

A REPORT SUBMITTED TO
BLUE SHIELD OF CALIFORNIA FOUNDATION
BY SOCIAL ACTION PARTNERS

Perceptions of Domestic Violence in California's African American Communities:

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Roots, Prevalence
and Resources



Funding for this project was provided by Blue Shield of California Foundation,
Blue Shield Against Violence

Blue Shield is committed to build lasting solutions to end domestic violence
and make California the healthiest State, especially for our most vulnerable
neighbors

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About This Report

With support from the Blue Shield of California Foundation, Social Action Partners (SoACT) developed a mixed-methods study of perceptions and attitudes surrounding domestic violence (DV) in California's Black/African American community. In this report, SoACT reviewed research findings from the 2017 *Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence* and insights from a series of five focus groups with Black community leaders conducted across the state of California to:

■ **Determine** how Black community leaders and stakeholders perceive the severity of domestic violence in their communities.

■ **Define** the root causes of domestic violence in Black communities, as described by Black community leaders and stakeholders.

■ **Gauge** the awareness and satisfaction of Black community leaders and stakeholders with the current domestic violence infrastructure.

■ **Find** culturally competent models to serve Black families and communities impacted by domestic violence.

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This report provides the Blue Shield of California Foundation, domestic violence advocates and community stakeholders insights on how Black communities in California perceive the challenges they face in combating domestic violence and the resources available.

Through its Blue Shield Against Violence initiatives, the Foundation has led the state of California in working to address, prevent and ultimately end domestic violence. In its mission to serve California's most vulnerable populations,

the Foundation and its partners recognize a need to improve the systems that serve Black domestic violence survivors, their families and communities.

As a partner to Blue Shield's efforts, SoACT is proud to present these findings and recommendations towards our shared mission of building a safer and more just California.

Methodological Approach

To identify the concern surrounding domestic violence, gauge awareness of resources and develop recommendations to better serve domestic violence survivors, SoACT designed, distributed and analyzed the results of *The Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence*, a 23-question anonymous opinion survey administered online. From July 26 to September 15, 2017, the survey was completed by 160 organizational leaders across the state of California. Survey participants were recruited through requests to relevant organizations and by using key community gatekeepers to distribute the survey among their networks.

The survey sought to solicit insights from thought leaders and organizational forerunners who serve Black communities. Considering the changing demographics

of the state and the ways in which domestic violence issues present themselves in multiple institutional spaces (i.e. faith communities, health organizations, schools, etc.), SoACT intentionally opened the survey to 1) non-Black participants who serve Black communities, and 2) representatives from organizations who do not explicitly focus on domestic violence. In doing so, the survey offers an enriched perspective that chronicles multiple vantage points on these issues. 65% of survey participants identify as Black or African American and 48% work for a domestic violence organization (see **Appendix B** for a list of organizational participants).

The geographic breakdown of survey participants generally resembles the regional epicenters of Black populations throughout

the state (see **Appendix A**). Each dot represents a city in which one or more survey participant resides; the map also displays the population distribution of Black/African American adults according to the U.S. Census estimates in 2017. Areas in blue represent counties in which African Americans live in larger numbers. This convergence between the regional location of survey participants and the general Black population suggests that our survey represents an important range of perspectives connected to California's historic Black/African American population centers.

To deepen our qualitative understanding of Black community perspectives, SoACT conducted five focus groups throughout the state of California in September 2017, again with emphasis on regions with significant Black

populations. Focus groups were hosted in Richmond, Ontario, Sacramento, and two were held in Los Angeles. To diversify perspectives, one Los Angeles group was composed of male participants only. Each focus group was facilitated over dinner hosted by SoACT with six to twelve community leaders. Focus group participants were recruited in collaboration with organizational partners based in each of the cities. All participants identified as Black or African American and worked within a wide range of organizational focuses, including domestic violence, health, criminal justice reform, faith, education, state and local government and community organizing entities.

Supplemental data provided in the “Numbers in Context” section comes from the California Department of Justice *Open Justice Initiative*, the *National Network to End Domestic Violence* and the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010-2012)* administered by the Center for Disease Control.

Table 1 provides a comprehensive list of data sources used in the report.

Table 1.
Review of Report Data and Sources

Data	Source
Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence, 2017	Social Action Partners
Focus Groups (5), 2017	Social Action Partners - Richmond, Ontario, Sacramento, Los Angeles (2)
National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, 2010-2012	U.S. Centers for Disease Control
Open Justice Initiative: Report of DV-related Police Calls, 2007-2012	California Department of Justice, OpenJustice.gov
Domestic Violence Counts Survey, 2015	National Network to End Domestic Violence



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Executive Summary

Black women in California are disproportionately impacted by domestic violence. Conversely, resources to support survivors and their families in California are either oversubscribed or underutilized.

This report aims to highlight how Black community leaders and stakeholders throughout California perceive domestic violence and present their recommendations to end intimate partner violence in Black communities. The report pulls from quantitative and qualitative data collected by Social Actions Partners (SoACT) during the summer of 2017.

Core Findings

Prevalence of Domestic Violence

Respondents perceive domestic violence as a large concern in their communities and neighborhoods. Most Black leaders feel that domestic violence disproportionately impacts Black women, compared to other racial groups. However, too many leaders lack awareness of resources to direct survivors or point to cultural nuances that might explain why so few Black women report domestic violence.

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Perceptions of Root Causes

Black community leaders see systemic issues, such as poverty, racism, and childhood trauma along with substance abuse as the most significant contributors to domestic violence in Black families. Individualized factors like low self-esteem or jealousy are ranked much lower by comparison to these more global matters.

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Violence Against Black Men

Although most participants see violence against Black women as a larger concern, many acknowledge abuse of Black

men as a real problem. In fact, violence against Black men often complicates access to resources by Black female survivors.

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Challenges in the Current Domestic Violence Infrastructure

Services for domestic violence survivors are described as routinely culturally incompetent, scarce, ineffective and even hostile towards the Black community. Funding for creative initiatives that address root causes are often scarce or only temporarily available.

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Solutions for Black Families & Communities

Black community leaders wish to see a movement away from criminalization and institutionalization, towards solutions that acknowledge the root causes of intimate partner violence. In addition to making domestic violence resources more accessible, participants recommend galvanizing Black communities to address domestic violence and adopting models that support families, rather than individuals, to break the cycle of violence.

