



Race-Based Mental Health Equity in the Southeast

In the past few years, race-based health disparities have gained increased attention from health professionals, public health experts, and the public. Currently, there is momentum on addressing health inequities among BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color). Within the movement to address BIPOC health inequities, mental health must be prioritized.

This factsheet summarizes recommendations for eliminating mental health disparities from the American Psychological Association (APA), describes promising practices in the Southeast (HHS Region IV), and lists additional resources.

Guidance from the APA on Eliminating Mental Health Disparities

The [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#) recommends eliminating race-based disparities in mental health status and mental health care by using psychological and behavioral research and services that are culturally and linguistically competent. To eliminate race-based mental health disparities, the APA suggests that stakeholders take the following steps:

1. Facilitate **partnerships** among physicians, mental and behavioral health providers, educators, community leaders, government agencies, and families
2. Increase the availability of **culturally and linguistically competent** mental and behavioral health services accessible to racial and ethnic minorities
3. Increase research examining the complexities and intersections of **multiple statuses/identities** (e.g., socioeconomic status, disability, and immigrant status)
4. Foster **positive relationships** and programs within racial and ethnic minority communities to increase awareness of mental health issues
5. Increase **funding for training** mental and behavioral health professionals and to train these professionals to become culturally and linguistically competent
6. Develop and implement policy and programs based on **psychological and behavioral research** ensuring that racial and ethnic minorities are empowered
7. Advocate for local, state, and national funding agencies to incorporate culturally and linguistically competent **guidelines into proposals for programs**
8. Increase **collaboration across federal funding** organizations involved in racial and ethnic minority resiliency research





Promising Practices in the Southeast

This section introduces three promising practices from the Southeast that demonstrate actionable ways to follow the APA guidance on eliminating race-based mental health disparities.

FLORIDA: REACHUP, Inc., Male Involvement Network



Source: <https://www.reachupincorporated.org/> (Retrieved July 2020)

REACHUP, Inc. is a nonprofit in Tampa, FL that works to improve the health of underserved communities in the Tampa Bay Region. According to its website, the mission of REACHUP is *“to advocate for and mobilize resources to help communities achieve equality in healthcare and positive health for families.”* REACHUP offers an array of programming to fulfill its mission including the Black Infant Health Practice Initiative, the Nurse-Family Partnership Program, and the Male Involvement Network. This section will specifically highlight the Male Involvement Network at REACHUP.

The [Male Involvement Network](#) is made up of programs and activities that are designed to bring men together to develop and/or enhance strategies that lead to positive personal growth and development. These programs include: Brain/Mental Health Counseling, Case Coaching/Management, the Intergenerational Mentoring Group, and others. The list below highlights some aspects of the Male Involvement Network that further race-based mental health equity.

- **Brain/Mental Health Counseling** helps underserved men address their mental, social, psychological, and social well-being. Also, **Stress Group** teaches strategies for coping with and managing stress in a healthy way. ([APA Recommendations 2 & 4](#))
- **Case Coaching/Management** is used to assess, evaluate, and plan ways to meet a full array of men’s needs by connecting them with resources in the community. ([APA Recommendation 1](#))
- The **Intergenerational Mentoring Group** brings three generations of men together to support each other’s growth. Additionally, the Male Involvement Network hosts the annual **Affirming Fatherhood Conference** and offers a curriculum called **24/7 Dad** to help men develop parenting knowledge and skills. ([APA Recommendations 2 & 4](#))





GEORGIA: ARCHI, South Fulton Collaborative



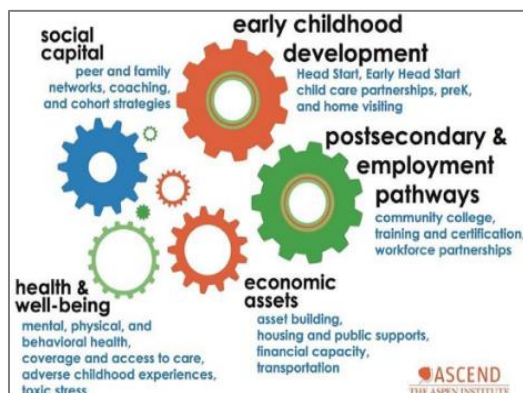
Source: <http://archicollaborative.org/> (Retrieved July 2020)

The **Atlanta Regional Collaborative for Health Improvement (ARCHI)** is an organization in Atlanta, GA that was formed in 2012 to understand and transform the systems that keep the city's people of color from achieving good overall health and wellness. ARCHI seeks to unite community perspective with institutional action to accelerate health improvement for all Atlantans.

One way that ARCHI meets its objective is by facilitating "prototype" initiatives. These prototype initiatives develop from partnerships between health systems, payers, providers, and organizations. These stakeholders collaborate on innovative pilot projects. As the coordinator for all participating organizations, ARCHI ensures that prototype initiatives are executed and completed successfully.

An example prototype initiative is the [South Fulton Collaborative](#). The South Fulton Collaborative aims to support individuals on the path to quality, sustainable employment. While such an aim may not seem directly related to mental health, the South Fulton Collaborative demonstrates movement towards race-based mental health equity in its approach. The list below highlights a few relevant strategies that the South Fulton Collaborative relies on.

