

Communicating about Sexual Health in Black Families in the DMV



OBJECTIVES

This study aims to address parent-child sexual health communication to reduce sexual health disparities among Black children and adolescents by enhancing health literacy and parental efficacy among Black parents in discussing sexual health topics, specifically sexual trauma. This study seeks to develop and pilot a digitally-based CRI to increase parental efficacy in communicating with their children about sexual health and trauma.

STUDY

The proposed study will develop partnerships with nonprofit and faith-based organizations in Washington D.C., Maryland, and northern Virginia (DMV) that provide social and economic support for Black families, trauma-informed workshops, and counseling for gender-based violence survivors (including sexual assault), in the context of racism against Black people.

The expected outcomes from this study include (1) the development of a digital anti-racist, survivor-centered, culturally responsive intervention, (2) increased perceptions of parental efficacy in communicating about sexual health risks with their children, and (3) reduced victim-blaming beliefs among Black parents and guardians.

PHASES

1. The objective of Phase 1 is to develop culturally responsive, trauma-informed, sexual health promotion messages with community advisory board members (CAB) selected through community partnerships from the DMV region. The intervention's development and modifications will take 6-9 months, with meetings with the CAB twice every month.
2. Phase 2 will pilot test the digital intervention within a survey with Black parents who live in the DMV region to assess the differences in the demographic and sociocultural characteristics among Black parents' frequency of sexual health communication, sexual trauma exposure, beliefs about sexual trauma (i.e., rape myths), perceived parental efficacy in communicating about sexual health and trauma, racism-based stress, parents' experience of racism, and perceived worry about their children experiencing racism. A random selection of the participants will be exposed to digital messages that intend to promote sexual health communication behaviors, particularly about sexual trauma.

3. The final phase, Phase 3, includes conducting in-depth interviews with a sample of Black parents exposed to the intervention. The qualitative analysis of these interviews will consist of responses about the cultural relevance of the messages, effectiveness in influencing behaviors and beliefs, general acceptance, feasibility, and participant evaluation of the intervention. Data collection and analysis for Phases 2 and 3 will last 12-15 months.

We are seeking Community-based partners, mental health providers, social workers, nonprofit organizations, that work with Black families.

Please reach out to Dr. Davidson Mhonde for more information about becoming a community partner.



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