

# Resilience and Strength Series: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of our Black Community

## Summary Report

APRIL/MAY/JUNE 2021

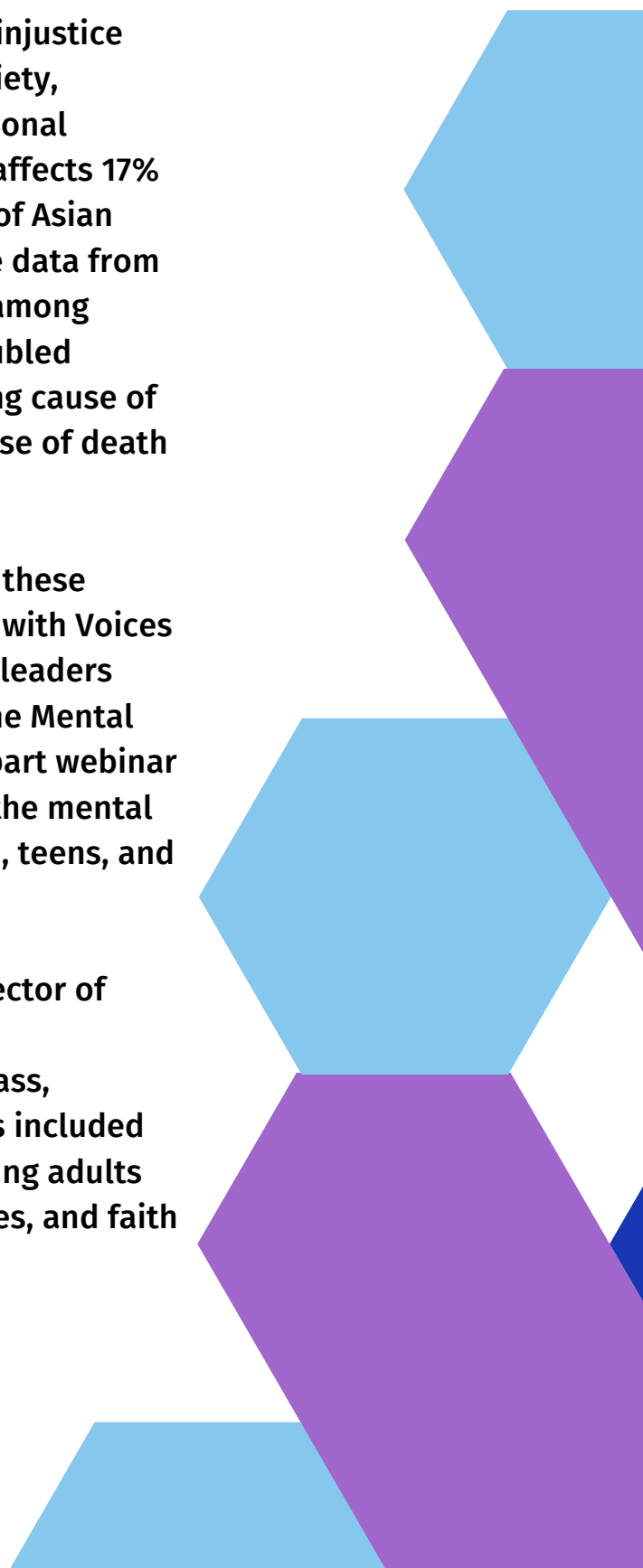


# **BAPTIST HEALTH & VOICES INSTITUTE PARTNER TO SUPPORT MENTAL WELL-BEING IN THE BLACK COMMUNITY**

As the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and racial injustice unfold, communities of color experience stress, anxiety, depression, and racial trauma. According to the National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI), mental illness affects 17% of Black adults, 18% of Hispanic/Latinx adults, 14% of Asian adults, and 32% of multiracial adults. Recent suicide data from the Florida Health Charts shows the rate of suicide among African American Duval County youth ages 15-19 doubled between 2019 and 2020. Suicide is the second leading cause of death of youth ages 15-24 and the tenth leading cause of death for all Americans.

