

Quarterly Meeting

Applying an Anti-racism and Anti-oppression Lens to Violence Prevention

Wednesday, March 1, 2017 | 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Transcribed Notes & Small Group Discussion Summary

Group Topic: Gun Violence Prevention

Facilitators: Jessyca Dudley & Marilyn Pitchford (Sana Yousef)

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

- Round 1:
 - (+) Change language used in the media
 - (+) Historical pattern
 - (+) Drug epidemic only with guns
 - (+) Self-fulfilling prophecy
 - (+) Access to guns & related policies
 - (+) Trauma; inability to manage emotions leads to more violence
 - History of trauma & lack of mental health resources and effects
 - (+) Complacency and lack of urgency/attention
 - (+) Desensitizes and public health issue
- Round 2:
 - Promote policies that invest in communities of color instead of repressing them
 - Interview with gang members by justice system
 - **Name racism and oppression in our work; we need to call it what it is; continue to spread awareness****
 - **Mandate closure of gun cases****
 - Reform plea-bargaining system; change criminal justice system to reform gun violence
 - Create prison system that's restorative; not punitive
 - Expand programming
 - **Listen to communities that are impacted to inform practice****
 - Educate communities about systems of oppression they face

DETAILED NOTES

- Historical pattern
- Self-fulfilling prophecy
- History of trauma & lack of mental health resources & effects
- Complacency (?) & lack of urgency/attention
- Desensitization
- Access to guns & related policies

- ACTION ITEMS
 - 1) Promote policies that invest in communities of color
 - 2) Interviews w/ gang members
 - 3) **Name racism & oppression in our work & continue to spread the idea and awareness****
 - 4) **Mandate closure of gun cases****
 - 5) Reform plea-bargaining system & change criminal justice response
 - 6) Create prison system that restorative NOT punitive
 - 7) Expand programming
 - 8) **Listen to communities that are impacted to inform practice****
 - 9) Educate communities about systems of oppression they face

Group Topic: Mental Health Access

Facilitators: Yolanda Burgess (Kirstin Grabski)

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

- Round 1:
 - Justice system used as a default mental health system, which deters utilization and creates fear & stigma regarding mental health issues. Lack of access to resources, lack of clinician training, and job/system requirements contribute to racist & oppressive practices.
- Round 2:
 - Agency outreach & accountability; utilizing existing/natural supports
 - Educating communities about mental health- Mental Health First Aid, letter to congressman to support MH education & funding
 - Creating a trauma-informed space, encouraging conversations/relationships, skill building, addressing organizational racism

DETAILED NOTES

- Access to services
- Reducing stigma
- Trauma of racism
- Foreshortened life
 - Decrease of hope
 - Decrease of resources
 - Decrease of trust
- Interaction- MH issues criminal justice system
- Need for cultural sensitivity/competence/humility
- Decrease of MH resources in schools/communities
- Decrease of police training in MH
- Racism in systems (police-mental health/health-education); fear of using systems
- Need for primary care/prevention
 - Frontline community approach
- Lack of resources

- Disconnect between needs (community) and MH services
 - Decrease in MH services in Chicago/Illinois
 - Prison as default in MH system
- ACTION STEPS
 - Educating communities/schools engaging on what is available (Mental Health First Aid)
 - Agency outreach (jobs) & accountability, being vocal w/i your own organization, group discussion
 - Creating a TIC space, safety relationships, skill building & holistic view of treatment
 - Allow for open dialogue regarding different topics & natural supports (faith based, CBOs & bringing more resources)
 - Concrete political action (writing politicians, keeping engaged with bills/policy alerts)

Group Topic: Community Investment

Facilitators: Ashley Velchek & Renee Haynie-Jackson

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

- Round 1:
 - Lack of resources/organizations contributes to a lack of counter-forces
 - If schools aren't invested in, schools fail them & violence ensues
 - More resources = less violence
 - The people in power are not the ones working at the organizations attacking violence in communities, there violence continues & it reinforces the narrative that the orgs in the communities cannot manage funds for their community & make decisions, which in turn causes those in power to continue the cycle of oppression & racism.
- Round 2:
 - Make these meetings accessible – write grants to pay stipends to community youth & parents for steering communities
 - Learn – I.D. & create brave spaces @ our orgs to challenge & dismantle implicit bias & institutional racism @ our org to root our work in anti-racist values
 - Systems transformation

DETAILED NOTES

- There isn't consistent ongoing investment in communities of greatest need – a lack of resources orgs contributes to a lack of counter-forces
- Racism suggests these communities are inherently more violent, we do more violence and reinforce that they aren't worth our investment (which is violence too)
- When ppl can't meet their needs – violence is a result of what's not there; more resources = less violence
- We aren't in relationship – so people aren't connect and people don't invest; those who make policy aren't affected
- Schools are divested from and we need to invest; if they're not educated, they can't connect to jobs there's an inclination to quit, b/c schools will fail them; invest in tech skills
- Helping on our terms VS helping on the terms of communities of color - implicit racism here
- Who decides where resources go – we don't believe communities know best that means our resources go to the wrong places – don't really help