The Numbers in Context

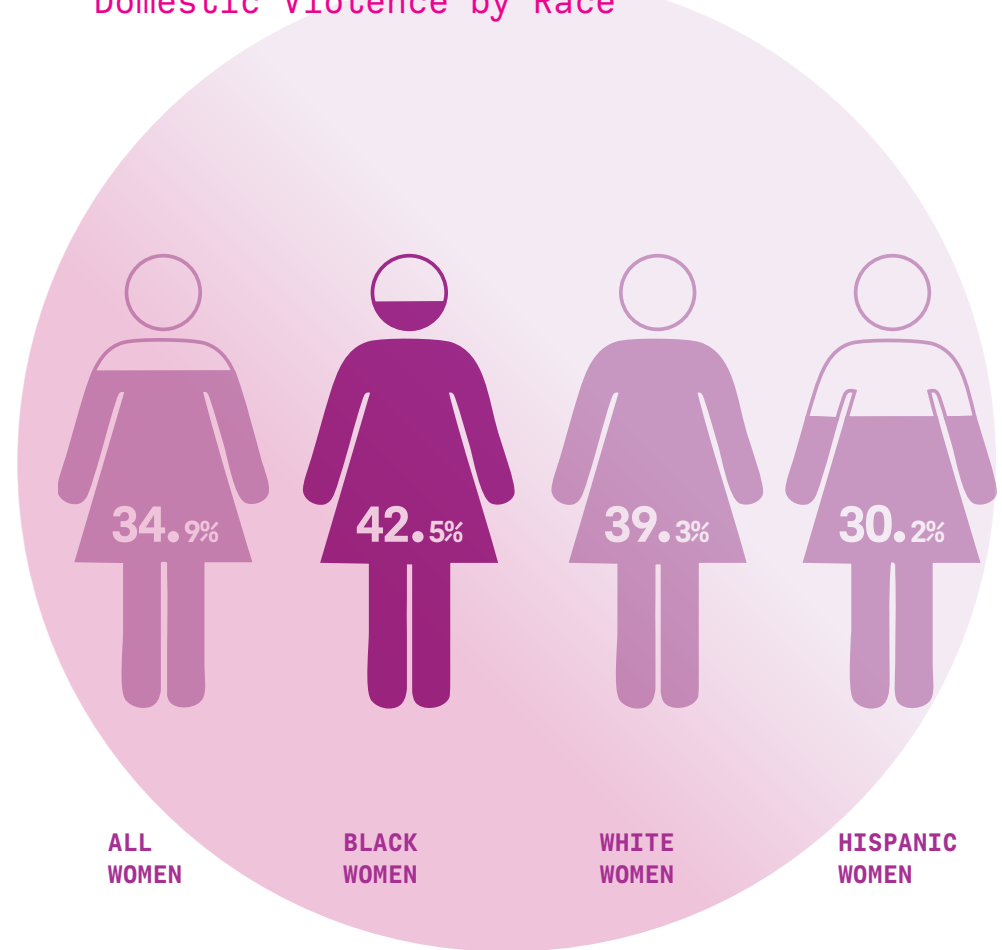
Women in California continue to experience intimate partner violence at extreme rates. According to the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, **34%, or one in three California women report experiencing domestic violence at some point in their lifetimes (Figure 1)**. As one of the most populous regions in the country, California holds the largest number of domestic violence survivors in the United States (4,939,000 women in 2012).

In any given year, estimates suggest that more than 700,000 women in California will experience some form of physical violence by an intimate partner.

Despite these unsettling trends, **Black women in California face even higher rates of domestic violence, compared to other racial groups.** 42.5% of Black women report experiencing intimate partner violence, compared to 39.3% of white women and 30.2% of Hispanic women.

Figure 1.

Lifetime Experience of Domestic Violence by Race



Source: National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010–2012)

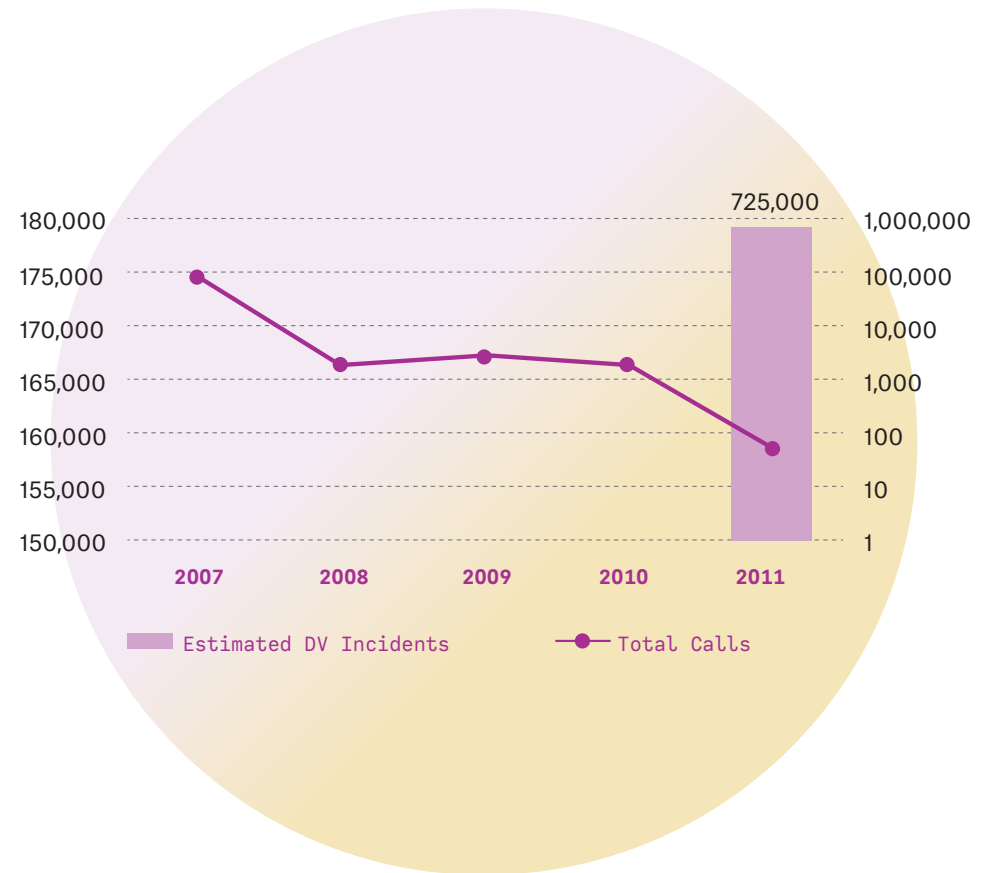
Only a fraction of domestic violence-related incidents in California are ever reported to authorities (Figure 2). Of the 725,000 estimated domestic violence instances in 2011, just 158,548 calls were received by California police according to the California Open Justice Initiative – under 22%. The number of domestic violence related calls in California decreased by 9% from 2010 to 2011.

