

MENTAL HEALTH IN BLACK YOUTH

Black youth are experiencing the fastest growing suicide rate compared to their peers. The suicide rate among Black youth ages 10-17 **increased by 144%**; from 1.54 per 100,000 in 2007 to 3.77 per 100,000 in 2020 (Johns Hopkins, 2023)

RACIAL TRAUMA

is the result of dealing with **repeated stress from racism and discrimination**. This stress creates an unsafe environment for youth leading to poor health outcomes.



20.1% of Black youth reported exposure to racial trauma often or very often in their lifetime (AAKOMA, 2022)

TYPES OF RACIAL STRESS

Structural

Laws, policies, and societal standards that are harmful and/or unfair to people based on race
Ex: Mass incarceration

Institutional

Discrimination by institutions through policies and practices
Ex: The wealth gap

Interpersonal

Placing discriminatory perceptions onto another individual
Ex: words and actions between individuals

Internalized

A person of color taking on negative societal beliefs
Ex: denying one's own culture or identity

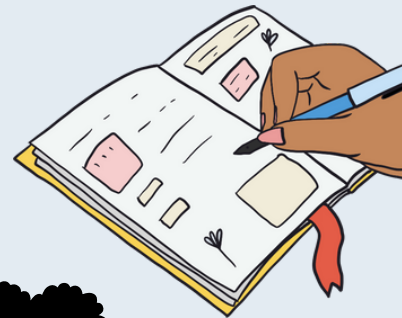
IMPACT OF RACIAL TRAUMA

Racial trauma can have negative psychological impacts which often resemble PTSD, anxiety, and depression:

- Fatigue
- Worrying and stress
- Low self-esteem
- Hypervigilance
- Trouble sleeping
- Recurring thoughts of a traumatic event
- Anger
- Pain (head, stomach, chest)

COPING WITH RACIAL TRAUMA

- **Talk to people who understand and validate your experiences**
- **Engage in activities you enjoy**
- **Give yourself a break and the space to heal**
- **Take a break from social media**
- **Write out your feelings**
- **Practice meditation, body relaxation, prayer, etc. to promote physical, spiritual, and mental well-being**
- **Know that your feelings are valid**



RESOURCES

Crisis Text Line - Text “HOME” to 741741 or visit crisistextline.org

Therapy for Black Girls - therapyforblackgirls.com

Black Mental Wellness - blackmentalwellness.com

National Queer & Trans Therapists of Color Network - nqttcn.com/en

C.A.R.E. Package for Racial Healing - drishametzger.com/care-package-for-racial-healing

State of Mental Health for youth and young adults of color 2022. AAKOMA Project. (2022, January 30). <https://aakomaproject.org/somhyoc2022/>

Still Ringing the alarm: An enduring call to action for Black Youth Suicide Prevention. Center for Gun Violence Solutions. (2023). <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/center-for-gun-violence-solutions/2023/still-ringing-the-alarm-an-enduring-call-to-action-for-black-youth-suicide-prevention#:~:text=Black%20youth%20have%20the%20fastest,3.77%20per%20100%2C000%20in%202020.>