

Allies in the struggle: intersectional work as trauma-informed response and prevention

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Action Alliance
www.vsdvalliance.org
@VActionAlliance



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTIONALLIANCE

Welcome

We'll be talking about:

Trauma

Privilege and oppression (specifically racism and white privilege)

Current disparities

Examples from Action Alliance

The work of allies

Objectives

- Deepen understanding of systemic and institutional racism in America and its impact on people of color experiencing sexual and intimate partner violence.
- Discuss ways that allies can integrate a racial justice lens in our daily work as a critical component of trauma-informed response and prevention.

**“Survivors of color
live at the intersections
of racism, sexism, and
other oppressions.”**

The work of allies is to understand these intersections, integrate this understanding into our trauma response, and work to dismantle these forms of violence at the individual, community, and societal level.

Source: INCITE! Women, Gender Non-Conforming, and Trans people of Color Against Violence

Understanding the great harm racism has created for individuals, families and our communities in Virginia, we commit to building within the coalition an anti-racist framework from which to address sexual and domestic violence.

Excerpt from Action Alliance mission statement



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTION ALLIANCE

This is
hard
to
talk
about.



10

8

A few working
assumptions...

9



Let's dig in...
understanding trauma



What is Trauma?

- An incident or event that is threatening or is *perceived as* threatening and overwhelms a person's normal coping skills.
- Trauma can take many forms:
 - Emotional, physical, sexual abuse
 - Neglect
 - Abandonment
 - Natural disaster
 - Assault
 - Catastrophic injury or illness
 - Historical trauma
- Historical trauma is **cumulative** and **collective**.



Trauma May Be Woven Into DNA of Native Americans

Trauma is big news these days. Mainstream media is full of stories about the dramatic improvements allowing science to see more clearly how trauma affects our bodies, minds and even our genes. Much of the coverage hails the scientific connection between trauma and illness as a breakthrough for modern medicine. The next breakthrough will be how trauma affects our offspring.

The science of epigenetics, literally "above the gene," proposes that we pass along more than DNA in our genes; it suggests that our genes can carry memories of trauma experienced by our ancestors and can influence how we react to trauma and stress. The Academy of Pediatrics reports that the way genes work in our bodies determines neuroendocrine structure and is strongly influenced by experience. [Neuroendocrine cells help the nervous and endocrine (hormonal) system work together to produce substances such as adrenaline (the hormone associated with the fight or flight response.) Trauma experienced by earlier generations can influence the structure of our genes, making them more likely to "switch on" negative responses to stress and trauma.

In light of this emerging science and how it works with the way we react to trauma, the AAP stated in its publication, [Adverse Childhood Experiences and the Lifelong Consequences of](#)

"We Shall Remain"

www.thestylehorsecollective.com

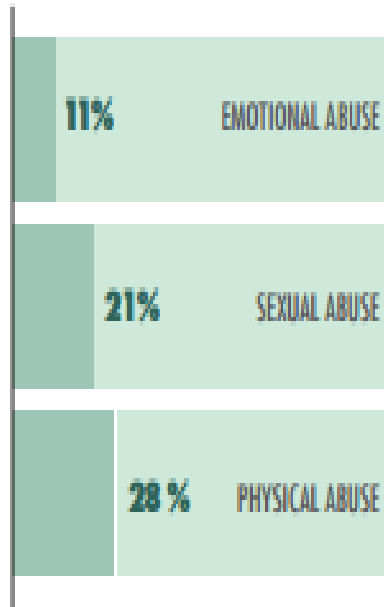
Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACEs)

What are ACEs?

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) is the term given to describe all types of abuse, neglect, and other traumatic experiences that occur to individuals under the age of 18. The landmark Kaiser ACE Study examined the relationships between these experiences during childhood and reduced health and well-being later in life.

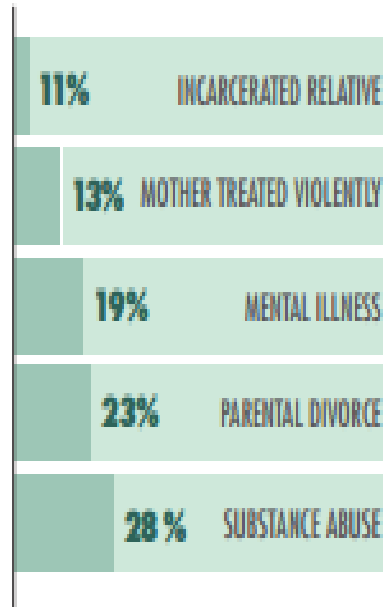
ABUSE

0% 25% 50% 75%



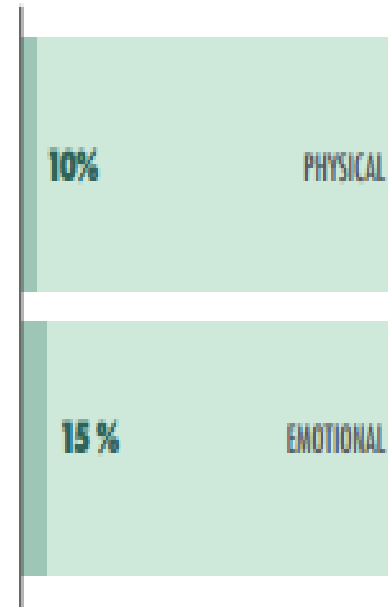
FAMILY DYSFUNCTION

0% 25% 50% 75%

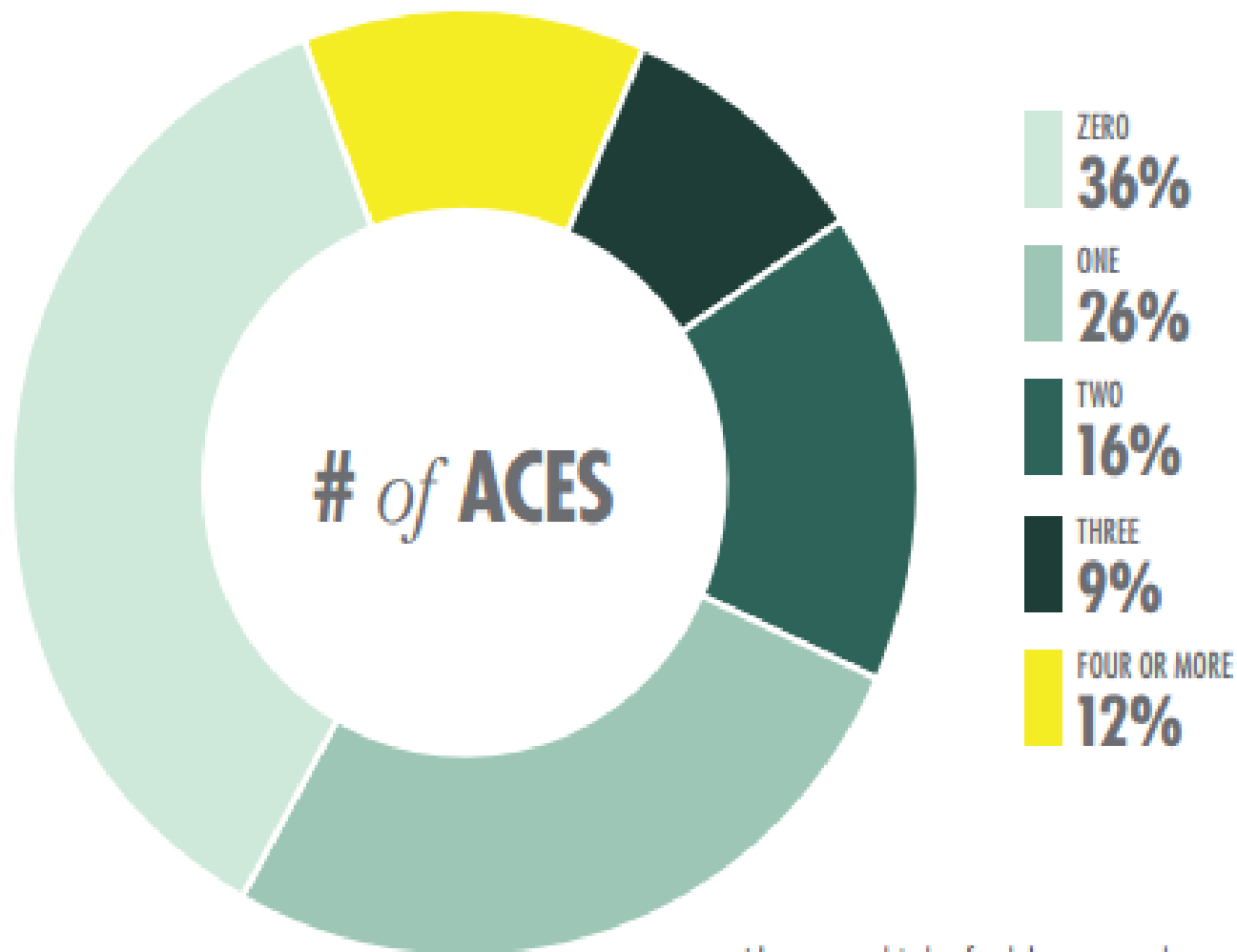


NEGLECT

0% 25% 50% 75%



HOW COMMON ARE ACES?



