

A S C A W E B I N A R S E R I E S



AMERICAN
SCHOOL
COUNSELOR
ASSOCIATION

How School Counselors Can Address Race-Based Stress and Trauma

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Kentucky Department of Education
Webinar Date: June 9, 2020

Learning outcomes:

- Acknowledge and address current events that cause race-based stress and trauma
- Discuss the realities of race-based stress and trauma and see how this plays out in students' lives
- Identify next steps in becoming culturally sensitive and competent

*Attain tools to work with Black traumatized students, families and colleagues.

Background



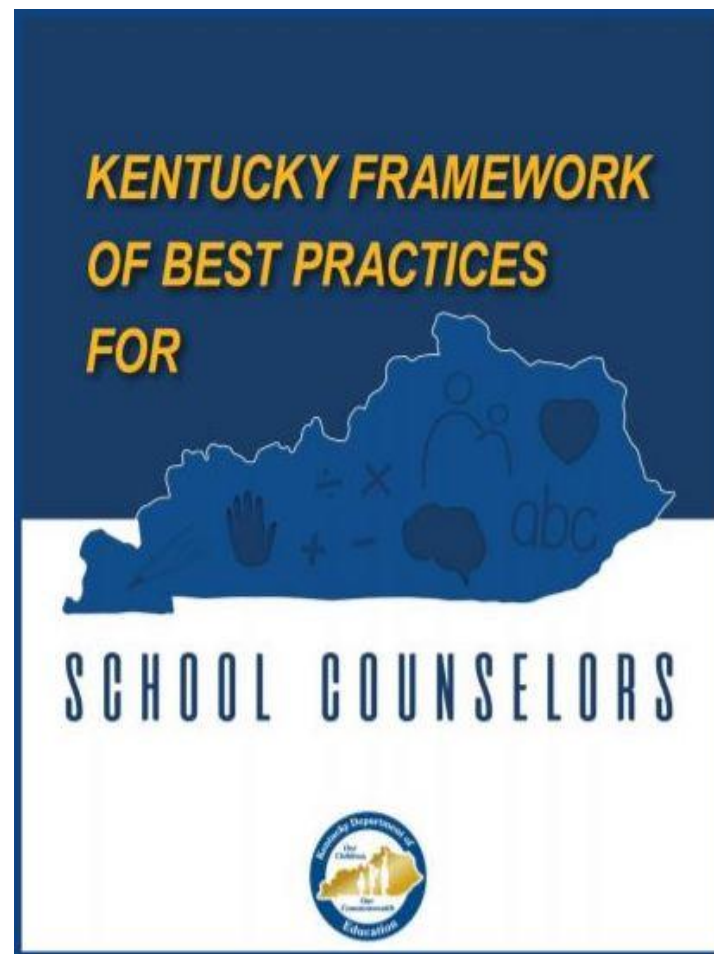
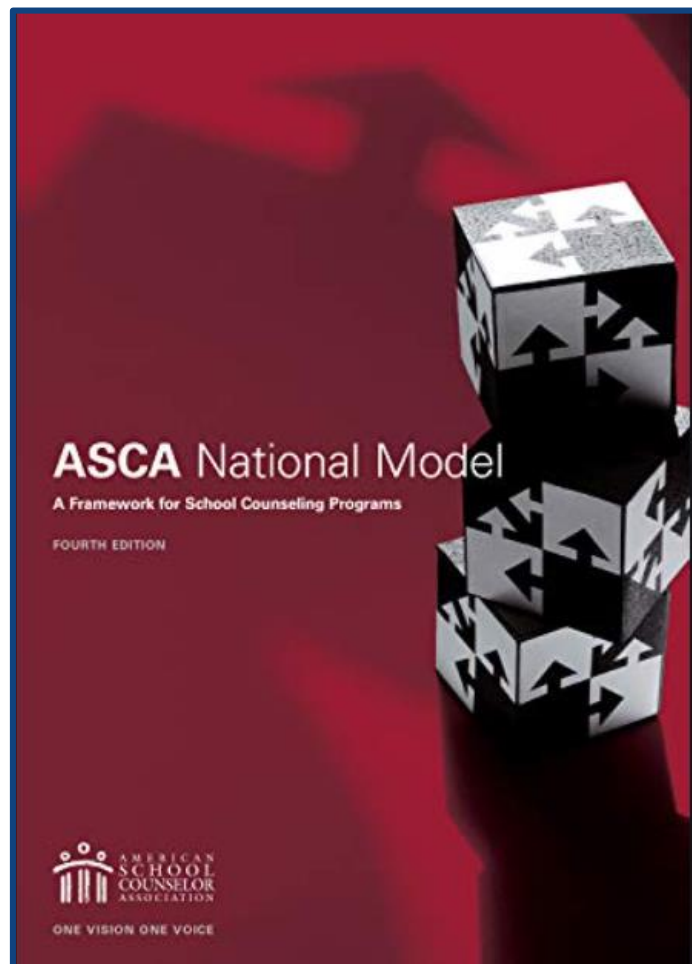
Publications

Sweeney, D.L. (2016). [Professional school counselors : integral stakeholders in the recruitment, retention, and support of African American, Latino, and low-income students in advanced placement programs \(Publication No.2580\)](#). University of Louisville. Think IR: The University of Louisville's Institutional Repository.

