

RISE Field Scan Synthesis Report

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PREPARED FOR





RESearch | **I**NTegration | **S**TRATEGIES | **E**VALUATION

RISE for Boys and Men of Color is a field advancement effort that aims to better understand and strategically improve the lives, experiences, and outcomes of boys and men of color in the United States.

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What Is the RISE Field Scan Initiative?

RISE for Boys and Men of Color believes there is an urgency to build and advance the knowledge of interventions effectively addressing the challenges facing boys and men of color among philanthropic leaders, evaluators, researchers, policy makers, and practitioners. In order to achieve this aim, we invited a select number of research and evaluation firms (some in collaboration with practitioners in the field) to respond to a request for qualifications to engage in field scans to inform our approach. Specifically, we were looking for a deeper understanding of the literature on interventions serving boys and men of color—narrowly defined as Asian and Pacific Islander, Black, Latino, and Native American boys and men. Each field scan addresses the following: 1) a review of the existing literature on effective interventions for boys and men of color within the field areas; 2) a synthesis of the reviewed literature identifying promising interventions for boys and men of color; and 3) recommendations for further research or evaluations to address gaps in our understanding of effective interventions. In addition to reviewing the academic literature, commissioned field scans also include knowledge about effective interventions that may be published outside traditional academic journals. Each of the eight commissioned reports includes a review of both academic and gray literature.

How to Read This Synthesis Report

To provide readers with a broad overview of the state of the literature on evidence-based practices in communities of boys and men of color, this document serves as a synthesis report of the key findings and recommendations contained within the eight reports commissioned by the RISE Field Scan Initiative. Readers should use this report as a summary starting point to delve further into the field scans, which offer detailed investigations of the state of the literature on effective interventions for boys and men of color.

Through the synthesis report, icons are used to alert the reader to the population and field areas to which informational statements pertain. Multiple icons assigned to one statement designate interventions with outcomes at the intersection of more than one field.

Icons used to designate populations:

Asian Americans and Pacific Islander



Black Boys and Men



Native American Boys and Men



Latino Boys and Men



Boys and Men of Color (General)



Icons used to designate fields:

Health, Physical and Mental



Education



Criminal Justice



Human Services










































Economic Opportunity



Who are the RISE Field Scan Authors?

RISE values the importance of having researchers and experts who are aware of how their background and experiences influence all aspects of their research, from the questions asked to the selection of methods and interpretation of findings. RISE also acknowledges the importance of having expertise that is inclusive of the rich diversity of experiences and backgrounds that make up the boys and men of color demographic. RISE Field Scan authors were asked to capture within their reports not only their credentials, but their positions on the topics and populations they studied. In addition to knowing the researcher behind the research, transparency of the research process is important to advancing equitable knowledge production. A consumer of research should be able to easily understand the research design and methods behind the analysis and recommendations offered by the authors. RISE values the transparency of knowledge production. Authors were requested to make their search parameters clear enough for field scan replication. Please refer to the specific RISE Field Scan Report, as designated by the reference symbol in the last column of the table below, for additional information and references.

Authors and Titles of Field Scan Report	Race & Ethnic Population	Fields of Interventions Scanned	Reference Symbol
Bryan McKinley Jones Brayboy; Jessica A. Solyom A Study of Indigenous Boys and Men		 	*
Benjamin Cook The Intersection of the Criminal Justice, Education, and Mental Health Care Systems and Its Influence on Boys and Young Men of Color	   	  	‡
Sherry Hamby Breaking Free from the Web of Violence: Asset-Based Approaches for Boys and Men of Color	   	 	§
Thomas LaVeist A Review of Economic Opportunity and Criminal Justice Programs for Boys and Men of Color	   	 	¶
Silvia L. Mazzula The Latino Boys and Men: Advancing Scholarship and Community-Based Solutions			◇
Ninez A. Ponce The Status of Evaluation and Research on Effective Interventions Serving Boys and Men of Color	   	  	△
Wizdom Powell Masculinities Matter: The Role of Masculinities in Depression, Suicide, and Substance Abuse Among African American, Hispanic/Latino, and Alaska Native/American Indian Boys and Men	   		↕
Daphne C. Watkins Physical and Mental Health Interventions for Black Men in the United States		 	⊗

● AMERICAN INDIAN OR NATIVE AMERICAN
 ● ASIAN AND PACIFIC ISLANDER
 ● LATINO
 ● AFRICAN AMERICAN

 PHYSICAL HEALTH
  MENTAL HEALTH
  EDUCATION
  CRIMINAL JUSTICE
  HUMAN SERVICES
  HUMAN SERVICES

What Is Gray Literature?

The term *gray literature* is often used to refer to research and data produced and disseminated outside of the traditional academic publishing channels. The distinction between academic literature and gray literature is not entirely clear-cut for two major reasons. First, gray literature is often used as a catch-all category for information labeled as nonacademic literature and is often defined by what it is not rather than what it is. Second, some define gray literature not only by its publishing source but also by the source's representation in the established academic canon, that is, the body of work generally accepted as representing a certain field. Some examples of gray literature include program evaluation reports and administrative documents; conference abstracts or papers; hard-to-find studies, reports, or dissertations; governmental or private sector research; and interviews from experts and researchers in the field. Examples of what is and is not gray literature can differ based on the precise definition one uses. For example, some may define gray literature as research that has not been peer reviewed, while others may define it as research from a source that is not easily accessible. Dissertations would be defined as *not* gray literature in the former case but as gray literature in the latter.

Why Is Gray Literature Important?

The gray literature is an important body of information. It is often produced by researchers and practitioners in the field and quickly disseminated via hard-copy materials or online channels. Gray literature is thus able to be both more reflective of and responsive to current happenings in the field. This is particularly important for communities whose experiences are often unrepresented in the traditional academic literature. The gray literature also comes from a broader and more diverse demographic of producers and presenters, which democratizes knowledge production. This expansive network of content production, however, can make finding credible sources of gray literature more challenging.

