

Empowering Parents to Navigate Cultural and Racial Stress in Black Youth

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Disclosures

- Some content from the webinar today will be shared from my books, *Mental Health among African Americans* (2019) and *Raising Resilient Black Kids* (2024). Please note, royalties may be received from books sold.
- Generative AI was not used for the development or content of this presentation.

Learning Objectives

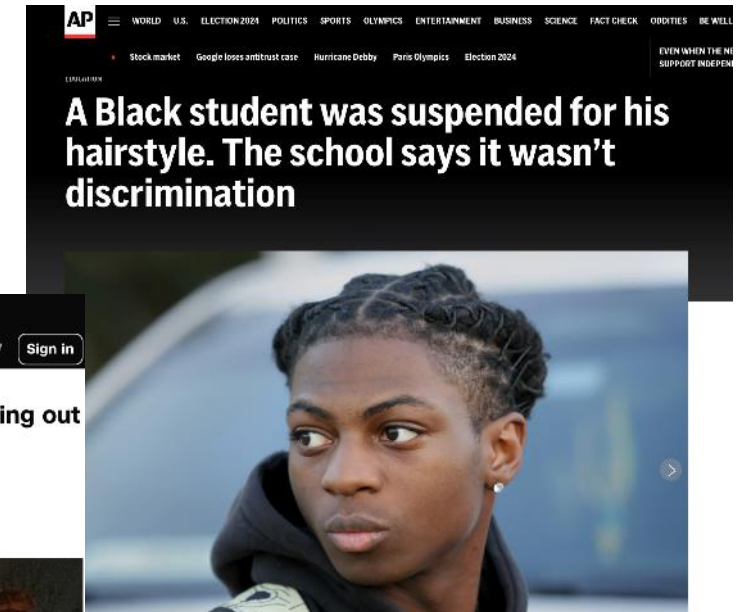
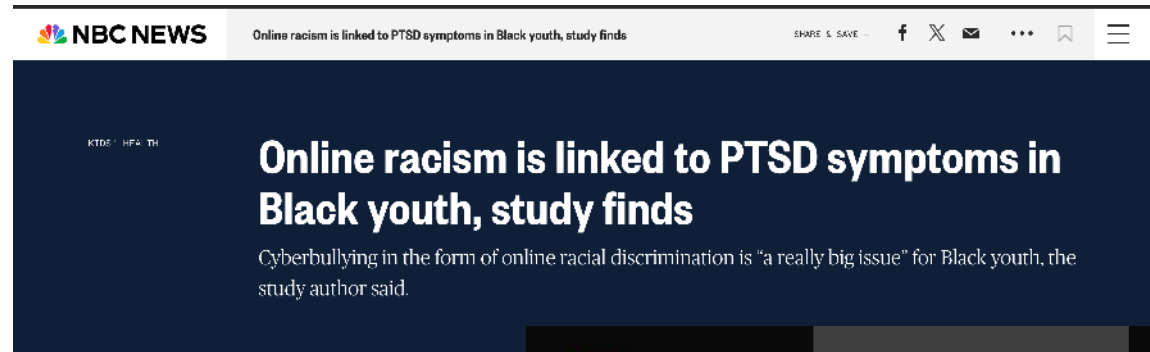
1. Identify the psychological and emotional effects of racial discrimination and hate on Black youth.
2. Explain effective strategies for helping Black youth manage symptoms of racial and cultural stress in therapeutic and home settings.
3. Apply culturally responsive interventions that support the unique mental health needs of Black youth.

Introduction

- Children's mental health continues to be a crisis in the United States. (CDC, 2023; NAMI, 2019)
- Individuals from racial and ethnic groups utilize mental health services less than average. (Broman, 2012; NAMI, 2019; Turner, 2019)



Bridging the Community to Practice Gap



Bridging the Community to Practice Gap



Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GUHFq6aSRco>

Psychological Impacts of Racism

- Discrimination and racism impacts mental health
- Racism has short- and long-term effects on mental and physical health
- Increases anxiety and depression in youth.



