Rise Sister Rise
Evaluating African American Girls’ Experience of Trauma and Resiliency in Ohio’s Communities

PLACING BLACK GIRLS AT PROMISE
OHIO SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION CAPITAL CONFERENCE
NOVEMBER 10, 2014
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For African American adolescents to develop into individuals actively engaged in optimal personal and collective development, they must be placed “at promise” as opposed to “at risk” in order to become contributing members of their families, schools, communities, and the broader society.

Why Black Girls?

There are approximately 201,000 African American girls living in Ohio’s communities. The majority of them reside in metropolitan areas. Our research and the work of others suggest that urban adolescent African American girls are significantly exposed to more traumatic stressors than children of other groups. Not every Black girl is a victim of poverty, has limited access, poor academic proficiency, few employment opportunities or a life with few successes. Yet, most Black girls live with some kind of trauma every day. Unresolved and prolonged trauma produces the negative and aggressive behavior manifested in Black girls today.
409 Girls surveyed 11-18 years old

- Akron = 125 girls
- Columbus = 101 girls
- Dayton = 109 girls
- Lima = 74 girls
The Rise Sister Rise Project

Building Resiliency in African American girls through community engagement and empowerment

Local Coalition building

Gather Data (Focus Groups and Surveys)

Resiliency Activities

Build Awareness Through Speakers and Panels

Data Sharing

Community Dialogue and Action Planning

The Rise Sister Rise Project
RSR Survey Instruments

- Search Institute’s Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors Survey
- Youth Self Report from The Child Behavior Checklist
- Questions from the New York Black Girls Survey
- Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey
- Recent Exposure to Violence Scale
What Girls Like About Themselves

- Intelligence: 83.3%
- Friendliness: 77.3%
- Skin tone/Complexion: 77.3%
- Face: 76.6%
- Hair: 76.1%
- Ability to stick up for myself: 75.6%
- Independence (take care of self): 74.9%
- Body: 69.6%
- Grades: 64.8%
- Contribution to House (e.g. chores): 56.6%
- Ambition: 50.1%
- Don't like anything about self: 1.7%
- Other: 10.2%
“I’m proud that I’m somebody my little cousins can look up to.”

“I want to do something with my life.”

“I’m happy of my ability to adapt to things that are changing.”

“I’m proud of the fact that I can stand on my own two feet and not let anybody knock me down.”

“I have high self-esteem. It’s always high. I wake up in the morning, get dressed with a good feeling, and that’s how I am.”
Feelings about Race

- Love Being Black: 95.4%
- Afrocentric, Identify with Black Culture: 80.0%
- Unfairly Treated due to Race: 62.7%
- Life would be easier if not Black: 28.8%
- Would Change Race: 12.7%
Whom Girls Seek Advice From

- Best friend: 34.3%
- Mother: 29.2%
- No one, figure out alone: 8.2%
- Other family member: 6.9%
- Boyfriend: 6.9%
- Grandparent: 5.3%
- Father: 2.2%
- Pastor: 1.3%
- Someone in a program/mentor: 1.3%
- Teacher: 0.3%
- Other: 4.1%
Who Has the Most Influence on Girls

- Mother: 52.3%
- God/Allah/Jesus/Other religious: 23.2%
- Grandparent: 15.1%
- Sister or Brother: 14.8%
- Friend: 11.1%
- Father: 7.9%
- Boyfriend: 7.4%
- Celebrity: 4.4%
- Teacher: 4.2%
- Someone in a program/mentor: 2.7%
- Pastor: 2.5%
- Other: 10.4%
“I have to say my role model is **my grandfather**. I think out of everybody in my family, he was the closest person to me.”

“My aunt is my role model because of her job.”

“My grandma is my role model. I’m not my mama’s girl, I’m my grandma’s girl. I admire her.”

“My sister is my role model because she went to college and she’s doing good. I had to flip it and get on the right track like my sister.”

“I would say my role model is **my brother** because he tells me what I need to hear. He doesn’t sugarcoat it. He puts it in a way I understand.”

“My cousin is my role model because she’s got a child and still goes to college. She’s been doing a lot and she’s going to be a police officer.”
Spirituality and Religious Involvement

Relationship with Higher Power

- Excellent, 28.8%
- Good, 23.8%
- Alright, could be better, 37.0%
- Not very good, Horrible, 2.9%
- Don’t Know/ Don’t Have One, 7.5%

Attendance at Religious Services:

- Weekly 50.7%
- Never 9.2%
- Rarely 16.2%
- A Few Times a Year 11.2%
- Monthly 12.7%
Girls’ Favorite Hobbies and Activities

