Racism: A Public Health Crisis (and its Implications on Child and Maternal Health)

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What is Public Health

“Public health focuses on the entire spectrum of health and well-being, not only the eradication of particular diseases”

- Promoting well-being
- Prolonging life

Public Health applies to many domains of society

- Schools and Education
- Housing and Community
- Employment

Citations:
- WHO. Public health services. (2019).
Racism’s Impacts on Health

- Systemic
- Institutional
- Interpersonal
- Toxic Stress
- Stigma
- Social Determinants of Health

Citations:

Racism’s Impacts on Children

- Adverse Childhood Experience
  - Causes
    - Less access to resources
    - Less healthy neighborhoods
    - Racial discrimination
    - NOT any fault of the child
  - Outcomes
    - Academic
    - Behavioral
    - Health

- Infant Mortality

Citations:
- NVSS
Cleveland Context

Map of Redlining in Cuyahoga County: http://guides.osu.edu/maps-geospatial-data/maps/redlining/
Racism’s Impacts in Cleveland

- Infant Mortality
  - Cuyahoga County ranked last in the state in 2015
  - Ohio is consistently among the worst states for IMR disparity

Citations:
Racism’s Impacts in Cleveland

- Redlining & Housing Policy
  - Food Deserts
  - Wealth
  - School Districts
  - Lead Poisoning

- Trust in the police
  - Black residents are stopped more
  - Experience more racialized treatment
  - USDOJ Report

Citations:
- Cuyahoga County Board of Health. (2011, December 8). Cuyahoga County Assessment: Access to Supermarkets
- USDOJ (2014, December 4). Investigation of the Cleveland Division of Police
Public Health Crisis

- What is a crisis?
  - Sandro Galea’s definition
    - Affects a large number of people
    - Long term - threat to health
    - Requires large-scale solutions
  - Abstract

- National Example of a Public Health Crisis
  - Gun violence
    - Impacts on Children

- Ohio Example of a Public Health Crisis that impacts children
  - Infant mortality

Citations
- The Plain Dealer (2019, November 21) Tamir Rice’s story is about America’s fascination with guns and its fear of black people who have them
- Ohio 131st General Assembly. (n.d.). House Concurrent Resolution 12
Public Health Emergencies

- Acute and extraordinary
- Often a natural disaster or infectious disease
  - Like a hurricane
- An executive issue (Mayor/County Executive/Governor)
- Vaping declared a Public Health Emergency in Massachusetts
- Concrete

Citations
Resolutions vs Ordinances

- **Resolutions**
  - Position statements
    - Locally specific findings supported by data
    - Guides the position of the legislature

- **Ordinance**
  - Enacts or changes law
  - Can create programs or allocate funds
Addressing Racism as a Public Health Crisis — City and County Examples

- Before Wisconsin
  - Pacific Northwest
- Wisconsin
  - UW Madison, WPHA
  - Milwaukee County
- After Milwaukee County
  - Cook County, IN
  - Kansas City, MO
  - Madison, WI
Racism and Resolutions

- **Commonalities**
  - Declaration of racism as a public health crisis
  - Assessment of internal policy
  - Statement of commitment to equity
  - Workforce education
  - Equitable development

- **Impacts**
  - Racial equity training
  - Formulation of new offices, strategic plans, and focus groups
  - Inclusion of equity in future decision making
A Public Health Crisis as a Call to Action

- 400 Years of Inequity
  - 87% of the American experience
  - Results of the summit
- Ever-increasing support
  - Resolutions spreading across the nation
  - Wisconsin’s Impact

Potential Next Steps for Cleveland/Cuyahoga County

- Craft Locally Specific City and/or County Resolutions
- Commit to racial equity in:
  - Leadership
  - Planning and legislation
  - Workforce development
  - Collaborations with the community
  - Communication
  - Development projects
- Ensure transparency and accountability
- Encourage continued education
- Ensure common definitions
Questions?

- For any further questions or if you would like information about a particular source, please contact me at james.darnell@case.edu
• American Public Health Association. (2019). Gun Violence is a Public Health Crisis
• Cuyahoga County Board of Health. (2011, December 8). Cuyahoga County Assessment: Access to Supermarkets
• Galea, S. (2017, April 23). Crying "Crisis": SPH: Boston University
• HIP Cuyahoga. (2019). 2019 Cuyahoga County Community Health Needs Assessment
• Morsy, L., & Rothstein, R. (2019, May 1). Toxic stress and children's outcomes: African American children growing up poor are at greater risk of disrupted physiological functioning and depressed academic achievement.
Bibliography

• NVSS Mortality Data 2007-2017
• USDOJ (2014, December 4). Investigation of the Cleveland Division of Police
• Ohio Department of Health. (2019, July 8). 2017 Ohio Infant Mortality Report - Final
• Ohio Public Health Association. (2017, December 14). Health Equity, Social Determinants, and the History of Place
• Ohio 131st General Assembly. (n.d.). House Concurrent Resolution 12
• The Plain Dealer (2019, November 21) Tamir Rice’s story is about America’s fascination with guns and its fear of black people who have them
• WHO. Public health services. (2019).
Media Citations

- Stream picture: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Potok_pod_jezerom_1.jpg
- Map of Redlining in Cuyahoga County: http://guides.osu.edu/maps-geospatial-data/maps/redlining/