2.4 ANTI-RACIST PRAXIS WITH STREET-INVOLVED AFRICAN CANADIAN YOUTH

Julian Hasford, Peter Amponsah, & Treisha Hylton

INTRODUCTION

People of African descent have a long, troubled, yet inspiring history in Canada, marked by tensions between anti-black racism and resistance, and by the establishment of a dynamic and diverse diaspora. In this chapter, we discuss how race and racism influence the experiences of street involvement and mental health among African Canadian youth. We also offer a few analytical and practical tools for practitioners to consider for engaging street-involved youth from an anti-racist perspective.

According to the 2011 National Household Survey, African Canadians make up approximately 3% of the country's population and are among the fastest growing racialized groups in urban areas in southern Ontario, Quebec, and Nova Scotia (Statistics Canada, 2013). Although we use "African Canadian" as a broad term to refer to anyone of indigenous sub-Saharan African ancestry, the term encompasses a population with tremendous diversity in terms of ethnicity, culture, class, language, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity.

A large body of evidence indicates that race and ethnicity profoundly affect how people experience mental health (Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000) and homelessness (Springer, Lum, & Roswell, 2013). Factors such as racism, culture, and stigma amplify the stressors that lead to mental illness and homelessness. They also limit access to resources that buffer such stressors and reduce the quality of interactions with social and health services. Although relatively little race-based data exist on homelessness or mental health in Canada, some evidence suggests that African Canadians are overrepresented among street-involved youth (Gaetz, 2002; Springer et al., 2013), particularly in some parts of the Greater Toronto Area.

Systemic racism is one of the most pervasive sources of stress experienced by street-involved African Canadian youth. It involves patterns of behaviour, practices, and policies within institutions that produce structural disadvantages for racialized peoples (Ontario

Human Rights Commission, 2017). Systemic racism exacerbates the factors that are generally known to increase the risk of mental health problems and homelessness; these factors include poverty, familial adversity, and child welfare involvement (Kidd, 2013). African Canadians experience significantly higher rates of poverty than other racialized groups (Galabuzi, 2006). This situation is compounded by discrimination in employment (Block & Galabuzi, 2011) and housing (Teixeira, 2008). In addition, African Canadians face major inequities in the child welfare system (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies [OACAS], 2016), education system (James & Turner, 2017), and criminal justice system (Sapers, 2016; Wortley & Owusu-Bempah, 2011).

Community and family dynamics also influence how African Canadian youth experience mental health problems and homelessness. The legacy of colonization and slavery is a source of historical trauma, which has disrupted the intergenerational structures and relations of many African families (DeGruy, 2005). It plays an important role in young people's pathways to homelessness (Kidd, 2013). For many contemporary African Canadian families, these strained relations are compounded with the stressors of immigration and settlement, which can lead to family conflict (OACAS, 2016). Moreover, homophobia and heterosexism faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer African Canadian youth within their families, communities, and broader society have been identified as another significant source of marginalization (Springer et al., 2013).

Studies also suggest that African Canadians may be more likely to avoid or delay seeking help from mental health services due to cultural stigma related to mental illness and to mistrust of mainstream health professionals (Corrigan, 2004; Ferrari et al., 2015; Whaley, 2001). Lack of access to culturally relevant services further increases the criminalization and marginalization of African Canadian youth; untreated mental health issues end up being addressed through the criminal justice system (John Howard Society of Ontario, 2015; Rankin & Winsa, 2013).

INTERVENTION COMPONENTS

Various frameworks and strategies are available to front-line service providers who engage with African Canadian youth. Historically, these strategies have often involved multicultural or cultural competence approaches that emphasize understanding the cultural traits and values of "other" non-white racialized groups, and tailoring practices accordingly (Bishop,

2015; Katz, 2003). While such approaches may seem promising for agents of social justice, they can limit the effectiveness of work with racialized youth when they fail to address issues of power, historical oppression, and mistrust within helping relationships, or when they neglect to include culturally grounded intervention approaches (DeGruy Leary, 2005). In this section, we suggest a number of approaches to intervention that challenge practitioners to critique racism and oppression, to be critically reflective about their own power and privilege, and to use the assets of African communities to engage young people.