- Threat, lack of control of their body – basic control – they don't know how else to react & then we pigeon ppl
- COMMUNITY INVESTMENT ACTION
 - Stop expecting unpaid work! Fundraise for \$
 - Relationship-based approaches/attentive to power
 - Intergenerational/two generational approaches to investment
 - Don't recreate instead connect
 - MITIGATE Encourage intermediaries to connect/leverage – connect to SURS, CLAW and IRI to have hard convos
 - TRANSFORM Building the tools to learn & opp to learn from one another and esp listening to POC & youth & grassroots org
 - TRANSFORM Change the way \$ investment are structured – school funding via prop. tax
 - Divest from practices that perp racism & invest in comm solutions – police out of school – invest in RJ
 - Change the way we direct our resources/who advises – how do we defer power to them
 - Have mtgs @ night
 - In our organizations
 - Talk about institutional racism @ our organization
 - Identify & create brave spaces for talking about implicit bias
 - Make a choice ourselves
 - We need to root our work in anti-racist values
 - Do we want to???

Group Topic: Justice System Reform

Facilitators: Breanna Hollie & Karima Douglas

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

- Round 1:
 - Racism & oppression have deep historical roots based in policy & discriminatory practices. These are shown in the criminal justice system through sentencing laws, intentionally racist policies, targeting, and the cyclical & destructive removal of individuals from communities. With insufficient re-entry programs & few/no resources, disproportionately so in communities of color, the system facilitates violence through racist constructs.
- Round 2:
 - Modify/observe institutional & workplace policies, procedures
 - Sustainable, ongoing language*
 - Language/rhetoric
 - Empathy – have empathy these are traumatic events (removal from community)
 - Hippocratic oath of law & cultural competency in law
 - Make your presence known
 - Accept that you don't know – cultural humility & diversity
 - Build alliances, get out of your 'bubble' – build bridges b/w organizations

DETAILED NOTES

- Cyclical systems → no resources for generations
- Discrepancies in sentencing laws
- Families broken
- Insufficient re-entry programs (esp for minorities)
- Once in the system – stuck (that is where the resources are)
- ANTI-OPPRESSION ACTIONS
 - 1) Modify/observe institutional workplace policies, procedures, language/rhetoric
 - 2) Make anti-oppression CENTRAL demographics
 - 3) Empathy – “This could be your family”
 - 4) Address trauma of removal
 - 5) Hippocratic oath of law DO NO HARM
 - 6) Showing up
 - 7) Build bridges between organizations
 - 8) Brutally honest self-awareness – over and over again
 - 9) Shame = honesty
- 10) Measure your success by anti-oppression measures**Addt'l notes in margin, please see image JSR
(2)
 - Continuous ed policies & procedures

Group Topic: Youth Development

Facilitators: (Kelli Day)

WORKSHEET OVERVIEW

- Round 1:
 - Environmental segregation and systematic racism affects the brain development that contributes to trauma and violence
- Round 2:
 - Youth peer to peer mentorship and coaching in schools and in their respective communities
 - Young people have a voice to create something sustainable, include them at the table during decision making
 - Continue w/ networking, and continuing the dialogue w/ SCY and outside the meeting
 - Advocacy – doing something an action (sp?) the meeting (i.e. sending a letter to the Congress)
 - (Sp?) (Spaces of healing)

DETAILED NOTES

- Contribution to Violence: Pursuit of Violence = Pursuit of Power
 - Segregated housing
 - Access to resources, isolation, learn to protect resources you DO have, housing, checks & rent
 - Environment → Brain devo
 - Generational trauma → passed on to kids

- Focus on ROOT causes
- Narrative is traumatizing, youth have belief of future
 - Focus on community resiliency
 - School curriculum, terminology
 - Idea of upward mobility untrue, hustle but may not pay off, idea you got ahead because of exception
- Family support
 - Families may not have capacity to care for kids, not necessarily lack of desire
 - Social connections create oppty
- Services outreach
 - Higher ed, job services & opts not reaching out to communities
 - Reach out at younger age to develop skills
- Empower youth to create change
 - Redefine role & definition of family
 - Ageism also oppressing
 - Inclusion of disconnected youth
- HOW CAN WE ENGAGE IN ANTI-OPPRESSION/RACIST ACTIONS?
 - Collaborate & connect
 - Bring youth together, youth focus groups
 - **Stay connected**
 - Youth engagement w/ police
 - Police education
 - SCY Member Database
 - Spaces of healing
 - Youth summer jobs
 - How do we give young people high-quality, meaningful oppty? Contribution to community?
 - Social enterprise funds
 - What happens when over?
 - Voice & choice for young people, run program
 - **Bring to SCY mtg**
 - Incentivize w/ services learners
 - Redefine quality as more than just # output
 - Mentorship
 - Adults & peer, youth go back to their community
 - More than 1 yr
 - Advocacy
 - More commitment in communities
 - Hold businesses & city accountable
 - **Legislative advocacy at mtgs, witness slips**