Increasing Resilience and Family Support

Module 4 Script

Slide 1: Module 4: Increasing resilience and family support for young people with mental health conditions.

Welcome to Module 4 of our Promoting Positive Pathways to Adulthood training series, which is being brought to you by the Research and Training Center for Pathways to Positive Futures at Portland State University.

We have created ten hour-long modules based on a set of core competencies developed by the Pathways Transition Training Collaborative, which is an advisory committee of young adults, family members, practitioners and researchers.

We have designed these modules to be interactive, so please work through the questions and exercises that you will encounter throughout each module. At the conclusion of each slide, the marker labeled "onward" will be flashing. Please click on the marker "onward" to advance to the next slide.

Slide 2: Training Series Modules

The ten modules in our series focus on:

1. Partnering with youth and young adults
2. Promoting recovery
3. Increasing cultural awareness and building community support
4. Fostering resilience and family supports
5. Promoting cross-cultural and intergenerational relationships
6. Providing individualized and developmentally appropriate services
7. Supporting young people's healthy relationships
8. Planning partnerships with providers of other services and collaborating to bridge service gaps
9. Promoting support from family, peers, and mentors
10. Using evidence-supported practices and individualizing interventions

Although the modules are designed to be completed in this sequence, each can stand alone as an in- service training experience. After you work through a module, you'll be given a short quiz and if you pass it successfully, you'll receive a certificate of completion that you can use as a record of this continuing education experience.

We have designed these modules to be interactive, so please work through the questions and exercises that you will encounter throughout each module.

Slide 3: Module 4: Increasing Resilience and Family Support for Young People with Mental Health Conditions

Module 4 focuses on increasing resilience and family support for young people with mental health conditions. We will emphasize working with African American youth, young adults, and their families.

Slide 4: Module 4 Competencies

Module 4 is part of a three-module group within our series which focuses on meeting the needs of young people with serious mental health conditions who are members of communities that are often marginalized. In Module 4, we will address two key competencies:

- Meeting the needs of young people from cultural groups that are marginalized and their families, and
- Promoting support for young people from family, peers and mentors.

In this module, we will focus on skills for working with African American youth and young adults and their families.

Slide 5: Module 4: Five Sections

Building upon the content of our first module on meeting the needs of youth who are often marginalized, we will address the following topics:

1. Resilience, racial identity, and racial socialization in African American communities.
2. The diversity and mental health disparities in the African American community.
3. Addressing discrimination, oppression, and trauma.
4. Skills for increasing resilience, and
5. Building support for African American young people and their families.

While there are many young people whose parents immigrated or came as refugees from Africa or who have Afro-Caribbean ancestry, in this module, we will focus on meeting the needs of African American youth and young adults whose ancestors were brought to the U.S. as slaves and who endured decades of legal discrimination and oppression, with significant consequences for the health and well-being of their families and communities.

Slide 6: 4.1 Resilience, Racial Identity, and Racial Socialization in African-American Communities

In the first section, we will examine resilience, risks, and protective factors in African American communities, along with the importance of racial identity and racial socialization for fostering resilience in African American young people.

Slide 7: What is resilience?

Resilience is the process of, capacity for, and outcomes of successful adaptation of people despite exposure to life events and conditions which threaten their well-being (Masten, Monn, & Supkoff,

2011; Ungar, 2018). Young people are resilient if they:

- Have more favorable outcomes than expected even though they belong to groups exposed to high levels of risk; in other words they've "overcome the odds."
- Show positive adaptation despite challenges; that is "sustained competence under stress."
- Are able to navigate to sources of support and form ongoing relationships.
- And finally, recover well from trauma.

Youth resilience is fostered through families, supportive groups, adult mentors, and communities that mitigate risks that young people encounter in their daily lives through providing support and an environment that builds the capacity of young people through protective factors that bring about positive outcomes (Ungar, 2018).

Slide 8: Development is affected by risk factors
Risk factors are associated with higher likelihood of undesirable outcomes for a specific group. Sroufe, Egeland, Carlson & Collins, 2005). Risks include: poverty, low maternal education, low socioeconomic status, low birth weight, family instability, mental illness in a parent, exposure to violence, and parental substance abuse (Domitrovich et al., 2017; Eisman et al., 2015; Walker et al., 2011). While these types of risks can affect youth from all ethnic and racial groups, risks affecting youth of color, including African American young people can also include exposure to racism and other types of discrimination, which affect health and other types of outcomes (Assari et al., 2018; Brandolo et al, 2009).

We want to emphasize that groups are at risk, not individuals. Because a young person is a member of a group with high risks, don't assume that they are at a high level of risk.

Slide 9: Protective factors improve outcomes
Protective factors are aspects of a young persons' life associated with positive outcomes in the presence of stressors. Protective factors:

- Appear to lessen psychological distress, and
- Produce turning points in people's lives, in which their life paths change positively.

Examples of protective factors include personal characteristics such as a positive cultural identity and an optimistic attitude; family characteristics such as warm and supportive family relationships; and community factors such as a safe neighborhood and a high level of community support and connectedness between members of the community (Robinson et al, 2011; Wallace et al., 2018).

Coping skills of African American young people can be promoted through strengthening their awareness of their ethnic identity and connection with groups that promote their achievement (Wallace et al. 2018). These protective cultural buffers can overcome such challenges as living in a community affected by violence, or growing up in circumstances where their families are struggling financially and affected by hardships (Williams et al., 2014).