Since police calls reflect just a portion of all domestic violence related incidents, resources offered by nonprofit providers are understandably routinely oversubscribed. According to the 2015 *Domestic Violence Counts*

Survey, in just one day, 17% of all requests for DV services went unmet in California; 72% of unmet requests were for emergency housing. While this data is not broken down by race, these trends suggest that California women and Black women in particular, who are overrepresented among domestic violence survivors experience a significant resource gap after instances of intimate partner violence. With these challenges in mind, the following describes how Black community leaders and stakeholders perceive these issues and their recommendations to improve the domestic violence infrastructure for Black communities.

Figure 2.

Total Domestic Violence Police Calls vs. Estimated Domestic Violence Incidents



Sources: CA DOJ Open Justice Initiative; National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (2010-2012)

The background of the slide is a photograph of a residential street. It features several tall palm trees, utility poles with power lines, and a building with a dark door. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent grid pattern. A horizontal dotted line is positioned above the main title.

Study Findings

“African American people, historically in this country we were enslaved, we were murdered, we were raped, we were dragged over to this country against our will. We had all of that trauma that built up. Then we had the Reconstruction and Jim Crow and the Klan, and all of this stuff that kept stacking upon, stacking upon, stacking upon us, being victimized and traumatized.

And we never had a debriefing. We never had any mental health help, [not] until the last thirty years we’ve been discussing mental health in the black community —and with the shame and the embarrassment a lot of people keep quiet and put makeup on their bruises and go about their days.

It’s not normal, and it’s not right. And we need to do something to help women and men and victims of abuse to feel comfortable speaking out about it.”

—Los Angeles focus group

Perceptions on the Prevalence of Domestic Violence

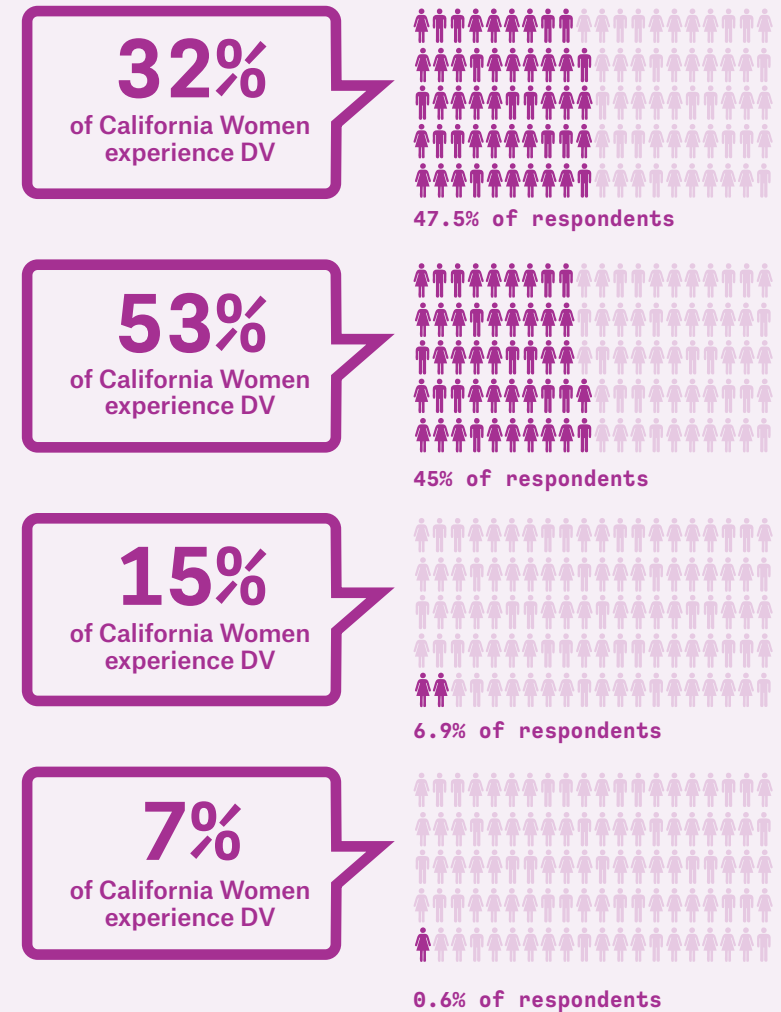
Black community leaders correctly perceive domestic violence as a large issue within their communities — either correctly identifying the percent of California women impacted by domestic violence at 32% or overestimating the prevalence of intimate partner violence in California (Figure 3).

When asked how many California women had experienced domestic violence in their lifetime, just 6.9% of respondents underestimated at 15% percent of women, and less than 1% of participants guessed that 7% of women had experienced domestic violence.

Most respondents also correctly perceive that this is an issue that disproportionately impacts communities of color — **65% agree that Black women are more likely to be victims of domestic violence than white women.**

Figure 3.

Perceived Prevalence of Domestic Violence Experience



Source: Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence (2017)



**1 in 4
BLACK
LEADERS
ARE
UNAWARE OF
LOCAL DV
RESOURCES**

However, despite awareness and concern about the prevalence of domestic violence, **more than half of Black community leaders in the survey (51.3%) describe any discussion about domestic violence as uncommon in Black communities.** Black community leaders additionally express limited awareness of domestic violence resources. While 93.6% of respondents report knowing a survivor of domestic violence personally, and 39% feel that domestic violence is common in their neighborhoods, **1 in 4 Black community stakeholders are unfamiliar with any local domestic violence resources.**

In the focus groups, participants were equally likely to describe domestic violence as a large community concern, both in the past and currently. Participants shared stories of witnessing

their own parents and even grandparents suffer from intimate partner abuse. Some shared their own experiences with domestic violence.