- Computers, TV, Videogames: 36.0%
- Reading: 26.7%
- Singing: 19.1%
- Dancing, Step, Cheer/Drill: 16.2%
- Games, Cards: 12.3%
- Artistic Hobbies: 12.0%
- Phone/Texting: 11.5%
- Playing Instruments: 11.5%
- Writing, Poetry: 11.0%
- Sports, Exercise: 9.8%
- Listen to Music/Radio: 9.6%
- Shopping: 7.1%
- Crafts: 6.6%
- Hanging Out with Friends, Family: 4.2%
- Hair, Nails, Fashion: 2.7%
- Acting, Modeling: 2.0%
- Cars, Riding in Cars: 1.7%
- Cooking: 1.2%
- Sleeping: 1.2%
- Volunteering: 1.2%
- Miscellaneous Activities: 6.6%
Types of Jobs/Chore Responsibilities

- Kitchen/Dishes: 39.5%
- Babysitting: 33.1%
- Clean Bedroom: 31.4%
- Clean Bathroom: 12.5%
- Formal Paid Job: 8.3%
- Laundry: 6.4%
- Animal Care: 2.5%
- Homework, Gr.: 2.5%
- Take out Trash: 2.2%
- Volunteering: 1.2%
- Yardwork: 1.2%
- Other Cleaning: 21.6%
- Other Job/Chore: 6.4%
Involvement in Organized Activities

Number of Organizations, Clubs, Teams or Other Groups Girls are Involved In

- 0: 46.8%
- 1: 25.0%
- 2: 13.5%
- 3: 14.7%
Developmental Assets

- **External Assets:**
  - Support
  - Empowerment
  - Boundaries and Expectations
  - Constructive Use of Time

- **Internal Assets:**
  - Commitment to Learning
  - Positive Values
  - Social Competencies
  - Positive Identity
## Support

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<th>25%</th>
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<th>75%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family support</td>
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<td>72.3%</td>
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<td>Positive family communication</td>
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<td>Other adult relationships</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>49.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caring neighborhood</td>
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<td>32.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caring school climate</td>
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<td>41.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parent involvement in schooling</td>
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Empowerment

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<tr>
<td>Community values youth</td>
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<td>34.3%</td>
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<td>Youth as resources</td>
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<td>34.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service to others</td>
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<td>35.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
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<td>36.5%</td>
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## Boundaries and Expectations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Boundary</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family boundaries</td>
<td>51.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School boundaries</td>
<td>68.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood boundaries</td>
<td>49.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adult role models</td>
<td>29.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive peer influence</td>
<td>63.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Constructive Use of Time

- Creative activities: 25.6%
- Youth programs: 56.2%
- Religious community: 73.9%
- Time at home: 64.2%
Commitment to Learning

- **Achievement motivation**: 80.8%
- **School engagement**: 66.6%
- **Homework**: 37.8%
- **Bonding to school**: 56.3%
- **Reading for pleasure**: 32.7%
Positive Values

- Caring: 64.4%
- Equality & social justice: 70.6%
- Integrity: 83.0%
- Honesty: 78.1%
- Responsibility: 76.6%
- Restraint: 47.7%
Social Competencies

- Planning and decision-making: 35.1%
- Interpersonal competence: 51.2%
- Cultural competence: 45.3%
- Resistance skills: 44.1%
- Peaceful conflict resolution: 16.5%
Positive Identity

- Personal power: 41.6%
- Self-esteem: 68.6%
- Sense of purpose: 68.5%
- Positive view of personal future: 83.1%
Deficits

- TV overexposure (3+ hrs/day): 51.6%
- Alone at Home (2+ hrs school days): 48.0%
- Physical abuse by someone living with you: 28.1%
- Victim of violence that caused injury within last two years: 22.5%
Substance Use Risky Behaviors

- Drinking parties 1+ last yr: 42.9%
- Alcohol use 1+ last month: 21.0%
- Get drunk last 2 weeks: 13.6%
- Alcohol 3+ last mo or drunk last 2 wks: 15.6%
- Drunk driving 1+ last year: 8.2%
- Rode with a drunk driver 1+ last yr: 40.2%
- Drunk drive or ride 3+ last yr: 19.1%
- Cigarettes 1+ last month: 6.7%
- Other tobacco 1+ last year: 0.7%
- Cigarettes daily or chew tobacco freq: 5.0%
- Marijuana 1+ last year: 23.2%
- Inhalants 1+ last year: 4.0%
- Other drug use last year: 1.0%
- Illicit drugs 3+ last year: 17.7%
Risky Behaviors

- Shoppedlifted 1+ last year: 28.5%
- Vandalism 1+ last year: 12.2%
- Police trouble 1+ last year: 20.5%
- Anti-Social Behavior 3+ last year: 14.5%
- Hit or beat up someone 1+ last year: 55.9%
- Hurt someone 1+ last year: 20.0%
- Used weapon to get something 1+ last year: 5.5%
- Group fight 1+ last year: 27.9%
- Carried weapon for protection 1+ last year: 10.3%
- Threatened harm 1+ last year: 41.9%
- Violence 3+ last year: 50.2%
Additional Risky Behaviors

- Sexual intercourse ever: 35.7%
- Sexual intercourse 3+ times: 25.8%
- Skipped school 1+ last month: 26.7%
- Skipped school 2+ last mo. < C avg.: 22.8%
- Gambled 1+ last year: 14.8%
- Gambled 3+ last year: 5.7%
- Disorder eating ever: 18.6%
- Depressed most last month: 20.7%
- Attempted Suicide ever: 19.7%
- Frequently depressed/Suicide ever: 32.1%
Anger Management

“I was in anger management, but I stopped going because they just had you and this lady in a tiny room with one lamp. And it makes me mad. Like why am I sitting in the dark talking about my problems? And I got very angry.”