Slide 10: Resilience in cultural context
Resilience researcher Michael Ungar points to the importance of the social environment surrounding young people. In the context of exposure to significant adversity, resilience is both the capacity of individuals to **navigate** their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being, and of groups to collectively **negotiate** for these resources to be provided and experienced in culturally meaningful ways (Ungar, 2008, p. 225). Ungar believes that — "Processes of positive growth under stress are both culturally and temporally (and therefore historically) embedded" (Ungar, 2011, p. 8). Culture is a productive force for psychosocial health (Ungar, 2018).

In this module we are considering both the risks and protective factors affecting members of the African American community.

Next you will hear from Dr. Joy DeGruy, a nationally and internationally renowned researcher and service provider with over 20 years of experience working with individuals and families from diverse backgrounds. Dr. DeGruy talks about the necessity of culturally specific services and the resilience that the African American Community has shown despite great adversity.

Slide 11: Resilience of the African American Community [Video Clip]
Dr. Joy DeGruy: Very often when people [providers] think of culturally-specific, they think of, unfortunately, diversity stuff. Let's just recognize the food they eat, the clothes they wear. Sort of like a fruit and festival kind of perspective of it. There's a wonderful book that's called *The Warmth of Other Suns* by Isabel Wilkerson and she talks about how African American families have maintained themselves, pre- and post-slavery. That of all the people in the United States that have migrated, one of the largest and under spoken of migrations was six million people leaving the South seeking asylum– let's be clear– in the only country that they knew.

Most people seek asylum elsewhere. People were seeking asylum from Jim Crow and so six million– without a leader– came. We have to take a look at how did those families stay together, what did it mean for them, what are the core values that bind these families and instead of making a general assumption of dysfunction.

Without knowledge of what Cleveland was going to look like, they went to Cleveland and California and they went north to Portland. What did they find in Portland? Exclusionary laws and exclusionary acts. That if you didn't leave they would beat you [with] 30 stripes on the back and this is 1926. What we're talking about is a history that is intricately woven into adaptation and behavior and survival. And so we cannot ignore those things that these families have held, that we've survived with.

Slide 12: Risks affecting African American youth
As Dr. DeGruy noted, African American communities and families have been broken up again and again because of discriminatory and harmful effects of deliberate social policies that continue to affect their communities profoundly even now. This results in African American youth encountering many environments and situations that place them at risk for mental health difficulties, such as depression.

A primary risk factor is **racial discrimination**, which may be experienced at the individual level, in organizations or institutions, and in terms of societal practices (Tobler et al, 2013).

Racism has resulted in residential segregation that may limit socioeconomic opportunities and mobility, and in major disruptions of functioning communities.

- Many African American neighborhoods have fewer economic resources than White neighborhoods, resulting in unemployment, fewer social resources, and poorer quality housing and schools.
- Young people in economically depressed neighborhoods may experience despair and come together, leading to violence and crime, although high rates of justice system involvement may also be a result of over-policing and discriminatory police treatment.
- Because of shifts in schools and communities toward punishment rather than rehabilitation of youth growing up in difficult circumstances who have behavioral difficulties, African American young people may get caught up in the "**school-to-prison pipeline**" through which they experience school exclusion and punishment, involvement in the juvenile justice system, and eventually arrest and imprisonment (Mallett, 2017).
- Additionally, individuals and families have faced **serial forced displacement,** a process of repetitive, coercive upheaval of groups (Fullilove, & Wallace, 2011). Individuals and families have been forced to move through urban renewal, foreclosure, and widespread gentrification that has broken up functioning communities that provided support to the African Americans living in cities.

Slide 13: Cultural protective factors
Cultural values revolve around collective structures, especially the family, as transmitter of values and traditions and the primary source of **relationships** and mutual practical and financial assistance. A key value in the African American community is the importance of personal relationships.

Culturally based protective factors have three major characteristics:

- The primary importance of relationships (DeGruy Leary et al., 2005)
- A strong sense of racial identity and racial pride, and of belonging to a valued community (Wallace et al., 2018), and
- Extended family and kinship network (Hamilton, 2007).

Next we hear from Dr. DeGruy about the primary importance of forming strong and authentic relationships with young people, and from Rena Allen who was working as a professional mentor of African American young women at Friends of the Children who focuses on the importance of establishing relationships with young people.

Slide 14: The Importance of Relationships [Video Clip]
Joy DeGruy: We are trained as practitioners and professionals to develop a basic rapport and *rapport is not relationship*. Given the fact that there is such historical mistrust of systems, and

culturally there are some real divides there, it's not enough for you to sit in a room and say "I'm a professional, and I'm going to ask you to undress yourself right here in front of me, the stranger."

Presumably, I'm the one with the problem, so does that mean you're undefeated? That's my first question because if you're the one sitting in that chair thinking you're undefeated, I'm not asking you to bleed on me. Don't dare sit here and pretend as though *you* are perfect. There is a level of humanity that has to show up, a level of vulnerability if you will.

Truly, *authenticity* is what we're talking about here. But again, we create these kinds of artificial things like, "Okay if I follow the list, I ask these questions, this is what I do." If you don't have a relationship with these young people, if you don't have a relationship, you have nothing. I don't care how many clinical tools you think you have, they are going to fall on deaf ears because I'm looking at you and you want me to show you mine, and I want to see yours as well. Which means I really need to see your humanity, I need to see that piece of you that is as real as the pieces of me that you want me to express and share.