Although domestic violence is a common occurrence, focus groups were quick to identify that domestic violence in Black communities cannot be quantified by looking at rates of service use. **Many expressed that although Black women may under utilize domestic violence services, this did not reflect a lower level of violence in the community.** This mismatch between the prevalence of violence and the under use of services could be culturally explained: **several participants stressed that many Black women may be experiencing abuse but not know that the behavior is inappropriate.**

“In some neighborhoods, a woman doesn’t feel as if a man really loves her unless he hits her. So no... she’s not going to report that as abuse.”

—Inland Empire focus group

Root Causes of Domestic Violence

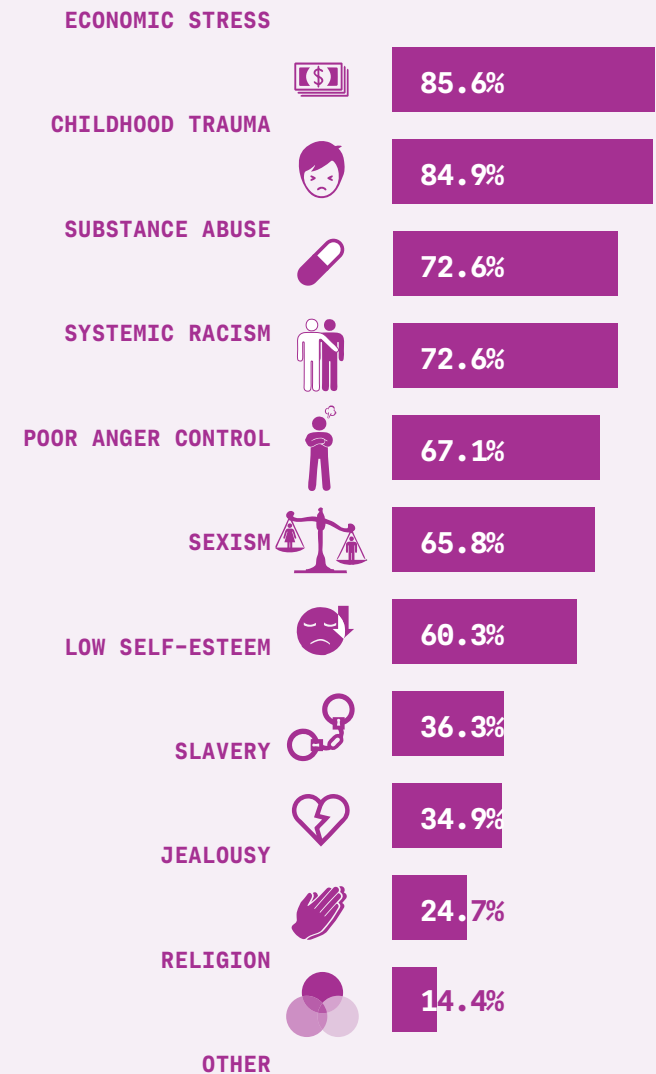
In discussion however, focus group participants were quick to identify that intimate partner violence was not a feature of being Black. Yet, domestic violence in Black relationships may present itself differently when compared to other populations.

In other words, culturally specific gender roles, relationship norms and stereotypes work together in homes, and all create the circumstances that allow domestic violence to occur in Black families. Thus, while very common, leaders identify why there may be a gap pertaining to the participation of Black

women in “safe” spaces. Both survey takers and focus group members identify systemic oppression as the most significant causes of domestic violence. **Economic stress, childhood trauma and experiences with violence, followed by substance abuse and racism were the next most cited causes of domestic violence in Black communities and families (Figure 4).** More individualized factors like anger management issues, sexism, poor self-esteem or jealousy ranked lower.

Figure 4.

Root Causes of Domestic Violence in Black Communities



Source: Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence (2017)

For participants who emphasized economic stress, many discussed how many Black men feel emasculated by the inability to provide for their families. Conversely, women without economic means to support themselves might stay in dysfunctional relationships out of necessity.

Black leaders identified the cyclical way in which those who experienced abuse as children — either through spanking, or seeing their loved one's abuse — grow up to repeat these unhealthy behaviors in their families and intimate relationships. By situating domestic violence as one part of a larger complex of social problems, rather than as a flaw attributable only to the abuser, Black community leaders are attempting to re-frame how domestic violence should be addressed.

“I think every community deals with it, but it just shows up differently in Black communities—many times, a Black woman will fight you back!

Other communities won't have that.

Or, we'll normalize it as 'just arguing.' Often times people will know it's wrong, but it's so embarrassing to be getting beat up when you're supposed to be a 'Strong Black Woman' so they'll just keep it to themselves.”

—Richmond focus group

Violence Against Black Men

According to the *National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey*, 51.7% of Black men in California report experiencing sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking by an intimate partner. Study participants acknowledge that violence against men is a community concern.

However, **less than 10% of survey participants believe that Black men are more likely to experience domestic violence compared to Black women.** Similarly, focus group participants acknowledged that while men can be victims of intimate partner violence, especially those in LGBTQ relationships, the issue remains predominately one that impacts women and children. Nonetheless, Black leaders were quick to call out violence in general as all sourced from similar root causes, regardless of the gender of the survivor.

“Women have become more violent themselves! We don’t talk about it as much, but a lot of times women fight more than men do! People generally have a hard time interacting with one another respectively, but this is learned behavior from reality TV, from watching it in their own homes, from their own insecurities.”

—Los Angeles men’s focus group

Challenges with Current Domestic Violence Infrastructure

Black community leaders expressed frustration with the system currently in place to address domestic violence. One common theme was frustration with police and the justice system.

Often, the response of the criminal justice system to domestic violence cases is to divide families, by removing the children or one of the parents from the home. This places Black women, particularly those with limited economic means, with difficult decisions to uproot their families or stay silent about abuse. **Participants were also adamant that black women were treated differently by the police, the court system and even domestic violence providers.** For example when police were called to a situation, focus group participants from multiple cities felt that Black women were just

as likely to be arrested or believed to be an aggressor in the incident.

This lack of support or empathy carried over into domestic violence providers themselves; the group felt that the domestic violence service providers were more hesitant to perceive black women as victims. Because black women know these risks, and want to avoid negative personal consequences, they will often handle violent situations themselves. Participants identified that this lack of empathy came directly from racist stereotypes about Black women held by police and DV providers.

