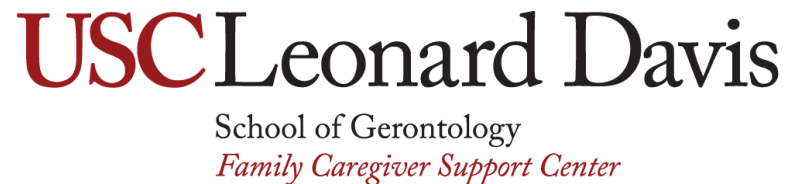


An Intersectional and Multi-Disciplinary Look at Elder Mistreatment and the African American Community: Sharing New Resources and Strategies for Impact



Housekeeping

- All attendees will enter the meeting in listen-only mode.
- If you have questions, type them in the box below. We will address as many as possible during the Q&A session at the conclusion of the presentation.
- Presentation recording and materials will be made available via the Training Resources on Elder Abuse www.trea.usc.edu
- Your feedback matters! After we conclude today's webinar please follow the link to complete our brief survey.

Goal of the National Center on Elder Abuse

To improve the national response to elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation by gathering, housing, disseminating, and stimulating innovative, validated methods of practice, education, research, and policy.

We are here to ensure that older adults live with dignity and honor and are free from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.

3

Today's Presenters

USC Leonard Davis
School of Gerontology
Family Caregiver Support Center

**NATIONAL
CENTER ON
LAW &
ELDER
RIGHTS**



Donna Benton, PhD
Associate Research Professor
of Gerontology and
Director of the USC Family
Caregiver Support Center



Vivianne Mbaku, JD
Senior staff attorney of
Justice in Aging



Juanita Davis, JD
Associate Director of the
National Clearinghouse on
Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)



Katie Block, MSW, MPH
Project Coordinator of the
National Clearinghouse on
Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

Webinar Objectives

- Discuss the intersectional and transgenerational impact of racism, classism, and gender on African American elders
- Describe trauma-informed, culturally competent legal services
- Share strategies, resources, and supports to help older African Americans navigate intersectional traumas in later life

Can Use of Intersectionality Theory Improve Research and Programs for Elder Mistreatment in the African American Community?

Donna Benton, PhD
Associate Research Professor of Gerontology
Director, USC Family Caregiver Support Center/LACRC

6

Intersectionality, *n*.

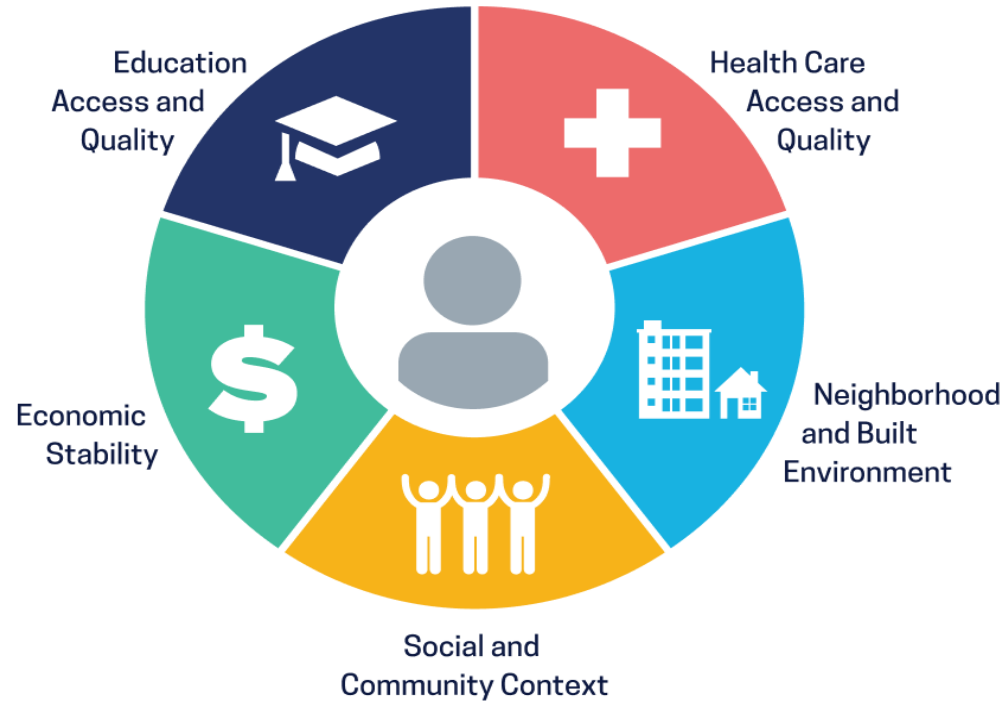
The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as

- race
- class,
- gender

regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage;
a theoretical approach based on such a premise. (Oxford Dictionary)

Kimberlé Crenshaw, law professor and social theorist, first coined the term intersectionality in her 1989 paper [“Demarginalizing The Intersection Of Race And Sex: A Black Feminist Critique Of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory And Antiracist Politics.”](#)