RISE values the knowledge captured in the gray literature, which too often goes unnoticed. A major objective of the initiative was to compile the innovations and lessons learned in the field by including gray literature (along with the academic literature) on interventions that work to improve the outcomes of boys and men of color. RISE Field Scan authors were asked to give their precise definition of gray literature within their stand-alone reports.

The Value Added of the Gray Literature for the RISE Field Scans

Field scan authors used data uncovered from the gray literature in tandem with research published in the academic literature to inform their analyses and recommendations. Below are some key advantages of executing a review of the gray literature in addition to reviewing more traditional sources.

Connecting language and perspectives across research and practice divides

New terms were discovered and used to expand the investigative scope. For example,

- The terms *status offense* and *disproportionate minority contact* were introduced to our vocabulary through initial exploration of gray literature. These terms helped to broaden the overall search and to find more literature, both academic and gray. ‡
- The gray literature on understanding and reducing violence among boys and men of color tended to focus on the needs of boys and men of color and especially the need for culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive programs for boys and men of color. The gray literature helped us understand the lens through which providers, policy makers, and researchers see these issues. §

Disclosing lesser-known interventions

Local efforts within smaller municipal levels or efforts supported by philanthropic, nonprofit, and corporate sectors were uncovered. For example,

- There is a lot of effort to decrease juvenile justice involvement for youth on the county, city, or state level often in collaboration with nonprofit research or advocacy organizations, such as the Vera Institute of Justice's Status Offense Reform Center, the Justice Policy Institute's Models for Change initiative, the Urban Institute, and Strategies for Youth. A major funder for juvenile justice reform research and projects is the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. We would not have known of these organizations and their work without scanning the gray literature. ‡
- Without the inclusion of the information from the scan of community-based approaches, 11 of the 16 programs would have gone unnoticed as they are not published in the academic literature base. Moreover, nothing related to gay, bisexual, transgendered, and queer (GBTQ) Latino communities would have been discovered, and the accompanying information about the nuanced ways in which these communities define masculinity in the context of sexual health would have been overlooked. ◇

Identifying urgent research questions needed to advance effective interventions

A review of the gray literature offers opportunities to lessen the misalignment between the questions by practitioners in the field and the questions addressed in academic literature. For example,

- The gray literature taught us that there is a real hunger in the field for more specific information on each community of color and frustration that there is not more information available to answer the pressing questions faced by providers in all settings every day. §
- A critical examination of gray evidence on the physical and mental health of Black men helped us to understand the gaps in knowledge and practice that exist for this already underserved population. Often, the health interventions that receive the most attention are those that are present in the empirical literature. However, what we learned from this field scan are that many of the most innovative interventions for health promotion for Black men may not be featured in a "mainstream" academic journal; rather, some of them exist on an organization's website or in their program materials. ¶

Substantiating data and providing nuance to information published in the academic literature on boys and men of color

For example,

- Regarding specific results, we generally found that the gray literature was largely consistent with the findings from the peer-reviewed literature. §
- Many of the intervention programs identified in the gray literature provide insight into the interventions that are currently widely disseminated. Many demonstrated preliminary success and generated toolkits ready for replication but were not formally evaluated. Findings from the gray literature reinforced some of the central themes of the scan. ‡
- The gray literature enhanced what was learned from the systematic review and helped field scan authors create more nuanced recommendations. ⚡
- The value added by the nonacademic sources of knowledge for this scan was tremendous. First, few programs have any information published in academic settings. Hence their knowledge lives and stays in their communities and the networks of other organizations that they are immediately connected to. This scan highlights that a traditional scan of gray literature would have still overlooked these programs as only two organizations were found in a Google scholar search. The methodology of using a snowball sampling strategy with an established network of organizations (with the five original organizations) and partnering with a community-based organization to do this work allowed this scan to uncover organizations that would have been missed otherwise. ◇

- In many ways, for us, the gray literature was an important source of data. There were very few peer-reviewed articles that were actually useful for our research questions. The gray literature opened up new ways for thinking about what factors are crucial in the daily lives of Native boys and men. Recommendations are profoundly influenced by the gray literature. It is clear that there is work happening to address the needs of boys and men of color; however, it is not being published in the research literature. *

Limitations of the Literature and the RISE Field Scan Initiative

Below are some common limitations faced by the authors in the execution of their field scans and in the drafting of the synthesis report:

- **Limited representation in academic literature**

Across the field scans, academic literature on prevention and intervention programs targeting boys and men of color was severely limited. Additionally, studies often used a deficit-based model or lacked a culturally relevant approach to research design, analysis, and recommendations.

- **Limited representation in the gray literature**

Generally, the gray literature expanded the information available on programs and interventions targeting boys and men of color. Still, the gray literature could not quite make up for inadequate attention to this population. Interventions targeting Asians and Indigenous boys and men were particularly challenging to find.

- **The value added of the gray literature**

Despite the scarcity of research in both the academic and gray literature, innovative interventions for boys and men of color were uncovered during the RISE field scan process. While some of these promising interventions are not rigorously evaluated, they do offer contextual and nuanced information that is useful to advocates of the boys and men of color community. Field scan authors used the new information uncovered from the gray literature in tandem with research published in the academic literature to inform their analyses and recommendations.

- **Limitations of the RISE Field Scan Initiative**

Although many of the limitations of the RISE Field Scan Initiative stem from the scarcity of knowledge in the academic and gray literature, there was also a lack of coverage in the areas investigated by the authors. Additional field scans need to be conducted on the Asian subdemographic across all five fields; health and education interventions of Latino and Indigenous men; and economic interventions across the boys and men of color spectrum. Field scans specific to boys and men of Middle Eastern descent and boys and men who are biracial were not within the scope of this project. Field scans for particular subcategories of men within the broader boys and men of color population as they relate to immigration, religion, and sexuality would be beneficial. One field scan offers a review of the gray literature on interventions targeting Latino boys and men who also identify as gay, bisexual, transgendered, or queer.

The research base should be reflective of the U.S.'s increasingly diverse population. Most of the programs we located focused on African American and Latino American participants; the research base is even slimmer for American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, and multiracial boys and men. Every individual should have access to high-quality and culturally appropriate violence prevention and intervention programs. §

Summary Insights from the RISE Field Scans

Below are common insights extracted from the field scans that were similar across field areas and among the boys and men of color subpopulations.