Almost two-thirds of adults surveyed reported at least one Adverse Childhood Experience – and the majority of respondents who reported at least one ACE reported more than one.

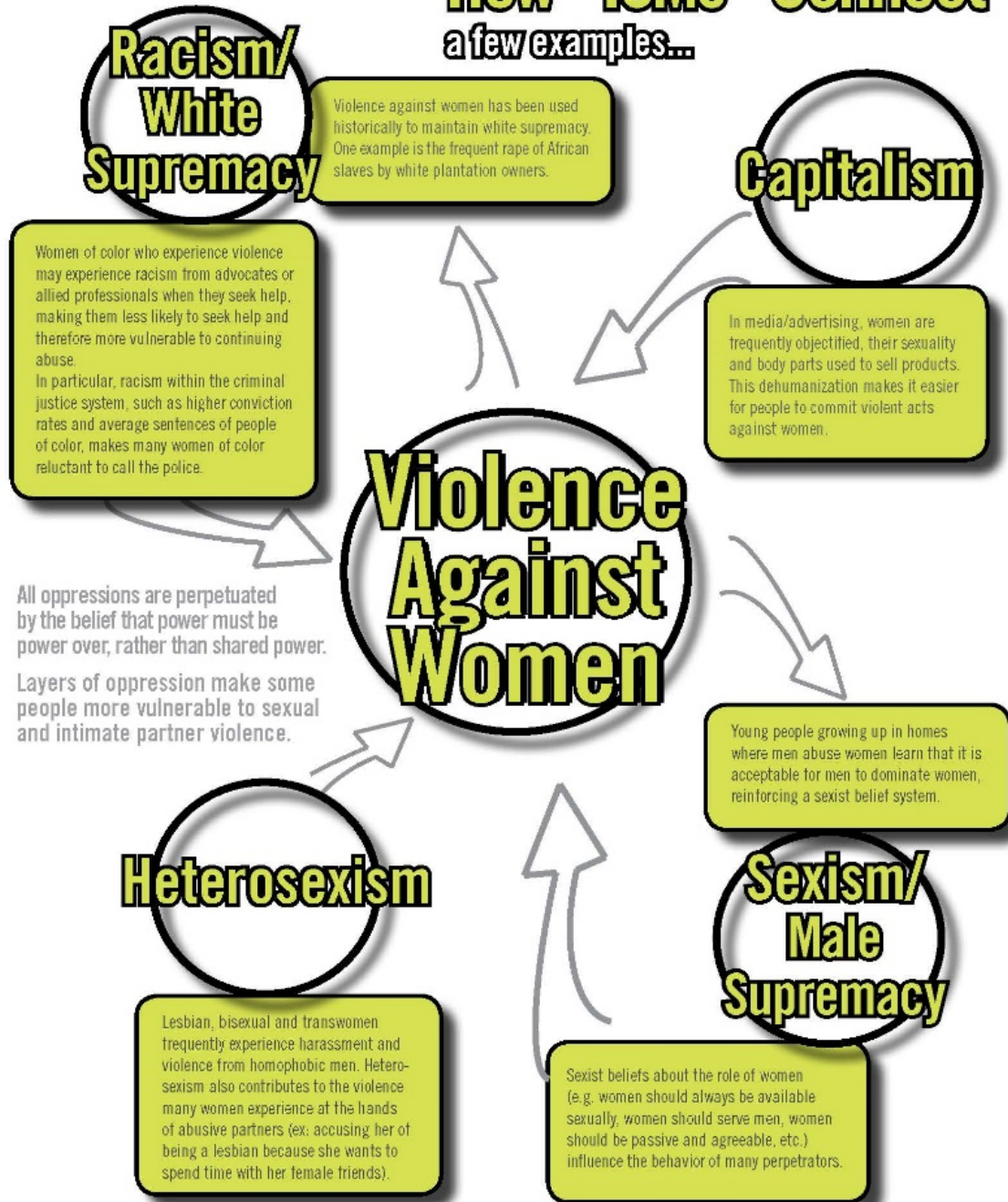
Childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime



How we define the problem
determines how we work on the problem.



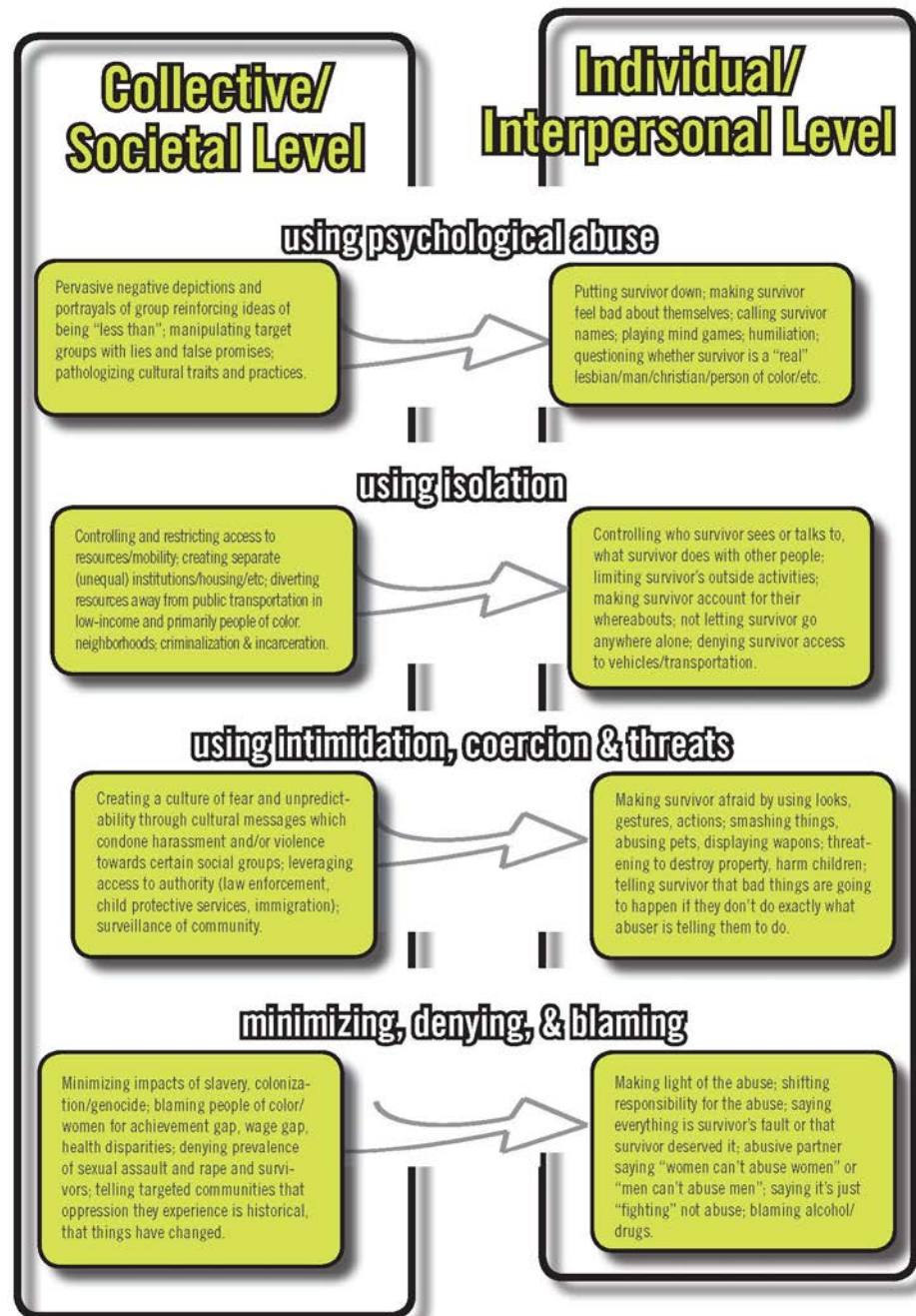
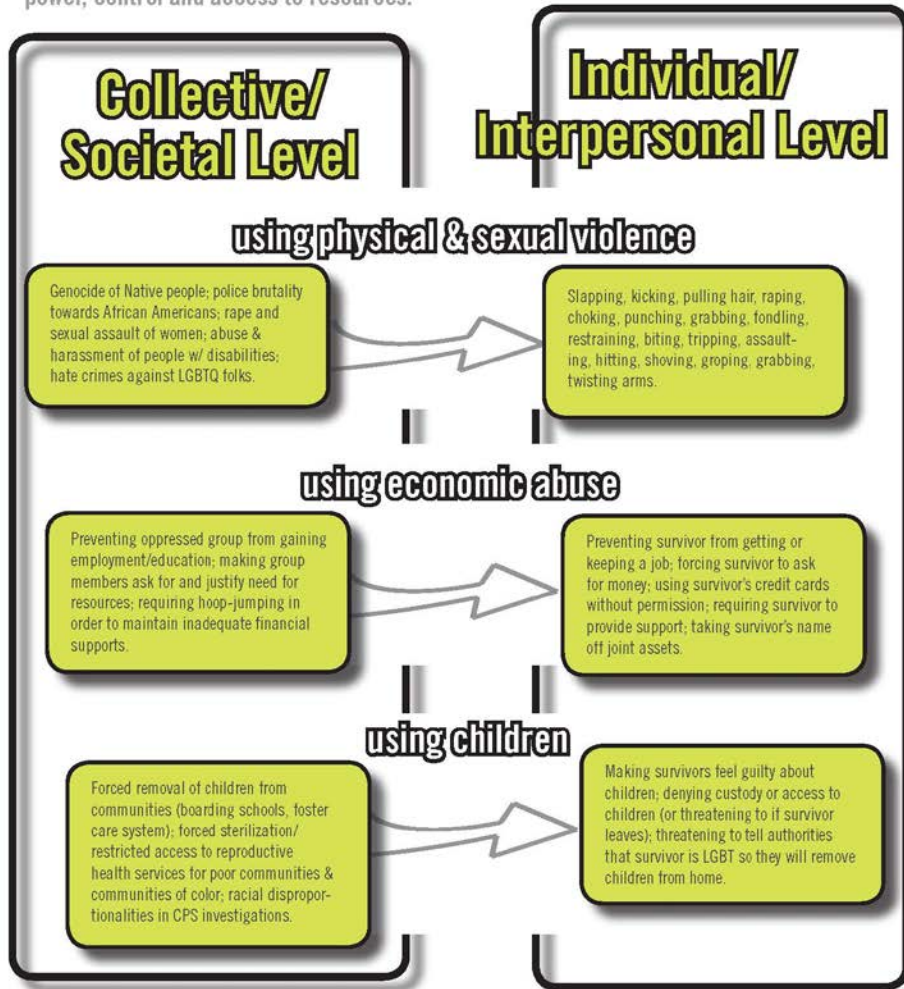
How "ISMs" Connect a few examples...