Howell, P.B., Thomas, S., Sweeney, D. & Vanderhaar, J. (2019) Moving beyond schedules, testing and other duties as deemed necessary by the principal: The school counselor's role in trauma informed practices, *Middle School Journal*, 50:4, 26-34, DOI: [10.1080/00940771.2019.1650548](#)

Sweeney, D. (February 2018). [Want to close the achievement gap? Lace up your shoes and join the race](#), *The Courier Journal*.

Sweeney, D. & Silman, M. (June 2020). Guidance on how districts can facilitate conversations about race-based stress and trauma. Kentucky Department of Education. Retrieved June 4, 2020 from [https://education.ky.gov/educational/compschcouns/Documents/KDE%20Racial%20Trauma%20Guidance%20FINAL.pdf](#)



At the end of the day...

Personal Experiences

Never have this
on in a store



Never put your hands in
your pockets in a store

“You talk too
black...”

“You talk too
white...”

“You guys are
way too loud...”

YOUR **VOICE**

Learn to code switch or
else...

Images of racism – you
must see and experience
these images feeling like
you have an ability to
change them
(monuments, flags,
clothing, etc.)

Personal Response

What do you say,
When at the end of the day,
People continue to target blacks,
Folks who have a history of deep lashes on their backs?

Haven't we endured enough?

My thoughts are fuzzy
Because this is scary;
Will someone else get killed?
History suggests they will.

Haven't we endured enough?

Who is to say,
At the end of the day,
Which mother or father will be left devastated
As a result of the racial inequities the world has created?

Haven't we endured enough?

George, Breonna and Ahmaud did not deserve to die;
It's no secret as to why
We aren't being honest;
They are threatening us and putting their knees on us.

Haven't we endured enough?

We are angry, traumatized and sad;
We watch our counterparts walk with rifles freely, which only
makes us mad;
Guilty before proven innocent is where my brothers and sisters
are;
We are so far from where we need to be, so very far.

Haven't we endured enough?

Don't want to just send out a post;
To show solidarity of the utmost,
I want to do something that matters
To help end this sadness.

WE HAVE ENDURED ENOUGH.

By: Damien Sweeney, Ed.D.

Within seconds of walking in a room...

- I know whether I'll be accepted
- How many minorities are in the room

Lay of the Land

TAKE
ACTION!



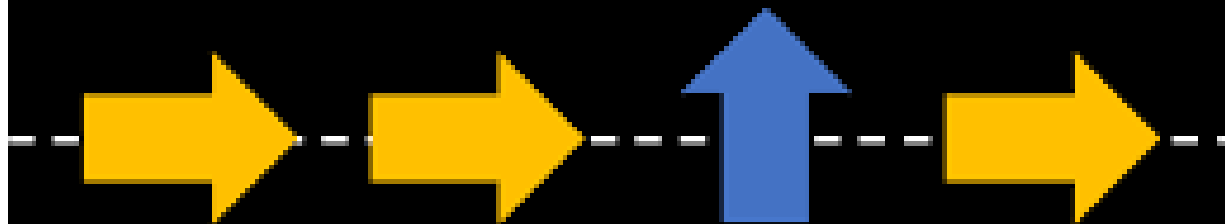
YOUR JOURNEY
STARTS
HERE:

Events Leading Up to This Webinar

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

- George Floyd
- Ahmaud Arbery
- Breonna Taylor (my hometown)
- Tamir Rice
- Trayvon Martin
- Michael Brown
- Sandra Bland
- Emmett Till
- And so many other black lives (they have all mattered)

Something is
different...



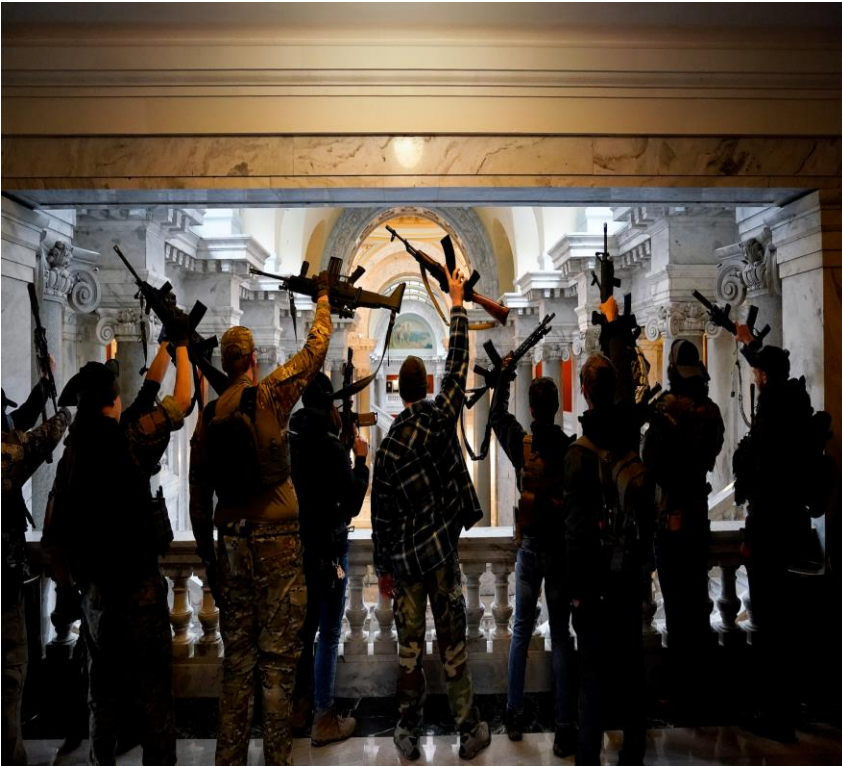
“Just pull up your bootstraps.”