- Positive racial identity is significant in the formation of resilience of boys and men of color to individual and systemic forms of discrimination.
- Boys and men of color need support in reconciling mainstream and cultural understandings of success where they are not aligned or where indicators of mainstream success do not necessarily lead to individual achievements owing to the burden of discrimination. For example, one can graduate from high school and still not find a job, or one can avoid risky behavior but still get entangled in the criminal justice system.
- In addition to amassing more research on interventions that work for boys and men of color, there is also a need to construct research in a way that facilitates the understanding of the nuances within a population's experience. New research must take the time and display the necessary conscientiousness to highlight the areas of intersectionality while engaging in interdisciplinary research designs.
- There is a need to acknowledge and address the dual power of norm prevalence. Deficit-based approaches in knowledge production and program design can reinforce negative stereotypes for boys and men of color. Strength-based orientations that focus on protective factors and resilience characteristics are important for advancing the effectiveness of work with boys and men of color.
- While it was fairly easy to find statistics on outcomes of boys and men of color, such as X percent are arrested or X percent are held back a grade in school, it was very challenging to locate statistics on the mechanisms that influence outcomes. For example, if X percent of boys are obese, for the Y percent who are not, which resilience characteristics and protective factors act as mechanisms?
- Male-only interventions have been found to be effective for boys and men of color.
- There is an unmet need for services and programs that are inclusive of gay, bisexual, and transgendered men and boys and male-of-center individuals.
- The color and gender of the staff used for interventions matter for boys and men of color. Women and nonminority staff play vital roles in tandem with minority male staff. More formal research on the effect of the gender of staff is needed.
- There is a lack of standardization of collecting race and ethnic data in both the academic and gray literature. There is also a lack of standardization in distinguishing findings by gender.

Community-based practitioners often work alongside diverse communities to develop creative solutions to not only combat individual issues but solutions that intervene at the community level. This source of knowledge is all too often ignored, keeping an entire field of initiatives in the dark and ignored. ◇

- There is a major gap between what is occurring in the field and what is published and available in both the academic literature and gray literature.
- There is an unmet need for interventions that affect systemic discrimination. Interventions that prioritize constructing forgiving environments in addition to offering self-regulation skills tackle both sides of the coin in supporting boys and men of color.
- There is an increasing importance of the use of social media in both outreach and programming in advancing outcomes of boys and men of color.



Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Criminal Justice

Field scan authors researched and analyzed characteristics that were found to be important for programs serving boys and men of color. Below is a reference table that lists characteristics by field (Health, Education, Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Economic Opportunity) and by race and ethnic subpopulation. Each characteristic is followed by a symbol denoting the RISE Field Scan Report that provides more detailed information about the intervention's broader approach or program model as well as details of its effectiveness.

There were times when I made poor choices, times where I was adrift. The only difference between me and a lot of other young men is that I grew up in a forgiving environment.

—PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

Among the many initiatives we have reviewed, constructing a more forgiving environment for boys and men of color has been unambiguous, if not absolutely necessary. ‡

Population	Intervention characteristic
	Programs that included content related to redefining masculinity, developing a range of specific strengths (such as self-regulation or career development), and promoting overall well-being (such as by teaching general cognitive restructuring principles or mindfulness) showed the most promising results. §
	All-male programs reported better results than mixed-gender, including majority male programs. Boys and men of color may benefit more from single-gender programs, even in comparison to programs with a majority-male participant pool. §
	Deficit-based approaches (focusing on risk and negative aspects of a person's life) have not been very successful, with most reviews indicating modest or null results. Some programs have even documented backlash in participants, that is, worse outcomes after the program than before it. §
	Social support of various kinds and higher school engagement were found to be protective in multiple studies. Although several other protective factors were identified in individual studies, few other clear patterns emerged. §
	Quality diversion programs, such as the Adolescent Diversion Program, have demonstrated effectiveness in helping youth avoid the first contact with the courts, thereby avoiding the inequities of the juvenile justice system. ‡
	Programs that promoted overall well-being, through generalized cognitive restructuring, mindfulness, career development, or other approaches, were among the most effective and should be applied more broadly. §
	Group interventions on moral reasoning and anger management that fail to address the context of lived experience of boys and men of color are limited in their effectiveness. For example, anger management groups that do not address risks of being "punked" are unlikely to be effective. ‡
	Interventions that focus on interpersonal relationships and cultural connectedness particularly for boys and men of color can lead to adverse effects. For example, strengthening family relationships could be problematic if the families in question also have problems with violence, addiction, or related issues. §
	The intervention with the greatest evidence base in supporting at-risk youth is Multisystemic Therapy, a comprehensive model that affects the individual, family, community, and systems, such as schools, courts, after-school programs, and social services. This therapy is not clinic based, so clinicians meet families in convenient settings instead of mandating them to come to a clinic at a certain date and time. ‡



Although race is a purely social construct with no biological basis, race nonetheless touches every aspect of violence and victimization. Discrimination against people of color over many generations, including overt attacks and unintentional slights based on implicit biases contributes to the inequitable burden of victimization. §

Oyáte kin nípi kta cha léchamun.

I do it so my People live. It is important that researchers also understand and engage language and culture into their work. We propose that programs be built on the strengths of language and culture, rooted in place, to assist tribal peoples in creating futures of their own making. *