Belgrave & Allison, 2014; Stevenson et al., 1997; Tatum, 2003; Turner, 2019

Racial and Cultural Stress

Racial Stress and Trauma

- A psychological reaction following racial harassment, witnessing racial violence, or experiencing institutional racism (Bryant-Davis, & Ocampo, 2006; Comas-Díaz, 2016)

Cultural Stress

- Cultural stress highlights how integrating into the US culture may increase stress and strain due to being “othered” based on race, ethnicity, or nationality (Nyanamba et al., 2024)

Terminology is Important

- The African American and Black community is not homogeneous.
- According to the U.S. Census, African American or Black is “a person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa”.
- U.S. born African Americans and African immigrants also have unique histories, experiences, and stressors (Nyanamba et al., 2024).

4 Ways Kids Are Impacted By Racism

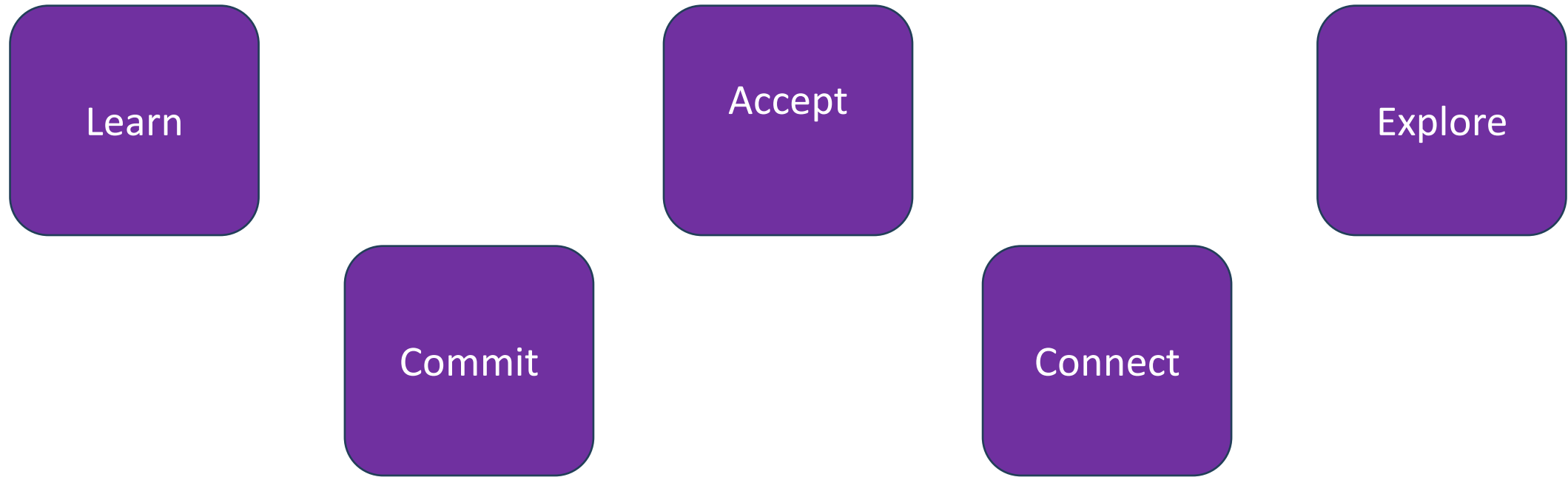
- 1 Emotionally
- 2 Cognitively
- 3 Behaviorally
- 4 Socially

Helping Children Cope & Thrive



Image: iStock Photos

Practical Strategies for Supporting Black Parents



Kanter & Rosen, 2016; Williams, 2019

Treatment Considerations

- Evidence-based treatments are efficacious with this population but it's important to recognize limitations (Turner, 2020).
- Clinicians should explore the impact of discrimination and help identity coping resources.
- Adaptations to trauma-focused CBT may be beneficial for working with African American/Black youth (Metzger et al., 2021).

Trauma Focused-CBT With Racial Socialization

Table 1. Racial Socialization Integration in TF-CBT via PRACTICE Stages.