ANTI-RACIST PRAXIS

Praxis refers to a process whereby practitioners gain a deeper understanding of themselves and their environment through ongoing action and reflection (Freire, 1968/2000). It has become an important component of professional practice in fields such as social work (Nylund, 2006), education (Dei, 1996a), and youth work (White, 2007). Anti-racist praxis is a framework for professional practice that involves "an action-oriented strategy for institutional systemic change that addresses racism and other interlocking systems of social oppression" (Dei, 1996b, p. 4). It offers an alternative to predominant rehabilitative models, which can be reactive and limited to addressing basic needs such as education, employment, and "life skills" (McKenzie-Mohr, Coates, & McLeod, 2012), while failing to address the everyday impacts of racism and trauma that black youth who are homeless experience. Theory is a critical component of anti-racist praxis because it provides conceptual tools for naming, analyzing, and disrupting racism. We begin this section by describing a few key conceptual tools that practitioners can use to inform their anti-racist work, drawing on perspectives from critical race theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) and black feminism (Collins, 2000).

A central concept of anti-racist praxis with African Canadians is the notion of anti-black racism, which acknowledges that black Canadians face a unique type of racism that differs in kind and extent from that faced by many other groups and that merits distinct forms of intervention (Benjamin, 2003). The unique nature and implications of anti-black racism have been acknowledged by the United Nations (Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, 2016) and the Government of Ontario (Lewis, 1992), and have been the foundational analytical focus of community activism for decades (see below). Practitioners can examine anti-black racism in their settings by observing whether there are differences in the experiences or outcomes of African Canadians within their organizations and by reflecting on what might be root causes of such differences.

A second important concept—one of the tenets of critical race theory—is the critique of colour-blindness, the ideological belief that society consists of a multicultural utopia where race does not matter and merit determines life chances (Dei, Karumanchery, & Karumanchery-Luik, 2005). Anti-racist theory recognizes that racism is a permanent and embedded feature of Western capitalist democracies, and therefore advancing social justice requires a critical examination of the racial impacts of laws, policies, programs, and practices (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). When developing or implementing policies or programs, practitioners can counter colour-blind assumptions by explicitly reflecting on the implications of race on the policy or program.

A third key concept of anti-racist praxis is intersectionality (Collins, 2000), which involves understanding how multiple forms of identity, such as race, class, gender, and ability, intersect to create unique experiences of oppression (and privilege). An intersectional anti-racist approach examines the role of institutions in producing racial, gender, sexual, and class-based inequalities within larger society. In working with black youth who are homeless, it emphasizes the importance of tailoring interventions and avoiding those that use a "one size fits all" approach. Practitioners can ensure they integrate an intersectional lens by engaging youth in frequent discussions about various aspects of their identity, particularly during program planning and evaluation.

A fourth key concept in anti-racist praxis is microaggressions, which are everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental insults, intentional or unintentional, that communicate derogatory or negative messages based on a person's racial identity (Sue et al., 2007). Youth workers should be mindful of the personal and systemic consequences of microaggressions. They need to be vigilant and prepared to interrupt the links between daily personal and relational experiences and systemic anti-black racism.

ALLYSHIP

A co-worker asks you what you were up to this weekend. You tell her you were at a seminar to help you practise talking about racism. She looks startled and says, "I wouldn't need that. I'm colour-blind. I don't see race, only the human race." What do you say?

You're hanging out after work with some co-workers at your drop-in centre and you're talking about the recent violence in the community and measures to adopt for safety. There

is a group of co-workers who are agreeing with the need for racial profiling for security. One person, who has been fuelling the conversation, is getting very emotional and turns to you and says, "I mean, wouldn't YOU want black people to be searched?" How do you respond?

Many people who work in social services occupy privileged or dominant social locations. Social location refers to a person's affiliation or categorization within intersecting webs of oppression and privilege, which include, but are not limited to, race, age, gender, sexual orientation, class, and religion. These affiliations confer on the person a certain set of social roles and expectations, power, and privilege (or lack thereof) (Baines, 2007). Although the vast majority of practitioners enter the field with sincere passion and commitment, their work with people from marginalized groups can often present tensions due to differing social locations, and as a result, risks reproducing oppressive societal power relations (Carniol, 2005; Lundy, 2011; Mullaly, 2002). More recently, the literature on anti-racism and social justice has emphasized the role of allies and allyship in advancing this work (Bishop, 2005; Mullaly, 2009).