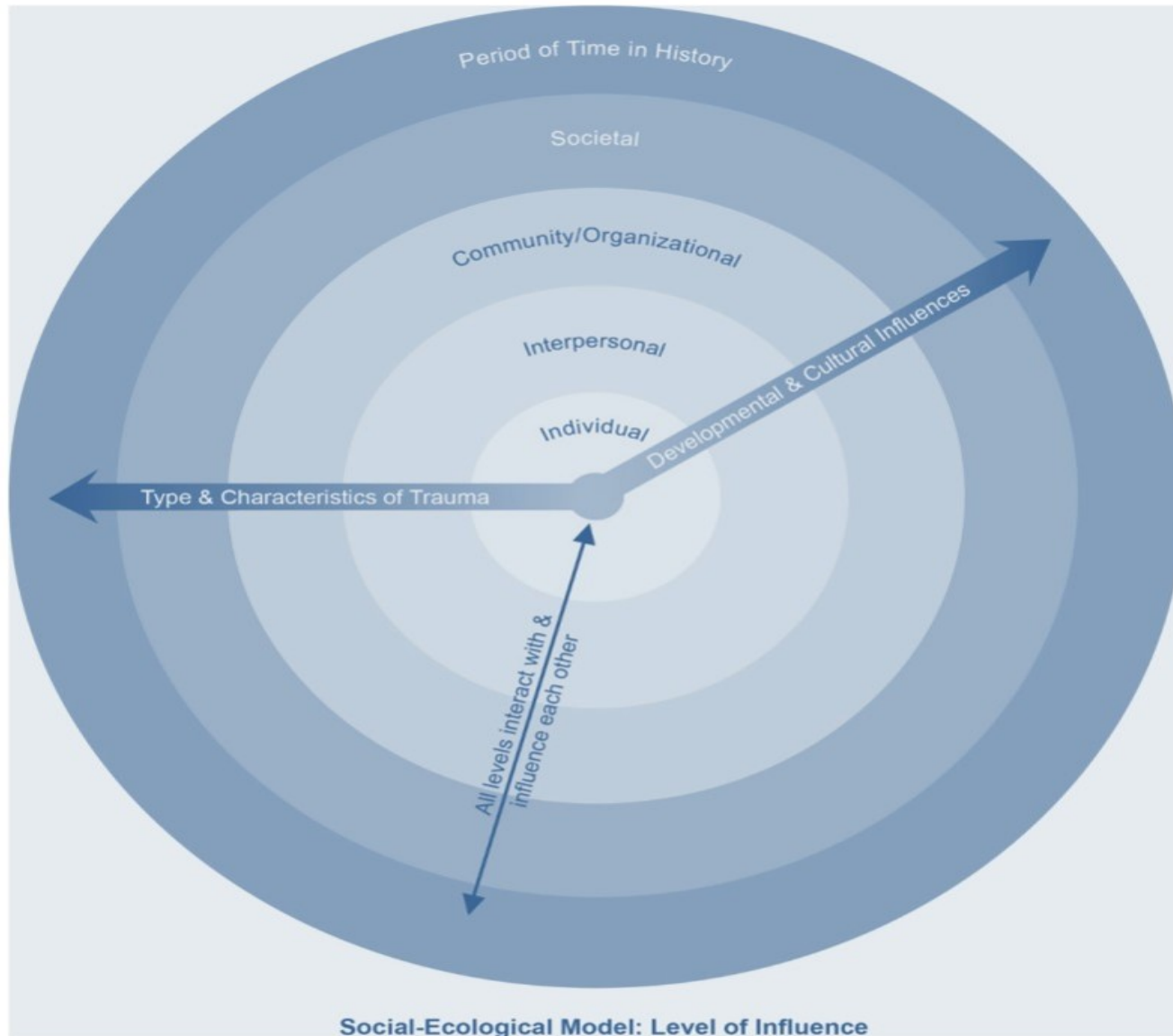


Tactics of Oppression

Power and control look alike whether perpetrated against an intimate partner or an entire cultural/ethnic group.

Whether we are talking about power and control within an intimate relationship, or within the whole of U.S. society, we see the same tactics used to maintain an unequal distribution of power, control and access to resources.





Source: Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. "Trauma informed care in behavioral health services". SAMHSA

What is racism?

Progress for
IS
Progress for
Everyone



 WE ARE
ALL
IMMIGRANTS



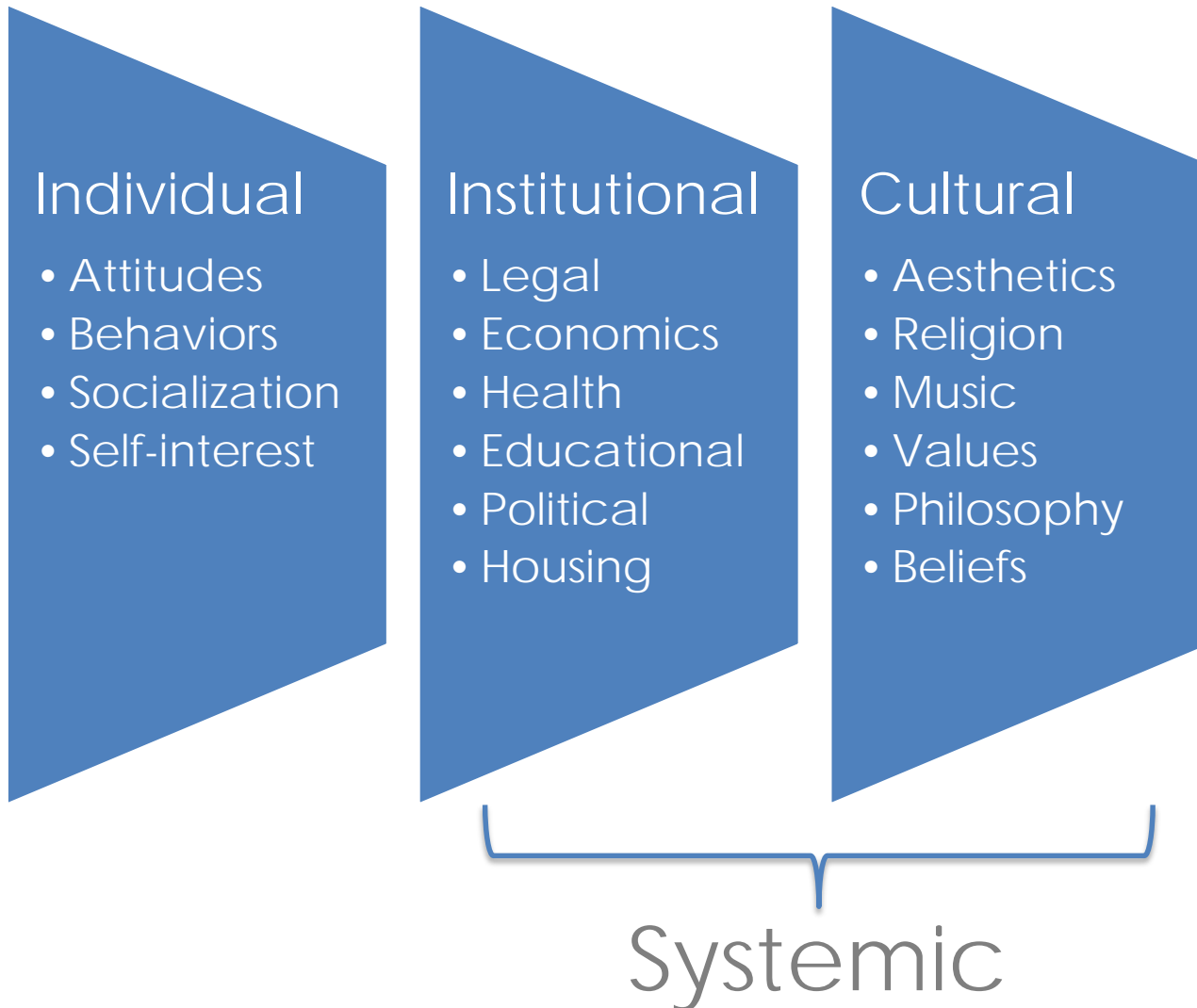
A Few Terms...