This distrust of police officers strongly influences community-wide responses to intimate partner violence. Only 39.7% of community stakeholders report that they would tell the police if

“One of the biggest problems I see is Black women are scared to get their children taken away if they report an incident [of domestic violence]. And it’s a fair concern, because more than likely the police will contact [the Department of Children and Family Services] and they’ll take the kids.”

—Richmond focus group

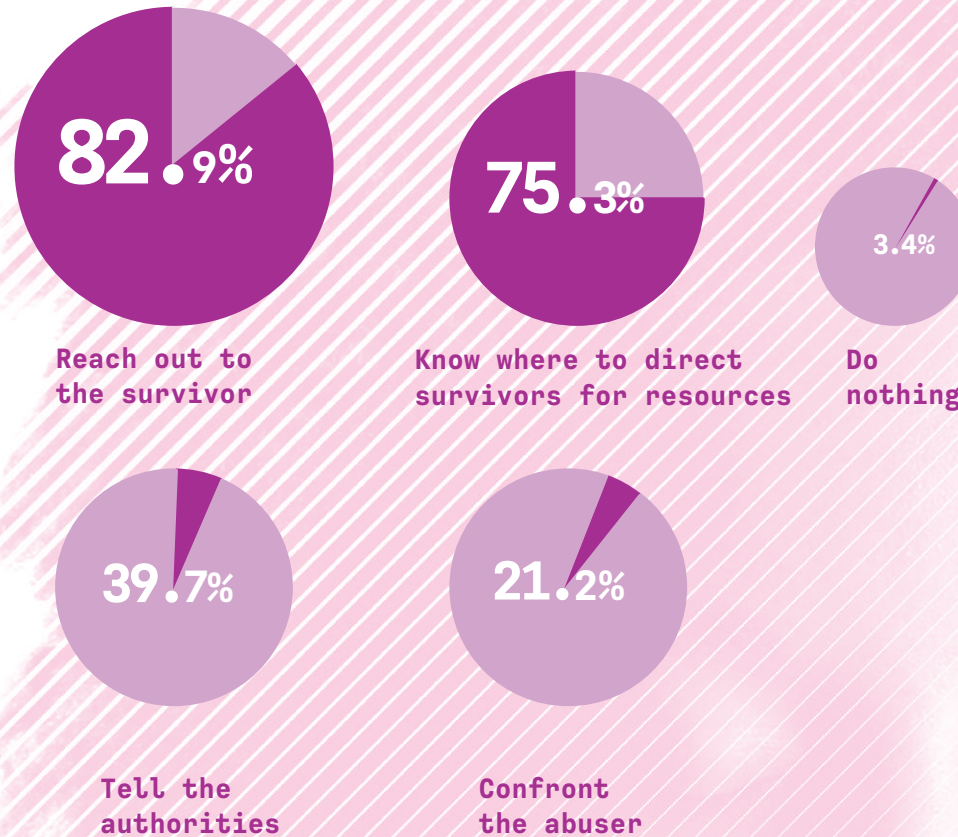
Figure 5.

Personal Responses to Domestic Violence

they personally were made aware of domestic violence (**Figure 5**).

In addition to an unwillingness to trust the police, participants also expressed concern about the **lack of culturally relevant services**.

As an example, shelters may not provide hair care products that are appropriate for Black women. In the Sacramento and the Inland Empire, leaders feel that domestic violence resources appear to be linguistically geared towards Latina women, making many Black women feel that they aren't welcome at shelters, community centers, etc. A few domestic violence leaders expressed concern with the time limits on emergency housing and some of the rules as too inflexible for Black survivors.



Source: Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence (2017)

Respondents were also critical of the existing programs to address domestic violence, describing programming as outdated and often projecting a reality outside of people's lived experience.

Others were concerned about the quality of information in support groups, parenting classes, or in the mandatory 12-week course.

“It would be great if support groups for survivors got everyone to leave [an abusive partner]. But we need to deal with the reality: most people stay. So what do we do then? Why would somebody go to this class that’s just going to make them feel bad about their decision?”

**—Inland Empire
focus group**

“A lot of men get angry when women don’t obey them, and their children don’t obey them. So it’s a lot of things that we need to try to change. And we have to have workshops and make conversations about mental health and about training children. But the parenting classes, because I’ve sat in them, they’re garbage. And oh my goodness, the domestic violence classes that I could teach better myself because at least I’ve been in that situation. I’ve been embarrassed to say something about it.”

—Los Angeles focus group

Finally, Black leaders reported that funding resources were limited and prevented any creative interventions from being implemented. In particular, government programs that worked to end domestic violence often suffered from budget cuts or mission drift.

“Here in Contra Costa County, we had a really exciting model in the courts that brought together a bunch of stakeholders in more of a case management approach in each DV case. We would sit and discuss the entire family, but that program was cut when the leadership changed. It didn’t have enough time to really prove itself. The County is like a pendulum. It swings from ultra-conservative to ultra-progressive every few years. So good ideas get funded and de-funded all the time.”

—Richmond focus group

Culturally Competent Solutions to Ending Domestic Violence

Black community leaders emphasize the need to improve and promote domestic violence resources, raise awareness on the rates of domestic violence in Black communities, invest stakeholders across the Black community in pursuing outcomes that end the cycle of violence, and develop new models outside of criminalization (Figure 6). Although important, survey respondents ranked creating systems for youth, LGBTQ and male survivors as lower priorities, along with policy interventions.

These recommendations are further described below in four sections:

- 1. Promote and Improve Current Domestic Violence Services**
- 2. Education Campaign for Youth and Adults**
- 3. Galvanize Black Community Leaders**
- 4. Move from Criminalization to Family-Oriented Mental Health Models**

Figure 6.

Domestic Violence Solutions for Black Communities, Ranked by Importance

Make DV resources more publicized **4.76**

4.6 Raise awareness on the rates of DV

Gather Black community leaders to strategize on DV prevention **4.59**

4.45 Develop solutions outside the criminal justice system

Create more support for youth, LGBTQ people and other disenfranchised survivors **3.69**

3.29 Improve legislation to protect survivors

Discuss DV against Black men **2.62**

Source: Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence (2017);
Note: Ranked on a importance scale of 1-7, higher scores mean more important.