Rena Allen: My suggestion for any of the service providers that will be working with any youth of color is to get to know them. As I say, the book knowledge is great; I have that as well. Our Sociology classes, our Psychology classes, and all of those classes are great, but to get to know the youth, get to know them and find out where they come from, and not clump them all in one area. Don't stereotype them, that sort of thing. Get to *know* them.

Slide 15: Racial identity and resilience
Racial identity refers to the degree to which a person incorporates a particular race into self-definitions (Sellers et al., 1998; Wallace et al, 2018).

Developing a strong and positive African American identity can counteract some of the negative effects of racial discrimination on young people, and lead to higher self-esteem, better school performance, and less involvement with violence. (Franklin-Jackson & Carter, 2007; Chavous et al 2008; Richardson et al., 2015; Wallace et al., 2018).

A positive racial identity can be formed through support from family members, and community groups, such as sport teams, mentoring activities, and school-based activities, and can serve as an important protective factor in a young person's life (Neblett et al, 2012; Reynolds et al., 2017).

Slide 16: Racial socialization
Racial socialization is the process by which African American youth learn language, customs, and cultural practices that affect their experiences as an African American in a society demarcated by race (Lipford Sanders & Bradley, 2005).

Parents must teach their children how to handle the challenges of a bicultural or multicultural existence without losing the core sense of themselves (Richardson et al., 2015). The pressures of racism and the efforts by African American parents to minimize its damaging effects on their children are major stressors for African American parents.

Children and youth are taught to understand and take pride in their culture and their history, as a foundation for coping (Brown & Tylka, 2011).

Slide 17: Proactive socialization
Recognizing that African American families and communities are affected by the racist attitudes of others, proactive socialization focuses on:

- Developing a strong sense of racial identity and pride.
- Communicating clear messages to children and youth about the strengths and accomplishments of the community, including family history, and stories of survival and triumph over adversity.
- Expectations of youth success.

There is also open family discussion of race and cautionary lessons about how to behave in difficult situations, such as what to do if stopped by a police officer, and about the benefits of supports, such as religion and spirituality and the extended family (Stevenson, 1994; Lipford Sanders & Bradley, 2005; Richardson et al., 2015).

We next hear from India, a young woman served by Friends of the Children. India talks about the support she gets from her mentor Miss Rena, and her positive views of African Americans. She also gives advice to providers who need to understand the African American youth experience.

Slide 18: Advice to Providers on Socialization [Video Clip]
India: The hardest thing that providers can do well is– I think– understanding youth, because nowadays youth are very different from when they were youth. You really have to understand how they cope, how they talk, how they hang out. Not a lot of people want to do a structured thing whenyou just came from school and being structured all day. So I think the hardest thing would be understanding youth.

I've been at school all day long and I come here I just want to hang out and chill with my friends and if they have something going on that I'm not really interested in, they keep pushing us to do those activities, and I say, "No, it's okay, I just want to chill out," and things like that. They keep pushing me, and if you keep on pushing someone they are bound to snap. So then it looks bad on my part and then I say, "I told you I just want to chill, so can I chill?"

Slide 19: Question 4.1
What do you think are the two or three most important protective factors for young people from the African American community?

Please type your answer in the text box.

Slide 20: Module 4.2 Diversity and Mental Health Disparities
The next section focuses on diversity and mental health disparities affecting African American youth and families.

Slide 21: Diversity and African American experiences
There are approximately 42 million African Americans in the U.S., representing 13% of the population. About 14% of the US population under 18 years of age is African American. (Colby & Ortman, 2015). Interventions with African American youth and families need to take their historical context into account.

Most African Americans are descendants of people who were captured from their homeland and enslaved, and then were legally discriminated against for decades. There are also many more recent immigrants and refugees from African and Caribbean countries who have not had these experiences but have experienced the traumas of violence, war, displacement, and poverty. Due to space and time limitations, this module focuses specifically on the needs of African American youth and young adults who are descendants of those who had been slaves, and we will address the needs of immigrants and refugees in the next module.

The legacy of trauma has continued to affect African American families and youth intergenerationally, resulting in lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of emotional distress, anger, and risks for delinquent behaviors (DeGruy, 2005).

While there has been substantial growth in the African American middle class, 28% of African American children and youth live in poverty, (Fontenot et al, 2018) with higher rates of poor health and mental health as one of the consequences.

Slide 22: Depression in African American youth
African American youth living in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods have higher rates of depression than youth of other races living in similar neighborhoods and they're less likely than White youth to receive mental health services (Lindsey, et al., 2006). Exposure to violence has also been linked to heightened incidence of depression for young people (Eisman et al., 2015).

In a national survey conducted in 2017, 9.5% of African American youth reported having a major depressive episode during the past year (National Institute of Mental Health, 2017). Depressive symptoms have been demonstrated to be a predictor of alcohol use in inner city African American youth (Repetto, Zimmerman, & Caldwell, 2004). Service providers working with young people in schools, child welfare, and juvenile justice should be aware of the risks associated with youth depression, and refer young people to screening for depression and appropriate services (Husky et al., 2012) before patterns of self-medication become established.

Depressive symptoms are a concern for African American youth because of their association with both substance abuse and with suicide.

Slide 23: African American youth suicide risk
The prevalence of suicide among African Americans aged 15-24 has increased in recent years, and it is now the third leading cause of death (Joe et al., 2009). A recent study by Rheeda Walker and her research team (2016) has found that the level of perceived discrimination experienced by African American youth was related to increased thinking about their own death. The rate of suicide attempts was larger for African-American high school students in 2011 than for White

students, with 8.3% of African American students attempting suicide compared to 6.2% of White students (Eaton et al., 2012). Additionally, according to the Centers for Disease Control, for those who attempted suicide in 2014, the death rate per 100,000 population for African American young men ages 15-24 was 12.3, compared with 2.7 for African American young women (Curtin et al., 2016). Unfortunately, for young African Americans struggling with depression, anxiety, suicidal thoughts, and other mental health issues there are major barriers to service access.

