



Healthy Black Families Collaborative (HBFC)

Building trust and preventing domestic violence with the South Sacramento Black community.

@weaveinc on all social media

LEAD AGENCY

[WEAVE Inc.](#)

Weave’s mission is to promote safe and healthy relationships and support survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and sex trafficking.

ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERS

[WEAVE Inc.](#)

[Escape Velocity](#)

[Rose Family Creative Empowerment Center](#)

[Sacramento Children’s Home](#)

[South Sacramento Christian Center](#)

[She Could Be My Daughter/Voice of the Youth](#)

[South Sacramento Kaiser Permanente’s Trauma Center](#)

DV PREVENTION APPROACH

The collaborative’s vision for preventing domestic violence is that everyone understands and seeks healthy relationships, talking about domestic violence is normalized, and it is seen as acceptable for victims to seek help and mitigate the impact of their trauma. They are focused on developing community-driven, culturally responsive strategies impacting the individual and communities.

WEAVE had historically seen an under representation of Black/African American individuals accessing their non-emergency services (e.g., voluntary counseling, restraining orders, etc.). They wanted to convene members of the Black community to explore why the community did not see WEAVE as a resource for them and how they might differently serve the community. The HBFC held a series of community listening sessions and uncovered a disconnect with the Black and African American community and learned how systems have harmed the community which resulted in distrust. WEAVE and their partners in the HBFC embarked on an intentional journey to build relationships and partnerships with trusted agencies in the African American/Black community to ensure that services are culturally responsive. The collaborative identified seven strategies to address these shortcomings and reduce the impact of domestic and sexual violence of African American/Black victims in South Sacramento:

1. **Community ambassadors.** People (both youth and adults) with lived experiences of DV were invited to the collaborative and provided training (DV 101, WEAVE resources, peer support, facilitation, Mental Health First Aid Training) and support to serve as trusted messengers and resources in the community. They serve as facilitators of groups where survivors can come and talk about their experience, strengths and hope on their journeys of recovery. They also go out into the community such as tabling at the jazz festival. This approach has had such success that WEAVE’s Northern Sacramento partners are seeking to implement a similar approach.

GEOGRAPHIC AREA

South Sacramento

COMMUNITY OF FOCUS

African American/Black community of South Sacramento and WEAVE leadership and staff

2. **Peer support groups and spaces** where community members can come together to share their experiences in a safe space and not feel shame or alone, and know it is ok to talk about and seek support to overcome the impact of their trauma.
3. **WEAVE liaison** to provide the Black community with an advocate reflective of the community to serve as a direct connection to WEAVE and its resources.
4. **Faith community engagement** to ensure faith leaders are creating spaces where their congregants feel safe and supported in disclosing domestic violence, and churches are aware of best practices for handling disclosures and know about the resources available in their community.
5. **Two-generational approach.** To break the intergenerational cycle of domestic violence, strategies need to focus both on parents and their children. Strategies include helping parents understand the impact of domestic violence on their children as well as involving children in developing an understanding of healthy relationships, healthy coping skills, and building protective factors.
6. **Youth engagement and awareness** to develop messaging and activities relevant to youth to raise awareness about domestic violence, as well as understanding of healthy relationships, healthy coping skills, boundaries, consent, and protective factors. One of the partner youth-serving organizations engaged a group of youth, during the pandemic, to create a virtual PSA about domestic violence and sexual assault of black girls.
7. **Building relationships and engagement with law enforcement.** The relationship between the community and law enforcement has a long history of mistrust, oppression, and pain. By engaging law enforcement in this work, the collaborative hopes to rebuild the relationship in some way and create opportunities for more trauma informed, equitable, and just responses to community violence, including domestic violence. The collaborative has created community resource cards to distribute to partners and community agencies like law enforcement as a first step to improving relationships and increasing engagement.

