



“We’re Looked at as Superhuman”: How Racism Affects Black Women’s Mental Health

August 21, 2020

News Type: Weekly Spark, Weekly Spark News

[TODAY](#) [1]

African Americans are as likely to experience mental illness as other Americans but more likely to get poor or no treatment. Black women are often left out of research studies and hesitant to obtain mental health care. There are many reasons for that, including racism, mental health stigma, and the history of providers using information against them. They may also have difficulty finding therapists who are Black or culturally competent. “The ‘strong black woman concept’ (implies that) we’re able to handle all things and so sometimes clinicians—who may not be culturally competent—may also [believe that stereotype],” said Mia Moore Kirby, an assistant professor in social work and the Center for African American Studies at the University of Texas at Arlington. “That’s not validating a person’s experience, not empathizing with what’s going on, and maybe minimizing their symptoms.” Some organizations and programs across the U.S., such as those described in this article, are working to destigmatize therapy and make culturally competent care more accessible to Black women.

Spark Extra! Learn more about [suicide among Black populations](#) [2] and [culturally competent approaches](#) [3].

Links within this resource

[1] <https://www.today.com/health/we-re-looked-superhuman-how-racism-affects-black-women-s-t186495>

[2] <http://www.sprc.org/populations/blacks-african-americans>

[3] <http://www.sprc.org/keys-success/culturally-competent>

Printed on 01/23/2021 from <https://sprc.org/news/%E2%80%9Cwere-looked-superhuman%E2%80%9D-how-racism-affects-black-women%E2%80%99s-mental-health>