Promotion of Emotional Well-Being and Mental Health among Youth

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- Community-University research partnership
- Implemented the Communities that Care Prevention System
  - Coalition part of a larger project to promote the well-being and health of African American men
  - Emotional well-being and mental health selected as 1 of 4 health promotion goals
- Today’s Discussion: How do family and community dynamics impact the coping strategies, mental health, and academic engagement of youth?
Communities Invested in Healthy Life Trajectories of Our Youth: Acknowledgements

- University of Minnesota Medical School Program in Health Disparities Research
  - National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities (U54MD008620)
    - Center for Healthy African American Men through Partnerships (CHAAMPS)
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  - Hazel Park Area Coalition
    - Capetra J. Parker, MPH
    - Elijah F. Jeffries, BS
    - Dr. Delores Henderson, Principal (retired)
      Hazel Park Preparatory Academy
    - Mr. Andrew Jones, Branch Director
      East Side Boys & Girls Club
  - Center for Communities that Care
    - Blair L. Brooke-Weiss, MSPH
    - Kevin P. Haggerty, PhD

https://chaamps.com/
https://www.communitiesthatcare.net/
Question 1: Environmental Correlates of Coping

Are youths’ relationships with their caregivers and stressor exposure associated with their approaches to coping?

**Relationship with Caregiver**
- Perceived Support
- Perceived Conflict

**Stressor Exposure**
- Uncontrollable Life Events
- Violence Exposure

**Positive Coping Approaches**
- Behavioral /Problem-Focused
- Cognitive /Emotion-Focused
- Family Support

**Negative Coping Approaches**
- Avoidance
- Anger
- Helplessness

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
Question 2: Behavioral Correlates of Coping

Are youths’ approaches to coping associated with their externalizing symptoms, internalizing symptoms, and academic investment?

Positive Coping Approaches
- Behavioral /Problem-Focused
- Cognitive /Emotion-Focused
- Family Support

Negative Coping Approaches
- Avoidance
- Anger
- Helplessness

Externalizing Symptoms
Internalizing Symptoms
Academic Investment

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
Question 3: Coping as a Potential Mediator of Associations

Do youths’ approaches to coping explain associations between family and community factors and youths’ externalizing symptoms, internalizing symptoms, and academic investment?

- Positive Coping Approaches
  - Behavioral / Problem-Focused
  - Cognitive / Emotion-Focused
  - Family Support

- Negative Coping Approaches
  - Avoidance
  - Anger
  - Helplessness

- Relationship with Caregiver
  - Perceived Support
  - Perceived Conflict

- Stressor Exposure
  - Uncontrollable Life Events
  - Violence Exposure

- Externalizing Symptoms
- Internalizing Symptoms
- Academic Investment

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
Question 3: Perceived Support from Caregiver & Youths’ Coping

Perceived support from caregiver influences youths’ externalizing symptoms, internalizing symptoms, and academic investment through coping.

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
Question 3: Perceived Conflict with Caregiver & Youths’ Coping

Perceived conflict with caregiver influences youths’ externalizing symptoms, internalizing symptoms, and academic investment through coping.

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
Question 3: Exposure to Violence & Youths’ Coping

Violence exposure influences youths’ externalizing symptoms and academic investment through coping.

Brady, Jeffries, & Winston III (In Preparation)
African American Caregivers' Resources for Support: Implications for Children's Perceived Support from their Caregiver

- Caregivers’ Emotional Attachment to Others
- Children’s Perceived Emotional Support from Caregiver
- Caregivers’ Perceived Instrumental Support from Caregiver
- Caregivers’ Reassurance of Worth by Others
- Caregivers’ Guidance by Others
- Caregivers’ Reliable Help from Others
- Caregivers’ Social Integration with Others
- Caregivers’ Opportunity to Nurture Others

Kenigsberg, Winston III, Gibson, & Brady (2016)
Race-related Stressors and Resources for Resilience: Associations with Emotional Health and Behavioral Health among African American Youth

- African American youth in the United States grow up in a society with a long, pervasive and living history of interpersonal and institutional racism
  - Civil rights
  - Education
  - Housing
  - Employment
  - Juvenile and criminal justice systems

Austin, Jeffries, Winston III, & Brady (Under Review)
The Ideal:
Community members are a resource for support and resilience
Ferguson, Missouri – August, 2014 in the aftermath of police shooting of Michael Brown

Photo by Scott Olson/Getty Image
Minneapolis, Minnesota –
4th Precinct protest over shooting of Jamar Clark on November 15, 2015

https://www.rt.com/usa/322654-police-chemicals-protesters-clark/
Minneapolis, Minnesota –
4th Precinct protest over shooting of Jamar Clark on November 15, 2015

We must love each other and support each other.

Minneapolis, Minnesota – City Hall Protest, November, 2015

http://www.citypages.com/arts/the-art-of-black-lives-matter-7878093
Aftermath of police shooting of Philando Castile on July 6, 2016

https://www.npr.org/tags/485432381/philando-castile
Resource for Resilience: Racial-Ethnic Connectedness Protects African American Youth from Racism-Related Emotional Problems

Figure 1. Emotional Problems by Awareness of Racism and Racial-Ethnic Connectedness

Austin, Jeffries, Winston III, & Brady (Under Review)
Resource for Resilience: “Embedded Achievement” Protects African American Youth from Racism-Related Conduct Problems

Figure 2. Conduct Problems by Experiences of Racism and Perceptions of Embedded Achievement

Austin, Jeffries, Winston III, & Brady (Under Review)
Implications for Prevention

• **Primary and secondary prevention, as well as treatment**
  - Universal prevention efforts
    • Ability to recognize stressors, adaptive versus maladaptive form of coping, and difficulty in coping
    • Ability to seek and accept support from others
    • Positive racial-ethnic identity formation among youth of color

• **Focus on social ecology, as well as individuals**
  - Develop policies and practices that create healthy communities for all
    • Reduce structural barriers to opportunity, including interpersonal and institutional forms of racism
  - Provide support for caregivers and families
    • Enhances the success of prevention efforts
    • Enhances the success of treatment efforts
Questions & Discussion

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