Mental Health & COVID-19

How Can We Help Our Families and Youth of Color Cope?

Erikka Dzirasa, MD, MPH, DFAACAP
Impact of COVID-19 on Youth

2020 Top 10 Child Health Concerns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concerns</th>
<th>Among Black Parents</th>
<th>Among Hispanic Parents</th>
<th>Among White Parents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Racism</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. COVID</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Overuse of social media</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Unhealthy eating</td>
<td>68%</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Internet safety</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bullying/cyberbullying</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Povert</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Drinking or using drugs</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Unequal healthcare access</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Gun injuries</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>61%</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: C.S. Mott Children's Hospital National Poll on Children's Health, 2020
COVID-19 & RACISM
COVID-19 & RACISM
COVID-19 & RACISM

Percent of respondents who reported the following had happened because of the COVID-19 pandemic

- Been unable to pay for basic necessities like food, heat, or rent
- Used up all or most of their savings*
- Borrowed money or taken out a loan
- Suffered from any economic consequence**

Adjusted for age, other racial groups are this many times more likely to have died of COVID-19 than White Americans

*Reflects cumulative mortality rates calculated through March 2, 2021.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indigenous</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Burden of COVID-19

- Social isolation
- Zoom fatigue
- Changes in routine
- Anticipatory anxiety
- Loss/Grief
- Parental stress
- Health disparities

- Financial
- Food insecurity
- Lack of supervision
- Domestic violence
- Emotional/physical abuse
- Substance use
Our Youth Are at Risk

- Development:
  - Emotional
  - Social
  - Cognitive
  - Physical
- Genetics
- Prenatal factors
- Family relationships
- Parental depression/mental health problems
- Stressful life events
- Lack of parental care
- Trauma
Types of Mental Health Conditions

- Mood Disorders
- Anxiety disorders
- Eating Disorders
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- Substance Use Disorders
- Behavioral Disorders/ADHD
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Learning difficulties
Common Warning Signs:

- Sadness or apathy
- Sensitivity/emotional reactivity
- Temper Tantrums
- Irritability/Aggression
- Anxiety
- Lack of energy/motivation
- Social isolation
- Negative thinking/hopelessness/shame/guilt
- Poor attention/concentration, changes in grades
- Changes in appetite
- Insomnia/Hypersomnia
- Suicidal thoughts/Self-injurious behaviors
What Do I Say or Do If I Suspect My Child Is Suffering From Mental Illness?
What Do I Say or Do If I Suspect My Child Is Suffering From Mental Illness?

- Recognize symptoms early
- Create a welcoming and safe environment
- Ask!
- Listen without judgment
- Seek resources
- Break stigma
- Have hope
Barriers to Treatment

Black youth are less likely to:

- receive psychiatric diagnosis
- receive outpatient services
- complete treatment
- receive culturally informed care
Barriers to Treatment

- Fear
- Shame
- Stigma
- Misdiagnosis
- Mistrust
- Religion/Spirituality

- Misunderstanding
- Racism
- Resources
- Transportation
- Finances
- Bias
Barriers to Treatment

• Black physicians are 5x more likely to treat Black patients

• Black physicians viewed as “more participatory”

• Blacks represent only 2% of psychiatrists, 2% of psychologists, and 4% of social workers
Promoting Parent Mental Wellness
Put Your Oxygen On First!!

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Care
- Self-Disclosure
- Set the Example!
Resources

- NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness
- Therapy for Black Girls
- Psychology Today
- LOVE LAND Foundation
- AAKOMA
- Lawrence Henson Foundation
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