- The South Fulton Collaborative applies the **Aspen Institute's Two Generation Model** in its approach to supporting employment. ([APA Recommendation 6](#))
- An **integrated service delivery model** is emerging that provides a supported path to quality employment as well as wraparound services to help sustain employment, including increased **access to mental health services**. ([APA Recommendation 2](#))
- The Tri-Cities community in the Atlanta metro area has been engaged in the development of the South Fulton Collaborative since it was first discussed in 2014. Today, **community partners, including family counseling centers and homeless shelters**, provide wraparound services for those on the path to sustainable, quality employment. ([APA Recommendation 1](#))



Source: Aspen Institute Two Generation Model
<http://archicollaborative.org/action/prototype/south-fulton-collaborative/> (Retrieved July 2020)



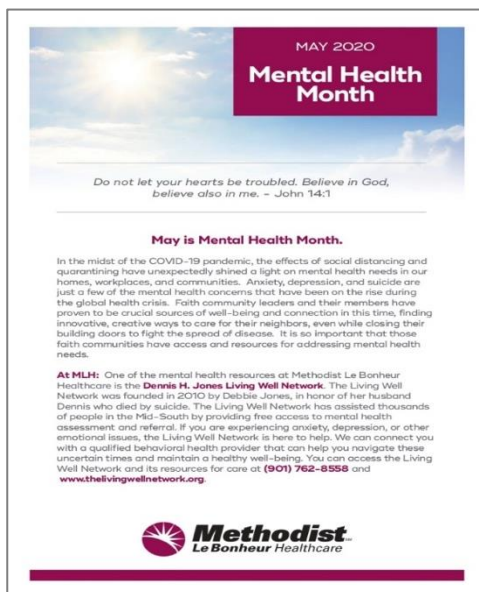
TENNESSEE: Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare, Congregational Health Network



Source: <https://www.methodisthealth.org/about-us/faith-and-health/congregational-health-network/> (Retrieved July 2020)

Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare is a network of four Memphis metro adult hospitals. On the 1st floor of Methodist's flagship location, Methodist University Hospital, is the Center of Excellence in Faith & Health. The Center was designed to support the mental, emotional, and spiritual needs of patients and their families. It relies on local faith community resources to provide education and training to Methodist's staff, clergy, and volunteers.

A major initiative within the Center of Excellence in Faith & Health is the [Congregational Health Network \(CHN\)](#). CHN is a collaborative partnership between church congregations, Methodist hospitals, and community leaders to increase health equity among the citizens of Memphis, particularly in underserved minority communities. The success of CHN has led to its international recognition as "The Memphis Model." The list below highlights aspects of CHN that advance race-based mental health equity.



- Trained volunteers in Memphis area congregations, known as **Congregational Liaisons**, work closely with a **CHN Navigator**, employed by Methodist. **(APA Recommendation 1)**
- CHN provides **monthly bulletin inserts** that highlight a different health condition to congregations. In May 2020, CHN distributed an insert on Mental Health month. **(APA Recommendation 4)**
- CHN's May 2020 bulletin insert included information about **low-cost and culturally competent behavioral health services** at The Living Well Network, located at Methodist. **(APA Recommendation 2)**

Source: Church Bulletin Insert on Mental Health
<https://www.methodisthealth.org/files/faith-and-health/MLH%20Sunday%20May%202020%20-%20PDF.pdf> (Retrieved July 2020)



Additional Resources

This section provides a short list of recommended resources related to race-based mental health equity.

Books & Articles

[*Eliminating Race-Based Mental Health Disparities: Promoting Equity and Culturally Responsive Care Across Settings*](#), M.T. Williams, Ph.D., D. C. Rosen, Ph.D., and J. W. Kanter, Ph.D., November 2019

[*Removing Obstacles to Eliminating Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Behavioral Health Care*](#), M. Alegria, Ph.D., K. Alvarez Ph.D., R. Z. Ishikawa, Ph.D., M.P.H., K. DiMarzio, and S. McPeck, June 2016

Organizations

[*SAMHSA: Office of Behavioral Health Equity*](#) coordinates SAMHSA's efforts to reduce mental health disparities. Its work is organized around data, policy, and quality practice and workforce development.

[*National Hispanic and Latino MHTTC*](#) provides training and technical assistance to improve the capacity of the behavioral health workforce serving Hispanic and Latino communities.

[*National American Indian and Alaska Native MHTTC*](#) supports organizations and treatment practitioners in the delivery of mental health services to American Indian and Alaska Native individuals and families.

[*Black Mental Health Alliance*](#) offers specialized professional development and continuing education to give cultural insight to mental health practitioners who serve Black families and communities of color.

[*The National Asian American Pacific Islander Mental Health Association*](#) offers trainings to improve mental health outcomes for Asian Americans, Native Hawaiians, and Pacific Islander communities.

Southeast MHTTC Products & Webinars

[*Mental Health System in the Southeast*](#) - Tableau data visualization of inequities in mental health access

[*Social Determinants of Mental Health in the Southeast*](#) - Document on social factors and mental health

[*Cultural and Structural Competence: Mental Health Equity*](#) - Fact sheet explaining mental health disparities and mental health inequities and the role of structural racism in contributing to inequities

[*From Cultural Competence to Structural Competence—Strategies for Achieving Mental Health Equity*](#) - Webinar by Ruth Shim, M.D., M.P.H. offering strategies to providers and policymakers to effectively address mental health disparities and inequities