COVID-19, Climate Change, Equity & Justice...

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CLIMATE CHANGE IS A “UNIVERSAL” SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUE

CLIMATE CHANGE CREATES SEVERE AND DANGEROUS

• HEAVY RAINFALLS
• DANGEROUS STORMS/HURRICANES/TORNADOES
• FLOODS
• DROUGHTS
• HEAT WAVES
• WILD- FIRES

CLIMATE CHANGE THREATENS OUR HEALTH

• CHANGING THE SPREAD OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES
• INTERFERING WITH OUR FOOD SOURCES
• STRAINING VITAL INFRASTRUCTURE LIKE ROADS AND BRIDGES

Human activities – specifically, the burning of fossil fuels for electricity and transportation – are the major driver of climate change.
Climate change acts as a multiplier of many of the problems that Black Americans face related to environmental racism, poverty, and hunger.

- Racism, Racial Bias and Discrimination
- Racial Profiling
- Institutional Racism
- Social & Environmental Determinants of Health
- Trauma

Jones CP Using Socially Assigned Race to probe White advantages in health status. Ethn Dis 2008;18(4)496-504
RACE AND SES

Systemic Racism and socioeconomic disadvantages lead to the overrepresentation of minorities in housing and work environments that lead to elevated risk of exposure to climate change, major hardships, conflicts, and disruptions such as crime, violence, material deprivation, loss of loved ones, recurrent financial strain, relationship conflicts, unemployment, and underemployment.

Williams 2016
CLIMATE CHANGE IS WIPING OUT HARRIET TUBMAN’S HOMELAND, AND WE’RE DOING LITTLE ABOUT IT

AIR POLLUTION, WATER POLLUTION, EQUITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE?

Climate Change Tied to Pregnancy Risks, Affecting Black Mothers Most

Women exposed to high temperatures or air pollution are more likely to have premature, underweight or stillborn babies, a look at 32 million U.S. births found.
A Teenager Didn’t Do Her Online Schoolwork. So a Judge Sent Her to Juvenile Detention.

A 15-year-old in Michigan was incarcerated during the coronavirus pandemic after a judge ruled that not completing her schoolwork violated her probation. “It just doesn’t make any sense,” said the girl’s mother.
Role of Psychiatrists in Addressing Care for People Affected by Forced Displacement

Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2017
Approved by the Assembly, May 2017

“Policy documents are approved by the APA Assembly and Board of Trustees. . . These are . . . position statements that define APA official policy on specific subjects. . .” – APA Operations Manual

Issue:
An unprecedented level of migration due to a variety of socio-political and economic factors has marked the 21st century. Currently, 65.3 million persons worldwide have been forcibly displaced by armed conflict, political oppression, starvation, or other catastrophes (1). While people who are displaced both within and out of countries can demonstrate high levels of resiliency, they can also experience disabling posttraumatic disorders or other consequences that adversely impact medical, psychological, social, and spiritual well-being. These consequences can range from demoralization to various sequelae involving simple and complex trauma complicated by the migratory journey and resettlement process. Perpetuating factors can include limited access to basic services, including appropriate medical and mental health care, legal and financial stressors, as well as discrimination faced in the host community, all of which can contribute to poorer mental health outcomes. These migration-related and post-migration stressors can produce demoralization, grief, loneliness, loss of dignity, and feelings of helplessness as normal syndromes of distress that impede refugees from living healthy and productive lives (2, 3, 4).

Position:
American psychiatrists have broad skill sets for relieving suffering inflicted upon immigrants and refugees by displacement from and within their home countries and can provide direct psychotherapeutic and psychosocial interventions, as well as programmatic leadership, for the care of
This book addresses the unique sociocultural and historical systems of oppression that have alienated African-American and other racial minority patients within the mental healthcare system.
Context: From Slavery → Jim Crow → civil right movement → high incarceration → continued racial discrimination, racial profiling, police brutality including shootings, President Trump’s comments on race and African American communities, lead to ongoing trauma and stress for African Americans.

Purpose

Education
Increase awareness
Provide resources for providers
Engaging the church in promoting climate health equity
THE PLEDGE

I, ________________________, commit myself to environmental justice for all. Furthermore, I commit to organize with local environmental leaders and initiatives, like Community Rx, to advocate for, educate with, and amplify the stories of African-Americans in impacted communities so that we may all go forth and fight for justice.

I vow to stand against environmental racism. I vow to stand with African-American communities who are disproportionately affected by climate change and air pollution. I vow to inform my church, community, family and friends about these issues so that we can collectively take a just stand and demand a seat at the table for environmental justice in our communities.

Lastly, I commit to making changes to my lifestyle that support protecting the earth, air and other natural resources, because I know every child has a right to breathe clean air and that right is a civil right for all.
REFERENCES


8. Gordon-Achebe, K., American Psychiatric Association Position Statement: Separation of Immigrant Children and Families, Approved by the Board of Trustees, December 2018 Approved by the Assembly, November 2018

9. Gordon-Achebe, K., American Psychiatric Association Position Statement: Role of Psychiatrists in Addressing Care For People Affected by Forced Displacement, Approved by the Board of Trustees, July 2017 Approved by the Assembly, May 2017

10. Fact Sheet: Climate Change in the African American Community momscleanairforce.org/rx-climate September 2019


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