Disparities are Pervasive In Our Society

Here are 3 quick examples...

Disparities Exist in Our World



Disparities Exist in Our World

Students of color, those from low-income families, English language learners, and students with mild to moderate disabilities have even less access to these resources than their peers.

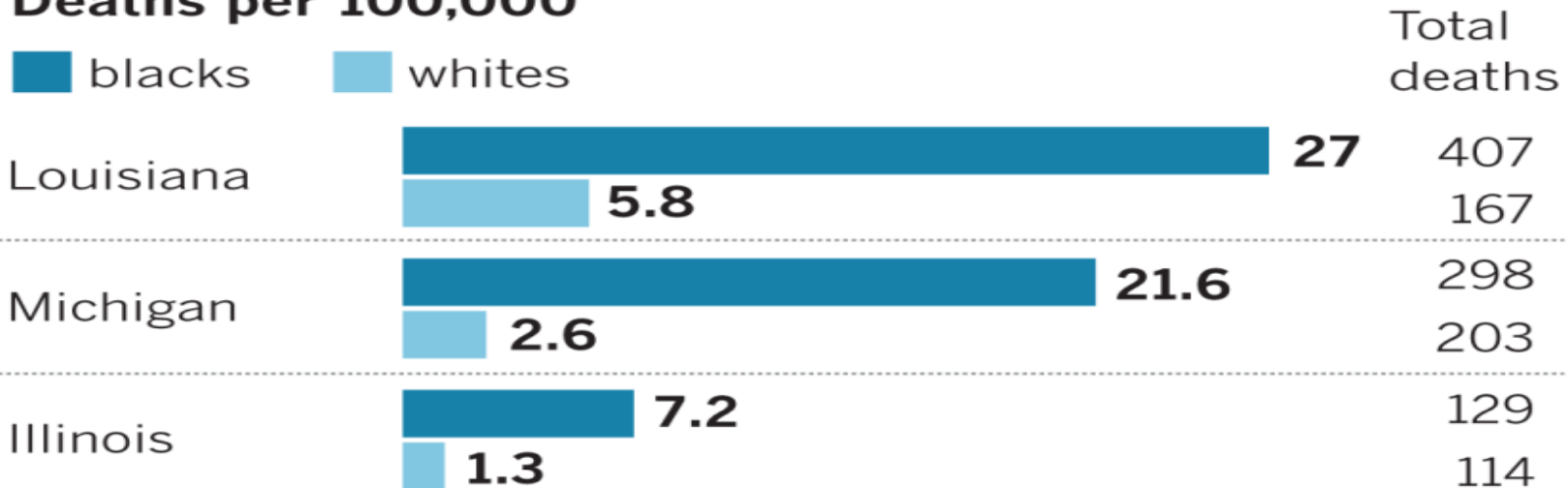
For example, classrooms that served predominantly students from higher-income backgrounds spent twice as much time on grade-appropriate assignments and five times as much time with strong instruction, compared to classrooms with predominantly students from low-income backgrounds.

TNTP Opportunity Myth Report:
<https://opportunitymyth.tntp.org/>

Coronavirus deaths and race

COVID-19 is disproportionately killing black Americans, according to data released by several states.

Deaths per 100,000



Death totals as of Tuesday afternoon.

State governments, U.S. Census Bureau

Lorena Elebee / Los Angeles Times

All These Disparities Lead to a Collective Trauma for Black People

What Is Trauma?

Witnessing or experiencing an event that poses a real or perceived threat of death, serious injury or sexual violation

Trauma can be experienced in the following ways:

- Directly (child abuse or neglect, fire, accident)
- Closely Witnessed (domestic violence, community violence)
- Secondary exposure (TV/social media exposure, someone retelling event)

What Is Traumatic Grief?

Grief – An emotional reaction to loss of a loved one through death. Death itself is not traumatic; it happens to everyone.

Trauma – A perceived distressing or life-threatening event.

Traumatic Grief – The responses are severe or prolonged and interfere with daily functioning after the death of a loved one.

It's all about how the student interprets and responds to the loss.

What Is Complex Trauma?

- Occurs as a result of repetitive, prolonged trauma involving sustained abuse or abandonment by a caregiver or other interpersonal relationships with an uneven power dynamic

We are Experiencing Personal, Societal and Vicarious Trauma

- Personal- we are hurt by what has happened and scared about what will happen. We are trying to figure out where we stand, what to say, how not to say the wrong thing, etc.
- Societal- we are hurting for our communities, concerned about lives, police brutality, health care, inequities in education, toxic stress, how to build bridges with people who look different (for some- how to keep those bridges burning).