- Prejudice
- Power
- Oppression
- Racism
- Privilege

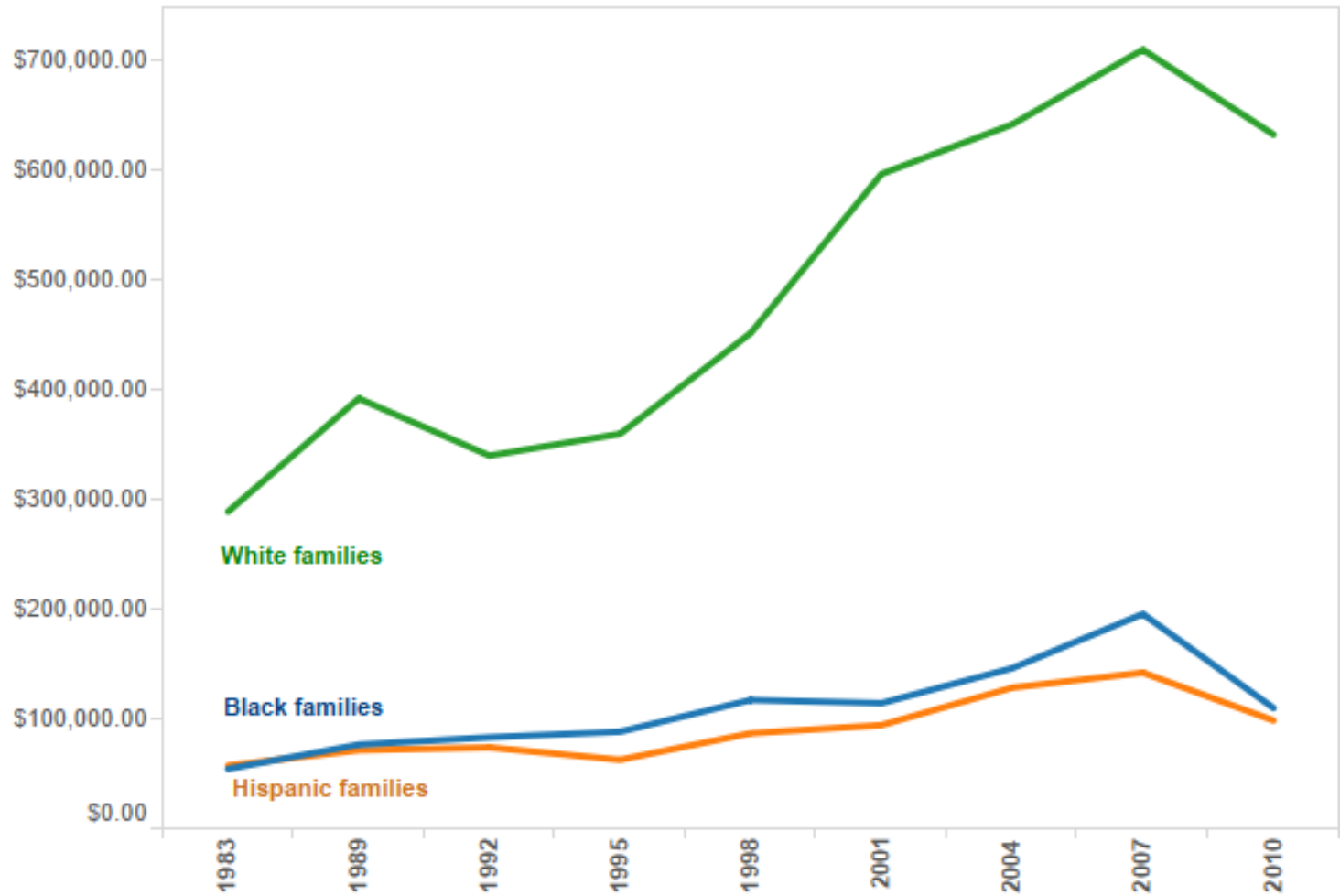
Racism Is...

- Power + Race Prejudice
- A system of advantage based on race
- A system of oppression based on race

Expressions of racism



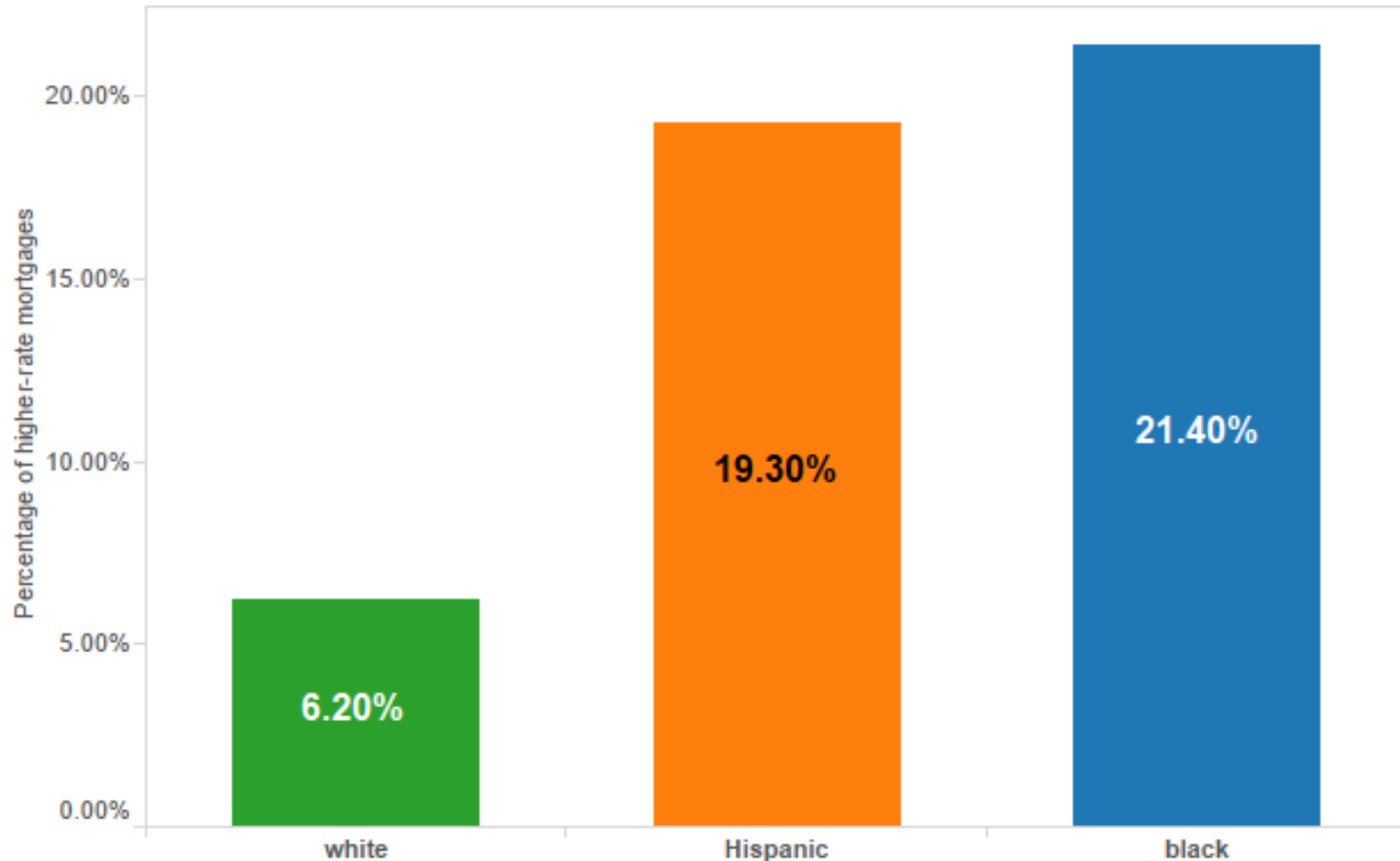
AVERAGE FAMILY WEALTH, BY RACE 1983-2010



Figures from the Urban Institute. (Chart: John Light/Moyers & Company)

PERCENTAGE OF HIGHER-RATE MORTGAGES GIVEN TO BORROWERS WITH GOOD CREDIT, BY RACE

2004-2008



Data includes only borrowers with a FICO score of 660 or higher. Figures from the Center for Responsible Lending via the Economic Policy Institute. (Chart: John Light/Moyers & Company)

Figure 9. Racial disparities in marijuana use in past month and marijuana possession arrests, 2010

Usage rates



Blacks used marijuana at 1.3 times the rate of whites.

