sets tone! Be aware of values associated with colors. For example, **red** is often seen as negative and **green** is positive.

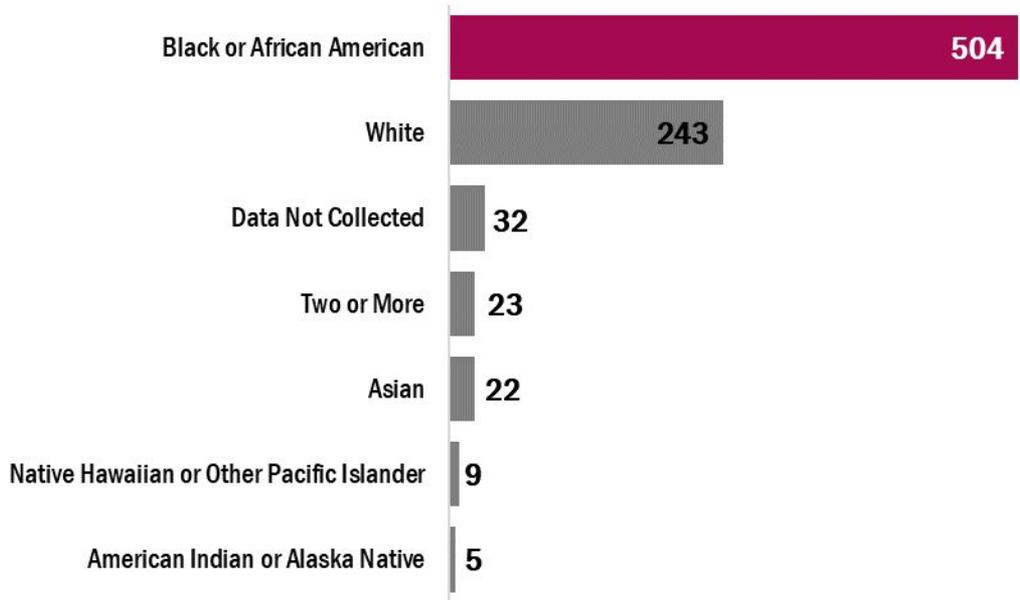
Count of Clients by Race



Step 7: Title

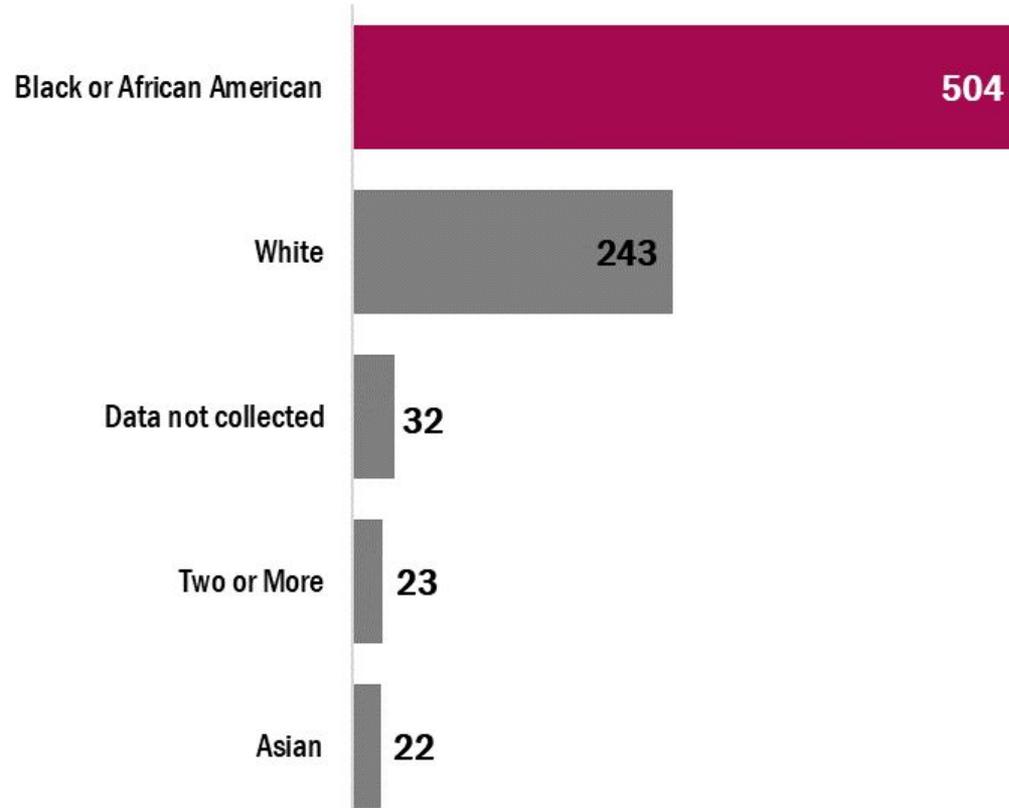
- Active titles are a great way to draw the audience in and give them the BLUF.
- Create an active title by describing your main point in 6 to 12 words.