We are Experiencing Personal, Societal and Vicarious Trauma

- Vicarious- we are being inundated with scenes on TV and social media that result in a man's death, police in riot gear in predominantly Black communities along with many other troubling images.

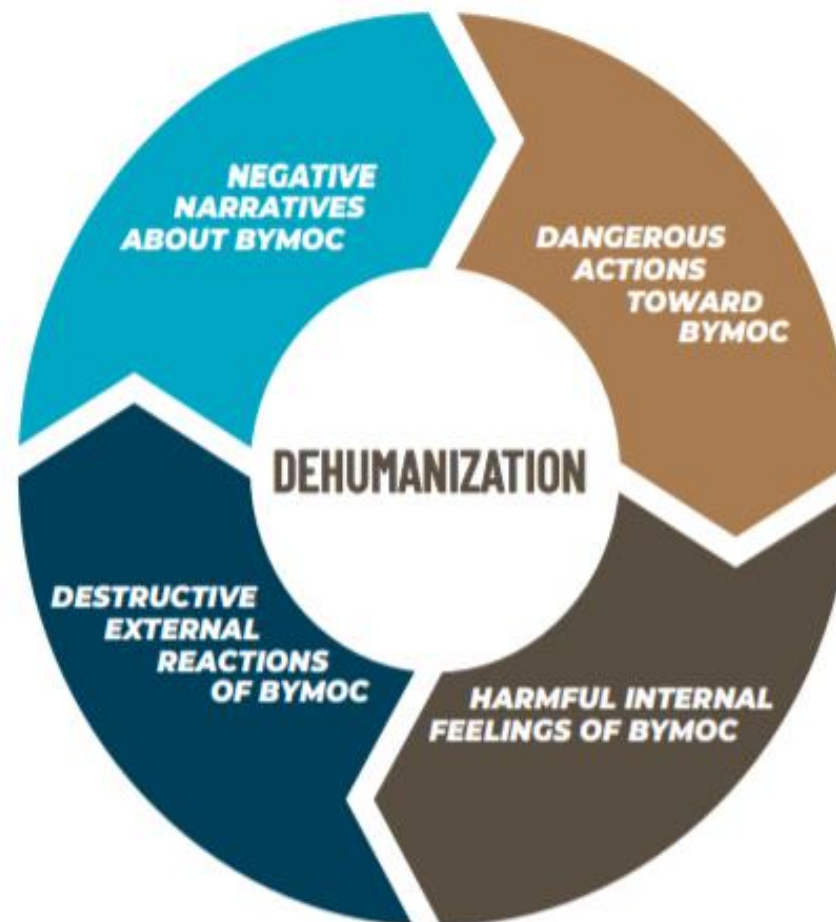
Race-Based Traumatic Stress Defined

- “Racial trauma (also known as race-based traumatic stress) refers to the stressful impact or emotional pain of one’s experience with racism and discrimination” (Carter, 2007).

Another Type of Trauma that Must Be
Disrupted Is the Dehumanization for
Boys and Young Men of Color. This
goes for girls, too!

THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF DEHUMANIZATION

Dehumanization is the cause of generations of historical trauma.





BLOG > BETTER CONVERSATION

Teachers Must Hold Themselves Accountable for Dismantling Racial Oppression

<https://educationpost.org/teachers-must-hold-themselves-accountable-for-dismantling-racial-oppression/>

What Does It Mean to Be an Ally?

- Just as you can't tell me how to best support my brothers and sisters of color, I can't tell you what best makes sense to you in terms of being an ally.

TAKE
ACTION!

CHOOSE

COURAGE
OVER
COMFORT

This is Not a “Their” Problem

How do you acknowledge that even if you don’t share the lived experience of racism with a minority colleague, student or family, that you are with them and willing to learn?



What systems are in place?

- Are you intentionally recruiting to add diversity?
- Is your school or organizational staff representative of the people you serve?
- If not, what are you going to do about it?
- “Nothing. I don’t make the decisions.” = Unacceptable answer
- Much of today will show you what it is you can do to create this change.

**TAKE
ACTION!**

Let's not make this a moment, but rather a movement...

- How will we ensure change is happening and sustainable?
- How will we be the change and fight for social justice?
- What will we stand for in our organizations?
- What will we stand against?

***Old ways
don't open
new doors***

**TAKE
ACTION!**

Microaggressions

- Not overt
- Can feel like “death by a thousand cuts”

<https://www.buzzfeed.com/hnigatu/racial-microaggressions-you-hear-on-a-daily-basis>



What is implicit bias?

Implicit bias refers to the brain's automatic, instant association of stereotypes or attitudes toward particular groups, often without our conscious awareness.



Harvard Project Implicit

TAKE
ACTION!



Do you see me?

- When there are other minorities in the room, there is most often an acknowledgement of one another that speaks: “I see you. I feel you. I’m with you.”
- Very rarely will you see two Black strangers pass one another without an acknowledgement.
- There should never be a time where a school counselor is walking in a hallway by an individual student without acknowledging them (regardless of race). By doing so, you are saying, “You are important. I see you. I care.”

