



The Mental Health Movement and the African-American Community

Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement creates supportive communities that encourage anyone and everyone to get help when it's needed. Below are a few examples of how the movement is advancing mental health in California's African-American communities.

Programs and Resources available:

Mental Health Friendly Communities

[Mental Health Friendly Communities](#) – a program introduced in four regions across California – brought together African American faith leaders to address mental health challenges in their community by providing culturally focused trainings and resources that directly speak to the interconnection between spirituality and mental health. The program's goal is to engage populations by helping them get on a path that will lead toward mental wellness. [Click here](#) to view the Mental Health Friendly Communities brochure.

Community Baptist Church (CBC)

[Community Baptist Church](#) is located in Sonoma County and was the denomination's first African-American church. Currently, CBC has an ethnically and culturally diverse congregation. CBC provides programming and services to children, youth and their families, including special services to seniors that are supported by volunteers and donations. CBC was funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) and implemented four programs targeting members of their congregation with a specific focus on mental health in the African-American community.

Successfully Motivating African Americans through Resiliency Training (SMAART)

[The SMAART Program](#) is an exciting partnership between Young Visionaries Youth Leadership Academy (YVYLA) and Black Voice Foundation (BVF). In coordination with the San Bernardino County Department of Behavioral Health and funded by the Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63) SMAART is aimed at motivating African-American children and their families within San Bernardino County through resiliency training (primarily students within San Bernardino Unified School District). The objectives are to educate, empower and engage students through mentorship from professionals, workshops addressing the importance of mental health, nutrition, character and career development.

[California Reducing Disparities Project \(CRDP\) African American Population Report](#)

This report focuses on rationale and the approaches to eliminating mental health disparities among African Americans in California.

[U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health Fact Sheet](#)

This report focuses on the effects of poverty on mental health status. According to this report African Americans living below the poverty level, as compared to those over twice the poverty



level, are 3 times more likely to report psychological distress.

[Dismantling the Stigma around Black Mental Health](#)

This report was produced by reporter Leila Day for the California Health Journalism Fellowship, a program of the USC Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism. The three-part series looks at stigmas toward health care amongst African Americans; and why there are not more African-American therapists and the possible effects.