Most People Engaging with the Homeless Response System Identify as **Black or African American.**



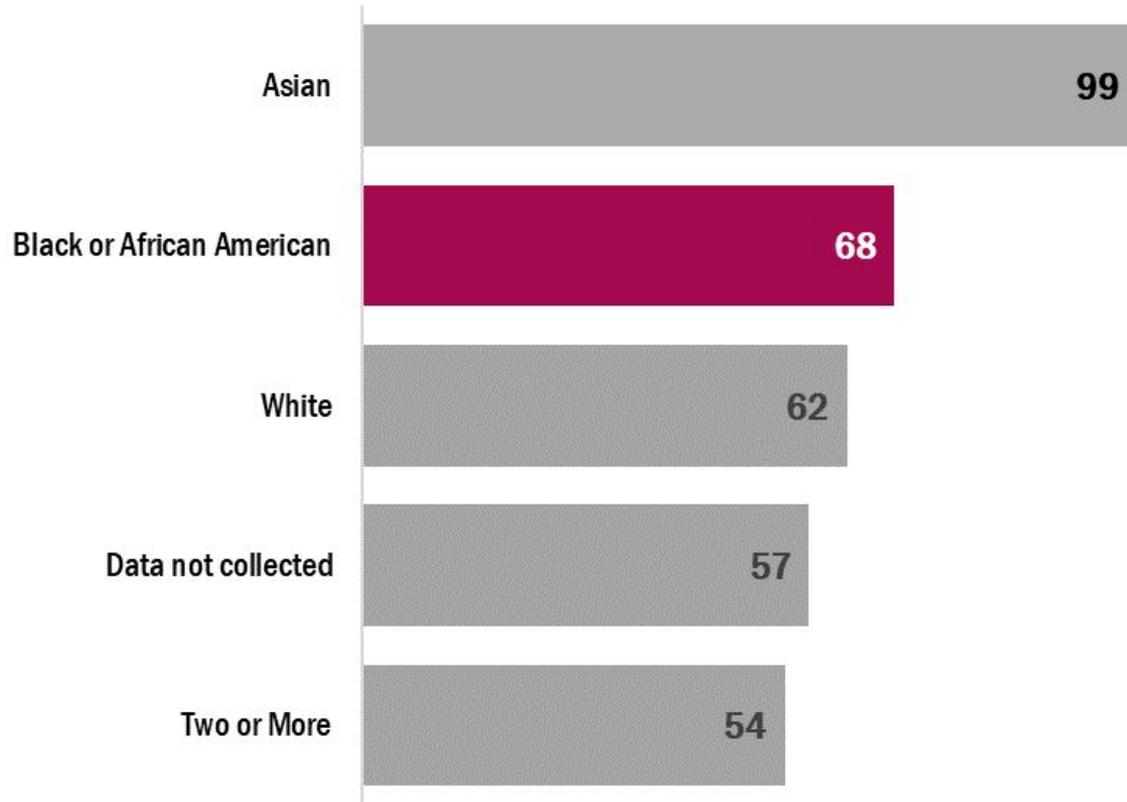
After Example

Most people engaging with the homeless response system identify as **Black or African American**.