Do you see me?

- How can you open the door to acknowledging Black people and hearing their stories? What is working for you? What are you willing to try?



What is in a name?

- 26 letters
- Learn All Student Names on Caseload
- Be visible

TAKE
ACTION!

What has your school or organization done?

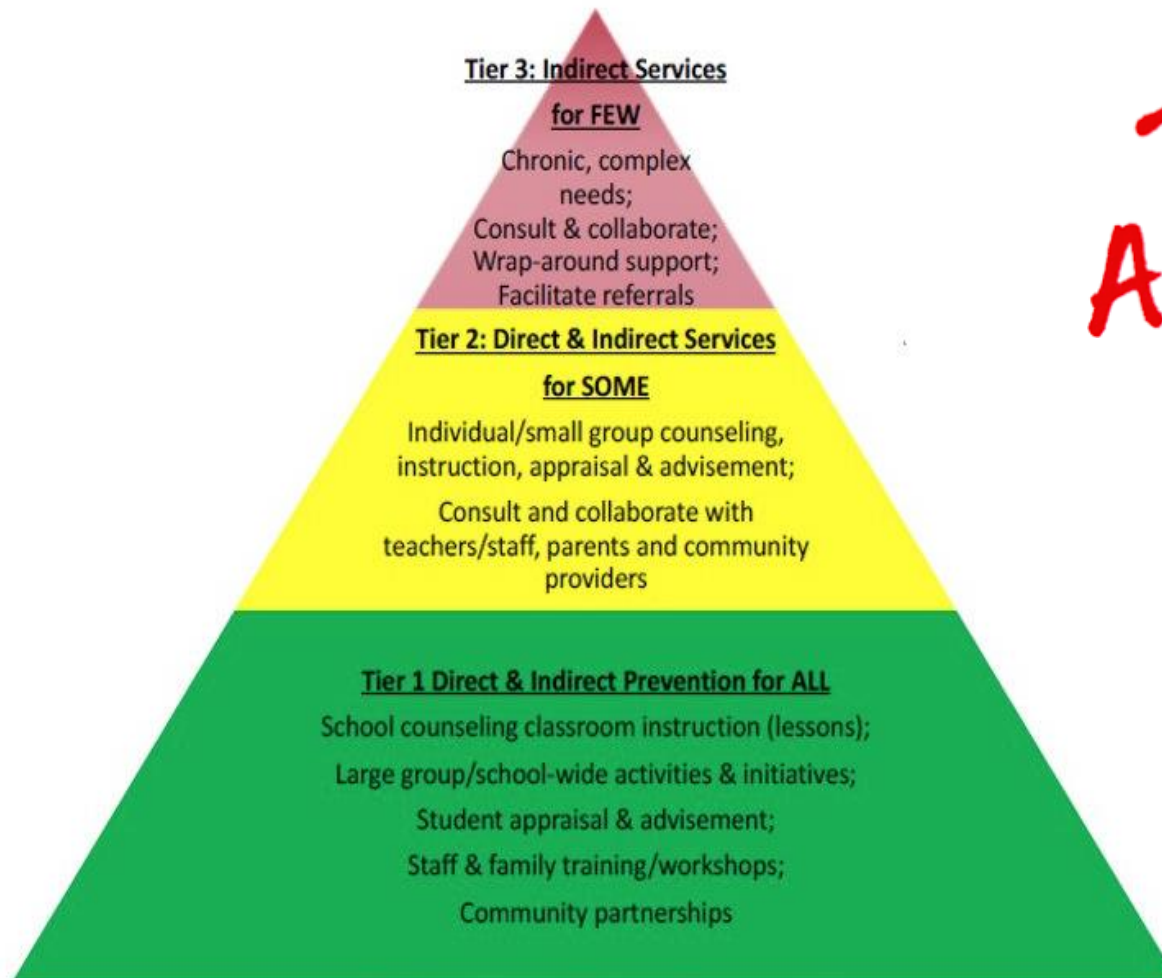
- Has your school sent out a statement about the police brutality, race-related trauma and violence that has occurred throughout our country?
- Did they explicitly name these things or generalize?

What Can You Do?

- You have multiple stakeholders that need to hear from you with varying levels of wellness who include students, families and colleagues.
- Create a Multi-tiered System of Support

Find out more ►

Multi-tiered System of Support



TAKE
ACTION!

Tier 1 (Whole Group)

- Tier 1 instruction (virtually through flipped classrooms AND when we resume in classrooms)
- Create lesson using [ASCA Lesson Plan Template](#)

Create Safe Spaces

- Safe Space = “We must commit to building conversational safe spaces, not merely declaring them” (Kay, 2018, p. 16).
- Create Agreed Upon Norms.

Silence is okay and to be expected!

- Understand that there may be moments of silence and that is okay! Let people sit with their thoughts and be prepared to speak.

Tier 1 (Whole Groups)

- Show people unconditional positive regard for who they are and recognize that many are hurting during this time.
- Acknowledge what has happened.
- Acknowledge the emotional response this creates for students and staff.
- Remind them that it is OK not to be OK.
- Acknowledge that events in the community are not separate from the context of school.

