

RACISM IS A FUNDAMENTAL CAUSE OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

June 18th, 2024

At The Center for Empowerment and Education (CEE), we believe that education and awareness spark essential changes within our community. Understanding the historical context of racial oppression is crucial in recognizing how deeply entrenched inequalities contribute to interpersonal violence. As an anti-violence organization, we understand that power imbalances continue to affect communities of color in our country. All systems of abuse are interconnected, and systemic racism is a significant part of this web. This is why we commit our resources and voices to highlighting the intersections of racial justice with ending interpersonal violence.

Juneteenth, celebrated on June 19th, commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States. It marks the day in 1865 when Union soldiers arrived in Galveston, Texas, to announce the end of slavery, over two years after the Emancipation Proclamation. The significance of Juneteenth extends beyond this historical moment; it serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggles against racial oppression and the fight for equality. Celebrating Juneteenth offers a vital opportunity to reflect on these issues and promote healing and resilience within affected communities. Addressing the root causes of violence necessitates acknowledging and dismantling the legacy of slavery and systemic racism, fostering community resilience, and advocating for equitable policies.

Racism is a fundamental cause of interpersonal violence. Harmful beliefs that view other groups as lesser — including sexism, heterosexism, transphobia, ableism, and racism — contribute to the inequity and abuse that underpin all forms of interpersonal violence. To effectively prevent interpersonal violence, we must recognize and address the systemic manifestations of racism in our communities and our work.

Juneteenth is a poignant reminder of the interconnectedness of various forms of oppression and the need for comprehensive approaches to combat violence. Racism, poverty, and lack of access to resources can exacerbate situations of domestic violence, sexual assault, and other forms of abuse. By strengthening community bonds and promoting awareness, Juneteenth can serve as a platform for discussing and addressing the impact of interpersonal violence, encouraging support networks and advocacy.

At CEE, we will continue to advocate for systemic changes that address the root causes of both interpersonal violence and racism at local, state, and national levels. We will use an intersectional framework to address how various forms of oppression, such as racism, sexism, and classism, intersect and impact individuals and communities. We will collaborate with other sectors, such as healthcare, education, and criminal justice, to create a coordinated response to violence and racism.

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On Juneteenth, we encourage everyone to engage in and explore ways to commemorate this day. We invite each of you to be a part of the solution that breaks down systemic racism and injustices.

We encourage you to increase your own knowledge and awareness by reading the following:

- [The Ways Racism Fuels the Fire of Domestic Violence](#)
- [What is the connection between Sexual Violence, Racial Injustice, and All Forms of Abuse?](#)
- [Intimate Partner Violence and Its Health Impact on Disproportionately Affected Populations, Including Minorities and Impoverished Groups](#)
- [Anit-Racism as Violence Prevention](#)
- [Racial Disparities in Sexual Assault Characteristics and Mental Health Care After Sexual Assault Medical Forensic Exams](#)

If you or someone you know needs support, our no-cost confidential hotlines are available 24/7.

Ashley Dunn, President & CEO