

The Least of Us, Mental Health and Suicide - From a Diversity Point of View

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There are alarming suicide trends in African American Children, *“the suicide rates among African American children ages 5 – 11 years has increased substantially since 1993”* according to an article written by Roslyn Holliday – Moore.

African Americans, Native American Women and our LGBTQA+ communities are considered among the least of us and have disproportionately higher depression and suicidal thoughts and attempts. Intergenerational trauma, also referred to as historical trauma plays a major role in why these groups suffer some of the highest rates of depression and suicide.

In 2022, more than 50% of trans and non-binary youths in the US have considered suicide. That’s nearly 34,000 queer and trans youth ages 13 to 24. And these statistics don’t factor in depression and anxiety.

87% of Native American women throughout their lifetime has experienced physical or sexual abuse. **60%** of African American women have “reported” being coerced or forced into having sex prior to their 18th birthday, **45%** have experienced intimate partner violence, stalking and **9%** have “reported” a rape, *(for every rape reported by an African American woman there are **15** who have decided not to reported it)*, and **29%** are significantly more likely to be killed by an acquaintance than their white counterparts.

Because, *“getting help”* in these communities is seen as a sign of weakness, rarely do we *“ask for help”*. And when we do, we are typically faced with ridicule leaving us with feelings of shame or guilt. So, many of us turn to sex, drugs and alcohol in an attempt to self sooth, to brushed off our anxieties, fears, and insecurities

We need to talk (more openly) about suicide, there’s no doubt about that. But, there may need to be different approaches when speaking about suicide culturally. Reducing the Mental Health Stigma in African American communities can help prevent suicides. How?

Be bold, start a conversation, it can be about a time when you felt depressed, anxious or even contemplated suicide. Be brave enough to have the conversation

regardless of the consequences. You'll find out who your true supporters are AND you'll feel better...much better for having shared YOUR truth.

2022 Statistics - Famous African Americans Who Died by Suicide:

Mayor of Hyatsville, MD - **Kevin Ward, 44**



Former Miss USA and Attorney - **Cheslie Kryst, 30**



Walking Dead Star - **Moses Moseley, 31**