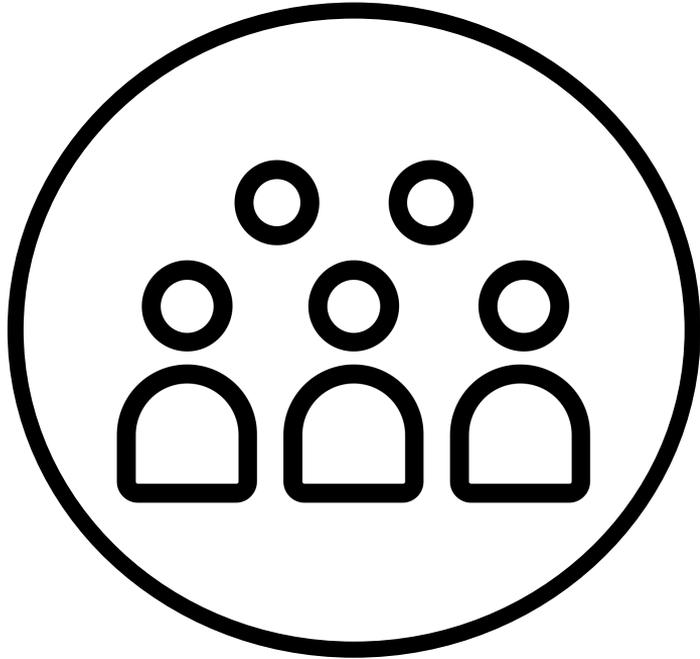
Note: Racial groups with less than 10 people were not included in the graph. That includes clients that identify as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (N=9) and American Indian and Alaskan Native (N=5).

Black and African American clients' median length of time (LOT) to homelessness is 9% longer than White clients.



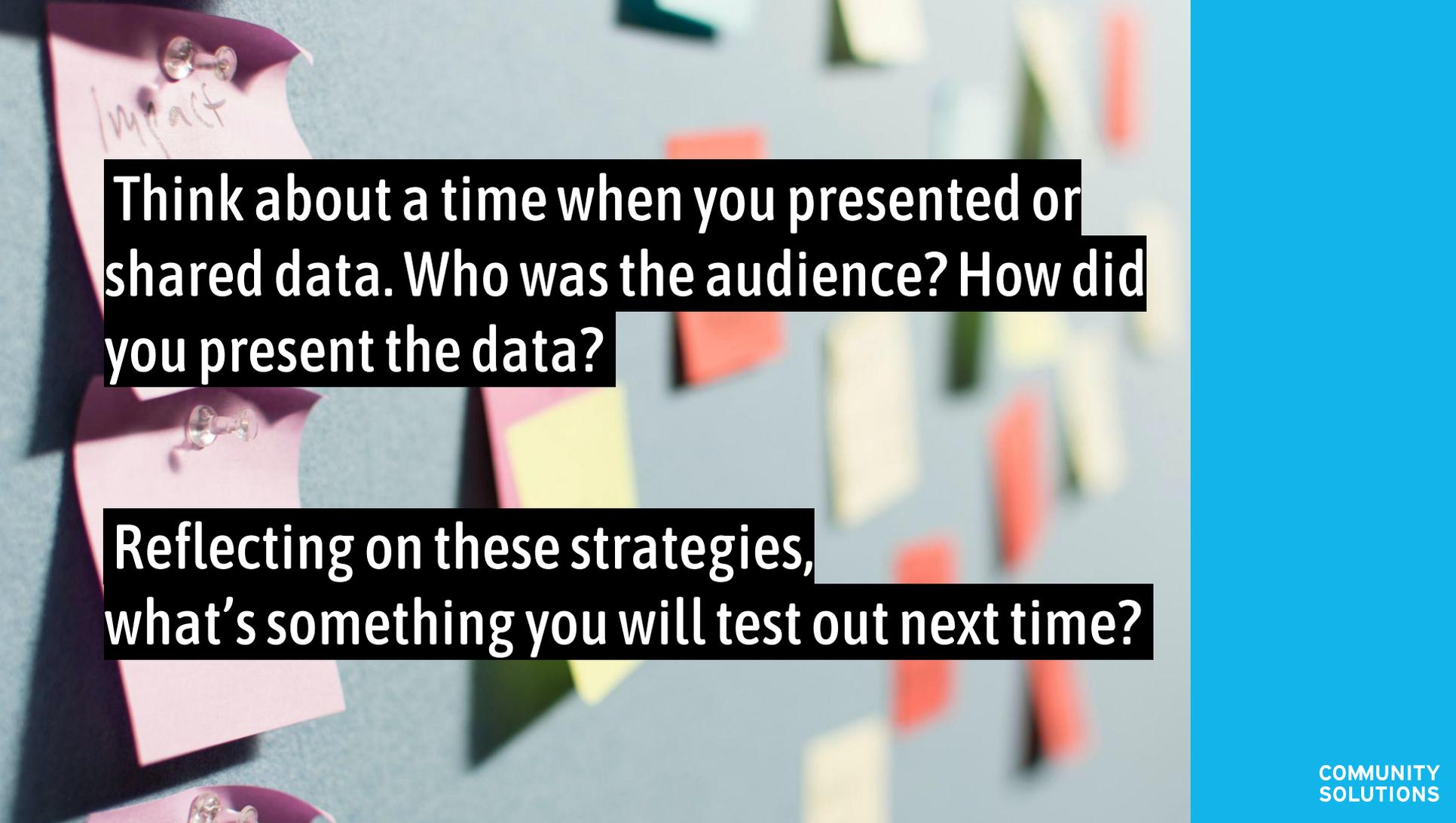
Note: Racial groups with less than 10 people were not included in the graph. That includes clients that identify as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (N=9) and American Indian and Alaskan Native (N=5).