Population	Intervention characteristic
	Functional Family Therapy, an intervention for youth referred for behavioral or emotional problems, has shown demonstrated success with youth, including with boys of color. Underlying its success are the five treatment phases; the final phase improves the family's capacity to use community resources so that the progress is sustained. ‡
	Resistance to peer pressure is most likely to increase and develop during middle adolescence, between the ages of 14 and 18. In other words, middle adolescence may be a critical period for developing individuals' capacity to resist peer pressure. ‡
	Social support is the protective factor that has been most studied among African American males, and it has generally been found to be effective. Social or family support was associated with ameliorated depression among African American youth exposed to violence and reductions in abusive behavior among batterers. §
	Although Rites of Passage is considered to be a promising culturally sensitive intervention for young African American males ¹ , no formal evaluation was conducted to determine the intervention's impact on juvenile delinquency. ¶
	Contrary to the association of cultural-connectedness programs with adverse results, interest in traditional culture among American Indian and Alaska Native boys and men is associated with less involvement in violence. §
	Higher levels of the protective factors of parental monitoring, self-efficacy, and interest in tribal culture were associated with less violent behavior. §
	Activities related to traditional culture and that promote social ties, such as hunting, were found beneficial for reducing exposure to violence for Alaska Native participants. §
	Returning to tribal values and developing cultural and bicultural competence framed as "new warriors" were keys to solving domestic violence and other social challenges, including those occurring in school settings. *
	In a study of youths of Cambodian, Vietnamese, Chinese, and Laotian/Mien descent, higher collectivist values (a concept related to having a sense of belonging within a group) was associated with less self-reported delinquency, while greater individualism was associated with more delinquency. §








¹Harvey, A. R., & R. B. Hill. 2004. "Afrocentric Youth and Family Rites of Passage Program: Promoting Resilience Among At-Risk African American Youths." Social Work 49(1): 65-74.



Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Education

There seems to be a gap in what is happening on the ground compared to what is being published in scholarly journals. We found no publication incorporated racial markers, and only one study measured racial identity. Given the documented evidence on the role of skin color and race on the lived experiences of Latinx communities, this is alarming.

In our review of community programs, we found that community programs are exploring race in nuanced ways, including at the core of many programs discussing racial identity and experiences of racism, discrimination, immigration experience and acculturation. ◇

Population	Intervention characteristic
	Family and community members' expectations about educational attainment influence the outcomes of young men and boys of color. ‡
	Community engagement and resource utilization positively influence African American adolescent males' educational expectations. African American adolescent males who rated their neighborhoods higher in quality also reported higher personal and educational aspirations compared to those who reported a lower neighborhood quality rating. ‡
	Cultural activities, having a strong personal and cultural identity, and practicing spirituality enhanced education success. *
	Social support from faculty and staff mentors was the most powerful noncognitive factor among undergraduate Native students. *
	Having Native instructors, access to classes on Native topics, and curriculum centered on Indigenous roots, along with applying learned skills in life, contribute positively to Native student persistence and success. *
	Among Native Hawaiian students in grades 6 through 12, findings revealed cultural attachment, connection to 'Ohana (family), connection to 'Aina (land), and connection to cultural practices held strong correlations with achievement motivation. *
	Peer support from family members was a particularly dominant theme to help redress challenges and inequitable education outcomes for American Indian boys. One study found monthly talking circles reduced adolescent truancy by 25 percent. *












Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Human Services

Field scan authors researched and analyzed characteristics that were found to be important for programs serving boys and men of color. Below is a reference table that lists characteristics by field (Health, Education, Criminal Justice, Human Services, and Economic Opportunity) and by race and ethnic subpopulation. Each characteristic is followed by a symbol denoting the RISE Field Scan Report that provides more detailed information about the intervention's broader approach or program model as well as details of its effectiveness.










Findings suggest that racial and ethnic stereotypes are seeping into the programming choices made by providers working with boys and men of color. Given the lack of a scientific database to guide decision making, it is not surprising that other factors are influencing program design. The finding that AI/AN [American Indian/ Alaska Native] and Asian American boys and men were more likely to be offered prevention <AU: prevention for what? This statement is unclear. I realize it's a quote, but without context, the point is difficult to grasp.> than African American and Latino American boys and men also suggests possible influences of positive and negative stereotypes. These patterns may suggest the existence of implicit biases held by researchers and providers. §

"It's not just this one kid." There is a need to identify system-level risk factors when supporting boys and men of color. ‡

Population	Intervention characteristic
	Although small in number, programs focused on redefining masculinity generally have good outcomes. ◇
	The use of practice-based evidence, particularly among communities of color, has been increasing in value. ◇
	Promising programs combined peer-to-peer level relationships with art expressions and found the combination instrumental for creating environments of change. ◇
	Interviews with community practitioners highlighted the importance of understanding within group differences (e.g., backgrounds, countries of origin, language) to effectively work with Latino communities. ◇
	Having the facilitators of interventions be members of the community they were serving was important for understanding the nuances and intersections of identities in each subethnic community. ◇
	Attending to participant urgent needs, such as providing information on obtaining a driver's license, also allowed promising interventions to build trust and understand the entire context of participants' circumstances. ◇
	Promising programs allowed flexibility to respond to the individual needs of participants, such as challenges caused by immigration, poverty, or civil war. ◇
	Promising programs prioritized providing spaces for Latino men and boys to heal from their own trauma in all of its forms (e.g., interpersonal and collective). ◇
	Promising programs found theories—such as critical consciousness; the ability to perceive social, political, and economic oppression; and taking action against the oppressive elements of society—as key to transformation for their participants. ◇



Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Mental Health











Population	Intervention characteristic
	Masculinities and male socialization processes can also be leveraged as strengths to produce positive health outcomes among boys and men of color.
	Statistically significant correlations exist between level of enculturation and posttraumatic growth (PTG). Traditional values and practices were found to promote higher PTG, resilience, and life satisfaction. According to this research, cultural wisdom in addressing well-being is key to healing. *
	Effective interventions serving American Indian boys and men accentuated Indigenous knowledge, created space for peer networks and sharing, and most important, acknowledged traumas specific to American Indian boys and men in order to provide a space for healing. *
	Research on internet-based interventions suggests that online settings can serve as “communities” for Black men, particularly those who are dealing with more stigmatized challenges regarding their mental health. †
	Interventions that focus on larger systems of power (such as racism) may help reduce the stigma of mental health problems among Black men. Framing mental health problems as a cause of broader social and racial inequality may make Black men more willing both to disclose mental health problems and to seek services. †
	Active learning and multimodal approaches that focus on other challenges (e.g., employment and problem-solving skills, gender norms resocialization) appear to be beneficial to outcomes of mental health interventions for Black men. †
	African American adolescent males who perceived more social support through their racial identity had less internalization of depressive symptoms. ‡
	For African American men, findings revealed that masculinity is significantly associated with depression, meaning that more adherence to male role norms is associated with increases in depressive symptoms. There was limited evidence to conclusively link masculinity to substance abuse and suicide in this population. †
	Among Latino men, most studies focused on the influence of machismo and substance abuse, particularly alcohol abuse and binge drinking. Findings show links between machismo and alcohol abuse among Hispanic and Latino men. Few studies detected significant associations between machismo and depression among these populations, which may be due to unidimensional measures used for machismo. †



Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Physical Health


Black men in the United States face a disproportionate burden of preventable morbidity and mortality rates compared to other groups. Of all the health concerns faced by Black men, mental health challenges may be among the most stigmatized. Research suggests that Black men have more adverse life experiences than men of other racial/ethnic groups, and consequently, experience poorer mental health. ¶

There is an urgent need for more research on strengths among boys and men of color. This may be the single biggest research priority because, this lack literature/research leaves providers “flying blind.” One effect suggested by our results is that racial stereotypes, rather than science, are influencing the content of programming offered to boys and men of color. §

Population	Intervention characteristic
	The body of evidence linking physical activity and nutrition programs to health and education is strong. Increased physical activity, brief breaks, physical education classes, and after-school programs are all associated with improved educational outcomes. Δ
	Across health conditions, specifically in type 2 diabetes care, when the use of culturally tailored forms of health communication were incorporated, there were marked improvements in adherence to medication and lifestyle changes. ¶
	Social media and mobile technologies have been tested as promising terrain for engaging both younger and older individuals for health messaging and, increasingly, health behavior change. ¶
	Peer interventions, such as barbershop models, are shown to be particularly effective since Black men are engaging in a routine activity in a familiar setting and receiving health information from someone they know. ¶
	Using a diverse range of interventions, various strategies work to address the complex health needs of Black men. Type 2 diabetes may be one of the few health conditions for which a range of interventions has been used. ¶
	Older Black men, in particular, have been drawn toward faith-based initiatives for managing outcomes, such as early detection of prostate cancer, control of diabetes or hypertension, and dietary changes. ¶
	Interventions in the neighborhoods where Black men reside and programs that have staff members from the community resulted in more successful programming. ¶
	Using community leaders to help foster engagement with health services is a proven intervention model for influencing behaviors regarding cancer screening, hypertension, diabetes control, cardiovascular risk, and HIV prevention. ¶
	The Affordable Care Act expanded health care coverage for younger and lower-income Black men who were often excluded from eligibility criteria for Medicaid. ¶
	Using peer survivors of health conditions as advocates for screening proved to be powerful in disseminating information to Black men. ¶























Important Intervention Characteristics for Boys and Men of Color and Economic Opportunity

Population	Intervention characteristic
	Programs that integrate college and career preparation, such as Year Up or GED Bridge to College, present strong evidence that focusing on career development can lead to economic benefits among low-income youth. ¶

This section contains an inventory of programs that have been found in the academic or gray literature to be exemplary programs for addressing the challenges boys and men and color face. Please refer to the corresponding Field Scan Report, as indicated by the reference symbol, to read more about each program model. This section also embeds the work of these interventions in the broader context of the inequality and structural conditions that boys and men of color face in their quest to succeed.

Exemplary and Promising Programs in Physical and Mental Health

Racial and Ethnic Approaches to Community Health (REACH) used an empowerment-based approach with community health workers delivering diabetes self management education, home visits, and accompaniment to clinic visits. Black male participants had significantly greater improvements in blood sugar levels and diabetes understanding than control-group members. ⌘		
Black Barbershop Health Outreach Program uses role modeling, positive peer pressure, and the “captive audience” strategy, resulting in increased health literacy, self-empowerment, and the identification of multilevel barriers to care for Black men. ⌘		
A church-based intervention delivered by a race matched health educator significantly increased Black men’s knowledge of prostate cancer and self efficacy regarding early detection as evidenced by a pre post test design. Using decision aids, such as a prostate cancer “road map,” supports Black men in understanding when to safely forego screening and treatment. ⌘		
The ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences Framework) would provide this foundational tool for all practitioners and interventionists interested in addressing toxic childhood exposures. The ACEs has been adapted to serve various settings and has been retooled to assess specific childhood exposures related to health and toxic stress in children. ⚡		
The Building Resiliency and Vocational Excellence (BRAVE) Program, a violence-prevention program for young, African American men, uses a strength based approach to promote positive social competence, problem-solving skills, and ability to cope with challenging life events. ⌘		
The Young Black Men, Masculinities, and Mental Health (YBMen) project is a Facebook based intervention that provides mental health education and social support. The YBMen project has potential to improve the health and well-being of men by providing nontraditional resources that are easily accessible, culturally sensitive, and gender specific. ⌘		
Oh Happy Day! Program is an adaptation of an existing intervention, Coping with Depression course, for African American adults with major depressive disorder. There were significant declines in depression after the end of the intervention. Although not targeted specifically toward men, African American men experienced more mental health benefit than women. ⌘		
The Prodigy Cultural Arts Program increases self-regulation skills and prevents delinquency. Hispanic youth showed statistically significant improvements in internalizing behaviors (depression, anxiety, etc.), externalizing behaviors (aggression, disruptive behaviors, etc.), academic self-efficacy (beliefs they can do well in academics), and family functioning (communication, family rules, etc.) ⌘		
The Real Men Real Depression campaign aims at reducing the stigma toward depression among boys and men of color. Social media campaigns, such as the #YouGoodMan and #ItsOkToTalk, have increased the visibility of mental health among men and deconstructed previous misconceptions about help-seeking. ⚡		
By establishing male-centered health services, like the Young Men’s Clinic (YMC), providers may be able to further promote preventive screening and healthy lifestyles in this population. ⚡		

Exemplary and Promising Programs in Education

The School Referral Reduction Protocol in Clayton County, Georgia, has reduced juvenile court referrals from schools by more than 50 percent, decreased the number of youth of color referred to court by 60 percent, and increased the high school graduation rate by 20 percent in Clayton County. Data collected from schools (attendance, graduation, and grades) and criminal justice systems (police and court records) have demonstrated preliminary success and a potential successful model for boys of color. ‡