Arrest rates



Blacks were arrested for marijuana possession at 3.7 times the rate of whites.

Source: Edwards, E. Bunting, W. Garcia, L. (2013). The War on Marijuana in Black and White. New York, NY: American Civil Liberties Union. Available at: <https://www.aclu.org/files/assets/1114413-mj-report-rfs-rel1.pdf> (p. 47); U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2011). Results from the 2010 Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Available at: <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/nsduh/2k10NSDUH/tabs/Sect1peTabs1to46.htm> (Tbl. 1.28B).

Theater Shooting Suspect Was Brilliant Science Student

July 21, 2012 10:27 AM

Share 4 Tweet 2

Share 5

View Comments



James Holmes (credit: CBS)

Police: Michael Brown Struggled With Officer Before Shooting

Brian Kelly (Twitter: @brpkelly)

August 10, 2014 11:31 AM

Share 71 Tweet 22

Share 11

View Comments



BLACK VICTIM

Trayvon Martin was suspended three times from school

[NBC News ran this headline](#) during ongoing coverage of the Trayvon Martin killing.

WHITE SUSPECT

Oregon school shooting suspect fascinated with guns but was a devoted Mormon, his friends say

This [Fox News headline](#) quoted friends shocked that 15-year-old Jared Michael Padgett had entered his high school heavily armed and killed a classmate, injured a teacher and took his own life.

BLACK VICTIM

Deputy killed Marine out of fear for children's safety, officials say

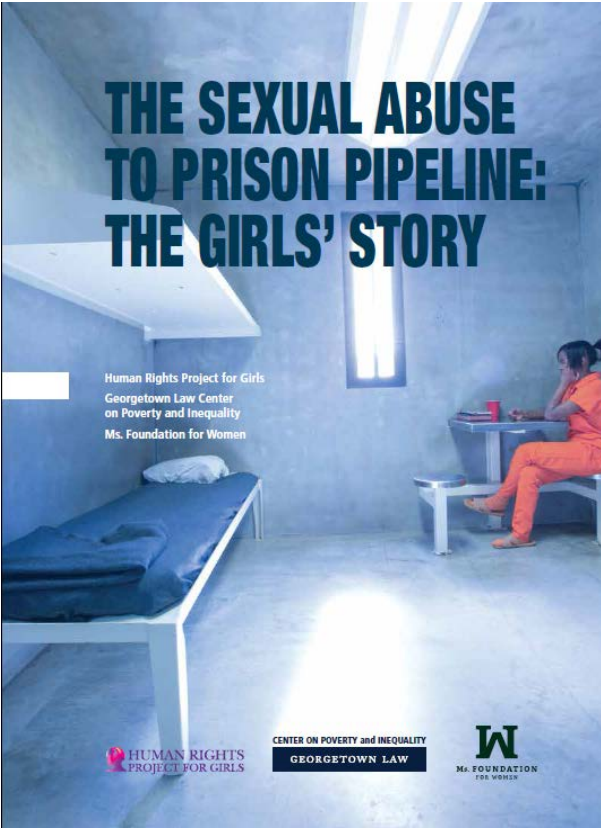
An unarmed father of two was killed by a police officer while entering a vehicle that contained his own children, the [Los Angeles Times served up this claim](#) from officials.

WHITE SUSPECT

Santa Barbara shooting: Suspect was 'soft-spoken, polite, a gentleman', ex-principal says

In the wake of the mass shooting in Santa Barbara, California, earlier this year, the [Whittier Daily News offered a headline](#) showing one man's disbelief that Elliot Rodger could have committed such a crime.





22%

Race / ethnicity or immigration status

PARTICIPANTS WHO CONTACTED THE POLICE

Fear of Calling Police Because of Their Response

2 in 5 (43%) felt police had **discriminated against them**. Of that 43%, the following responses indicated discrimination due to:

53%

Not being a "perfect" victim (income, reputation, disability, sexual identity)

46%

Gender (men side with men and won't believe me)

24%

Lack of understanding by police about partner abuse and sexual assault

22%

Race / ethnicity or immigration status

20%

Politics, offender connections

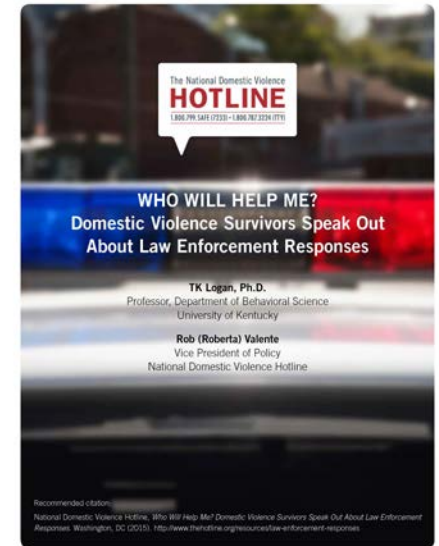
IN THEIR WORDS

"I live in a poor building; they stood there criticizing my apartment and talked down to me. I know if I lived in a nice neighborhood, they wouldn't have said the things they did."

"I am a black female so I felt like they automatically saw me as dumb, poor and ignorant... I didn't have any marks besides a swollen lip, so I felt like they didn't take it as an immediate threat."


"I felt the police were buddy-buddy with my partner and ignored what I had to say and the reality of the situation. I was scared and they ignored me."

"I am a black female so I felt like they automatically saw me as dumb, poor and ignorant... I didn't have any marks besides a swollen lip, so I felt like they didn't take it as an immediate threat."



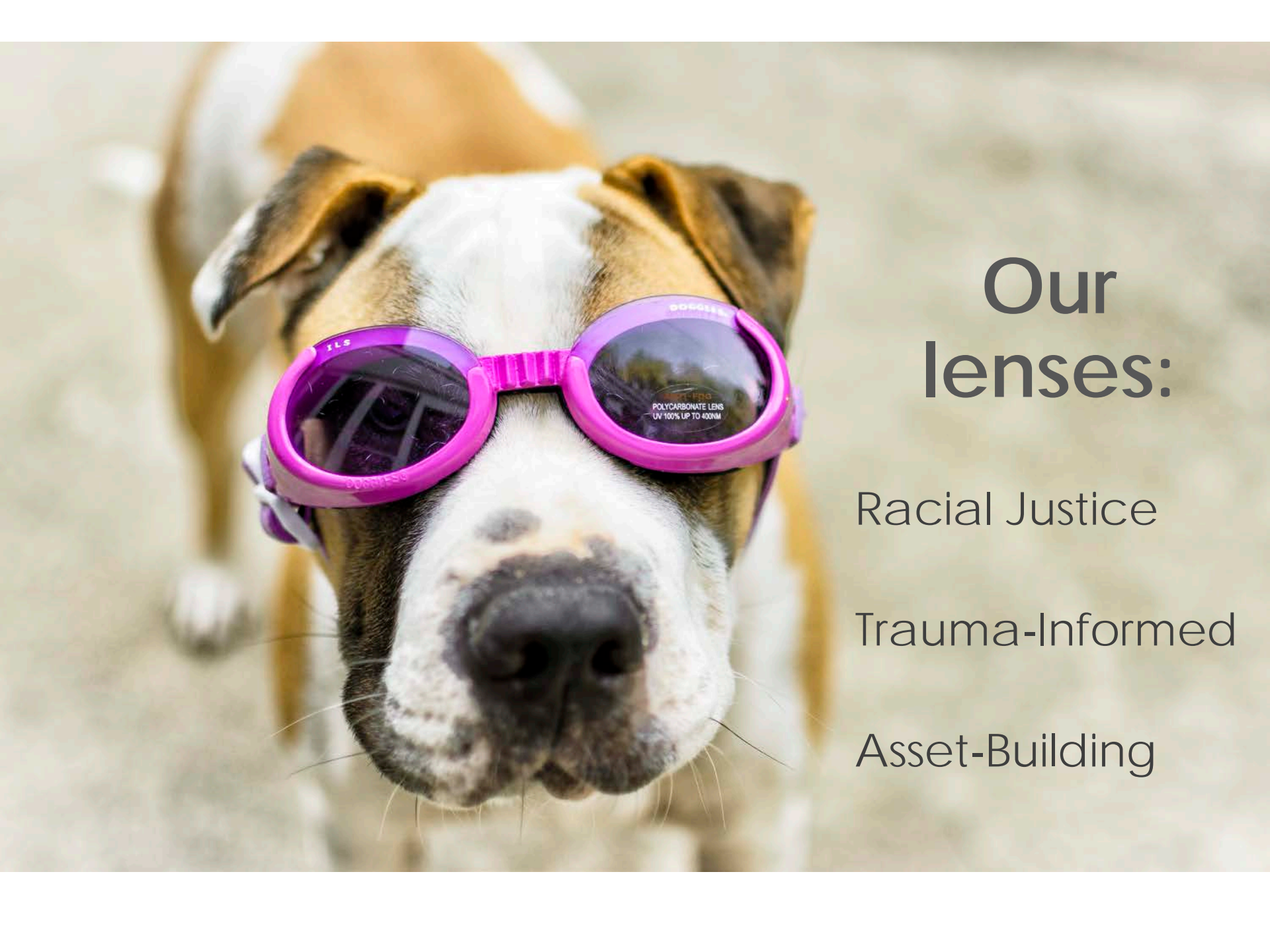
Connecting this to our work...