Engaging Explanatory Audiences



Center the Audience by...

- **Setting your aim**
- **Clarifying your story**
 - **Explore, Outline, and Iterate!**
- **Presenting your BLUF with clear visuals**



Think about a time when you presented or shared data. Who was the audience? How did you present the data?

Reflecting on these strategies, what's something you will test out next time?



How Can We Work Together To Bring Data to Our Communities?

BfZ Data Coaching



Jane Moy

Data Coaching &
Performance Manager

Tia Lurie

Data Coaching &
Performance Advisor



Tori Morris

Data Coaching &
Performance Advisor



- community data infrastructure
- getting to "yes" on data scorecard questions
- understanding/clarifying BFZ reporting metrics
- thought partnership on data quality plans
- help translating HMIS to a BNL
- setting up/maintaining community BNL
- catching up on BFZ data reporting
- understanding data reliability
- troubleshooting data sets to correct data reliability
- applying a racial equity lens to using BNL data
- building out a BNL data set

And anything else data related to your community's BFZ journey!

BfZ Data Capacity-Building



Lenny Pierce

Data Training &
Capacity-Building
Advisor

- Foundational Tableau Workshops
 - 100% hands-on training
 - Focused on the fundamentals of visualizing your client data
 - Coming next action cycle, Summer 2022
- Community-Specific Data Workshops
 - Keep an ear out! Timing TBD
- Ad Hoc Data Visualization Support
 - Reach out via email
 - lpierce@community.solutions

THANK YOU! Session Rapid Feedback Survey

<http://s.alchemer.com/s3/Rapid-Feedback-May-2022>



Tori Morris

tmorris@community.solutions



Lenny Pierce

lpierce@community.solutions



Questions?



The background is a stylized illustration. At the top, a light blue sky contains a bright orange sun with radiating lines, partially obscured by a white cloud. Large, soft-edged white and light pink clouds are scattered across the sky. In the bottom right corner, there are stylized buildings in shades of blue and white, suggesting a cityscape. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

Thank You

**COMMUNITY
SOLUTIONS**