The West Valley Community Truancy Board in Spokane, Washington, saw a 41 percent drop in the number of truancy petitions that reached contempt status and 94 percent of its truancy cases without further court involvement. West Valley School District truant students were more likely to graduate than truant students in comparison groups. The success of their model may be promising for boys of color. ‡



Modeled after the Milwaukee WrapAround model, the School-Based Diversion Initiative in Connecticut and the Responder Program from Ohio are school-based programs intended to reduce arrests and prevent unnecessary involvement with the juvenile court system. In both cases, the programs show promise, linking youth and families with community-based services, such as mental health care, substance abuse treatment, mentoring, tutoring, and a range of social services. ‡



The Healthier Options for Public Schoolchildren (HOPS) program, implemented in four Florida schools where the student population was largely Hispanic, was found to improve body mass index percentiles and math scores. Δ



Fast Track screens children in kindergarten and implements a multiyear program from first to tenth grade that includes home visits, parent training, and child group sessions concerning social skills. Fast Track children are less likely to develop conduct disorders or engage in criminal behavior but have not shown long-term improvement in grade promotion or graduation. Δ



The Healthy People/Healthy Economy Coalition includes programs targeted at raising student physical activity in elementary and middle schools with a participating population of 83.5 percent Latino, majority female. The authors found that higher physical activity was associated with higher standardized test scores in math and reading; school attendance was not affected. Δ



Hip-Hop to Health is a notable example of a physical activity program that has been used successfully in school settings and targeted to communities of color, but it has not been evaluated for both health and education outcomes. Δ



COPE (Creating Opportunities for Personal Empowerment) Healthy Lifestyles TEEN (Thinking, Emotions, Exercise, and Nutrition) is an educational and cognitive behavioral skills-building program noted for its focus on a minority population: Hispanic adolescents. However, it did not include academic outcomes beyond changing attitudes toward healthy habits. Δ






















The Brown Boi Project has created educational tools centered on promoting healthy masculinities among school-aged youth in California. ↓









FITKids, SPARK, Physical Activity Across the Curriculum (PAAC), Take 10, and Energizers are programs that promote physical activity in and out of school, with demonstrated gains in both health and education outcomes. Δ



Exemplary and Promising Programs in Criminal Justice

<p>Coaching Boys into Men is an exemplary violence-prevention program altering conceptualizations of masculinity and male gender norms that is specifically geared toward male, high school athletes. §</p>		
<p>Caught in the Crossfire is specifically geared toward youth who are already victims of violence and is a promising model for reducing the likelihood of perpetrating violence. §</p>		
<p>The Coping Power Program is an example of an effective program for middle school youth, a key developmental transition point, for reducing rates of substance abuse and other risky behaviors. §</p>		
<p>The Adolescent Diversion Program (Michigan State) is a strengths-based, advocacy-oriented program that helps youth avoid the first contact with the courts, thereby avoiding the inequities of the juvenile justice system; it may offer a promising model for boys and men of color. ‡</p>		
<p>Becoming a Man (BAM), a school-based intervention, attempts to help youth slow down their thinking, recognize their automatic responses, and consider whether those responses are contextually appropriate. With more research on potential adverse effects, the program shows promise for both Black and Latino boys. ‡</p>		
<p>The Multi-Agency Resource Center (MARC) in Calcasieu Parish, Louisiana, “links youth facing potential status offense or low-level delinquency charges and their families to services in the community that can most directly address their needs and facilitate timely access to those services.” MARC successfully reduced rates of recidivism, case processing time, and the number of cases that enter the system. This model may be promising for boys of color. ‡</p>	 	
<p>The Children at Risk (CAR) Program was a two-year drug and delinquency prevention program for high-risk adolescents 11 to 13 years of age who lived in neighborhoods with the highest rates of crime, drug use, and poverty in five cities: Austin, Texas; Bridgeport, Connecticut; Memphis, Tennessee; Savannah, Georgia; and Seattle, Washington. Youths in the treatment group, compared with youths in the control and comparison groups, participated in more social and educational activities, exhibited less antisocial behavior, committed fewer violent crimes, and used and sold fewer drugs in the year after the program ended. They were also more likely to report attending a drug or alcohol prevention program. ¶</p>		
<p>Leadership Exchange in Arts and Disability (LEAD) is an expressive arts program aimed at reducing the risk of first-time involvement by minority youth with the juvenile justice system. Using a quasi-experimental design with a nonrandomized sample of 146 African American youth, the program compared a group involved in the LEAD expressive art curriculum with an after-school control group. Outcome measures included protective factors, behavioral self-control, self-esteem, and resilience. All four of the outcomes were statistically significant for the LEAD group over the control group. LEAD can be viewed as a promising prevention program. ¶</p>		
<p>The Returning Educated African American and Latino Men to Enriched Neighborhoods (REAL MEN) Program increases young men’s chances of good health and economic and social stability by linking them to employment and educational opportunities after being released from jail. Assignment to REAL MEN significantly reduced the odds of substance dependence one year after release, reduced time spent in jail (29 fewer days) compared with the control group, and increased the likelihood of attending school or finding work in the year after release. ¶</p>		