In response to the mental health challenges during these unprecedented times, Baptist Health in partnership with Voices Institute, community-based organizations and faith leaders launched the Resilience and Strength: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of our Black Community series. A three-part webinar series was held April through June 2021 focused on the mental health of elders, adults and caregivers, and children, teens, and young adults in the Black community.

Each webinar session was led by Lynn Sherman, Director of Baptist Health – Community Engagement for Social Responsibility and moderated by Selena Webster-Bass, Founder/CEO, Voices Institute. The webinar sessions included Baptist Health clinicians, caregivers, adults, and young adults who have lived experiences with mental health issues, and faith leaders.





## **RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH SERIES: SUPPORTING THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF OUR BLACK ELDERS TUESDAY, APRIL 27, 2021, 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM**

**"A village without the elderly is like a well without water." - African Proverb**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Black elders 60 years and older, have experienced disruptions in their routines, barriers to accessing care, and the loss of loved ones. These issues are compounded by managing pre-existing chronic health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease.

Webinar panelists included Dr. Courtney Ross (clinician), Kandice Jacobs Robinson (caregiver), and Pastor Jeffrey Rumlin (faith leader). This session emphasized the importance of creating a village of support using technology and authentic connections, practicing mindfulness, and integrating one's faith and spirituality as coping strategies for our elders and their caregivers.

The webinar link is below:

<https://youtu.be/ygYqd3PlUmA>





## **RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH SERIES: SUPPORTING THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF OUR BLACK PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND ADULTS**

**TUESDAY, MAY 11, 2021, 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**"If you have health, you have hope, you have everything." – African Proverb**

According to the Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health, Black adults in the U.S. are more likely than white adults to report persistent symptoms of emotional distress, such as sadness, hopelessness and feeling like everything is an effort. Black adults living below the poverty line are more than twice as likely to report serious psychological distress than those with more financial security. The Black community experiences a higher rate of mental health challenges due to mental health care access issues, a lack of adequate health insurance, racism and discrimination, food insecurity and socioeconomic challenges, a lack diverse and culturally responsive providers, and mental health stigma. These issues are compounded by the impact of COVID-19 and racial tensions.

Webinar panelists included Kanoya Smith (social worker), Whitney Snider (lived experiences with mental health challenges), and Pastor Bruce Matthews (faith leader). This session emphasized the importance of self-care by embracing a posture of gratefulness, use of prayer/meditation, proper sleep, healthy nutrition, physical activity, and stress management as coping strategies.

The webinar link is below:

<https://youtu.be/-xYr1Icl-M0>







# **RESILIENCE AND STRENGTH SERIES: SUPPORTING THE MENTAL WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN, TEENS, AND YOUNG ADULTS**

**TUESDAY, JUNE 22, 2021, 5:30 PM – 6:30 PM**

**"Children are a reward of life." – African Proverb**

It is critical that parents, caregivers, and the village attend to the mental, social, emotional, and spiritual needs of Black children, youth, and young adults. Youth are experiencing loss of routines, adjustments to school/college, missing events such as proms, parties, increased screen time, and less time with friends. Children, teens, and young adults are also impacted by adverse childhood experiences, racial stress and trauma, grief and loss, depression/anxiety, suicide, and other mental health challenges.

Webinar panelists included Dr. Tyrenia Cross (psychologist), Cheryl Deas (caregiver of child that died by suicide), Donnie Raby (lived experiences with mental health challenges) and Pastor Kelvin Lewis (faith leader). Key themes that emerged during the discussion were the importance of parents having intentional conversations with their children about their mental health and being present with their children. Signs and symptoms of suicidality and non-suicidal injury were described. In addition, suggestions were offered on having "the talk" with children when stereotyped or experiencing racial discrimination. Practical coping strategies such as a mindful shower, observing the colors of the sky, exercise, reduction of screen time, and proper nutrition were emphasized during the discussion.