1 Promote and Improve Current Domestic Violence Services

Black leaders, including those who work in anti-domestic violence organizations, describe a community-wide lack of awareness of anti-violence resources. One immediate recommendation is to **promote existing resources to a wider group of community partners.**

Black leaders also felt that resources could be better utilized to improve the quality and cultural competency of existing services. From a quality standpoint, leaders expressed a desire to see more **Black counselors, therapists and social workers in the field.** Services in Black communities also needed more resources — particularly emergency shelters.

The focus groups emphasized that programs needed to be **created for African Americans specifically**, and that these efforts should in turn, be **led by African Americans.** Black leaders

expressed that they routinely compete for funding with Asian and Latina groups, even if the program is specifically tailored to benefit Black communities. In Los Angeles, a participant recommended that people who have been convicted of abuse should undergo therapy and then facilitate healing for others.

On cultural competence, community leaders described the challenges families and survivors face to find empathy within the current criminal justice infrastructure. Including these stakeholders in anti-racist work and anti-bias trainings would improve the perception and reception of Black women as they seek assistance. **Finally, programs need to make clear that resources are open for Black and Brown communities.** These changes would dramatically improve the use and value of existing work.

“It just breaks your heart — because I answer the phones. And having to tell a young girl, ‘Well we don’t serve your area and the shelter near you is too full.’ That’s unacceptable.”

—Richmond focus group

“I had an incident a few months ago where a woman in our church really obviously was in some kind of bad situation. One night, I saw her in the middle of town looking really distraught and disheveled, and so I picked her up in my car to try to get her some help.

Suddenly I just realized, *‘I have no idea where to go with this woman.’*”

—Sacramento focus group

2 Education Campaign for Youth and Adults

In all focus groups, Black leaders expressed the need to change norms within Black communities through the means of a mass media and grassroots education campaign targeted to youth, teenagers and adults.

This campaign would address the following issues:

- Raising awareness on the rates of domestic violence
- Sharing stories of survivors to end silence and shame
- Counteracting stereotypes of the “Strong Black Women” who might stay silent to protect the family
- Providing young people with conflict resolution strategies, anger management and interpersonal communication tactics

“I know we have sex ed, we have economics [so] LAUSD or someone needs to come together. And it needs to be a required course. And if they want to juice it up and not call it about domestic violence, you can call it about anger management, interpersonal relationship, whatever you want to call it that makes it sound nicer.

But the gist of it is making sure that those young folks that are coming out of middle school or coming out of high school at least are getting a course—and a real course, taught by an individual who is not a Harvard graduate coming in ‘*I’ve made this curriculum.*’

Someone that people have backed together like this group and made a curriculum that can actually teach them how to deal with the stressors that are going on in their lives.”

—Los Angeles focus group

- Pushing back against toxic masculinity
- Spreading awareness on red flags in relationships
- Encouraging survivors or bystanders to come forward
- Promoting parenting discipline beyond spanking

In addition to being present in media targeted at adults, many Black leaders recommended this campaign begin in schools.

While other strategies are focused on supporting families after DV incidents, Black community leaders felt strongly that preventative education work needed to be a core priority of the DV movement.

“Educate ministers about domestic violence; they often tell the woman to go back home and work it out or don’t make their spouse angry. Their attitude perpetuates domestic violence.”

—Survey open-ended response

3 Galvanize Black Community Leaders

Black leaders expressed a need for other community entities, particularly Black churches, to get more involved in anti-violence work. At present, participants identify that religious entities may play a problematic role in sending the wrong messages to families.

Other leaders, including Black men, were often called on to join the conversation.

Overall, this work to bring Black community leaders together with a common purpose would assist in educating important stakeholders about domestic violence, reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues and bring more voices into the conversation about creating solutions.

4 Move From Criminalization to Family-Oriented Mental Health Models

Most respondents identified economic oppression as a source of domestic violence. Consequently, sending people to prison — which further exacerbates financial hardship for families — seemed like a negative solution for most Black leaders. Respondents expressed a desire to support survivors, abusers and their children with mental health resources to end the cycle of violence. Black leaders also expressed frustration with the “non-profit industrial complex,” where resources exist but are imposed on Black communities for the benefit of the service providers, rather than really assisting communities in solving problems — often without input from Black people.

Participants in Richmond envisioned a “foster family” model where families impacted by violence would go live

with another family trained to deal with those experiencing disruptive communication, violence and trauma. This would be an alternative to the criminal justice system: instead of institutionalization or working to rehabilitate just the perpetrator of violence, the entire family would be engaged in the healing process.

This system would create a safe space for families to gather themselves in a loving environment. Host families would be compensated like foster care families and would be trained on how to deal with complex familial issues that include domestic violence. This model acknowledges that most of the time families do not separate, by choice or other circumstance, after an act of violence.

“Black men have an important role to play in saying ‘We don’t stand for this. This is not acceptable in our communities. Sisters we want to protect you.’ We need to be accountable for calling out bad behavior when we see it.”

—Sacramento focus group

Participants in Los Angeles similarly envisioned a “12-step program” similar to Alcoholics Anonymous. In this model, former abusers could help those who have been recently accused and work together towards healing and addressing trauma.

Many participants agreed that the existing 12-week course for domestic violence defendants should continue, however they felt that the entire family should also be included in a similar program. Since many domestic violence cases do not lead to the couple splitting up, effective interventions should be targeted to disrupt dysfunctional communication patterns and work to address trauma experienced by the survivor, the aggressor and, in many cases, by their children. Ultimately, all groups expressed a desire to move from paternalistic institutionalizations towards a culturally competent, trauma informed mental health model. ■

“I don’t feel incarceration is the best thing only because for people to go to jail it’s supposed to be a rehabilitation center so they could recoup and come back in—you know, perform as normal citizens of society. That’s not what the system does. I feel like the abuser should go to therapy. Because if they don’t fix the problem or get to the root of why they’re acting that way, it’s just going to keep continuing.

Take both parties! Since both parties are involved, and you get someone, maybe a male-female team because men tend to feel put upon and blamed and all of this, and egos, they don’t deal with counseling with a woman, so... I think a team of maybe two people, maybe a culturally sensitive person. You can talk out what has happened and what you can do to rectify it.”