Exemplary and Promising Programs in Human Services

<p>The Hombres Unidos Contra la Violencia Familiar project helps Latino men recognize the prevalence of sexual and intimate partner violence in their lives and communities. The program is notable because it relates to men's nurturing capacities and the effects they have on their communities at large. §</p>		
<p>The Family and Community Violence Prevention Program (FCVPP) focuses on personal, academic, and career development, family bonding, and cultural and recreational enrichment. There were differences among groups, with Latino American youth reporting increases in violent behaviors and African American youth reporting decreases. The comparison across racial and ethnic groups is a model for examining differential outcomes among subgroups of boys and men of color. §</p>		
<p>Programs such as RezRIDERS, a "multilevel extreme-sport experiential education intervention," encourages community among American Indian youth by addressing historical trauma and cultural protective factors through extreme sports by "shifting high-risk behaviors to a controlled program setting." *</p>		
<p>The Hale Mua Program is an example of the promise of listening to communities, returning to traditional teachings and roles, and engaging in the promise of the future. *</p>		
<p>Survivors' Pathway promotes equality, inclusiveness, and social action through counseling and advocacy services for theGBTQI and Latino communities, survivors of domestic violence, intimate partner abuse, sexual abuse, human trafficking, and other types of victimization. ◇</p>		
<p>The Father-Child Program is designed to help men with children ages prenatal or infant to age 5 develop the attitude, knowledge, and skills to become involved in and connected to their children's lives. This program serves men who live in Washington, DC. ◇</p>		
<p>The Engaging Men Project engages Spanish-speaking Latino immigrant men as allies to learn how to change social norms and end tolerance of family violence. Training lasts five weeks (two-hour sessions) providing opportunities for men to learn about family violence, to examine beliefs that tend to perpetuate violence against women, and to mobilize men to stop and prevent violence in their community. Two community educators recruit male participants from the Spanish-speaking community and facilitate the sessions based on the curriculum, Men United Against Family Violence (Hombres Unidos Contra la Violencia Familiar), developed by Migrant Clinician Network. ◇</p>		
<p>In 2014, the Obama administration launched the My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Initiative to bring local communities, governments, and organizations together to address challenges faced by young men of color in the United States. Nearly 240 communities across the country have accepted the MBK Community Challenge, committing resources to fill opportunity gaps in the lives of young men. In accepting the challenge, communities were tasked with investigating salient policies that affect boys and men of color within their respective communities. This is a promising policy initiative for boys and men of color. ⚡</p>		
<p>Youth Alive implements a rapid assessment of trauma exposure and has been shown to be an emerging tool for those interested in mitigating violence exposure in communities of boys and men of color. Additionally, organizations aimed at addressing the needs of young boys of color should be mindful of adopting a tailored framework of assessing the needs of this population, particularly surrounding issues stemming from childhood trauma. ⚡</p>		

Exemplary and Promising Programs in Economic Opportunity

Year Up is a one-year intensive training program that used hands-on skill development, college credits, and corporate internships to help low-income youth become self-sufficient. Two years after random assignment, these investigators conducted a small-scale impact study. Findings indicated that Year Up participants had annual earnings about \$3,461 higher than the control group. Further, the average hourly wage for Year Up participants was higher than that of the control group, and Year Up participants more often engaged in full-time work. ¹¹



The GED Bridge to College and Careers program offers intensive career-contextualized GED instruction reinforced by counseling support focusing on college. In a small, randomized study, Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) found that one year after enrolling in the program, participants were considerably more likely to have completed the course, passed the GED exam, and enrolled in college than students in the college's standard GED preparation course. ¹¹



Accelerating Opportunity is a program that seeks to change the way in which adults with lower-skilled education approach and matriculate from postsecondary education. This program has two objectives. First, the program seeks to improve community colleges through contextualized, integrated, and accelerated for-credit pathways that provide valued occupational credentials and enhanced supportive services. Second, the program aims to change perceptions of adult education students. While this program seems exciting, a formal evaluation has not yet been conducted. Currently, the Urban Institute is leading an impact evaluation of the program in four states. ¹¹



A national impact study found that Job Corps participants made significant gains in earning high school credentials and vocational certificates; those with criminal histories also had reduced recidivism rates. Significant earnings gains were found in the two years after random assignment, but those gains did not persist after four years. The gains were concentrated among the older participants. Job Corps is a high-cost intervention, but the benefits outweigh the costs for older participants and for taxpayers. ¹¹



Philadelphia Youth Network, a promising initiative, uses comprehensive programs and services to support local disadvantaged youth as they progress from secondary to postsecondary education and into the workforce. ¹¹



Baltimore Youth Opportunity Program, a promising initiative, uses a caring adult model to provide comprehensive support services to achieve participants' academic and employment goals. In an internal evaluation of its program model, YO! Baltimore saw higher earnings for its participants (out-earning a comparison group by 35 percent) and greater labor force attachment. ¹¹



Fathers at Work helps young, low-income, noncustodial fathers support themselves and their children through employment, child support, and parenting services; the program is operated by an experienced workforce. An evaluation using a quasi-experimental design and propensity-score matching found that participants increased their earnings by about \$4,600 and earned twice as much as the comparison group. Participants paid \$52.19 more in child support monthly on average than the comparison group. ¹¹



Sector-based Career Centers are American job centers that provide industry-specific job services and training. A quasi-experimental evaluation showed positive impacts for participants on employment, work stability, and earnings, with those who participated in training receiving the largest benefits from the program. ¹¹



Field Recommendations for Research and Practice

Informed by the review of both the academic and gray literatures, field scan authors offered key recommendations for the advancement of knowledge and practice to better serve boys and men of color. Please refer to the corresponding field scan reports for more information and additional recommendations.

Advancing Knowledge

- Develop comprehensive data sources and rigorous evaluation studies to identify the components of diversion programs that are successful in interrupting the school-to-prison pipeline. Diversion interventions are often inadequately described and contain a host of intervention components. Better description of these interventions is needed. ‡
- Create studies that target how both study dropout and sample pooling may bias the perceived effectiveness of interventions targeted toward boys and men of color. ‡
- In future research and academic publications, define the terms *Latino* or *Hispanic* when discussing people of Latinx origin in general and Latino boys and men specifically, as well as any other racial cultural terms. ◇
- Increase research efforts that highlight the use of subgroup analysis technique to capture intersectional identities. For example, when publishing research studies, move away from reporting a participant's racial cultural characteristics in simple general terms, such as Latino/Hispanic. Researchers and scholars should provide at a minimum at least one other racial cultural identifier (e.g., language, generation status, nativity). ◇
- Increase the number of academic publications and research and evaluation efforts that incorporate the psychological understanding of participants' racial cultural identities (e.g., racial identity, ethnic identity, acculturation level). ◇
- Increase the number of publications that establish the cultural appropriateness of existing tools and measures used in the field by conducting psychometric validation studies. These should also be disseminated to community-based programs. ◇
- Pursue studies to understand the potential value of physically active interventions for boys to improve educational outcomes. Boys generally get more physical activity than girls throughout the day; thus, there tend to be more physical activity programs targeting girls than boys to improve their daily activity. Because boys gravitate to physical activities, physical activity interventions that integrate academic and educational goals could be used to address the special needs and interests of boys. This area of research should be developed with the introduction of rigorously designed intervention studies. Δ
- Support more research focused on how masculinities get beneath the skin of boys and men of color and the biophysiological pathways to health inequities and disparities that drive these associations. ⚡
- Although we know that structural racism contributes to behavioral health outcomes, there is less known about the mechanisms driving these associations or how racism and attitudes toward masculinity interact to increase the risk for depression, substance abuse, and suicide. ⚡