Slide 24: Barriers to mental health service use
African American youth experience barriers to their mental health service use such as: stigma associated with receiving mental health care; lack of affordability; inaccessible locations; transportation and child care needs; and unresponsive service providers (Breland-Noble, Bell, & Nicolas, 2006; Planey et al., 2019).

Additionally, White service providers may convey negative racial attitudes toward African American youth and their families which contribute to racial disparities in mental health services (Dovidio, Penner, Albrecht, Norton, Gaertner, & Shelton, 2008; Kruzich, Friesen, Williams-Murphy, & Longley, 2002).

As a result of these factors, African American youth with mental health needs are more likely than **White youth to be channeled into the juvenile justice system or child welfare, where their mental** health needs may be addressed poorly or not at all (Breland-Noble et al., 2006). Despite efforts to develop new pathways to mental health services for youth involved in juvenile justice or child welfare who have been identified as having emotional or behavioral difficulties, service access remains problematic (Garcia et al., 2016; Skowyra, & Cocozza, 2007).

Slide 25: Factors contributing to disparities
African American families are less likely to use mental health services for their children, because of:

- Lack of information about the effectiveness of services and negative experience with services.
- Distrust of services and providers including well-founded concerns about bias and oppression (Burkett, 2017; Planey et al., 2019); *Oppression* is defined as the systematic exploitation of one social group by another for its benefit. It contrasts with: *Privilege,* which is unearned advantage and dominance derived chiefly from race, ethnic identity, social and economic class, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. Privilege is an invisible system conferring dominance on certain groups (McIntosh, 2012). Oppression is manifested when youth of color, particularly those from economically disadvantaged families have limited access to supportive and culturally-appropriate mental health services and instead are channeled into more punitive systems such as the juvenile justice system. In contrast, middle class White youth who possess privilege are more likely to access appropriate therapeutic mental health supports.
- Fear of labeling, stigmatization, and being perceived as weak (Lindsey et al., 2013;), or worry about possible breeches of privacy (Thompson et al., 2013).

- Preferences for personal, family, and faith-based solutions to counteract discrimination and associated risk behaviors and mental health difficulties (Butler-Barnes et al., 2018; Richardson et al, 2015).
- And finally, cultural mistrust may also lead to reduced satisfaction with mental health treatment and increased drop-out (Anglin, et al, 2008; Planey et al., 2019).

In the next video segment Dr. Joy DeGruy will be talking about the challenges facing African American youth and families, the lack of understanding of their mental health needs and the concerns of African American families about oppressive mental health systems and disparities.

Slide 26: The Need for Information [Video Clip]
Joy DeGruy: I think one of the first things that has to happen, is there has to be a process of educating people in a way that they can hear it and they can understand it. I think that we do a disservice when we assume people don't want to know, can't quite understand it. People just need to have access; they need to understand that there is information out there. For example, I'm working with parents of adjudicated youth here and all around the country with very similar issues. Part of what I've seen from the families is that there is a real desire, hope, drive to understand. There are no services available to educate them. And so, as I've worked with these parents, I have provided them with information, and it's amazing the response that I have had. They're excited about it, but the key is they *trust* me. Many of the kids I work with have mental health issues and their parents don't understand the issue. They want to help their kids, but they don't understand what's going on.

I taught Human Development in the Social Environment, birth to death, the whole life span. I started off my ten week course that I teach to parents with the Apgar score; I start off from birth. I ask, "Do you know what an Apgar score is? Do you know what it [the Apgar score] means when your child is born?" The parents wonder what it is, can I know this, and do they have one. I tell them that of course they do, you have one and everyone has one. Often, physicians don't even tell them and these are indicators of health as well as mental health with children. We know that African American children are born with low birth weight, we know all of these things that exacerbate development.

So then the next step is to explain to them about development: here is what development looks like, here is what we might want to expect from a fifteen-year-old or a sixteen-year-old, or a twenty-year- old. Here are some stages of development that you might want to understand and here are the kinds of things that happen if they don't matriculate through that, in a healthy way, for example, if there has been a trauma. And what has been an amazing response has been when the parents have gone, "Oh my goodness, now I understand. I didn't even connect why he started acting out" at this critical age of concrete operations or cognitive development, or "That makes sense; that was when his dad died" or "when the house burned down." So for African American families who have a great deal of distrust in systems, they may be a bit paranoid, but unfortunately, someone's following them! (Chuckles).

The truth is the systems have been dysfunctional and have been hurtful. In a large way the African American community feels betrayed by them. The good news is that there is a desire [for information], and again, it has to be appropriate. When I teach my MSW [Master of Social Work]

students, I would ask them a question, "Let's say you have a huge influx of South Asians. What would you need to think about?" Oh, my goodness, all the hands are raised. "We need to think about language, culture, food, religion, gender." If I said "There was a huge influx of El Salvadorian people, what would you do?" Same thing, "Language, religion." When I say "African American" there is silence.