—Los Angeles focus group



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Recommendations

Black women domestic violence survivors in California face significant obstacles in navigating the current domestic violence infrastructure. Through the stories of Black community leaders and stakeholders, the challenges are laid bare: high rates of domestic violence, limited reporting, racial hostility and insensitivity from service providers, and a shifting funding landscape for programs with the greatest impact. At present, Black leaders describe the existing system as disconnected from the root causes of intimate partner violence. **Towards a more culturally competent domestic violence movement, SoACT recommends:**

Continue to lift the voices of marginalized communities through the dissemination of these findings.

Promote the insights provided by this study to a larger number of domestic violence leaders through Blue Shield’s existing channels, including the webinar series, future leadership meetings and the newsletter.

Support further investigation of existing culturally competent models of domestic violence prevention and service.

This study brought forward several promising existing models in Richmond, Los Angeles and Orange County for combating the root causes of domestic violence in combination with other programs. For example, the co-location model adopted by Jenesse Center and the Family Justice Center in Richmond pairs domes-

tic violence services with health services, making resources more available to under-resourced communities. With the call for more publicized and available services, these kinds of models may potentially serve as best practices for other organizations. In the future, efforts should focus on examining what works in the field currently for further sharing within the field.

Consider policy interventions that would re-frame the role of the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) in separating families impacted by domestic violence.

This report supports several potential spaces for policy intervention; making financial resources available for survivors to leave destructive relationships, stabilize funding for DV initiatives, and engaging in anti-poverty work to address the root causes of DV would all be worthy causes. However, one of the most imme-

diate policy interventions may be reorganizing the procedures of The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) intervention. At present, leaders express that Black women are discouraged from seeking assistance in fear of being separated from their children. This is a deeply consequential problem that could be remedied directly.

Convene Black leaders statewide to re-imagine the content of existing programs and continue to articulate new models.

Through the preparation of this report, focus group participants particularly were deeply interested in continuing the conversation around these issues. From their recommendations, it appears that work needs to be done to improve the impact of current DV programs. Also, many exciting models were imagined during our sessions; these should be further articulated. A convening of statewide Black leaders given the task

to design culturally competent models and re-imagine the existing infrastructure would be a deeply meaningful extension of this work.

Deepen the connection of the DV movement to other allied movements that address the root causes of violence.

By connecting the root causes of intimate partner violence to global issues like poverty, childhood trauma and substance abuse, Black leaders are calling on anti-domestic violence leaders to engage with activists in all of the other areas that impact or lead to domestic violence. In addition to working with women's movement groups and those working on human trafficking and sexual assault efforts, domestic violence leaders must also begin to engage with the struggles that underlie all of these issues. Opponents of domestic violence need to begin to see themselves as a part of anti-poverty work, anti-racist

movements and the movement to bring additional mental health resources to under-served populations. ■

Thank you to Blue Shield of California Foundation for their support in the creation of this report. Special thanks to all survey and focus group participants, and deep gratitude to our community partners: Community Coalition, Dulan's on Crenshaw, Contra Costa Family Justice Center, CASA Ontario, the Hawk Institute and Christian Faith Missionary Baptist Church.

About Us

Social Action Partners

In low-income communities of color and with culturally specific organizations, SoACT is committed to providing culturally-responsive organizational capacity building. We assist in program development, capacity building, fund development and building strong collaborations. In the fields of women's health, preventing violence and advancing social justice, we've worked with a range of partner organizations on systems improvements, innovation, strengthening social support networks and ending violence.

Recent efforts include technical assistance and program planning with First 5 LA, Los Angeles Homeless Housing Agency, SLATE Z – South Los Angeles Transit Empowerment Zone and small community organizations including Community Reflections, legacy arts organizations in South Los Angeles, and more!

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE VISIT www.socialactionpartners.org

Project Team

Project Manager **Fran Jemmott**



For over forty years, Fran Jemmott has contributed significant program development to improve community health outcomes in African American Communities. She is a founder of the California Black Women's Health Project; lead consultant for the Strong Field Project for Blue Shield of CA Foundation; former Program Director for Women's Health at the California Wellness Foundation (1996 - 2003); former Board Chair of Public Health Advocacy; and currently serves on the Board of CompassPoint Non-Profit Services.

Fran's life work is centered around using informal helping networks to complement formal services for prevention as well as interventions. She believes that restoring natural helping networks in marginalized communities will contribute to long term, sustainable and culturally grounded approaches to solving persistent problems including interpersonal violence.

Researcher/Writer **Jasmine Hill**

Jasmine Hill is a social justice consultant, educator and PhD candidate in Sociology at Stanford University. As a mixed-methods researcher, her work is focused on improving the economic conditions of low-income people of color in the United States and contributing to the theoretical frameworks that describe how racial inequalities persist. Jasmine works with activists, non-profits, schools and foundations as a research consultant, facilitator, and strategist on social change initiatives. She's taught courses on sociological theory, race and inequality at Stanford University, UCLA, Mills College and Bunche Continuation High School in West Oakland. Jasmine is co-editor of "Inequality in the 21st Century" with David B. Grusky (2017; Westfield Press). She received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Communication Studies with honors from the University of California, Los Angeles, and her Masters in Sociology from Stanford University.