Advancing Practice

- Be aware that stereotypes can influence even the most well-meaning providers. There is no science to support offering self-regulation training to African American boys and men while offering cultural connectedness to American Indian boys and men. Be cautious about selecting content based on what is most commonly offered to a group. Spend time identifying or developing respectful, culturally appropriate content for the populations in your setting. §
- Be cautious about adopting programs that focus on interpersonal relationships and cultural connectedness. Both of these types of content were associated with higher adverse effects. This may be related to underappreciated complexities. For example, strengthening family relationships could be problematic if the families in question also have problems with violence, addiction, or related issues. §

- Black men may have preferences about coping with treatment recommendations that are not clearly understood but that affect their health-related outcomes. They may also experience difficulty navigating the health care system and communicating across a range of health providers. Focus future efforts on drawing Black men into the decision-making process (across all physical and mental health conditions), soliciting their specific preferences and concerns, and providing health care navigation services as needed to coordinate care and overcome material and economic barriers to treatment adherence. ¶
- Include gender norm adherence in future health promotion programs for Black men. This considers how closely Black men adhere to certain gender norms because of their interpretation of gender presentations, actions, and traits. ¶
- Offer future programs and services through specific agencies that could be intentional about how they target Black men who fall into vulnerable subgroups (e.g., services offered by the National Football League for professional football players and services offered through regional and local religious groups for their Black male members). ¶
- Sustain and enhance diversion programs (either pretrial diversion from a court hearing or post-trial diversion from detention) that focus on multilevel, multisystem solutions. ‡
- Add systemic interventions to interpersonal coping strategies to help to further reduce risk behaviors and improve academic performance, while addressing larger issues, such as structural barriers to care, disproportionate minority contact in juvenile justice and school exclusion, and discrimination and negative attitudes from police and social service staff that are relevant for boys and men of color. ‡
- Create programs that are culturally targeted to each group, and be aware that there is a particular need for culturally targeted programs for Native American and Asian boys and young men. ¶
- Replicate evidence-based interventions with different community contexts. For example, can interventions effective in urban areas be effective in suburban or rural areas? ¶
- Consider all-male programs instead of mixed-gender programs. §
- Explore the potential for mutually beneficial partnerships among schools, health care providers, and community mental health organizations. Δ
- Forge partnerships between schools and communities. For example, community involvement has been identified as an important part of preventing obesity in communities of color. Such partnerships could include use of school property by the public for recreation during nonschool hours and implementing comprehensive district-wide wellness policies. Δ
- Assist Indigenous boys and men in both completing their degrees on a higher-education level and in better understanding possible futures. Create Native cultural centers on college campuses to allow young men there both to have a refuge from the daily stressors of being on campuses that are often hostile to them and to engage in community building. *
- Provide pre- and in-service training for all staff on developing, implementing, and maintaining in-class curricula by using culturally conscious ways of instructional design. *
- In school-based health clinics, construct positive narratives around masculinity and mental health help-seeking to destigmatize mental health needs among youth. †

Calls to Action

Boys and Men of Color and Their Families

Share your experiences. Tell your story. Use social media and contribute to media campaigns that speak to you. Researchers are increasingly using online media to improve the representativeness of the data they collect. Participating in surveys and focus groups is also a way to add your experience to the broader base of knowledge.

Researchers and Evaluators

Focus on factors of group resilience and ecological context when studying the population of boys and men of color. When writing and publishing your work about boys and men of color embed population outcomes within their ecological context. Make it a hardship for a reader of your work to disconnect dissimilar outcomes by race and ethnicity from the larger context of systems and mechanisms that disproportionately place boys and men of color at a disadvantage. Train the next cadre of researchers to prioritize culturally responsive research and evaluation.

Practitioners

Recognize and assert your expertise in working with your population. Engage in program evaluation and share the results, both achievements and lessons learned, in formal and informal networks. Connect with graduate students in evaluation programs who may be looking for access to an organization. Question the assumptions of your evaluators, and address their questions of your assumptions as well; work collaboratively to produce work that is rigorous in both methodology and cultural responsiveness.

Policy Makers

Compel institutions not to rely solely on punitive measures to address negative behaviors, but to include measures that focus on shaping forgiving environments toward the advancement of positive outcomes for boys and men of color.

Philanthropists

Address the lack of diversity in the leadership of well-funded initiatives and in the philanthropic entities that support their work. Prioritize efforts to expand and broaden the inclusion of those leading the design and execution of efforts affecting boys and men of color.

There is an urgent need for more research on strengths among boys and men of color. This may be the single biggest research priority, because this lack of a firm scientific foundation leaves providers “flying blind.” One effect suggested by our results is that racial stereotypes, rather than science, are influencing the content of programming offered to boys and men of color. §

About the Author of the RISE Field Scan Synthesis Report

Aasha M. Abdill manages organizational efforts to assess and enhance the significant impact of programming. She holds a master's degree in quantitative methodology from Columbia University and a doctorate in sociology from Princeton University, with a concentration in organizational theory and race and ethnicity. She is also a proud alumna of a historically black college, Spelman College. Currently, Aasha is working with initiatives to increase the diversity of those providing valuable skills, insights, and scholarship to philanthropy, policy, social enterprises, and nonprofit practice. Aasha has worked extensively with early childhood programs, workforce initiatives, and community-based organizations dedicated to family and community socioeconomic empowerment. To get to know Aasha and her work better, please find and connect with her on LinkedIn.

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