Presumably, there is nothing you need to know to go into *my* community. They [the students] are very upset by that, and I tell them, "Oh no, you have an assumption, we speak English, and that's all you need to know, you're smart, and you have an MSW." That is what's wrong with the services in the African American community. There is a fundamental assumption that you don't need to know anything which says either our culture is not valid or has no validity or nothing in particular is important, or we are just simply deficient White people.

However you look at it, your lack of preparedness, or your assumption that you don't need to prepare yourself, is creating havoc and injury in the community. If you don't think they know it, of course they know it when you sit in front of them. I give exhaustive examples of what that looks like, when a person is suffering from mental health issues and is confronted with issues of poverty and racism. There's lots of stuff there. So to say that you don't need anything or for you to remain silent in my class is not okay because you're not capable of just walking into that community and that is what is wrong with the services in the African American community right now.

I think that the first problem or difficulty that African American youth face is there is not an adequate amount of information about what mental illness is. There is a lot of mystery, fear, and to be really honest, there is a lot of distrust of systems in general. You have parents who may or may not know a lot about mental health, those parents who don't trust systems that have targeted, labelled, and taken away their children. Honestly that is the history. There's not a lot of trust of it. There is also a deep sense of shame that often comes with something you really are helpless to do anything about. Often, it's taken personally like they've done something. There are a lot of things going on with young people. They don't have a clear understanding of it, they have a lot of shame around it, they have angst, and a lot of fear. I think that's the number one thing.

That's coupled with the fact that there's a multitude of issues that they are experiencing. It's not like you have a kid who is navigating through life and the suddenly they have these mental health issues. Often there are layers of issues going on. There are services available to them. Sometimes their parents are not middle class so they are struggling and they don't have adequate care [of either] mental health or health care. You can't rule out economics. You can't rule out the fact that within the African American community here in Portland, there has been a real disenfranchisement. As a result of gentrification, folks are being pushed out of their communities to places they are not familiar with, they are not comfortable in. This exacerbates any other problem that you have, because this is going on simultaneously.

Slide 27: 4.2 Question

Why are African American youth less likely than other youth to access treatment for their mental health symptoms? Please check the correct response.

- ❑ Distrust of mental health services
- ❑ Misunderstanding of mental health issues
- ❑ Stigma
- ❑ Lack of culturally responsive providers
- ❑ All of the above

Slide 28: 4.3 Addressing Racism, Oppression, and Trauma

In this segment, we focus on the contexts of racism, oppression and trauma affecting the lives of many African American youth, young adults, and families.

Slide 29: Exposure to racism, oppression and violence

- For African American young people, continuing experiences of racism and oppression affect their health and well-being and can lead to trauma and anxiety (Hope, Hoggard, & Thomas, 2015).
- African American youth and young adults are also affected by trauma due to high rates of violence, especially in impoverished urban areas (Eisman et al., 2015). We are focusing here on urban areas where a high proportion of African American families reside.
- Violence is associated there with poverty, deteriorated schools, lack of opportunities, drug use, and gangs (Ofonedu et al., 2013).
- Oppression also manifests itself through experiences of invisibility that are sources of stress, anxiety, depression, frustration, and anger (Ofonedu et al., 2013).
- Paradoxically, African American young adults also experience hypervisibility, being followed by security guards in stores, asked for ID, or being stopped by police (Weaver, 2005).

Slide 30: Seeking to understand African American males

African American male youth and young adults are at very high risk to be victims of racism, oppression, exposure to community violence, and consequently trauma (Gaylord-Harden et al, 2017), although the majority grow up to be well-functioning and capable young adults (Gaylord-Harden et al., 2018).

The context of racism, unemployment, and poverty increases the risk for the young men to be marginalized and held back from full participation in education, work, and civic life (Stevenson, 2016).

Identity development is often also curtailed by existing stereotypes leaving African American males with limited choices, and with frequent experiences of discrimination (Assari et al., 2018).

Resulting trauma, depression, and fear might be expressed through aggressive behaviors (Gaylord-Harden et al., 2017). Service providers can work with young men and their families using a trauma-informed approach and supporting youth to develop a positive identity though

effective racial socialization so that they will not be limited by existing stereotypes (Richardson, 2015; Stevenson, 2016). Those providing services to young African American men should also focus on promoting their positive development, and present alternatives to using violence as a method of coping. Focusing on developing assets of self-regulation of their emotions, positive social relations, and positive bonding to individuals and institutions can insure successful transition of African American young men to adulthood (Gaylord-Harden et al., 2018).

Slide 31: Seeking to understand African American females
The healthy development of African American young women is affected by their experiences of discrimination and through being bombarded by stereotyped ideals of attractiveness, which can be destructive to self-worth (Seaton & Carter, 2018).

Considering gender, race, ethnicity, and social class together focuses attention on the resiliency of African American young women, and their need to develop a "critical consciousness" that allows them to examine the dynamics of the relationships and institutions in their lives. Service providers can assist young women to develop this critical understanding and appreciation of their own assets through supporting them as individuals as they develop their personal talents and skills, and through acting as allies for groups of young women of color who can support and empower one another (Clonan-Roy, Jacobs, & Nakkula, 2016).

In order to foster positive development in young African American women, service providers can explore how they think of societal racist and sexist messages and assist them to create a strong Afrocentric understanding, and healthy representation of themselves (Clonan-Roy et al., 2016; Lipford Sanders & Bradley, 2005).

Slide 32: Addressing interlocking oppressions
As service providers, we also need to consider the interlocking systems of oppression that affect the lives of youth and families such as racist attitudes, homophobia, and stigmatization in response to a mental health condition. These are addressed together in assessment and intervention planning because of their interacting effects on young people (Appleby, Colon, & Hamilton, 2011).