“[The instructor] talked to me like I was slow – like why are you talking to me like that?”

“I’ve been in anger management, but they kicked me out because they would ask me dumb questions.”

“I only went to a couple of sessions because the counselor kept asking me the same questions over and over again. And she would just make me madder.”
Exposure to Violence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLENCE AT HOME</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
<th>Witnessed</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>23.4%</td>
<td>18.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slapped/hit/punched</td>
<td>28.3%</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaten</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VIOLENCE AT SCHOOL</th>
<th>Experienced</th>
<th>Witnessed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>26.2%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slapped/hit/punched</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beaten/mugged</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>56.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exposure to Violence

**NEIGHBORHOOD VIOLENCE**

- Threatened: 9.8% Experienced, 28.5% Witnessed
- Slapped/hit/punched: 10.1% Experienced, 32.7% Witnessed
- Beaten/mugged: 4.0% Experienced, 31.7% Witnessed

**SEVERE VIOLENCE**

- Knife attack or stabbing: 4.5% Experienced, 14.3% Witnessed
- Gun threat: 7.8% Experienced, 20.6% Witnessed
- Gun attack: 4.5% Experienced, 17.3% Witnessed
- Sexually abused/assaulted: 16.6% Experienced, 21.1% Witnessed
“There are people shooting in the daytime right in front of your house.”

“The thing I worry about is my cousin getting hurt, because he’s been shot before.”

“In my neighborhood, you got boys beating up on their girlfriends, fights every night, guns shooting. It’s crazy.”

“It’s super dangerous [in my neighborhood], but I feel so safe. There are always shootings, always robbery, always somebody breaking in, but I feel super safe. The only reason I feel safe is because all the grown-ups know my mom and know my mom don’t play – especially when it comes to her kids. They have the most respect for her. Pretty much every female knows not to come at me sideways – so I feel safe.”
Adverse Childhood Experiences

- Parents Divorced: 57.0%
- Emotional Abuse: 54.6%
- Emotional Neglect: 48.4%
- Family Mbr Incarcerated: 31.9%
- Battered Mother: 29.4%
- Physical Abuse: 26.9%
- Family Mbr Substance Abuse: 21.7%
- Family Mbr Mentally Ill: 17.5%
- Sexual Abuse: 15.8%
- Physical Neglect: 11.4%
Adverse Childhood Experiences

High ACE scores are associated with:

- Depression and Suicide Attempts
- Alcohol, Smoking, Drug Use
- Absenteeism and job loss
- Financial problems
- Medical problems (Liver Disease, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease)

Ohio girls are at risk for these problems
Behavioral and Emotional Functioning

- More than 20% of the girls rated in the clinical range for:
  - Withdrawn/Depressed
  - Somatic Complaints
  - Social Problems
  - Thought Problems
  - Rule-Breaking
  - Aggressive Behavior

- And more than one-quarter (29%) of the girls had 2 or more problem behaviors in the clinical range.
MOVING TOWARDS RESILIENCY
“I would encourage all young girls to just stand out, **be yourself**, be your own person, and stand for yourself. You’ve got to make it for you.”

**Hang out with the right people.** Don’t be putting yourself in positions where you know you’re going to do something bad. That will keep you safe. Just hang out with the right people.”

**Stay away from the drama.** And look in the mirror everyday and see what you like about yourself.”

“If girls **have a hobby** that they like, they should stick with it and see where it goes.”

“Get into **sports** and different **activities**.”
“Stay on the right track and try to do positive things. Don’t worry about negative things. If people come to you with any kind of drama, stay on the right track and go towards your goals.”

“Act like a lady. Treat yourself nice and love yourself.”

“Stay away from the people who you know are going to get you hurt.”

“Do the right thing.”

“Don’t worry about what people think.”

“Be a leader.”

“Don’t be in the streets.”

“Stay positive.”

“Be outstanding.”
Resources for Building Resiliency

- Community Dialogues
- Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- GirlsHealth.gov
- Youth M.O.V.E. [http://youthmovenational.org/](http://youthmovenational.org/)
Each one Teach one

You don’t have to wait, make an impact in the life of an African American girl now.

For more information: 

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