Culturally Responsive School Mental Health Interventions: Fostering Resilience Among Students of Color

Dr. Janine Jones
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Janine Jones, PhD, LP, NCSP, HSPP

2021 California School-Based Health Alliance Conference:
Building Bridges to Healthy and Resilient Students

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Evidence-Based Practice

Best scientific evidence

Clinician expertise

Client characteristics, values, and context

(American Psychological Association Presidential Task Force on Evidence-Based Practice, 2005)
Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) (Felitti et al., 1998)
The Pair of ACEs

Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Maternal Depression
- Physical & Emotional Neglect
- Emotional & Sexual Abuse
- Divorce
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Illness
- Domestic Violence
- Incarceration
- Homelessness

Adverse Community Environments

- Poverty
- Violence
- Discrimination
- Community Disruption
- Lack of Opportunity, Economic Mobility & Social Capital
- Poor Housing Quality & Affordability

(Ellis & Dietz, 2017)
**Philadelphia Urban ACE Study, 2013**

**National Survey of Children’s Health (NSCH) 2016**

### Table 10. Urban ACE Indicators by Race

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Witnessed violence</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
<td>52.0%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=203)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=390)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felt discrimination</td>
<td>15.8%</td>
<td>49.5%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=124)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=372)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverse neighborhood experience</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>29.2%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=152)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=221)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bullied</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=70)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=48)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lived in foster care</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>4.1%***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(n=8)</td>
<td></td>
<td>(n=31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001, Chi-square  
Data Source: Philadelphia Urban ACE Survey, 2013  
Data Prepared by: The Research and Evaluation Group at PHMC
Adverse Community Experiences for Children and Adolescents of Color

Threats to Resilience
What is happening here?
Our behavior is powerfully guided by the things that we **expect** to be true.
Disrupting Patterns of Cultural Blind Spots

- Individuation (Fiske and Neuberg, 1990)
- Perspective taking (Galinsky and Moskowitz, 2000)
- Increasing opportunity for contact (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006)
- Stereotype replacement (Monteith, 1993)
- Counter-stereotypic imaging (Blair et al., 2001)
- Tracking personal information (Cook et al., 2018)
- Banking time (especially listening and validating) (Cook et al., 2018)
Recognize the Silent Struggles that Affect BIPOC Youth
Stereotype Threat
I'd better pretend like I get it and be the smart Asian he expects.

Ugh now I bet he thinks all black people are always late.

Why pay attention? He put me back here for a reason.

You should be on time, Tenisha. You need all the time we have to learn the material.

Meili, will you explain the concept to the class? I am sure you understand.

Stereotype Threat and Microaggressions in the Classroom

Illustration by Vanessa Solis

Adapted text by Janine Jones
Children and adolescents have different methods of sending out signals of distress. These methods vary by gender, personality, cultural values, and life experiences.
Adult Responses that Cause Internalization in BIPOC Youth

MINIMIZATION

“I think you might be taking that out of context.”

OR

“Are you sure you aren’t being too sensitive?”

DISMISSIVE

“Oh, I’m sure that’s not what they meant.”

DEFENSIVENESS

“Well, I am certain that your teacher has the best of intentions.”
Resilience from ACEs can be activated by the existence of safe, nurturing relationships with adults and peers.
Cultural Practices as Protective Factors

- Formal Kinship
- Informal Kinship
- Spirituality

Exposure to Chronic Community Violence
Complex Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Buffer Effect

(Jones, 2007)
Adverse Childhood Experiences (4 or more)

Intervention (Reduce Symptoms)
- Teach emotion regulation skills
- Psychoeducation about trauma

Intervention (Resilience-focused)
- Identify and apply individual strengths
- Maximize relationships
- Foster community support

Rarely includes cultural integration
Often includes cultural integration

Toxic Stress

Responding to the SOS
(Panter-Brick et al., 2017)
Risk, Protective Factors, and RESILIENCE

- Acculturation
- Spirituality
- Kinship
- Racial Socialization
- Cultural Norms
- Collectivism
- Racial and Ethnic Identity

Janine Jones, PhD
SUCCESS

If we intentionally foster resilience and keep in awareness the full identities of our youth, kids will not have to endure—they can thrive in resilience.
References