An ally is a person who works from an awareness of their social location in relationship to others, who recognizes the privilege they receive from society's patterns of injustice, and who takes responsibility for changing these patterns (Bishop, 2015). Although there have been contending views over the use of the term ally, the general consensus is that allyship is both an identity and a behaviour, founded on practitioners' critical reflexivity and conscious, moment-to-moment choice to challenge inequity and the status quo on behalf of marginalized groups (Fook & Gardner, 2007). McKenzie (2014) has distilled allyship to a few key concrete actions:

- "Shut up" and listen. There is a tendency for people from dominant groups, who have been socialized to be accustomed to having their voices heard, to speak before listening empathically to people from marginalized groups. Allies should cultivate the professional habit and self-awareness for active listening.
- Educate yourself. Allies who are committed to anti-racist practice should proactively educate themselves about anti-black racism and whiteness, drawing on ample resources that are available through the Internet and the community.
- When it's time to talk, do not talk over the people you claim to be in solidarity with. The voice of allies is critical in moving conversations about racism forward, and in engaging people from marginalized groups. However, when they speak, allies should do so from a position of humility and be mindful of not dominating the voice of "others." This contributes to creating safe and inclusive spaces and relationships for clients.

- Accept feedback/criticism about how your "allyship" is causing more harm than good without whitesplaining/mansplaining/whateversplaining. There will be moments when racialized clients express critiques of allies for subtle, inadvertent racism, such as microaggressions or minimizing the experiences of racialized people. Critically reflexive allies should maintain a stance of humility and be open to (and seek out) feedback from those they aim to help.

- Support groups, projects, and organizations run by and for marginalized people so their voices get to be the loudest on the issues that affect them. Authentic empowerment involves enabling people from marginalized groups to exercise self-determination in matters that affect them. Allies can engage in anti-racist praxis by supporting efforts of black-led organizations through actions such as fundraising, getting the word out, recruiting other allies, and doing advocacy.

- Do not expect marginalized people to provide emotional labour for you. Reflecting on and challenging racism and oppression is intellectually and emotionally difficult work that often falls on the shoulders of racialized peoples, who often have the fewest resources to engage in such struggles. Allyship should involve a shared commitment to shoulder some of the intellectual and emotional labour by challenging racism when allies encounter it in their personal and professional lives.

AFROCENTRIC APPROACHES

There is emerging evidence about the effectiveness of culturally relevant youth interventions that are based on values, principles, and concepts that are different than those grounded in Eurocentric values, norms, and traditions (Griner & Smith, 2006; Harvey & Hill, 2004). Afrocentric (similarly known as Africentric or African-centred) thought was pioneered in the West in the 1970s and '80s by the African American scholar Molefi Kete Asante (2003). Afrocentricity was based in a critical reflection on the place that people of African descent held within Eurocentric society, which often involved being relegated to the periphery. Asante proposed a "re-centering" of the African:

> *Afrocentricity is a mode of thought and action in which the centrality of African interests, values, and perspectives predominate. In regards to theory, it is the placing of African people in the center of any analysis of African phenomena. . . . In terms of action and behavior, it is a devotion to the idea that what is in the best interest of African consciousness is at the heart of ethical*

behavior. Finally, Afrocentricity seeks to enshrine the idea that blackness itself is a trope of ethics. Thus, to be black is to be against all forms of oppression, racism, classism, homophobia, patriarchy, child abuse, pedophilia, and white racial domination. (p. 2)

According to Asante (2003), the development of a strong Afrocentric identity could transform a person's worldview and build resilience by reclaiming African languages, names, symbolisms, and traditional practices. It is in a similar spirit that in the 1960s, Maulana Karenga developed the Nguzo Saba, a set of seven Afrocentric principles and values, and created the pan-African holiday Kwanzaa, a global, seven-day (December 26– January 1) celebration of family, community, and culture, using concepts from the Swahili language. Karenga (2016) describes Kwanzaa:

During the holiday, families and communities organize activities around the Nguzo Saba (The Seven Principles): Umoja (Unity), Kujichagulia (Self-Determination), Ujima (Collective Work and Responsibility), Ujamaa (Cooperative Economics), Nia (Purpose), Kuumba (Creativity) and Imani (Faith). Participants also celebrate with feasts (karamu), music, dance, poetry, narratives and end the holiday with a day dedicated to reflection and recommitment to The Seven Principles and other central cultural values. (para 2).