- What are some ways that systemic racism creates barriers for survivors of sexual and intimate partner violence?

A landscape photograph showing a wide, grassy field in the foreground, leading to a dense forest of tall evergreen trees in the background. The sky is overcast with soft, grey clouds. The lighting suggests a late afternoon or early morning setting, with a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid in the center of the image.

“Once you know some things,
you can't unknow them.
It's a burden that can never
be given away.”

Alice Hoffman



Our lenses:

Racial Justice

Trauma-Informed

Asset-Building

Enhancing Safety & Justice:

Promoting Racial Equality
in Our Work

A Toolkit for Sexual and Domestic Violence Agencies



Organizational:

- Job ads
- Interview questions
- Staff orientation
- Mentoring
- Ongoing education
- Discussion groups

PERPETUATING RACISM WHEEL

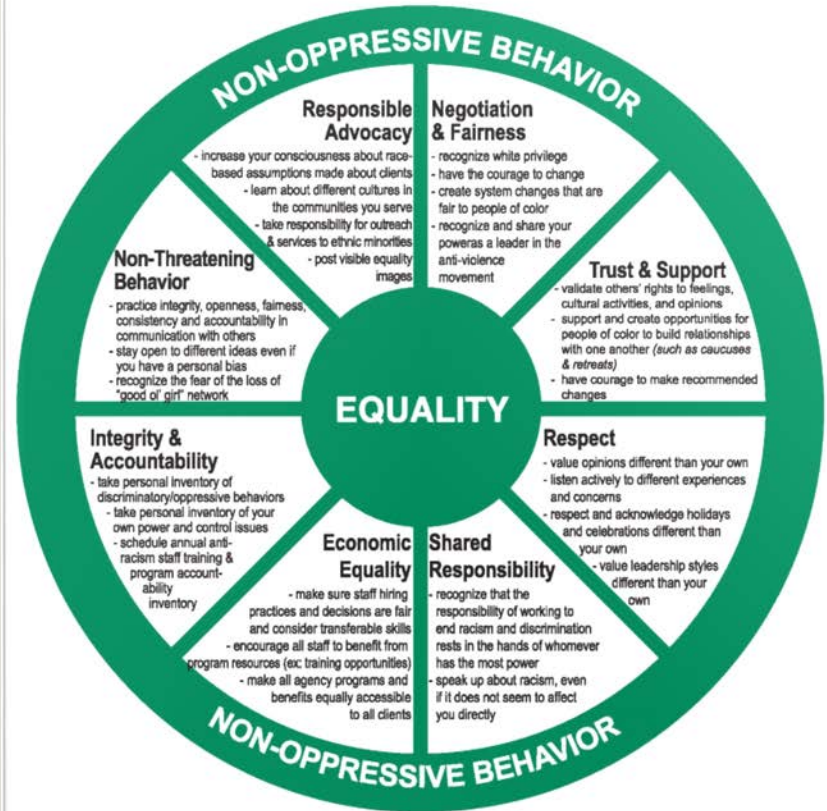
for Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Advocates and Programs



Under development by the Women of Color Caucus and the Social Justice Task Force

DISMANTLING RACISM WHEEL


for Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault Advocates and Programs



Under development by the Women of Color Caucus and the Social Justice Task Force


Organizational

Communications: CORE MESSAGES




Core messages

for community
and
media relations



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTION ALLIANCE



Intersectionality

Privilege and oppression often shape access to help and safety.

- Many people not only experience sexual and intimate partner violence, they also experience layers of oppression. Examples of oppression include racism, ableism, homophobia, classism, and sexism.
- Multiple forms of oppression contribute to increased vulnerability to violence, and can make it harder for victims to find the help and support that is responsive to their individual needs.
- Strategies designed to combat violence within communities (sexual and intimate partner violence) must be linked to strategies that combat violence directed against communities (i.e. police brutality, prisons, racism, economic exploitation, etc)

The Action Alliance strives to do its work through a racial justice lens.

- Sexual and domestic violence are linked to other forms of oppression, which disproportionately affect women, children, and marginalized people.
- The Action Alliance has a commitment to engage in sexual and domestic violence intervention and prevention through a racial justice lens. This means considering the impact of racism and privilege on how violence operates, and working to dismantle racism at the individual, community, and societal level.

Notes:
In the "Progress Intersection": <http://www.theactionalliance.org/page/intersectionality> Retrieved 5/19/11

Privilege and oppression often shape access to help and safety.
The Action Alliance strives to do its work through a racial justice lens.



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance

July 23 · 🌐

STATEMENT: The Action Alliance mourns the death of Sandra Bland, 28, who was found asphyxiated in a cell at the Waller County Jail (Texas) three days after being arrested during a traffic stop.

Following yesterday's release by Waller County Sheriff's Office of the dashcam video of Ms. Bland's traffic stop, we are deeply disturbed by the behavior displayed by the arresting officer in said video. We condemn the actions of Texas Trooper Encinia toward Ms. Bland, and call on law enforcement professionals, advocates, and others to do the same.

The Action Alliance has a commitment to engage in sexual and domestic violence intervention and prevention through a racial justice lens. Our racial justice work compels us to consider how privilege and oppression operate through violence and to examine how violence maintains unequal distribution of power.

If you find yourself questioning Ms. Bland's actions, we ask you to shift your focus to where professional responsibility lies--on the person in this situation holding the power, authority, and professional training.

As you view the video and follow the investigation of Ms. Bland's death as a possible homicide, please consider how Trooper Encinia's behavior on the video and subsequent investigations may impact people of color who are survivors of trauma and violence who are thinking about calling law enforcement for help.

#blacklivesmatter #SandraBland



Sandra Bland Video Appears to be Edited, Shows Cop Threatened Her With Taser

Dashcam video reveals the arresting officer provided conflicting versions of the arrest and threatened Bland with a Taser.

COLORLINES.COM

3,873 People Reached

80 Likes, Comments & Shares

55 Likes

50 On Post

5 On Shares

5 Comments

4 On Post

1 On Shares

20 Shares

18 On Post

2 On Shares

311 Post Clicks

0 Photo Views

66 Link Clicks

245 Other Clicks

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

3 Hide Post

2 Hide All Posts

0 Report as Spam

0 Unlike Page

Communications: Social media



Why we conduct sexual and domestic violence work through an anti-racism lens, and how you can get involved in racial justice efforts.

Working through an anti-racism lens:

The Action Alliance and its Membership have made a commitment to conduct sexual and domestic violence work through an anti-racism lens because we recognize that racism contributes to sexual and domestic violence, hinders survivors from obtaining adequate safety and support, and impedes justice and accountability for perpetrators.

Our Guiding Principles, adopted by the Membership in 2004, demonstrate our commitment to ensuring that historically marginalized or oppressed communities are active participants in all aspects of the Action Alliance.

Recognizing that sexual and domestic violence affects all Victorians, we seek to create an Alliance where those who have been traditionally oppressed in society and/or marginalized in anti-violence work have the opportunity to be full and active participants in the Action Alliance. The Action

HOW IS RACISM RELATED TO TRAUMA?

- Racism is trauma - living w/ impact of racism is traumatic
- Living in fear of negative prejudice/stereotyping based on race
- Constant need to prove yourself & your value/dignity matters
- Dr. Jekyll / Mrs. Hyde
 - ↳ No opportunity to be TRUE AUTHENTIC SELF*
- Current & historical "triggers"

BARRIERS - SYSTEMIC RACISM

- Questioning access to Criminal Legal systems
- Leaders/advocates/counselors don't reflect diverse communities impact perception of accessibility
- may not have access to resources to navigate systems successfully
- deference to authority b/c of or based on experience
- Indigenous systems of responding to violence may/may not work, but survivors have limited options

Training:

- Curricula
- Philosophical framework

THE RED FLAG CAMPAIGN

He said if I really loved him, I'd have sex with him

If he really loved you, he wouldn't push you.

Using emotional pressure or physical threats to engage in sexual acts is **COERCION**. When you see a **RED FLAG** in your friend's relationship, say something.

TheRedFlagCampaign.org

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TheRedFlagCampaign.org


Campus Work



**DO
YOU**

Building Youth Resilience Through Creative Expression

Prevention



“She knows I’m not out at my job. Whenever we get in a fight, she threatens to out me.”



L G B T Q
partner abuse
& sexual assault
HELPLINE
1.866.356.6998
Monday-Friday 8am-8pm

You deserve respect, not threats.

866.356.6998

#CallTheHelpline | text: (804) 793-9999 | chat: www.vsdvalliance.org

This publication was funded by the Virginia Department of Health and the Preventive Health & Health Services-Blood, Eyes, and Joint Protection. This project was supported by the Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS) award no. 14-O3476SA. Any views or opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of DCJS or the U.S. Department of Justice.

VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH
Protecting You and Your Environment

Advocacy



“Most of the time he uses my preferred pronoun. But when he is angry he messes it up. It feels like an attack.”