Tier 1 Direct Student Services (Whole Groups)

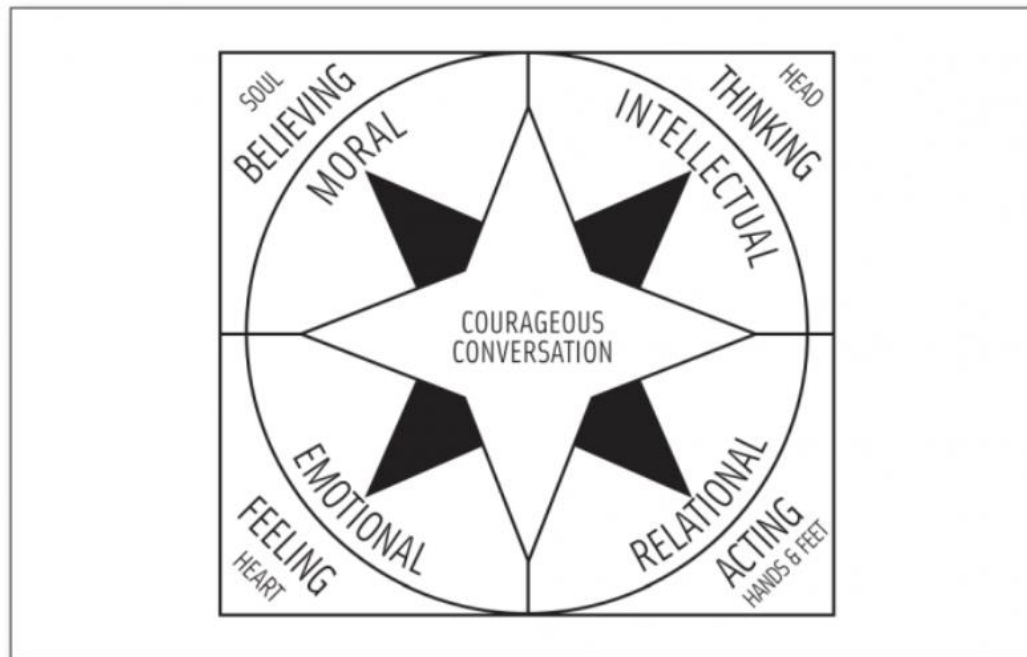
- Teach how to be an upstander when racism is witnessed.
- Begin efforts to implement an [anti-racism framework](#) in your school and classroom.

This is not the time for offensive opinions. Norms should help, but we also need to know what we will say/do if these remarks come up.



You May Choose to Use the Courageous Conversations About Race Protocol

Figure 2.1 The Courageous Conversation Compass



Source: Corwin (image from the first edition of the book and also appears in the second edition)

Courageous Conversations

- Acknowledge what has happened and the pain many people are feeling at this time.
- Honor everyone's participation and center on the humanity of those most impacted.
- Use a healing-centered approach. Instead of asking students what is wrong with them, ask them what is strong with them or what has happened to them.
- Openly discuss what racism looks like and might feel like for the victim. Remember that racism diminishes us all.

**TAKE
ACTION!**

Tier 2 Direct Student Services (For Some)

- Tier 2 direct services are going to be individual and small group (no more than 10 and preferably 8 or fewer- gets to even less for elementary and middle) for a minimum of four sessions.

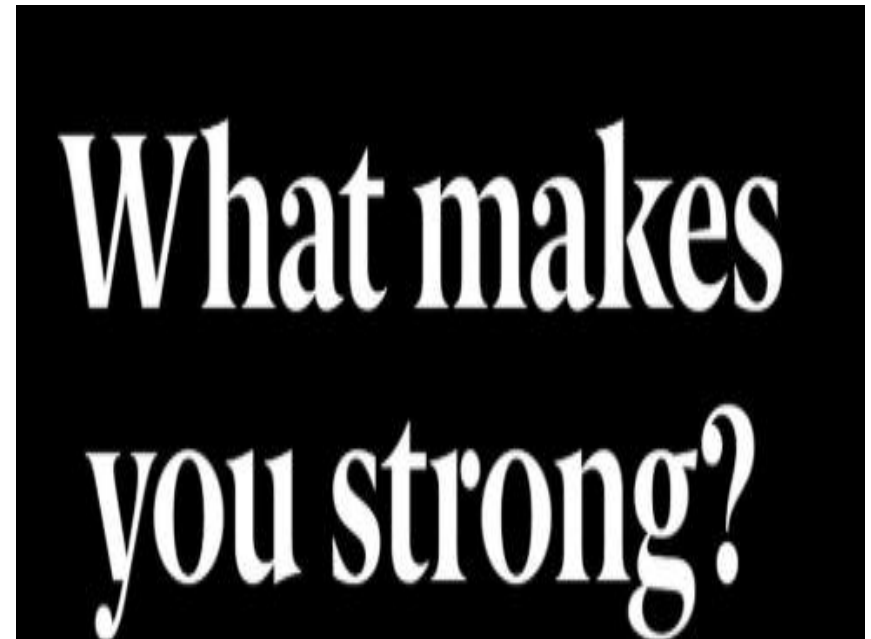
For whom would tier 2 (individual or small-group counseling) services be needed regarding today's theme?