Social Determinants of Health



Social Determinants of Health
Copyright-free

 Healthy People 2030

8

Source: Healthy People 2030, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. Retrieved [date graphic was accessed], from <https://health.gov/healthypeople/objectives-and-data/social-determinants-health>

USC Leonard Davis

School of Gerontology
Family Caregiver Support Center

LACRC
LOS ANGELES CAREGIVER RESOURCE CENTER
A program of the USC Family Caregiver Support Center



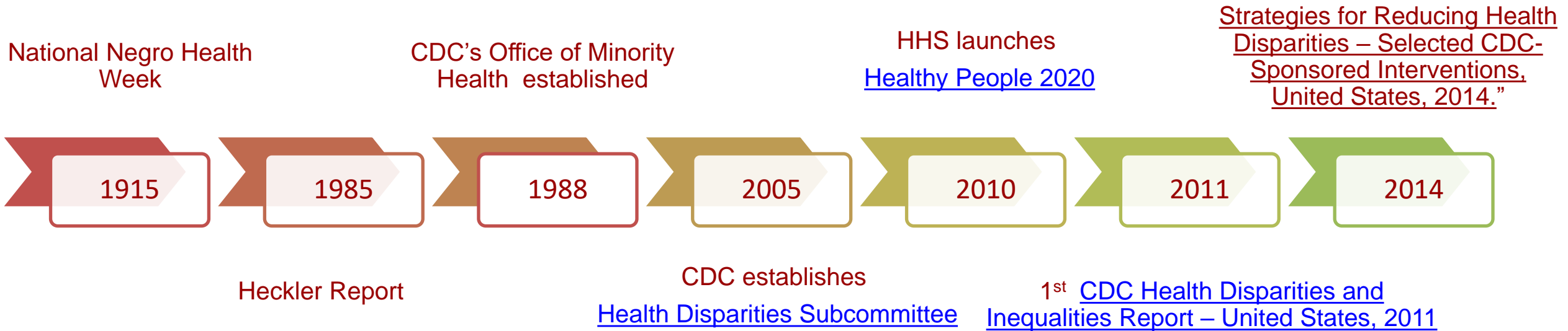
University of Southern California

The remnants of slavery
and forced segregation
that have fomented
economic and health disparities
may exacerbate
risk for elder abuse
among African American
Family Caregivers

9

**The remnants of slavery
and forced segregation
have also contributed to resilience
community interdependency and
familism**

10



Research Agenda Suggestions

- Research which elements of filial caregiving practices in African- American communities can be replicated in other ethnic/cultural groups?
- What are culturally appropriate ways to provide caregiver respite, education and support services?
- Investigate the impact of systemic racism, including health, economic, and other contextual disparities on African American family caregivers & elders' transgenerational susceptibility to mistreatment

Mistreatment of African-American Elders

Vivianne Mbaku, Senior Staff Attorney

What is Legal Services?

- Legal Services (Civil Legal Aid) provide free legal representation to millions of Americans every year
- Legal Services is limited to civil legal aid. Attorneys represent clients in cases like: evictions, divorce, preservation of public benefits, orders of protection, and financial exploitation.
- Depending on funding, civil legal aid organizations may have income or other restrictions on representation
- Title III-B of the Older American Act funds legal assistance for older adults, specifically targeting those with economic or social needs

Who Does Legal Services Serve?

- 52% of LSC Clients are People of Color
- 71.7% of LSC Clients are Women
- 21% of LSC Clients are 60 and Older
- LSC regulations limit income for clients to no more than 125% of Poverty Guidelines, which is \$21,550 for a household of 2 (\$1796 monthly)
- Legal Services Corporation (LSC) is the nation's largest provider of civil legal aid, but there are many other independent legal services providers that do not receive funding from LSC.

How Does New Research Impact Attorneys?

- In coming years, more Black older adults will be served by legal services, by 2060 Black older adults will constitute 13% of older adult population
- Impacts of systemic and institutional racism may mean older Black clients have more legal issues, attorneys need to be in tune to broader issue spotting
- These impacts can also increase susceptibility to abuse
- Fear of institutionalization and need to preserve family ties despite abuse may make legal advocacy more difficult, attorneys should lean into trauma informed practices, explore alternative issue solving like restorative justice for these cases

Trauma-Informed and Culturally Competent Representation

- Trauma-Informed Lawyering acknowledges the impact trauma has on the lives and functioning of clients and works to accommodate clients and reduce re-traumatization
- Culturally competent representation adapts to culturally diverse situations, rejects assumptions and stereotypes and recognizes how culture can impact representation.
- Integrating trauma-informed and cultural competent practices will lead to better outcomes, more trust and overall improved lawyer client relationship
- In light of the new research, there are several practices that attorneys can integrate in to their practice to better serve Black older adults