For example, a young person with a mental health condition may be affected by racist treatment in school as well as stigmatization by peers in response to mental health symptoms.

Intersectionality is defined as the consideration of the meaning and consequences of multiple categories of identity, difference, and disadvantage and the ways that they are intertwined and jointly associated with outcomes (Cole, 2009; Nash, 2008). Intersectionality may be a particular issue for gay or lesbian African American youth because of the prevalence of homophobic attitudes (McConnell et al., 2016). To be effective as a service provider, taking account of intersectionality is essential.

Incorporating a focus on intersectionality draws attention to the interactions of race, gender, and other dimensions of identity and how each specific youth and family member sees themselves. For example, in a specific school situation, a young person may feel that being African American, being male, being gay, or having a mental health condition may be the most important factor in how

others are treating him and that would need to be central in deciding how to respond appropriately.

Using this lens, you are more likely to explore young people's views of the ways in which they emphasize particular aspects of their identity, or choose not to, in each specific situation.

In the next video clip, India talks about the importance of being a daughter in a single parent family, as a key aspect of her life and identity.

Slide 33: On Being from a Single-Parent Family [Video Clip]
India: The most challenging thing: I would say not having my dad in my life. Some kids need both parents and I only have one. It is very hard for me to really compete with people who have both parents. It seems that they are more productive in life. I'm productive, but I think I'd be more productive if I had both of my parents and both of their support. Miss Rena [my mentor] does help with the support, but I think I'd do better with the support of both my parents.

Slide 34: Racial microaggressions and implicit bias
When providing services we also need to be mindful of the potential harms caused by racial microaggressions

Microaggressions are brief and commonplace verbal, behavioral, or environmental indignities, whether intentional or not, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults toward people of color (Sue et al., 2007).

Examples of microaggressions are expressing low expectations of school success for African American males, passing over an African American young woman who raises her hand to speak in a support group and allowing a White person to speak, or asserting you understand the experience of a young person, by saying something like, "As a woman, I know what you are going through as a youth of color." The experience of microaggressions may lead an African American youth, young adult, or parent to perceive the service provider as prejudiced or unlikely to perceive them as whole persons.

Service providers who are members of the dominant culture and who are products of their cultural conditioning may be prone to engage in racial microaggressions. The microaggressions may be due at least in part to implicit bias.

Implicit bias has been defined as "The attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. [They are] Activated involuntarily, without awareness or intentional control. (Kirwin Institute, Staats et al., 2017, p. 10). Implicit bias has been identified as the factor that results in police shooting African American youth, because of the incorrect perception that they are armed. The bias is rooted and grounded in social and political structures that continue to exist, years after major changes in civil rights in this country (Staats et al., 2017).

When service providers act out of implicit bias, and engage in microaggressions, this can lead to youth being less willing to self-disclose, failing to show up, or dropping out of services.

Slide 35: Avoiding and preventing microaggressions
Inexperience or cultural unawareness may make it difficult to avoid or overcome microaggressions. The following strategies from Derald Wing Sue and his associates (2007) may be helpful:

- Notice your own and others' microaggressions. (You may want to ask a trusted colleague to point out instances of microaggressions you are not aware of.)
- Examine how racial microaggressions, including your own, impact African American youth and other youth of color, and
- Accept responsibility for taking corrective action.

This is not easy to do because it implicates all of us in responsibility for contributing to a hostile environment with negative consequences for youth and families of color that we serve. But it is vital to the process of developing culturally responsive services.

Additionally, Fariyal Ross-Sheriff (2012, p. 235) has offered suggestions for reducing the damage done to young people experiencing microaggressions. She suggests that service providers recognize microaggressions that have hurt those you are serving, communicate the causes and effects of the microaggressions to the young people and families that have been affected, and help them to develop strategies to prevent future microaggressions, to mitigate their effects, and to resist and take actions to prevent them in the future. For example, Allyn (2013) reported that black fathers were successful in pointing out the ways in which teachers expressed negative assumptions about their sons enrolled in a suburban high school, which had the effect of reducing this teacher behavior and affirming their sons' positive sense of self.

Slide 36: 4.3 Question
Consider the intersectionality of your own identity. Which two or three personal characteristics are most important for your identity? There is no right or wrong answer to this question, we just want to invite you to think about aspects of your identity that are most important for you at the moment. Please type your answer in the text box.

Slide 37: 4.4 Skills for Increasing Resilience
In the next section, we will identify skills and strategies for increasing the resilience of African American youth and young adults.

Slide 38: Engaging youth and families
To engage African American youth and families and increase resilience we recommend that you:

- Assure that the agency or work environment is welcoming with art, announcements, and magazines that depict a range of people, including African Americans;
- Accept their definition of family and address family members with respect, using formal names, such as Miss, Mr., Mrs.;

- Take time to get acquainted as people as well as to provide a service and develop helping relationships;
- Show interest in the concerns being expressed by the young people and their families, and their own explanations and understandings, which includes attention to their spiritual beliefs and sources of spiritual support;
- Focus on youth and family strengths and empowerment and incorporate support from community resources and culturally responsive organizations.

Slide 39: Working with African American youth and families
As a service provider, you will need to:

- Tune into, and teach others to notice, the more subtle forms of depression among African American youth, and
- Engage families in the treatment process and address the stigma assigned to mental health difficulties that can lead to reluctance to seek services (Lindsey et al., 2006).