- Students who have endured race-based trauma or stress
- Students who are hurting as a result of what they have experienced or witnessed (oftentimes vicariously)
- Students who are beginning to act out
- Students who say racist things to or about classmates

Tier 3 Student Services (For Few)

- This will consist of indirect student services.
- “Although students are the beneficiaries of indirect services, school counselors work with parents, teachers, administrators, school staff and community stakeholders to promote achievement for a specific student or to promote system change to address the needs of groups of students such as underachieving or underrepresented groups of students in the school” (ASCA, 2019, p. 81).
- For students in crisis at risk of harming themselves or others
- Community-based partners needed!

Use a Healing-Centered Approach: Instead of “What’s Wrong With You?”



Teach resilience skills as a part of social and emotional learning and remind students and staff members of their character strengths. Use [this chart](#) for adults. [This character strengths chart](#) is for students.

What Techniques Might You Use in Individual and Small Group Counseling for Students (or Staff) who are hurting as a result of race-related stress and trauma?

Solution-Focused Brief Counseling

- Problem-Free Talk
- Scaling
- Miracle Question
- Flagging the Minefield

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Techniques Based on Gestalt and Psychodrama Principles

- Empty Chair

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Techniques Based on Mindfulness Approaches

- Visual/Guided Imagery
- Deep Breathing
- Mindfulness [\(this is my favorite video on why mindfulness is needed in schools\)](#)

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Techniques Based on Humanistic-Phenomenological Approaches

- Self-Disclosure
- Confrontation
- Strength Bombardment

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Techniques Based on Cognitive-Behavioral Approaches

- Self-Talk
- Thought-Stopping

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Other Techniques You May Choose to Use:

- Journaling
- Bibliotherapy
- Assigning Homework
- Co-regulation

Erford, B.T. (2020). *45 Techniques Every Counselor Should Know*. Pearson.

Let's work on an example together...

- Started because a group of students saw issues at our school
- Became a small counseling group
- They provided the issues (school counselor advisory group), and we discussed in the following format.

STAYWOKE

Theme and Song of the Day

- [For My People by Joey BadA**](#)
- Clean Versions Only
- Students get a copy of clean lyrics and are asked to annotate (underline, circle, make notes) lines that evoke emotion or further thought for them.
- What stands out to you as you listen?



Empower Youth Voices

- [Flipgrid](#)
- How can your students help bridge the gap?
- They want to be part of the solution and they need their voices to be heard.
- Ex: Prichard Student Voice Team

TAKE
ACTION!

All School Counselors Must Be Data-Driven

- 158/630
- Use the [Close-the-Gap Report](#) for your school
- ABC Data

TAKE
ACTION!

Training Needed by SCs

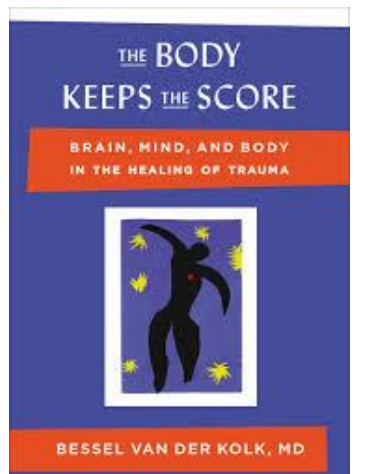
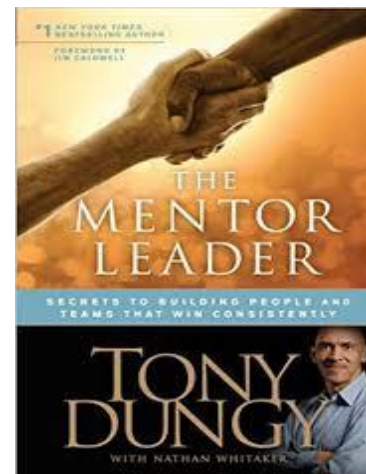
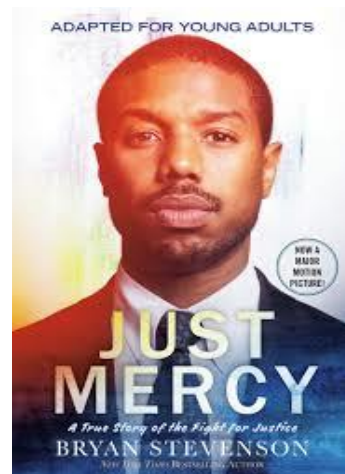
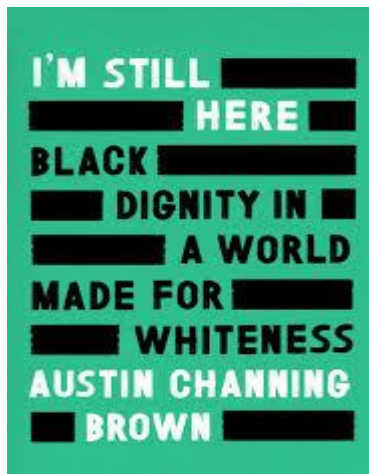
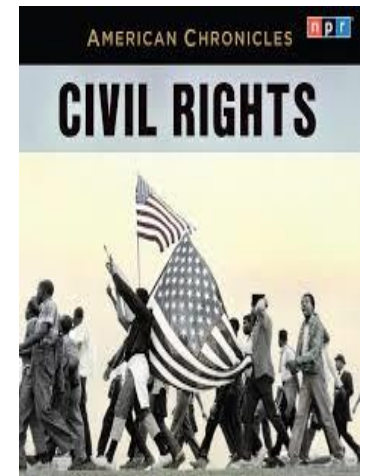
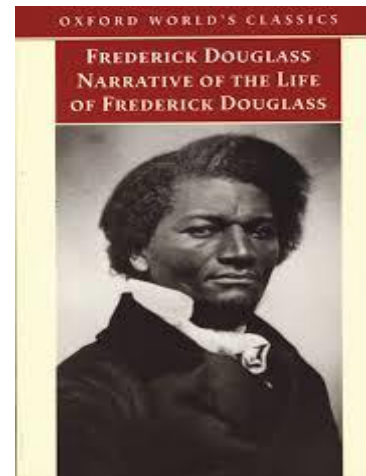
- Diversity and Equity Training
- Cultural Humility Training
- Anti-Racist Training
- Implicit Bias Training
- Learn about disrupting the dehumanization for boys and young men of color.
- Prepare by reading and processing the “Courageous Conversations About Race Protocol.”

