



Race & Racism In Our Work

AmeriCorps Health Education
School-Based Health Centers
2021-22



Objectives

- Discuss best practices regarding:
 - Talking to patients about racism (especially as it relates to SRH/nutrition)
 - Practicing anti-racism in our work as health educators
 - Best practices regarding anti-racism in outreach – focus on equity/outreach prioritizing groups who may have more barriers to accessing care
- Consider how to bring the racial justice lens to everything we do
- Examine and question personal and organizational structures that can influence an HE's impact

Guiding Assumptions

- Systems of power and oppression exist
 - Racism
 - Sexism
 - Classism
 - Homophobia
 - Ableism
- These power dynamics exist in our classrooms & clinics, even when we actively try to prevent them from entering
 - On personal, interpersonal, institutional, and structural levels
- The system is designed to reproduce itself

Levels of Oppression

INTERNALIZE



INTERPERSONAL



INSTITUTIONAL



STRUCTURAL



Feelings As Messengers

Feeling Families

◆ Sad



- There is a *loss*
- I need comfort, space, and/or support to grieve and let go

◆ Scared



- There is *danger*
- I need protection, support, and/or reassurance

◆ Mad



- There is a *violation*
- I need to set limits and/or re-establish boundaries or expectations

◆ Joyful

◆ Peaceful

◆ Powerful



- Keep on!

Racial Justice Lens: Reflection Questions

- How does this issue connect to race and racism or to justice issues more generally?
- What might be the root cause of the issue?
- How does this affect people's health?
- How might it affect one group more or less than another?
- How am I naming systemic oppression with patients instead of asking them to do so first?
- How is racism impacting my interactions with my patients? What about patient interactions with us?
- What am I (and others in the room) feeling and what messages might that be communicating about systems of power/oppression?

Baby scenarios

- A contact tracer calls a COVID+ patient and advises them to use a separate bathroom from the rest of the household so as to prevent spread of COVID
- A supervisor tells a BIPOC front desk staff member that their "outspokenness" about issues in the clinic has come across as "rude"
- A health educator designs a thoughtful workshop for all students about STIs and schedules it during a study hall – a time when most students are free but those who are failing classes are required to meet with their teachers & counselors
- A clinic has models with only white people's skin color

Racial Equity Principles

"These racial equity principles were developed by the Dismantling Racism Works collaborative after a decade of experience working with and for community based leaders and organizations living into their racial justice commitment. Many have found these principles to ground them powerfully in the wisdom offered as they navigate the challenges, constraints, and violations of white supremacy culture. As we build the world we want and deserve. As we become free." - White Supremacy Culture Website



Applying the lens

A patient comes in and shares that she doesn't want to be on birth control due to the historical experimentation of birth control on black and brown bodies. Plus she's heard that in certain practices in America, the medical provider will refuse to take out IUDs or Nexplanons from black and brown bodies despite the patient asking the medical provider to do so.

Using the RE principle you are assigned, how would you approach this?
You can use guiding questions to help too!

In your pair

- Read the section focused on the principle you were assigned
- Come prepared to share what the principle means to the group
- From the lens of that principle, how might you respond to the scenario?
 - Discuss & come prepared to share with the group

Group Debrief and Conclusion

1. What did you learn about the RE principle you were assigned?
 - a. Share out what it means & how it's applied
2. How would someone using this principle handle the scenario?
3. What is something that you identified today in the clinic setting or your personal background that impacts your ability to use this principle?

Key Take-Aways

- Before doing anything, take pause and be mindful of how our thoughts/actions might impact people - especially around race/racism.
- Ask yourself guiding reflection questions anytime you're creating a new resource, curricula, talking to pt, setting up your office, etc.
- Acknowledge that your privilege might mean there are impacts you don't see or can't predict. Ask for collaboration/support - the more voices in the room, the better!
- We see experiences of racism & systemic oppression as ongoing trauma. Anything can be a trigger!
- Trust your instinct & emotions - name racism when you see it!

Check out

- What are some skills or experiences that I bring to this work that will help me to do this work powerfully?

EXTRA SLIDES

Other scenarios for later

- A patient comes in and shares that she doesn't want to be on birth control due to the historical experimentation of birth control on black and brown bodies and that she's heard that in certain practices in America, the medical provider will refuse to take out IUDs or Nexplanons from black and brown bodies despite the patient asking the medical provider to do so. How would you approach this?
- A patient shares that she doesn't like how the medical records labels her as obese, when she doesn't see her body this way. How would you approach this?
- A patient shares that she doesn't like how her body looks and feels fat in it. She also shares that she is trying to lose weight to look better. How would you approach this?
- **In groups, discuss how you might address these scenarios. Write it up and then share out!**