Historical Trauma
Episode Guide

Focus: The importance of analyzing, understanding, and addressing the historical trauma in the lives of Black boys and men

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Key Findings

- Historical trauma, the cumulative psychological wounding of a family or group of people, impacts Black boys and men
- When working in communities of color, consider how historical trauma may be shaping thoughts, interactions, and behavioral processes
- The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Questionnaire is not totally relevant to the experiences of Black children
  - Mostly white, middle class participants
  - Cultural trauma is not included in the questionnaire
- Systems creating trauma
  - Childhood sexual abuse is often not discussed
  - Boys are expected to be men and not to “complain”
  - Impact of the criminal justice system on communities
    - Separated parents
    - Violence in communities
    - Foster care

Key Recommendations

- Get people to talk about their current family histories
- Understand how historical, cultural, collective trauma affects the Black community
- Therapists have to get a handle on their own trauma
- Avoid asking “What did you do?” Ask “What happened to you?”
- Black men and boys deserve the compassion and empathy that other people deserve
Resources