TAKE
ACTION!

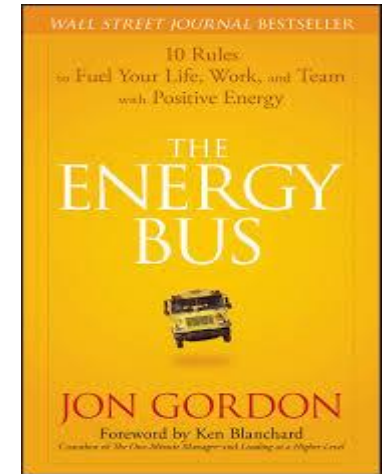
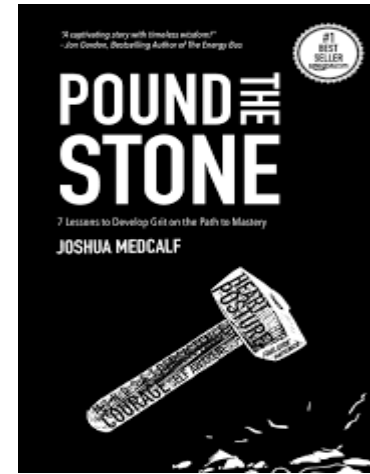
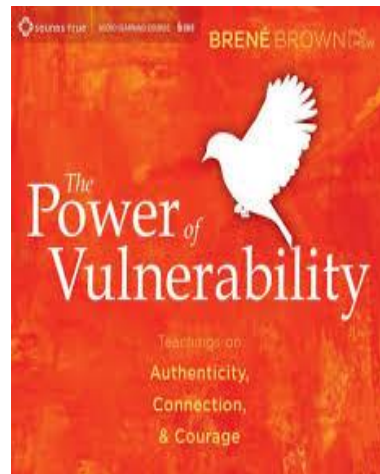
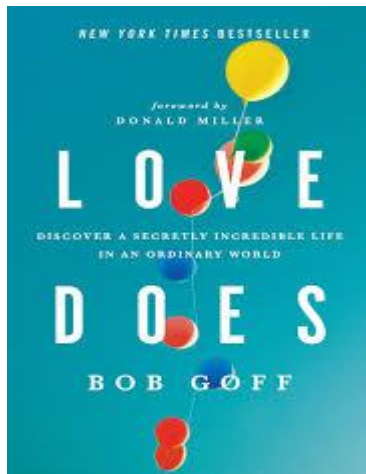
#BLM Anthem Songs Used to Create This Presentation (All Clean of Course)

- “Freedom” (Beyonce, Kendrick Lamar)
- “Able” (Pharell Williams)
- “For My People” (Joey BadA**)
- “Let Go” (Beau Young Prince)
- “One Day” (Logic)
- “Mr. Officer” (Tea Grizzley, Queen Naija, Members of the Detroit Youth Choir)
- “Keep Your Head Up” (2 Pac)
- “This is America” (Childish Gambino- music video can be traumatizing)

#BLM Podcasts/Movies/Books Used to Prepare this Presentation



Other Recommendations



Quick Reminder!

These are Practical Ways to Get Started with This Important Work

- ✓ Become an Ally
- ✓ Create/Implement Sustainable Systems
- ✓ [Harvard Project Implicit](#)/Get the training you need (today was a great first step!)
- ✓ Learn Names of All Students
- ✓ Create/Implement Multitiered System of Support
- ✓ Utilize Anti-Racism Framework
- ✓ Facilitate Courageous Conversations
- ✓ Empower Youth Voices
- ✓ Become Data-Driven
- ✓ Get Needed Training

TAKE
ACTION!

Thank You!!!

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