For Karenga (2016), it is not enough to think African; there has to be an enactment of these values in the African person. Currently, Afrocentrism and its related frameworks have influenced approaches to service delivery in areas of social work (Schiele, 1996), psychology (Akbar, 1991), and education (Dei, 1996a). A notable example of Afrocentrism in Canada is the Africentric Alternative School in Toronto, which has been giving young African Canadian students a grounding in an African-centred curriculum since 2009, despite persistent resistance and uncertainty about the school's role and future (James, Howard, Samaroo, Brown, & Parekh, 2015).

Rites of passage

An Afrocentric intervention that shows particular promise in engaging youth is rites of passage programs (Harvey & Hill, 2004). Unlike mainstream rites of passage programs, such as those offered in youth shelters, this form of intervention is rooted in a tradition common to many African cultures, during which adolescents are assisted by elders and the community in their transition to adulthood. These programs incorporate traditional

practices, education, rituals, and arts such as drum and dance (Harvey & Hill, 2004) that draw upon principles of the Nguzo Saba. Rites of passage programs are aimed at consciousness-raising, and provide people of African descent with alternative spheres of reality that emphasize healthy living, community responsibility, and eldership respect. Although relatively little research has examined the impact of rites of passage interventions with street-involved youth, evidence suggests that these programs can have a positive impact on other youth involved with the criminal justice and child welfare systems (Gilbert, Harvey, & Belgrave, 2009).

During the rites of passage process, participants explore the following questions (WoodGreen Community Services, 2016) that re-centre the African identity:

1. Who am I? What values, history, traditions, and cultural precepts do I recognize, respect, and continue?
2. How did I come to be who I am? What were/are the forces, events, and people that have come together to frame who I am?
3. Am I really who I think I am? To what extent do I understand, internalize, employ, and reflect the cultural authenticity of my origins?
4. What is my life purpose?

Youth practitioners can support street-involved African Canadian youth by connecting them with rites of passage programs, or by inviting community elders to their spaces to inform young people about rites of passage opportunities.

FAITH-BASED FAMILY MEDIATION

There is growing interest within human services in using restorative practices as a way to promote justice, problem solving, and healing by bringing victims, wrongdoers, and community together to resolve conflict. Some practitioners suggest that faith-based, restorative approaches to family mediation are an important emerging strategy for working with African Canadian street-involved youth and their families. This type of intervention builds on the central role of faith-based organizations in the lives of many African Canadians (Taylor, Ellison, Chatters, Levin, & Lincoln, 2000) and on the fact that clergy and other faith community members are often the first point of contact for mental health services (due, in part, to distrust of mainstream service providers). Youth

workers can explore these options by speaking with youth about their connections to faith communities and their openness to using them as a resource.

It is important for faith-based family mediation to use trauma-informed and intersectional lenses because trauma and social identities often underlie pathways to homelessness for youth. Many of these youth have been traumatized by homophobia and heterosexism in their homes and religious institutions. Indeed, religious beliefs have been a source of marginalization and exclusion of many young people, particularly for those who identify as LGBTQ2S. This means that practitioners who engage in faith-based restorative practice should ensure that faith organizations are committed to inclusive, anti-oppressive values and provide safe and respectful spaces for restorative practices.