Integrating Findings from Research into Practice

- Honoring, acknowledging and respecting the lived experience of older Black clients
- Acknowledging the power structures that have contributed to harm in their lives
- Explaining that lawyer is there to help in spite of these structures and will find a solution that fits client
- Reminding client that lawyer has an ethical duty to follow their lead and cannot do something they do not want to do
- Respecting and understanding familial boundaries
- Looking for solutions that respect the older adult and their lived experience

Other Ways to Integrate Research Findings

- Attorneys should know which culturally specific community resources are available for their clients
 - Are there community groups that serve Black older adults in your area?
- Lawyers should engage in research on older adults of specific cultural groups to better understand their clients and their lived experiences



Increasing Access to Healing Services and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors



ncall

October 28, 2020

Project History

- **2016** – NCALL joins NRC collaborative
- **2018** – multi-modal needs assessment
- **Early 2019** – filming session in Milwaukee, WI

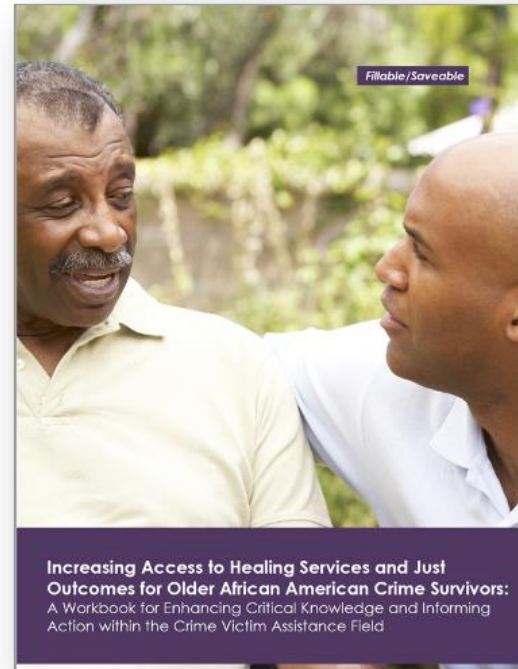
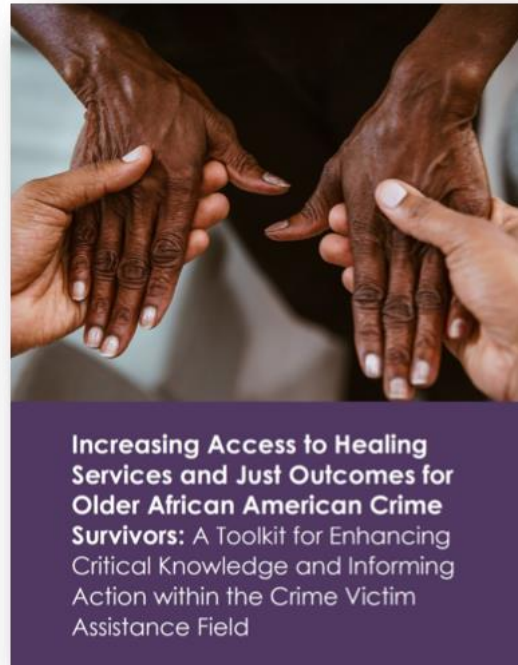


Project History (continued)

- **Late 2019/Early 2020** – drafting toolkit and external review
- **July 2020** – toolkit published



Toolkit Components



reachingvictims.org/resource/increasing-access-toolkit/

Critical Framework

Cultural Humility

Responsiveness

Intersectional Lens

Trauma-Informed

Institutional Positionality

Centering

Affirming

Learning and Unlearning

Why is this Information Critical for the Field?

- Older African American victims are underserved
- Systemic barriers prevent victims from accessing services
- Increasing awareness is critical
- Advancing equitable partnerships are key
- Sharing strategies for enhancing access

Moving Toward Racial Equity in Our Work

- “One size fits all” approaches are harmful.
- Learning, unlearning, and action must happen all at once.



Contact Information

Juanita Davis, JD
jdavis@ncall.us

Katie Block, MSW, MPH
kblock@ncall.us

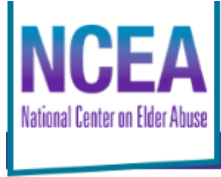
NCALL email: ncall@ncall.us





Questions/Comments?

Resources



National Center on Elder Abuse
1-855-500-3537 (ELDR)

ncea-info@aoa.hhs.gov
<https://ncea.acl.gov/>



USC Center on Elder Mistreatment website:
<http://eldermistreatment.usc.edu/>

**Training Resources
on Elder Abuse**

Training Resources on Elder Abuse (TREA):
www.trea.usc.edu



Mistreatment of African American Elders

[Mistreatment of African American Elders \(2020\)](#)



[Increasing Access to Healing Services and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors: A Toolkit for Enhancing Critical Knowledge and Informing Action within the Crime Victim Assistance Field](#)