

Mental Health Matters

February 2021



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We are highlighting Black and African American contributions to the mental health movement because they are oftentimes overlooked. Without recognizing the lack of representation of Black and African American people in the mental health movement, we do a disservice and continue to inflict harm.

Learning about the history of systemic racism during Black History Month* - and all year - in the mental health system and movement and how it harms Black communities in the US and around the world is key for creating a mentally healthier world.

Below is a non-exhaustive list of Black and African American mental health resources ([CLICK EACH LINK TO LEARN MORE](#))

Black Mental Health History

- [Black Pioneers in Mental Health](#)
-Black Americans' contributions to the field of mental health have been long overlooked



- [A Century of Stigma For Black America and Mental Health](#)
- The podcast *HISTORY This Week* explores what happened in 1840 as U.S. Marshals went door to door conducting the sixth-ever census in the United States. That Marked the first time the U.S. government included a question about mental health. The results were tragic and long lasting...

Statistics And Information Related to Mental Health for Black and African American Communities

- [Racial Trauma](#)
-Known as race-based traumatic stress (RBTS), refers to the mental and emotional injury caused by encounters with racial bias and ethnic discrimination, racism, and hate crimes
- [Racism And Mental Health](#)
-People of color and all those whose lives have been marginalized by those in power experience life differently from those whose lives have not been devalued. They experience overt racism and bigotry far too often, which leads to a mental health burden that is deeper than what others may face.

Black Voices On Mental Health

- [Honoring Black History While Honoring Mental Health](#)
-MHA understands that racism undermines mental health. Therefore, we are committed to anti-racism in all that we do [#mentalillnessfeelslike](#)
- [Road To Wellness: An African American Female's Journey](#)
-In 2012, Lauren Carson founded Black Girls Smile Inc. based on her personal mental health journey's struggle to find racial sensitive treatment and support.



Need Mental Health Support?

OPTUM EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) OFFERS **FREE CONFIDENTIAL HELP**

Call toll-free **888-444-8624** any time

OR

Go to www.liveandworkwell.com and browse as a guest using code **CSEBO**

More Black History Month Resources

[\(Click Link\)](#)

www.blackpast.org

[National Museum of African American History And Culture](#)

[African American History Month](#)

[Smithsonian Education: Black History Month](#)

[National Park Service: African American Heritage](#)

[BIPOC Communities and COVID-19](#)

www.mhanational.org



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In case of an Emergency:

- 911 For Immediate Support
- Ventura County Crisis Team (866) 998-2243 – (24 hours)

Resources for Teens

Interface Youth Outreach Line

PDF Flyer: <https://www.icfs.org/wp-content/uploads/YS-Brochure-FINAL-1.2018.pdf>

Phone: (805) 469-5882

Teen Line

Website:
www.teenlineonline.org

Phone: (800) 852-8336

Teen Mental Health

Website: <http://teenmentalhealth.org/>

Helping Teens Navigate Relationships and Technology During COVID-19

The continual uncertainty and stress caused by COVID-19 is impacting families in many ways. Social distancing can be especially challenging for teenagers, who may feel isolated from classmates, friends and romantic partners.

We know that teens used technology and social media to stay connected long before the pandemic. However, they may have difficulty coping with the reality of a new normal – seeing and chatting with peers through a screen may be the only form of connection available, and for an unknown amount of time.

Since technology is now playing an even larger role in our daily lives, we want to focus on how adults can help teens maintain healthy connections with their friends and romantic partners.

Honor the Need for Peer Connection

Many teens have a significant sense of loss due to interrupted high school experiences. There is an increase in anxiety and a decrease in connection so a teen may need screen time with friends outside of their school hours. Many adults can relate; a Zoom call for work feels very different from a FaceTime chat with friends. Try to focus on the quality of their screen time to determine if they are scrolling aimlessly and comparing themselves to filtered images, or laughing on a video chat with close friends.

Approach Teens With Curiosity

Before you sit down to chat with the teen in your life, consider how you are modeling digital habits with your devices as well as how you typically respond to a teen's (or their friends') habits. Being aware of your values around technology can help you to approach a teen with curiosity instead of judgment. For example, you could ask why technology is important to them or what one app does that another app does not do. You could even make a silly singing or dancing video with them!

Partner Together to Create a Family Media Agreement

Family media agreements provide a way to talk through digital boundaries. A teen can gain skills for self-regulation by learning how to manage their screen time with digital well-being tools on their devices. Creating family codewords can help teens manage peer pressure. For example, they may ask permission to do something on a FaceTime call with friends, but if they include the codeword, they actually want you to turn down their request.

Educate Teens (and Yourself) About Digital Dating Abuse

Supportive adults are often concerned about "stranger danger" but may not think about risks from a dating partner. Digital dating abuse is defined as the use of technology and social media to bully, harass, stalk or intimidate a current or former partner. These behaviors can include unwanted or excessive texting, demands for passwords, harassment through social media and pressure to send or receive unwanted sexual photos or messages.

Full article can be found at <https://www.nationwidechildrens.org/family-resources-education/700childrens/2021/02/helping-teens-navigate-relationships-technology-during-covid-19>