IMPLEMENTATION CONSIDERATIONS

ADVOCACY & STRUCTURAL CHANGE

Implementing anti-racist praxis requires that we expand our analysis of mental health problems and homelessness beyond individuals to the systems that produce inequities. This expanded analysis has implications for service providers: What is the role of front-line practitioners in changing systems and structures? How can practitioners do so through anti-racist praxis? To effectively respond to these challenges, youth workers must be willing to extend their role beyond front-line service delivery to become system advocates and community organizers, and to engage in policy development (Skott-Myhre, 2006). Youth workers possess a wealth of knowledge and wisdom about the impacts of systems on the lives of young people. They are well positioned to act for social change, especially by engaging young people in advocacy efforts.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

Youth workers can have considerable influence on policy development. Social policies, such as those related to housing and homelessness, child welfare, and criminal justice, have profound impacts on the lives of African Canadian street-involved youth, often in ways that deepen their marginalization. Creating more just and responsive policy,

therefore, can have a tremendous impact on large populations of the young people with whom we work. There are many ways in which the average youth worker can get involved in policy development. They can participate in community consultation processes and join public advisory committees or the boards of community agencies and councils (e.g., African Canadian Legal Clinic, Tabono Institute). They can also join think tanks (e.g., Broadbent Institute, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives) or partner with universities to conduct and disseminate research about the effects of policy on young people.

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION & ACTIVISM

Sometimes incrementalist, accommodationist approaches to policy change are too slow to generate the kind of social change required for equity. Community activism (or social action) can be an effective method for naming and drawing public attention to issues of institutional racism and for pressuring government or other authorities to act. This kind of activity often involves work that extends beyond the formal paid professional roles and responsibilities of most youth practitioners, and can pose professional, political, and ethical challenges to the practitioner. However, we believe it remains a critical component of anti-racist praxis. One of the most effective anti-racist grassroots activism initiatives in recent history is the Black Lives Matter movement, whose activities have generated international conversations about race, and which has sparked systemic change in some local areas. There are many approaches to activism, including direct action through protest or acts of civil disobedience. There are also artistic forms of activism, such as music, graffiti, and street theatre. Youth workers can also engage in more indirect forms of activism, such as sharing information, signing petitions, and writing news articles or opinion pieces. Social action can be an effective way to empower marginalized young people.

KEY MESSAGES FOR PRACTITIONERS

- Working with African Canadian youth requires a shift in perspective from service models to critical reflectivity and praxis.
- Practitioners should try to connect young people with culturally relevant resources and assets within African Canadian communities.

- Anti-racist work requires the role of front-line workers to expand to include advocating structural- and systems-level change.

REFERENCES

Akbar, N. I. (1991). The evolution of human psychology for African Americans. In R.L. Jones (Ed.), *Black psychology* (3rd ed.; pp. 99–123). Berkeley, CA: Cobb & Henry.

Asante, M. K. (2003). *Afrocentricity: The theory of social change* (rev. ed.). Chicago, IL: African American Images.

Baines, D. (2007). Anti-oppressive social work practice: Fighting for space, fighting for change. In D. Baines (Ed.), *Doing anti-oppressive practice* (pp. 1–30). Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

Benjamin, A. (2003). *The black/Jamaican criminal: The making of ideology*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.

Bishop, A. (2005). *Beyond token change: Breaking the cycle of oppression in institutions*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

Bishop, A. (2015). *Becoming an ally: Breaking the cycle of oppression in people* (3rd ed.). Halifax, NS: Fernwood.

Block, S., & Galabuzi, G. (2011). *Canada's colour coded labour market: The gap for racialized workers*. Toronto, ON: Wellesley Institute. Retrieved from www.wellesleyinstitute.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/Colour_Coded_Labour_MarketFINAL.pdf

Carniol, B. (2005). *Case critical: Social services and social justice in Canada*. Toronto, ON: Between the Lines.

Collins, P. H. (2000). *Black feminist thought: Knowledge, consciousness, and the politics of empowerment* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Corrigan, P. (2004). How stigma interferes with mental health care. *American Psychologist, 59*, 614–625.

DeGruy Leary, J. (2005). *Post traumatic slave syndrome: America's legacy of enduring injury and healing*. Portland, OR: Joy DeGruy Publications.

Dei, G. J. S. (1996a). The role of Afrocentricity in the inclusive curriculum in Canadian schools. *Canadian Journal of Education, 170*–186.