COLLABORATIVE ACCOMPLISHMENTS & BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

Development of the collaborative and building collaborative capacity

- **HBFC partners.** WEAVE and its collaborative partners established the Healthy Black Families Collaborative, consisting of 5 core agency organizations, with 11–15 representatives who consistently participate in the collaborative work described below. Additionally, they have over 10 other community partner organizations who have attended quarterly convenings, community listening sessions, and community events.
- The **pandemic** hit this collaborative's community particularly hard, and partners responded to the need. South Sacramento Christian Center distributed groceries for many hard hit by the financial impact of the virus and offered free COVID testing and vaccinations. She Could Be My Daughter and Voice of Youth distributed gas cards. And in 2021, HBFC lost Escape Velocity's founder, a beloved member of their collaborative, to COVID-19.
- **CLAS training.** The collaborative's lead agency, WEAVE, sought to improve its relationships with the Black community and build organizational wide capacity to be responsive to and serve an increasingly diverse community. They held a series of three in-person trainings for all staff that addressed the topics of cultural responsiveness and racial equity. The goals were to improve client services and outcomes and align more closely with the Cultural & Linguistically Appropriate Standards (CLAS). WEAVE has an IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access) Division with an executive leader who reports directly to the CEO.

Community engagement and power building

- WEAVE was able to leverage funding to **co-locate a WEAVE Advocate employee in each of the core partner sites** to support survivors of domestic violence and their families, replicate and expand services to North Sacramento through cross-collaborative learning exchanges, and convene community listening sessions with youth, men, faith leaders, law enforcement. This individual has increased trust of WEAVE in the Black community that if they seek help or refer someone they will be taken care of.

“And we just highly encourage them to speak to just one more person from WEAVE, and [WEAVE Advocate] always comes through. So, we are so happy to be a part of this collaborative and that she’s on board.”

- HBFC has expanded their prevention work by amplifying Black voices and providing opportunities for community members to discuss DV prevention. The programming reflects a shift in power-sharing of the lead agency with collaborative partners who have lived experience of DV and systemic racism.
 - **King’s Corner** is a podcast aimed to engage men and boys in discussions about mental health, healing and violence prevention hosted by HBFC partner Meadowview Family Resource Center. Sacramento Children’s Home also provides opportunities for men to discuss parenting and relationships as well as opportunities for self-care.
 - She Could Be My Daughter/Voice of the Youth held a **“Brother, Can We Talk?”** Zoom series, aimed specifically at men, fathers, and male youth.
 - **Monthly conversations in the community** held at the African Market Place was created by a mother and daughter from the Ambassadors Program. They discuss the different forms that DV can take, resources available, and of course speak from their personal stories.
 - Escape Velocity organized a **youth book club** aimed at creating multi-generational conversations about healthy relationships, anxiety, and belonging to a blended family and how it affects family dynamics, racism, and self-care. This organization also provided opportunities for healing (e.g., meditation), held fund events (e.g., skate night), and distributed self-care boxes with educational materials about healthy relationships.
- The collaborative partners held prevention-focused **community presentations** (98 presentations attended by 1,737 individuals between October 2021 and September 2022). Topics included DV prevention, identifying DV, anger management, mental health, Black father struggles, the importance of seeking help, healthy relationships, and self-care.

Policy and funding shifts

- By focusing on the two-generational approach, developing youth messaging, and integrating the WEAVE's domestic violence training into existing youth and community activities such as youth literacy groups, HBFC seeks to normalize talking about these issues and instilling skills and strategies to prevent domestic violence from happening or recognize it early and prevent it from escalating or repeating.
- WEAVE also changed organizational practices as a result to further the HBFC strategies. Placing an Advocate with trusted agencies in the community was a departure from the usual practice of requiring community members come to WEAVE to initiate services. Additionally, WEAVE hired a senior staff person reflective of the Black community to support a new racial justice focus as Chief Equity & Transformational Change Officer.

FUTURE & SUSTAINABILITY OF THE COLLABORATIVE

Plans for the next year:

- Develop an internal journey map documenting all the policies, procedures, practices, and initiatives it has implemented to become more culturally responsive. WEAVE will share this journey map with the collaborative and seek feedback on the impact it has had on the partners, community, or systems, as well as solicit input for additional strategies WEAVE can implement.
- Revisit the Healthy Black Families Collaborative values, agreements, membership, and workplan to reaffirm and/or make agreed upon changes reflective of the current and new partners.
- Convene community listening and reflection sessions with survivors, men, and youth on the work of the Healthy Black Families to date, the community's awareness of services for survivors of domestic violence, and their ideas for what is needed now as we transition to implementation.
- Revise and implement a comprehensive communication and outreach plan with the collaborative and incorporate the ambassador in outreach and dissemination.
- Highlight Community Ambassador success stories and their role and activities in the collaborative to lift up what is possible, as well as inspire and recruit additional Community Ambassadors.