LGBTQ
partner abuse
& sexual assault
HELPLINE
1.866.356.6998
Monday-Friday 8am-8pm

You deserve respect, not a put down.
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#CallTheHelpline | text: (804) 793-9999 | chat: www.vsdvalliance.org

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Advocacy

I deserve:
respect.

That's why I called.

Family Violence & Sexual Assault Virginia Hotline

1.800.838.8238

free. confidential. 24 hours a day

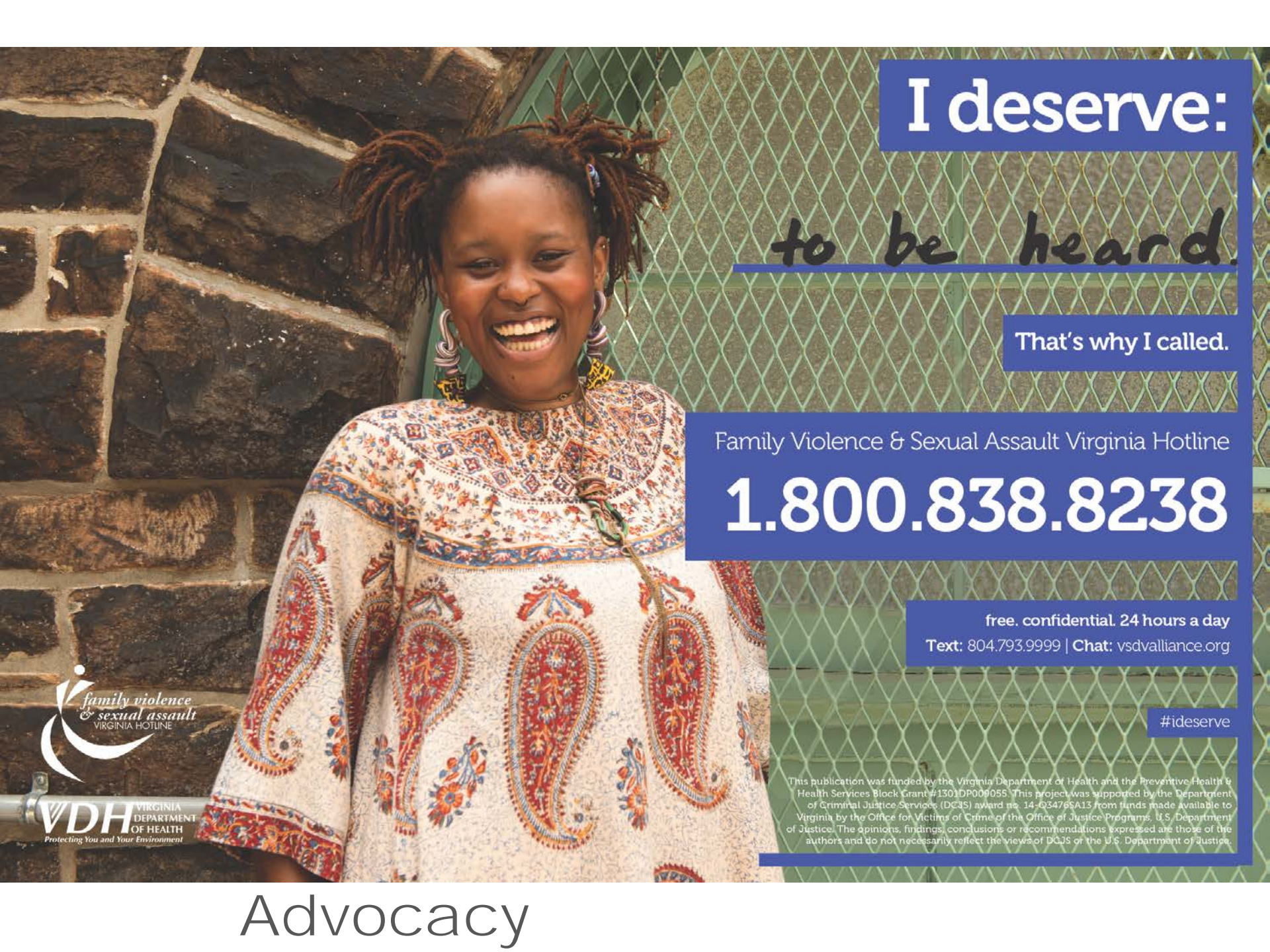
Text: 804.793.9999 | Chat: vsdvalliance.org

#ideserve

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Advocacy



I deserve:

to be heard.

That's why I called.

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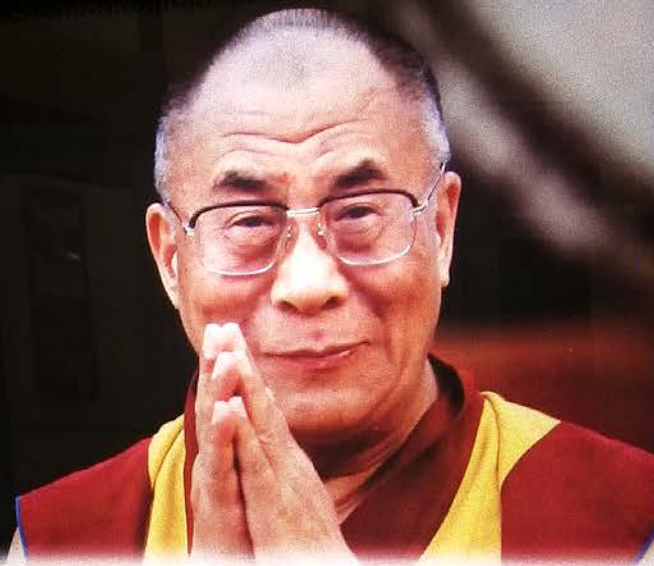
#ideserve

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Advocacy

DIRECTORY



Doesn't just wish for peace.
He works for it.

HOPE

Pass It On.

THE FOUNDATION FOR A BETTER LIFE™

www.forbetterlife.org

JOY MADM
CALIFORNIA

Doing the work

Addressing White Privilege

Ten Action Steps for Individuals & Programs

Be present for the struggle.

Don't avoid the hard work of dismantling racism, though it is often painful and frustrating.

Expand your understanding.

Racism is prejudice against people of a certain race combined with the power of privilege. Any person can be prejudiced, but only a person of privilege can be racist. Racism is interconnected with other oppressions, such as classism, homophobia, and sexism.

Listen.

Allow yourself to hear stories of racism without rushing to judgment or immediately making statements that distance you from the racist acts and make you feel better.

Educate yourself.

Learn about the history of oppression and efforts, like the Civil Rights Movement and Gandhi's work in India, to effect change. Seek out information about people of color who have not been widely acknowledged for their achievements. Expose yourself to the art, history, music, language and literature of people of color.

Recognize the reality of white privilege.

In this country, white people take for granted many unearned privileges based solely on the color of their skin. For example, a white person can assume that when she applies for a job or hunts for an apartment, she will probably be evaluated by people of her own race. And if she makes a mistake at work, nobody will assume that she was hired just because of her skin color.

Look at yourself.

"Where there is no vision, people perish." --James Baldwin

How have you been shaped by the racist culture in which we live? How often do you make assumptions about people based on the color of their skin? Do you ever use language that excludes or demeans people of color? It is important to challenge your assumptions and work on undoing your learned reactions.

Look at the institutions and organizations around you.

Does your workplace value diversity and actively work to confront racism? What about your religious community, school, and/or local government, just to name a few? Be sensitive to any conflict between official policy and actual practice.

Avoid hatred.

"We must be the change we wish to see in the world." --Mahatma Gandhi

Most racism is a product of fear or ignorance. Try not to waste time hating yourself or others for being racist. Hatred can paralyze you and delay real change. Cultivate hope, but demand change. If we want to live in a world where every person is respected and valued, we must begin by practicing compassion in our own lives.

Take action.

Never ignore or excuse a racist act, even if you believe the perpetrator "didn't mean it." Challenge yourself to find constructive ways to confront and dismantle racism, even if it is in yourself or your family. For example, you can avoid laughing at racist jokes and tell those who share that kind of humor how it makes you feel.

Talk about racism with others.

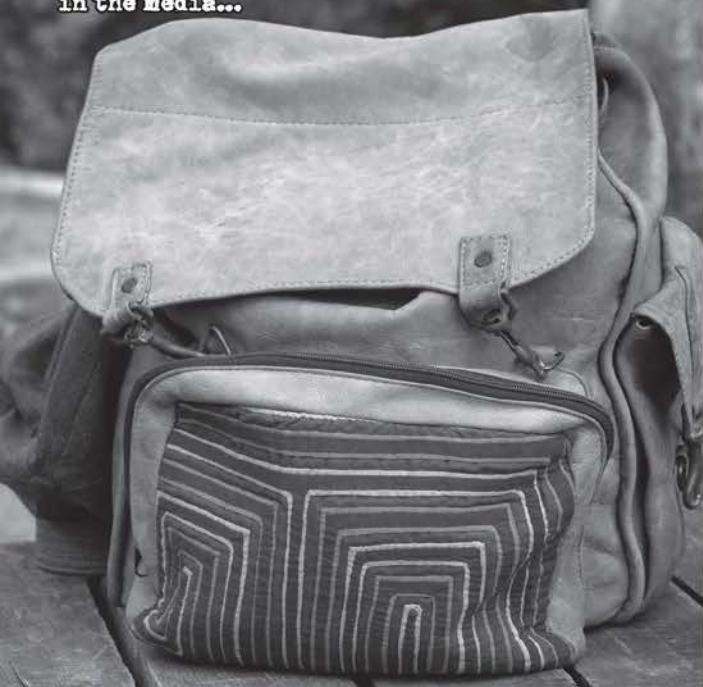
To dismantle racism means to take down the structure of racism one piece at a time. Each time you step outside your comfort zone to engage in open and compassionate dialogue about race with another person, you are dismantling racism. Only in community with each other can we truly confront oppression and our role in its continuation.