Dei, G. J. S. (1996b). Critical perspectives in anti-racism: An introduction. *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology, 33*, 247–267.

Dei, G. J. S., Karumanchery, L. L., & Karumanchery-Luik, N. (2005). *Playing the race card: Exposing white power and privilege*. New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2012). *Critical race theory: An introduction* (2nd ed.). New York: New York University Press.

Ferrari, M., Flora, N., Anderson, K. K., Tuck, A., Archie, S., Kidd, S., . . . Hamilton, H. (2015). The African, Caribbean and European (ACE) Pathways to Care study: A qualitative exploration of similarities and differences between African-origin, Caribbean-origin and European-origin groups in pathways to care for psychosis. *BMJ Open, 5*(1), e006562.

Fook, J., & Gardner, F. (2007). *Practising critical reflection: A resource handbook*. Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. (Myra Bergman Ramos, Trans.). New York, NY: Continuum. (Original work published 1968)

Gaetz, S. (2002). *Street justice: Homeless youth and access to justice*. Toronto, ON: Justice for Children and Youth. Retrieved from Homeless Hub website: http://homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/Street_Justice.JFCY.02.pdf

Galabuzi, G. E. (2006). *Canada's economic apartheid: The social exclusion of racialized groups in the new century*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Gilbert, D. J., Harvey, A. R., & Belgrave, F. Z. (2009). Advancing the Africentric paradigm shift discourse: Building toward evidence-based Africentric interventions in social work practice with African Americans. *Social Work, 54*, 243–252.

Griner, D., & Smith, T. B. (2006). Culturally adapted mental health intervention: A meta-analytic review. *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training, 43*, 531–548.

Harvey, A. R., & Hill, R. B. (2004). Africentric youth and family rites of passage program: Promoting resilience among

at-risk African American youths. *Social Work, 49*, 65–74.

James, C., Howard, P., Samaroo, J., Brown, R., & Parekh, G. (2015). Africentric Alternative School Research Project: Year 3 (2013–2014) report. Toronto, ON: York University. Retrieved from www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/54690686/africentric-alternative-school-research-project

James, C. E. & Turner, T. (2017). *Towards race equity in education: The schooling of black students in the Greater Toronto Area*. Toronto, ON: York University.

John Howard Society of Ontario. (2015). *Unlocking change: Decriminalizing mental health issues in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Author. Retrieved from www.johnhoward.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Unlocking-Change-Final-August-2015.pdf

Katz, J. H. (2003). *White awareness: Handbook for anti-racism training* (2nd ed.). Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Karenga, M. (2016). Kwanzaa: A brief description. Retrieved from Official Kwanzaa website: www.officialkwanzaawebsite.org/images/Kwanzaa--ABriefDescription2016.jpg

Kidd, S. (2013). Mental health and homelessness youth: A critical review. In S. Gaetz, B. O'Grady, K. Buccieri, J. Karabanow, & A. Marsolais (Eds.), *Youth homelessness in Canada: Implications for policy and practice* (pp. 217–227). Toronto, ON: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Retrieved from Homeless Hub website: www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/YouthHomelessnessweb.pdf

Lewis, S., (1992). *Stephen Lewis report on race relations in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Advisor on Race Relations. Retrieved from www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/13000/134250.pdf

Lundy, C. (2011). *Social work, social justice, and human rights: A structural approach to practice*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

McKenzie, M. (2014). *Black girl dangerous: On race, queerness, class and gender*. Oakland, CA: BGD Press.

McKenzie-Mohr, S., Coates, J., & McLeod, H. (2012). Responding to the needs of youth who are homeless: Calling for politicized trauma-informed intervention. *Children and Youth Services Review, 34*, 136–143.

Mullaly, B. (2002). *Challenging oppression: A critical social work approach*. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Mullaly, B. (2009). *Challenging oppression and confronting privilege* (2nd ed.). Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press.

Nylund, D. (2006). Critical multiculturalism, whiteness, and social work: Towards a more radical view of cultural competence. *Journal of Progressive Human Services, 17*(2), 27–42.