Your race may be important to some youth and families and referral to specific culturally responsive service providers or treatment approaches may be needed (Lindsey et al, 2013; Huang & Zane, 2016).

In the next video clip Dr. DeGruy will give examples of effective interventions and ways to engage youth.

Slide 40: Effective Interventions [Video Clip]
Joy DeGruy: One time we were working with a kid who was experiencing extraordinary panic and anxiety. He was truant, wasn't showing up to class. This was a straight A student, an African American boy, 15-years-old who suddenly couldn't concentrate. When he turned sixteen the school notified the parents, the parent reaches out to some of the programs I'm working with and we find out that his mother is in a domestic violence situation. He never told anybody that. When he's in school, all he could think about was someone hurting his mother. This produced so much stress in him, so much anxiety, he was not functional. But nobody knew when they would ask why he was truant.

Every time he was truant, he wasn't out with friends, they would find him at home, nowhere else but home. I said that there was something going on there, has anyone asked some other questions about his world. He really, truly, was experiencing severe anxiety. It had nothing to do with some of the things that people thought, even what the school was saying; it had to do with the fact that somehow he felt like he could protect his mother if he was at home.

So we had to deal with him and those feelings, since they were not going to just disappear, and we had to deal with Mom. We had to figure out how to deal with that environment. We had to figure out what would make you feel safe, what would make you feel comfortable, when do you most feel comfortable? When does that happen? Again, layers and if I don't trust you I'm not telling you anything. I'm going to buck up and tell you I'm not in school because I don't want to be. I'm going to show you that other side. The truth was extreme anxiety, extreme panic disorder, [for] this kid.

The layers that are there are huge and that is what we mean by *culture specific*. That means that you have to look beyond *your lens*; and not only do you have to look through another lens, you have to allow yourself to be educated about it. You become educated as you ask questions of them and you develop enough of a relationship and there is enough trust that they will tell you. Then you can begin your work.

This kid is not a separate being floating around. This kid is connected to a family, and all the layers that are there, so it's impossible for you to think that you are going to isolate this kid and not appreciate the dynamics of their environment, and the dynamics of family, because relationships are key: good, bad, or indifferent. You need to be willing to roll up your sleeves and engage with that youth's world because it's not just him. It's not just an isolated, "come in my office and let me work with you." It does not work like that.

Our perceptions of delivering services to the African American community are wound into our perceptions of African Americans. We are not one dimensional people; we are the whole scale-- socially and economically-- we are the whole scale. So being aware of that and understanding the multiplicity and diversity of the African American community is also key. I've spoken with families where they say: "These people talk to me like I'm an idiot." "I'm really clear about this, my son or my daughter has been struggling with this for years and then I meet a professional that talks to me like I am a child." Or, then you have what is called "culturally specific" and this is probably the most dangerous thing I see. And you have non-African American people who say "Let's find an African American" and *anyone will do*, so long as you're Black, you meet their standard. Given the multi-faceted multiple layers of the African American community, just being Black does not guarantee that that person has a clue; or they themselves have developed within that community, a sense of that community. Understanding that any Black will do is almost tantamount to finding a gatekeeper; "Here is our person who represents the Black people. We never considered the appropriateness, or the competencies or anything; all they need to do is be Black." That also produces a layer of problems. There is a lot to this that is embedded in systemic problems, it's embedded in leadership. It's asking how do you tear them apart and work on young person's mental health issue when wrapped up in it is a historical, systemic problem that shows up in the room every single time.

Slide 41: Increasing resilience
To support African American youth resilience, we suggest:

- Taking time to build a relationship and develop trust
- Focusing on cultural issues to engage youth
- Addressing known risk factors, especially traumatic experiences, and building protective factors
- Engaging youth in identifying goals and activities
- Teaching new skills for success
- Supporting family and community as contexts of racial socialization and racial identity development
- Seeking African American male and female mentors to advise you about appropriate ways of working with young people in their community and to help to you to connect youth with

positive activities and mentors, and

- Developing specific service models that are attuned to the cultural context of African American communities.

Slide 42: African American Wraparound

One example of a specific service model that is attuned to a particular cultural context, is African American Wraparound developed in northern California. This program is based on strong partnerships with African American churches. It uses a rites of passage approach based on biblical teachings and traditional African ceremonies to support male and female adolescents to develop a positive African American identity (Palmer et al, 2011).

This approach acknowledges the unfairness of the situations facing many African American families and emphasizes their capacities to love, to struggle against injustices, and to overcome challenges.

Slide 43: 4.4 Question

Please explain why it is important to engage families when working with African American young people. Enter your response in the text box.

Slide 44: 4.5 Increasing Support for African American Youth and Families

In the next section, we will focus on the importance of strong family and community supports for African American youth and families, and strategies to increase and strengthen these supports.

Slide 45: Building support for African American young people

Positive relationships between young people, parents, and extended families, and community connectedness have a direct impact on African American youth's emotional well-being (Liddle, et al, 2006; Reynolds et al., 2017).Therefore increasing family support and creating or strengthening the youth and family's pro-social attachments is essential.

Additionally, African American youth can receive wanted and needed social supports from mentors in the community. Although formal mentoring programs like Big Brothers and Big Sisters and Friends of the Children have proven effectiveness with African American youth and their families, natural mentors who are in the young person's existing social networks such as family, friends, athletic teams, and churches, can also add to their resilience and success (Sanchez et al, 2017).

The network of providers should reflect and embrace the culturally specific needs of this population. This will provide the needed support for families who prefer to work with culturally responsive organizations.