I can dress how I want to dress
without it being attributed to my race...

I can go shopping and not be followed
because of my race...

I can see my race represented positively
in the media...



**“White privilege is
an invisible knapsack of
unearned advantages given
at birth to white people”**

--Peggy McIntosh,
Wellesley College Center for
Research on Women*

*Full text available at www.wcwoonline.org

Unpacking White Privilege

What is white privilege?

White privilege means, whether we are overtly racist or not,

all white people benefit from living in a world run by

white people. For the most part, white people write the laws that govern our country, own the stores we shop in, assess our credit scores, etc. White privilege means that we are given the benefit of the doubt more often than people of color when we are being evaluated, such as for an apartment, a job, or a financial loan.

As white people, we are conditioned to deny that this privilege exists. We are taught that “privileges are earned.” Even though we may not have asked for it or want it, white privilege is real and it is harmful.

What harm does it do?

While racism puts people of color at an unfair disadvantage, white privilege puts white people at an unfair advantage over people of color. Many doors open to white people through no effort of our own. Even though you may have worked hard to get where you are today, white privilege means that a person of color born to similar circumstances would need to overcome more obstacles to achieve the same goals.

What can you do about it?

You can start by evaluating your own privilege and how you have benefited from it. Think about how those in power (white people) have maintained privileges for white people at the expense of others--both historically and in present day. Talk to your white friends and colleagues about it. Start working toward a more just world in which we all share the same basic human rights.



Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTION ALLIANCE

Brought to you by the Social Justice Task Force and
the Women of Color Caucus of the Action Alliance

info@vsdvalliance.org
(804) 377-0335



YoungGifted&Black

@CJ_musick_lawya



+ Follow

Yes let's do that: Which photo does the media use if the police shot me down?
[#IfTheyGunnedMeDown](#)

Reply Retweet Favorite More





King Ghidorah @__TrillClinton · 2h

#IfTheyGunnedMeDown what picture would they use
pic.twitter.com/IJ3k3tT63n



 4.6K

 3.1K

[View photo](#)



Dev

@DevinDinero



+ Follow

#IfTheyGunnedMeDown they'd say i was a thug pic.twitter.com/JsLxga0uwv

Reply Retweet Favorite More



RETWEETS

877

FAVORITES

606



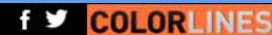
2:25 AM - 11 Aug 2014

Flag media



race forward!

THE CENTER FOR RACIAL JUSTICE INNOVATION



ABOUT RESEARCH PRACTICE PRESS CONTACT DONATE

ABOUT



RESEARCH

- ▶ Cutting edge, original research on pressing racial justice issues.
- ▶ Intersectional approach to how race compounds and intersects with other societal issues, which can be described as "race and..."
- ▶ Strong social change practice.



MEDIA

- ▶ **Colorlines**, a daily news site where race matters with award winning investigative reporting and news analysis.
- ▶ Use of storytelling and multimedia to amplify key issues we cover.
- ▶ Pushing key race stories into the mainstream media.



PRACTICE

- ▶ **Facing Race**, the largest conference for racial justice movement-making, focused on alliance-building, issue framing, and advancing solutions.
- ▶ Speakers, training, consulting services.
- ▶ Action-oriented campaigns, such as Drop the I-Word, which seeks to eliminate the derogatory term "illegal."



RACIAL EQUITY TOOLS



RACIAL EQUITY TOOLS

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SEARCH

FUNDAMENTALS

PLAN

ACT

EVALUATE

CONNECT

CURRICULA

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1700+ resources that can help you create change in your community. Explore the site or click to view our newest resources.



Learn concepts. Find data, lists & tips.

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Examine issues and plan.

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Identify strategies and communicate.

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Evaluate progress and results.

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Racial Equity Tools is designed to support individuals and groups working to achieve racial equity. This site offers tools, research, tips, curricula and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working toward justice at every level – in systems, organizations, communities and the culture at large.



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Key elements of a trauma-informed response

- Safety
- Trustworthiness
- Choice
- Collaboration
- Empowerment



*We need you
defecting from
White supremacy
and changing the
narrative of White
supremacy by
breaking White
silence.*

Alicia Garza, co-founder
Black Lives Matter

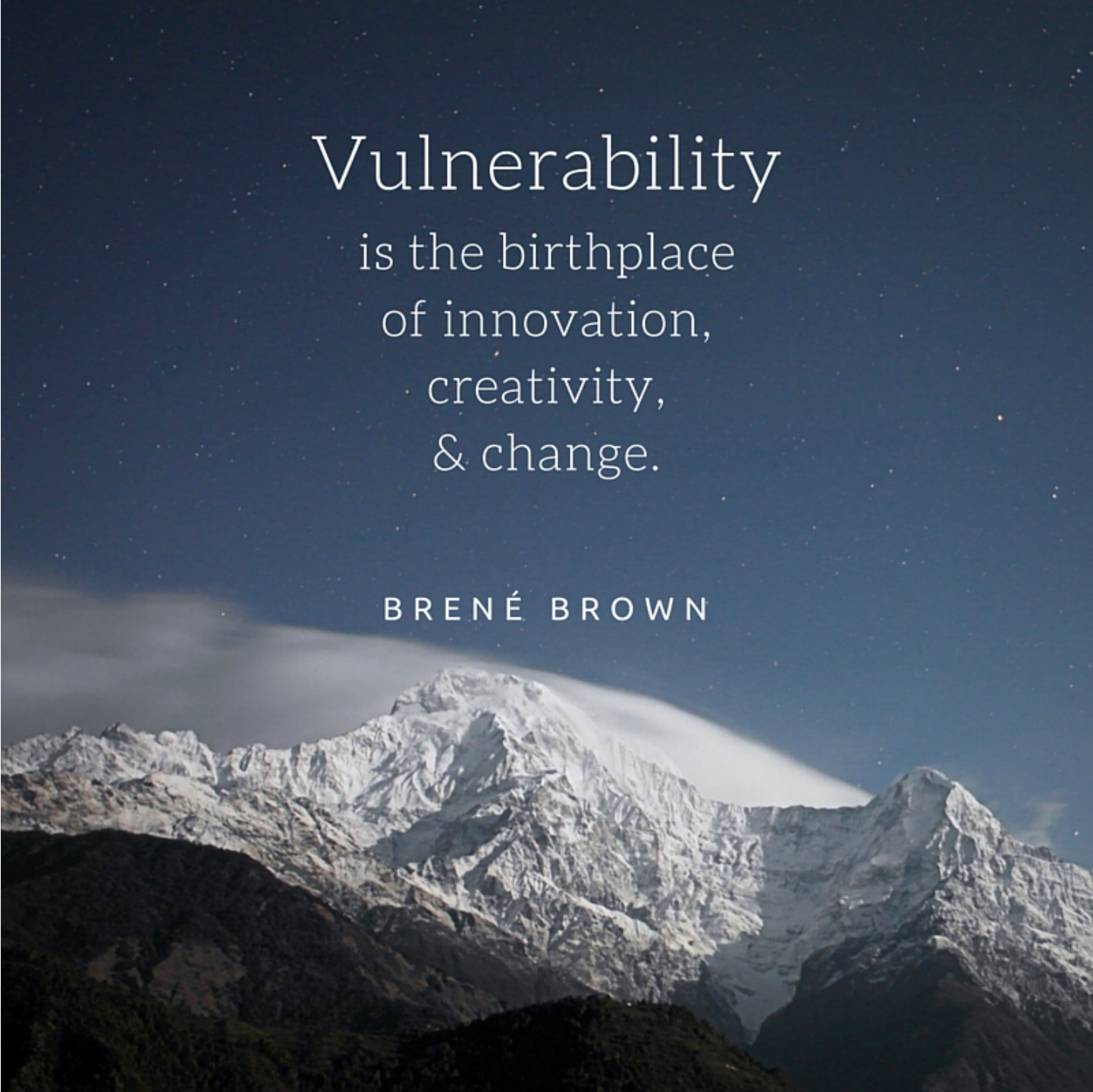
Key elements for racial justice work


- Practice compassion and accountability for ourselves and others
- Call people IN
- Focus on relationships

Vulnerability

is the birthplace
of innovation,
creativity,
& change.

BRENÉ BROWN





*When you
know better,
you do better.*

Maya Angelou,
poet
author
civil rights activist
survivor

Thank you!

Kate McCord,
Communications Director

Virginia Sexual & Domestic Violence
Action Alliance

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Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence
ACTION ALLIANCE