

# Disproportionality in the age of COVID- 19

“We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.”

— Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.

# THE BLACK PLAGUE

*Public officials lament the way that the coronavirus is engulfing black communities. The question is, what are they prepared to do about it?*

## NYC Blacks and Hispanics Dying of COVID-19 at Twice the Rate of Whites, Asians

U.S. Latinos among hardest hit by pay cuts, job losses due to coronavirus

The lasting damage to black and Latino communities

## Navajo Nation Reports More Coronavirus Cases Per Capita Than All But 2 U.S. States

Coronavirus could 'decimate' Latino wealth, which was hammered by the Great Recession

[LINK](#)

"Magnification." That's the word that surfaces again and again when psychologists who specialize in health inequalities discuss the coronavirus epidemic. The virus and the resulting economic shutdown are exacerbating long-standing inequities in American society, widening economic gaps and health disparities. And the impacts—both physical and psychological—are likely to be long-lasting.

People with disabilities are disproportionately represented in communities of color, and long-standing economic inequalities affect people of color disproportionately as well. Unemployment and underemployment are also high among people with disabilities, creating systemic challenges for them from several directions.

Black and Hispanic people in America are also overrepresented in high-risk front-line jobs. For example, severe outbreaks have hit meatpacking plants. Workers—predominately Hispanic and earning low pay—labored in close quarters and were given little leeway on staying home when sick even as the pandemic spread, according to state public health departments and media investigations.

The pandemic has also magnified socioeconomic gaps, often putting out of work the people who can least afford it, such as those in the service industry.

The Navajo Nation, which sprawls across Arizona, Utah and New Mexico, had 1,540 coronavirus cases and 58 deaths as of late April. That's 10 times the rate of Arizona per capita.

# Equity-related research and information

For behavioral and social scientists and allied health professionals



## How COVID-19 impacts people with disabilities

Research shows people with disabilities are at risk for mental health problems.



## Combating bias and stigma related to COVID-19

How to stop the xenophobia that's spreading along with the coronavirus.

[LINK](#)



## Coronavirus threat escalates fears — and bigotry

Psychologists are pointing to their research to help quell anxiety about a possible pandemic.



## How psychologists can combat the racial inequities of the COVID-19 crisis

The pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on marginalized groups.



## COVID-19 heightens the need to end health disparities

Communities are more successful at meeting challenges when we address the needs of all people.



## How to help vulnerable populations now

Psychologists can help protect the people most at risk during the COVID-19 public health crisis.



## Ageism and COVID-19 fact sheet



## Serious mental illness and COVID-19: How to help your



# THEMES

- Rates that POC get COVID-19
  - Higher Rates of Death
  - Higher Risk of Getting COVID-19
- Employment
  - Job loss: more than 65% of Latinx (newsweek)
  - Loss of employer-provided healthcare
  - Businesses closed
  - Low-paying jobs for essential workers:
  - Loss of savings, retirement
  - Fear of not being able to pay rent
- Access to healthcare
  - Low-quality or no access
  - Lack of access to tests
- Immigration status
  - Not qualifying for aid
  - Fear of accepting help from schools

# Disproportionality in Public Education

- Academic Achievement
- Special Education - Learning Disability, Language Acquisition, Emotionally Disturbed
- Behavior Referrals
- A-G graduation rates
- Access to AP coursework
- Suspensions and Expulsions

# Implications

*Educators need to understand the disproportionate impact of COVID-19. Many students of color live in households and neighborhoods that are affected by COVID-19 more intensely, and at a far greater rates. Their parents and families are often essential workers (or unemployed as a result of the pandemic) and more susceptible to COVID-19. Students of color directly deal with the concerns, worries, and the impact of this growing disproportionality. This crisis is impacting their growth, their social emotional development, and their mental health and possibly their physical well being.*

# Questions

- How are our schools poised to help support our families upon re-entry and re-engagement?
- How are we being proactive about the types of supports we will have to offer our students upon return?
- How will we empathetically understand and identify the level of COVID-19-related disruption students have experienced?



# What might we do?

As we begin to transition to a new, truly unique school year, we need to *understand* and *design responsive, restorative structures and supports* to help students of color more effectively navigate our systems.

Considerations for re-entry might include the following:

- Conduct re-engagement empathy interviews of families to gage the level of disruption to their household based on COVID 19. What supports are available at school, district or county level to help? City Level?
- Bring awareness to site level, district level
- Understand the impact and experience of the community you serve. (We are all in the same storm, but we are not on the same boat.) *Be mindful of your own privilege and bias.*
- Identify supports and services (based on the data from the empathy interviews).
- Identify a process to respond to and accelerate individual student learning needs based on the variability of experiences.
- Provide culturally responsive social-emotional support for students during the transition phase and beyond.



fabiola.bagula@sdcoe.net



@FabiBagulaPhD