Slide 46: Increasing resilience

For African American youth with depression and their families, Carl Bell (cf. Bell & McBride, 2014) recommends these principles for service providers:

- First, use **Motivational Interviewing** strategies to engage families and youth. (Motivational Interviewing is an evidence-based set of intervention strategies we described in Module 2. MI was developed by Miller and Rollnick and their colleagues (Arkowtiz, Miller & Rollnick,

2015) to engage young people in change efforts by eliciting and strengthening their motivation for change. This includes communicating to the young person that you are making an effort to see their needs and situation from their perspective, by affirming the young person's capacities to learn and grow, and by providing opportunities for the young person to practice skills such as making her own choices.)

- Also, increase positive community and organizational connections to create a sense of power and uniqueness.
- Use a **trauma-informed approach** and ensure safety and support (Breland-Noble, Bell, & Nicolas, 2006). You may want to note that we will discuss trauma informed approaches to services in Module 6.
- And, finally form alliances with African American religious organizations to create supports for mental health (Anglin, Alberti, Link, & Phelan, 2008).

Slide 47: Increasing support for and within families

Families are central to the lives of youth and high levels of involvement and monitoring by family members are linked with emotional well-being and positive behaviors in youth.

Hood and associates (2013) suggest that school-based programs can help parents and youth manage stress, build skills, increase family cohesion, and reduce conflict.

Slide 48: School based supports

Teachers play an important role in identifying early concerns about mental health, and communicating their concerns to parents, and they also serve as role models to their students (Lindsey et al., 2013).

School-based services may be more acceptable to some African American families because they are seen as less stigmatizing than community-based mental health services (Lindsey et al, 2006).

One recent example is *Umoja,* a school-based mentoring program that focused on mentoring African American youth in the context of a cultural arts program that was successful in improving self-esteem, increasing positive behavior, and reducing violence in a group of urban youth. (Watson et al., 2015).

Slide 49: Spirituality and Afrocentrism

Spiritual beliefs are a source of strength and a coping mechanism that may need to be considered in intervention (Hong et al, 2019; Lindsey et al 2013), although this is less important in some African American families (Lindsey et al., 2006).

Approximately 70% of African Americans are affiliated with a church, which is a valuable part of a helping network and they are more likely to consult members of their faith community about their children's mental health difficulties and ministers are identified as an important support for many families (Breland-Noble, 2006; Lindsey et al., 2013).

Because of the high levels of stigmatization of mental illness, community education via churches and the creation of alliances between mental health services and faith communities may be helpful

in raising awareness and increasing understanding of signs, symptoms, causes of mental illness, and effective treatments (Anglin et al., 2008).

Some African American families and communities have explored traditional African beliefs as a way to increase meaning in their lives and reduce the negative effects of racism.

Afrocentric thought focuses on collectivism, spirituality, mutual aid, and an integrated view of life that emphasizes balance.
In mental health services, Afrocentrism leads to a focus on incorporating spirituality and reducing (or overcoming) oppression (Weaver, 2005).

Slide 50: Support from mentors
As you work with young people, you will need to assess the modeling and mentoring relationships present or absent that young person's life.

Identifying and integrating pro-social mentors is a vital aspect of resilience that is critical to provide support, role modeling, and access to opportunities for learning, development, and recreation for African American youth (Sanchez et al., 2017).

If a father or a mother is not available, African-American rites of passage programs, church groups, tutoring, or job training staff can provide emotional support, values clarification, and skill development (Liddle, et al., 2006).

Slide 51: Youth civic engagement as an adaptive response
Recently Hope and Spencer (2017) have proposed that civic engagement activities can help young people cope with discrimination that they have experienced due to racism and oppression.

They see civic engagement as "an active form of resistance to protest inequitable conditions and to promote positive well-being for self and community" (p. 422). When young people participate in actions bringing about a more just and equitable society, their efforts can have a positive developmental effect—including greater satisfaction with their own lives, better educational outcomes, and lower arrest rates (Chan et al., 2014)

Through their organizing and participation in work to improve their communities, they can form ties with adult allies, and help change the schools, youth programs, and community policing that affect their lives (Kirshner & Ginwright, 2012).

As a service provider, you might encourage the young people you serve to participate in civic engagement experiences that have the potential to build their own resilience and promote their own empowerment and health.

Slide 52: 4.5 Question
To answer this question after reviewing this module, think about what are three key issues that are useful to consider as you work with African American youth and families in your community. Please enter your ideas in the text box.

Slide 53: References and Resources

On this slide we provide a link to references and resources that you may find helpful in your work. We encourage you to share relevant items with youth, young adults, and families.

Slide 54: Next module

In Module 5, you will learn about:

1. Diversities within the Hispanic/Latino community and how the immigration experience affects members of this community.
2. Oppression, trauma, and mental health disparities affecting Hispanic/Latino youth, young adults and their families.
3. Ethnic and cultural identity, bicultural development and intergenerational relationships in Hispanic/Latino families.
4. Skills for working cross-culturally and building family support for Hispanic/Latino young people and their families.
5. Implications for work with immigrants of other cultures.

Slide 55: Credits

We'd like to acknowledge and thank the people who contributed to the development of this module on increasing resilience and family support.

Slide 56: Acknowledgements / Funders

Slide 57: You're Almost Done!

You have completed the content portion of Module 4. Now you may take the Module 4 quiz, by checking the best answer to each of the following 10 questions.

Participants who successfully complete this final part of the training will be able to print out a certificate.