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies (OACAS). (2016). *One vision one voice: Changing the Ontario child welfare system to better serve African Canadians*. Practice framework Part 1: Research report. Retrieved from www.oacas.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/One-Vision-One-Voice-Part-1_digital_english.pdf

Ontario Human Rights Commission. (2017). Racism and racial discrimination: Systemic discrimination. Retrieved from www.ohrc.on.ca/en/racism-and-racial-discrimination-systemic-discrimination-fact-sheet

Rankin, J., & Winsa, P. (2013, March 1). Unequal justice: Aboriginal and black inmates disproportionately fill Ontario jails. *Toronto Star*. Retrieved from www.thestar.com/news/insight/2013/03/01/unequal_justice_aboriginal_and_black_inmates_disproportionately_fill_ontario_jails.html

Sapers, H. (2016). *Annual report of the Office of the Correctional Investigator, 2015–2016*. Ottawa, ON: Office of the Correctional Investigator. Retrieved from www.oci-bec.gc.ca/cnt/rpt/annrpt/annrpt20152016-eng.aspx

Skott-Myhre, H. A. (2006). Radical youth work: Becoming visible. *Child and Youth Care Forum, 35*, 219–229.

Springer, J., Lum, J., & Roswell, T. (2013). Policy challenges to homelessness among Caribbean youth in Toronto. In S. Gaetz, B. O'Grady, K. Buccieri, J. Karabanow, & A. Marsolais (Eds.), *Youth homelessness in Canada: Implications for policy and practice* (pp. 445–468). Toronto, ON: Canadian Homelessness Research Network Press. Retrieved from www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/YouthHomelessnessweb.pdf

Statistics Canada. (2013). *Immigration and ethnocultural diversity in Canada: National Household Survey 2011* (Catalogue no. 99-010-X2011001). Ottawa, ON: Author. Retrieved from www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/as-sa/99-010-x/99-010-x2011001-eng.pdf

Sue, D. W., Capodilupo, C. M., Torino, G. C., Bucceri, J. M., Holder, A., Nadal, K. L., & Esquilin, M. (2007). Racial microaggressions in everyday life: Implications for clinical practice. *American Psychologist, 62*, 271–286.

Taylor, R. J., Ellison, C. G., Chatters, L. M., Levin, J. S., & Lincoln, K. D. (2000). Mental health services in faith communities: The role of clergy in black churches. *Social Work, 45*, 73–87.

Teixeira, C. (2008). Barriers and outcomes in the housing searches of new immigrants and refugees: A case study of "Black" Africans in Toronto's rental market. *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment, 23*, 253–276.

Whaley, A. L. (2001). Cultural mistrust and mental health services for African Americans: A review and meta-analysis. *Counseling Psychologist, 29*, 513–531.

White, J. (2007). Knowing, doing and being in context: A praxis-oriented approach to child and youth care. *Child & Youth Care Forum, 36*, 225–244.

Williams, D.R., & Williams-Morris, R. (2000). Racism and mental health: The African American experience. *Ethnicity & Health, 5*, 243–268.

Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent. (2016). Statement to the media by the United Nations' Working Group of Experts on People of African Descent, on the conclusion of its official visit to Canada, 17–21 October 2016. Retrieved from Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights website: www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20732&LangID=E

Wortley, S., & Owusu-Bempah, A. (2011). The usual suspects: Police stop and search practices in Canada. *Policing and Society, 21*, 395–407.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Julian Hasford, PhD, MHSc, is an assistant professor in the School of Child and Youth Care at Ryerson University in Toronto. His interests are in anti-racism, empowerment, prevention, and systems change, particularly in matters concerning child welfare, homelessness, and mental health, as well as youth employment in African Canadian communities.

Peter Amponsah, MSW, has worked and taught in the service sector in Toronto for over 10 years, specifically with at-risk youth, criminally involved youth, and youth in care. He teaches in the Child and Youth Care Program at Sheridan College, including the course "Anti-Oppression and Equity in Child and Youth Care Relational Practice."

Treisha Hylton is a PhD candidate at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education at the University of Toronto. Her research interests are in anti-racism and black feminist theorizing. She has worked extensively with children and youth organizations and is a lecturer at Ryerson University in the Faculty of Communication Services.