

HARM REDUCTION AND THE STATE OF BLACK WOMEN'S LIVES

Meeting Description

The *Harm Reduction and the State of Black Women's Lives* virtual summit is a gathering that will take place over three-days (October 22-24, 2020) and be structured to share knowledge, build partnerships, establish principles of understanding, and create organizing and policy strategies that will improve harmful policies and practices that often impact Black women.

As an outgrowth from an October 2018 Black Harm Reduction convening, Black Women Rising (in collaboration with LAC) hosted the Northwest Ohio Racial Justice and Harm Reduction Summit on May 17, 2019, to include people of diverse faith based on their shared beliefs about adequately serving the needs of all people, and encouraged a deeper commitment to addressing the routine denial of black women's humanity. It also explored the racialized violence that continues to target Black women and began to put together steps to decouple the whitewashed narrative of the opioid crisis.

The current COVID-19 pandemic painfully reveals the need to reduce harms to Black communities much more than drug policy reform. It necessitates a movement that includes faith and community leaders and directly impacted people who work at the intersections of health care, mass incarceration, child welfare, and environmental injustice to analyze and determine how to mitigate the hurt, harm, oppression, and trauma that continues to be imposed on Black women and girls in the United States.

Background

History reveals that in every public health or public safety crisis where war is literally or symbolically declared within the United States, Black families and communities suffer the most. They bear the brunt of enforcement actions which are often put in place to respond to these crises. Moreover, women in these communities are often the unheard and disregarded casualties of punitive decisions tied to these actions, creating generational disasters that affect society as a whole and must, eventually, if belatedly be addressed.

The Harm Reduction movement was born out of the desire to reduce the negative consequences associated with drug use. However, the movement has been white-washed and must be liberated from necropolitics, patriarchy, sexism, and misogyny. It has also been centrally focused on drug use and criminal justice. Harm Reduction principles must be widened to encompass Black women's larger and intersectional experiences. We believe this can be achieved by creating core harm reduction principles and policies that will address the social, economic, environmental and health needs of Black women.



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Meeting Objectives:

1. To exchange information and share personal experiences and research about the history of harm reduction practices and policies.
2. To update participants on the latest information on harm reduction programs and services.
3. To develop ideas and strategies to secure the commitment of community members to adopt and promote an expanded perspective of harm reduction principles that work best for Black women and communities.
4. To examine the role of faith institutions in Harm Reduction.
5. To examine the harm of de-racializing Harm Reduction practices, programming, and direction

SUMMIT AGENDA

<p style="text-align: center;">Thursday October 22, 2020, 4:00 – 7:00 pm EST</p>	
<p>4:00 - 5:00 pm Opening and Grounding</p>	<p>Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Black Women Rising-OH Tracie Gardner, Legal Action Center</p>
<p>5:00 - 6:00 pm</p> <p>Topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trauma Informed Theology/ Trauma Responsive (first responders in the community) • Healing Hope and Harm Reduction/ Faith Community and the Emergence of Black Harm Reduction 	<p>Breakout Groups</p>
<p>6:00 - 6:30 pm</p>	<p>Report Out</p>
<p>6:30 - 7:00 pm Closing Remarks</p>	<p>Planning Team</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Friday October 23, 2020, 11:00 am - 4:00 pm EST</p>	
<p>11:00 - 11:15 am Recap of Day 1</p>	<p>Roberta “Toni” Meyers Douglas, Legal Action Center</p>
<p>11:15 am -12:15 pm Reproductive Health: An Interactive Discussion</p>	<p>Lilly Marcelin, Resilient Sisterhood Project</p>
<p>12:15 - 1:15 pm</p>	<p>Break</p>



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1:15 - 1:30 pm Setting the Framework, Introduction of Dr. Fullilove	Tracie Gardner, Legal Action Center
1:30 - 3:30 pm Ecology of Inequality: Race, Health, Environment & Criminal Legal System	Dr. Mindy Fullilove, The New School
3:30 - 4:00 pm Wrap Up & Preview of Next Day	Tracie Gardner, Legal Action Center
Saturday October 24, 2020, 10:00 am - 2:30 pm EST	
10:00 - 10:15 am Connecting the Issues (connecting the 2 nd and 3 rd day)	Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Black Women Rising-OH
10:15 - 11:30 am (including Q&A) Decoding Whiteness	Tony Caldwell, RLC Network
11:30 - 11:45 am	Break
11:45 am -12:00 pm Connecting the Issues (child welfare and decoding whiteness)	Tracie Gardner, Legal Action Center
12:00 - 1:00 pm Parallels in Child Welfare and the Criminal Legal System	Joyce McMillan, Child Welfare Organizing Project
1:00 - 2:00 pm Deeper Conversations on the Policies that Tear Families Apart	ASFA Steering Committee
2:00 - 2:30 pm Close Out/Call to Action	Bishop Marcia Dinkins, Black Women Rising-OH

** Please note, this agenda is subject to change*



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