Webinar link is below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5L41Q1v-IQs>





## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The following resources were shared during the webinars:

National Association of Mental Illness (NAMI) Jacksonville Chapter  
[www.namijax.org/familysupport](http://www.namijax.org/familysupport)

**On Our Sleeves Campaign Resources**

Visit - [www.WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves](http://www.WolfsonChildrens.com/OnOurSleeves)

**Ways to Get Involved:**

- Sign up for our monthly e-newsletter, featuring actionable, timely mental health information
- Download tips and tools to help facilitate conversations with kids and teens
- Learn how to recognize and respond to children in or at risk of crisis
- Access mental health support services provided by Wolfson Children's Hospital
- Make a financial gift or raise funds to support the movement for children's mental health

Wolfson Children's *On Our Sleeves* has been generously supported by the J. Wayne and Delores Barr Weaver Legacy Fund and Robert and Margaret Hill.

**Kids & Teens Helpline**

If you or your child need immediate help due to having suicidal thoughts, call our Kids & Teens Helpline at 904.202.7900 or text LIFE to 741741. If there is an immediate safety concern, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.

**Baptist Behavioral Health**

904.376.3800 Appts & Info, Weekdays 8 am - 5 pm

904.202.7900 24/7 Crisis Hotline





## EVALUATION SUMMARY

The following are the evaluation survey questions:

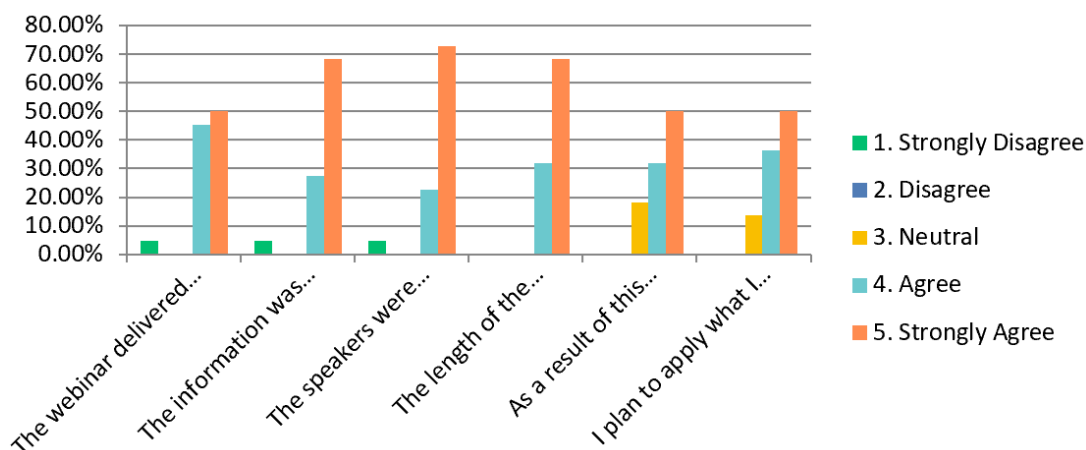
The webinar delivered the information I expected to receive.  
The information was presented in a way that I could understand.  
The speakers were knowledgeable.  
The length of the webinar was sufficient.  
As a result of this webinar, I gained new knowledge that will help me with my mental well-being.  
I plan to apply what I learned during the webinar.

### Resilience and Strength Series: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of Our Black Elders

Number of webinar participants: 64

Below is a graph showing responses of participants from the above questions. (N= 22)

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.