Community Outreach & Coordination **Carlene Davis**

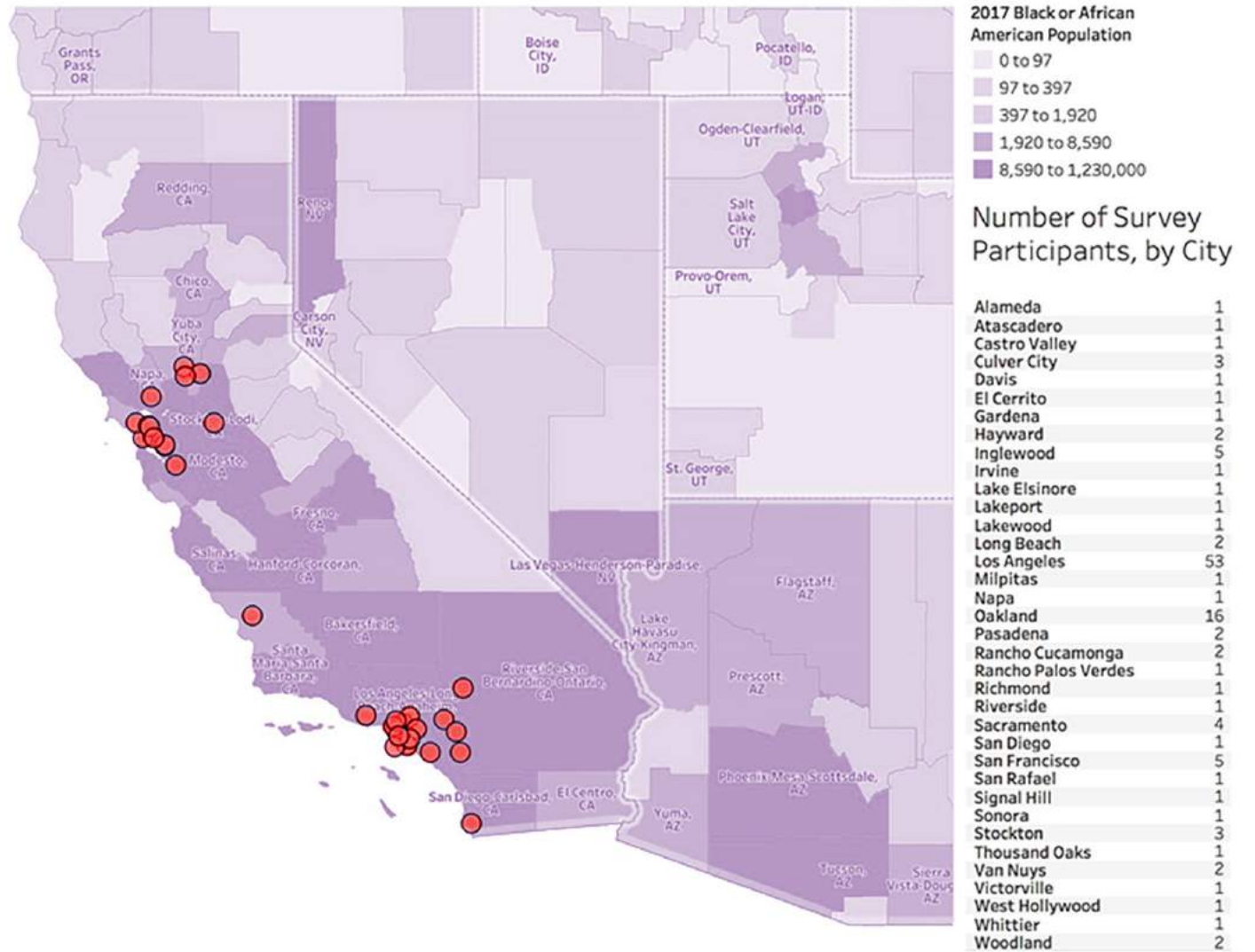
Carlene Davis is a collective impact leader and strategist for positive social change. Her work is focused on building the capacity of women, families and communities to navigate and challenge policy and system barriers that prevent them from realizing their full and desired potential. Carlene's leadership for the Culturally Responsive DV Network led to her successful transition from consultant to participant leadership and she served as Project Leader for the Movement Mobilization Institute. A peer led Institute convened DV leaders to promote radical changes that would center the needs and services of Black Women throughout the DV field. Carlene received her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science from the University of California, Berkeley and her Masters of Public Affairs from the University of Texas at Austin (LBJ School). Carlene was recently selected as a 2017 Robert Woods Johnson Culture of Health Leader fellow.



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Appendices

Appendix A: Map of Survey Respondents, by U.S. Black Population Density



Appendix B: Black Leaders Survey on Domestic Violence Participant Organizations

Organizations,
as listed by
survey participants.
Duplicates removed.

Afrikan Black Coalition • AIDS Project Los Angeles • Alameda County Public Health Department • Alameda County Social Services • Alliance for Boys and Men of Color • America Association of Retired Persons • Asian Pacific Institute on Gender-Based Violence • Asian Women's Shelter • Black Women for Wellness • Building Futures Women and Children • Building Healthy Communities: Long Beach • California Black Women's Health Project • California Partnership to End Domestic Violence • California State University, Los Angeles • Center for Community Solutions • Center for Powerful Public Schools • Center for the Pacific Asian Family • Charles R. Drew University of Medicine and Science • Child Start, Inc. • Christian Faith Missionary Baptist Church Market Place Ministry • Communities for a Better Environment • Community Action Marin • Community Development Technologies • Community Health Councils • Community Reflections Inc. • Dignity Health California Hospital • Diving Within, LLC • East Los Angeles Women's Center • Empower Yolo • Esperanza Community Housing • Essential Access Health • Great Beginnings for Black Babies, Inc. • Green Dot Public Schools • Greenlining Institute • Healthy African American Families • Hi Con Consulting • His Sheltering Arms, Inc. • Homeboy Industries • Human Options • Hunger Action Los Angeles • Inspiration Amongst Manifestation Project • Jemmott Rollins Group, Inc. • Jenesse Center, Inc. • JIB/Black Equity Initiative • Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity, Inc. • LA Commons • LA County DCFS • LA County Department of Public Health • Lake Family Resource Center • LeadersUp • Los Angeles Alliance for New Economy • Los Angeles Education Partnership • Los Angeles Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) Center • Los Angeles Neighborhood Land Trust • Los Angeles Southwest College • Los Angeles Unified School District • Loyola Maramoiunt University • Magic Johnson Foundation • MAITRI • Maternal and Child Health Access • Medical Center • My Sister's House • NAMI Urban Los Angeles • Pacific Union Conference of Seventh Day Adventist • Peace Over Violence • Preterm Birth Initiative • Psychology Applied Research Center • Queen E.S.T.H.E.R • Reentry Success Center • Restorative Media • RISE (Respect, Inspires, Support, Empower) • Ruby's Place • San Luis Obispo • Sanctuary of Hope • SCOPE LA • Scripps College • SF Board of Supervisors • SFUSD • Skid Row From A Woman's Perspective • Social Action Partners • Soledad Enrichment Action • South Central Family Health Center • South Central Prevention Coalition • Southern California Library • STAND! For Families Free of Violence • The Children's Collective, Inc. • The Positive Results Corporation • The Table Community Foundation • Tiombe MFT, Inc. • Tri-Valley Haven • TRUST South Los Angeles • University of California, Los Angeles • University of California, San Francisco - Center for Vulnerable Populations • University of Southern California - Trio Program Education Talent Search • Victory In Praise Church • Violence Prevention Coalition of Greater Los Angeles • Warner Bros • Women Against Gun Violence

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