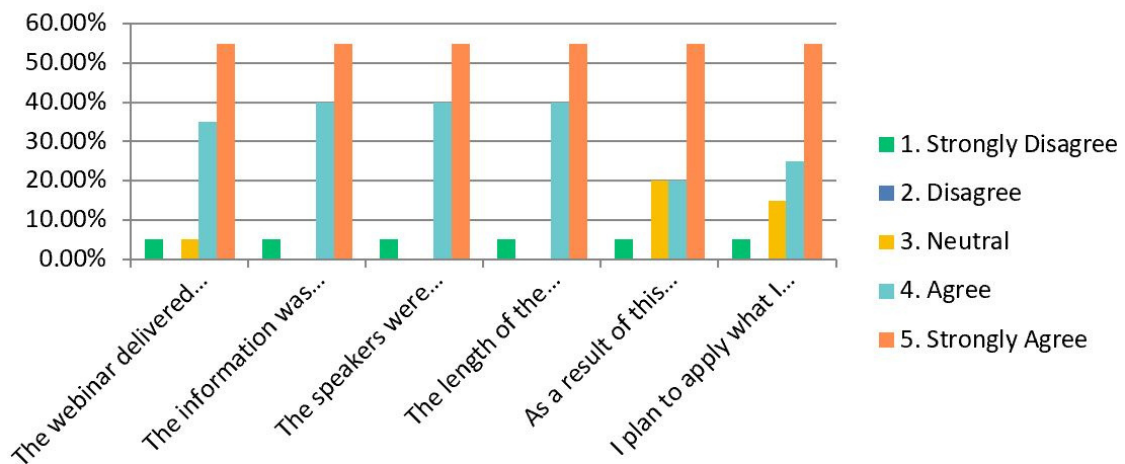


## Resilience and Strength Series: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of Our Parents, Caregivers, and Adults

Number of webinar participants: 65

Below is a graph showing responses of participants from the webinar. (N = 20)

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.



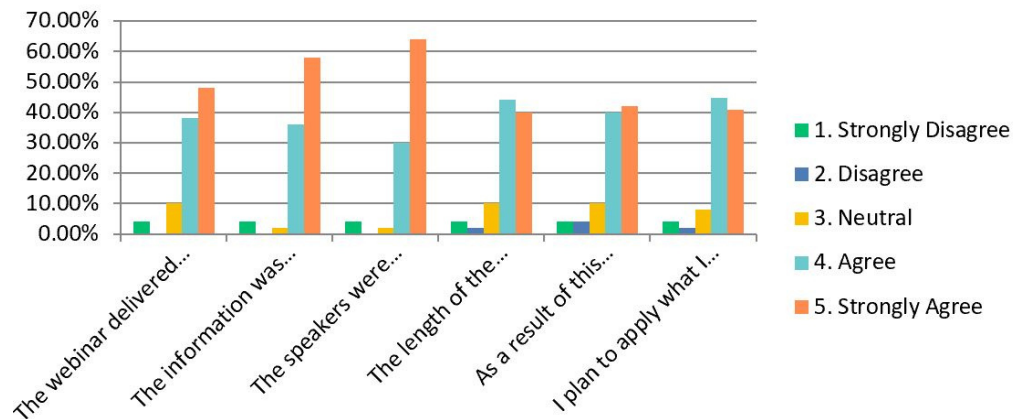


## Resilience and Strength Series: Supporting the Mental Well-Being of Our Children, Teens, and Young Adults

Number of webinar participants: 101

Below is a graph showing responses of participants from the webinar. (N= 50)

Please rate the following statements on a scale from 1 - 5, with 1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree.



## **Future Implications**

- **Continue conversations about communities of color and mental health**
- **Leverage the lived experiences and voices of Black and Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC) living with mental health challenges**
- **Seek out research opportunities to address mental health and communities of color**
- **Foster authentic partnerships with systems partners and ethnic community-based organizations to promote mental well-being awareness and education**
- **Use peer-to-peer mental health education models with children, youth, and young adults**
- **Collaborate with BIPOC professional organizations**
- **Create an integrative care model that includes the faith community**
- **Identify an on-line space for culturally responsive mental health resources**
- **Track mental health data by race, gender, and zip code and develop an equity plan to eliminate mental health inequities**
- **Train behavioral health providers in culturally responsive care with communities of color**

**Report Submitted By: Selena Webster-Bass, MPH, Voices Institute  
[selena@voicesinst.org](mailto:selena@voicesinst.org)**