PRACTICE Component		TF-CBT Focus	Cultural Considerations and RS Integration
PRAC: Coping skills	Psychoeducation and parenting	Provide information to youth and caregiver about the prevalence of childhood trauma, common reactions to traumatic events, and the structure of TF-CBT	Inquire about cognitive and attitudinal barriers, beliefs about mental health, or prior experiences with mental health and provide corrective information as necessary. Introduce RS as a protective factor
	Relaxation	Provide client with additional skills to use in different environments to manage distress	Assess beliefs (e.g., having to work twice as hard) and how the child and family relax and cope with stress (e.g., prayers and spirituality)
	Affective expression and modulation	Identify feelings and develop a vocabulary (behavioral, cognitive, problem-solving) to use outside and in sessions to regulate or tolerate distressing emotions	Identify feelings associated with previous experiences with racial discrimination. Provide strategies to acknowledge the racial stressor by accurately appraising the source of affective change
	Cognitive coping	Teach cognitive triangle as the association between thoughts (about trauma, self, world, family, and future), feelings, and behaviors	Process and role-play techniques that teach children how to behave in hypothetical situations (e.g., when pulled over by police officers, followed by an employee)

Trauma Focused-CBT With Racial Socialization

T: Trauma narrative and processing	Trauma narration and processing	Exposure to trauma-related memories that the client avoids or cause distress (intrusive thoughts, nightmares); identify unhelpful or inaccurate (e.g., self-blame) cognitions that need to be processed; put traumatic exposure into context (other good things, future hopes); share the narrative with family members as appropriate	Assess the child's/caregiver's understanding of cultural norms around trauma narratives/"not telling family business" or "having our business out in the street"; consider culturally relevant forms of communication including fables with morals, creating a song, rap, and poem
ICE: Treatment consolidation and closure	In vivo exposure	Separate harmless trauma reminders or triggers from fear (learned anxiety response); exposure to trauma-related memories and cues and reduce avoidance	Allow clients the opportunity to practice skills that will reduce negative cognitions, emotions, and behaviors in response to future triggering racial encounters
	Conjoint sessions	Praise, support, encouragement from caregiver; discussion between caregiver and child	Discuss the successes of RS activities that were assigned throughout treatment and the impact that they had on the client's racial identity
	Enhancing safety	Psychoeducation on risk of revictimization; develop a safety plan to help the child (and caregiver) identify risky situations, people, and places, and role-play how to respond	Develop a safety plan that equips the youth with how to respond in the event of future experiences with discrimination and racism; identify warning signs of danger (e.g., what to do when stopped by police officers); role-play new skills, ideally with the caregiver

Case Example: Applying TF-CBT w/Racial Socialization

- Jacoby is a 9-year-old, African American male. Recently, he experienced a racial slur from a peer. When the teacher witnessed the situation, they immediately intervened to tell Jacoby's peer that his language was not appropriate. The peer was also told to apologize for his behavior towards Jacoby. No other actions were taken at school. Jacoby later told his parents about what happened at school. They were upset that the school didn't inform them about the situation and called to schedule a meeting with the teacher and principal.



Applying TF-CBT w/Racial Socialization

PRACTICE Components	Supporting for Jacoby
P: Psychoeducation and Parenting	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Educate Jacoby and his parents about racial trauma and how it can impact emotional well-being.2. Discuss the protective role of racial socialization (e.g., cultural pride, preparation for bias).
R: Relaxation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Explore and incorporate culturally relevant stress-relief practices (e.g., prayer, music, rhythmic activities).2. Validate Jacoby's stress response and teach deep breathing or grounding techniques through culturally affirming activities.
A: Affective Expression and Modulation	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Help Jacoby name emotions related to the incident, including confusion, anger, sadness, and embarrassment.2. Validate parental anger and support their emotion regulation when discussing the incident.

Applying TF-CBT w/Racial Socialization

PRACTICE Components	Supporting for Jacoby
C: Cognitive Coping	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Work with Jacoby to challenge internalized negative beliefs (e.g., “Something is wrong with me”).2. Use examples relevant to racial identity and pride to restructure harmful cognitions.3. Role-play how to respond to future incidents with confidence and self-respect.

Three M's to Promote Youth Mental Health

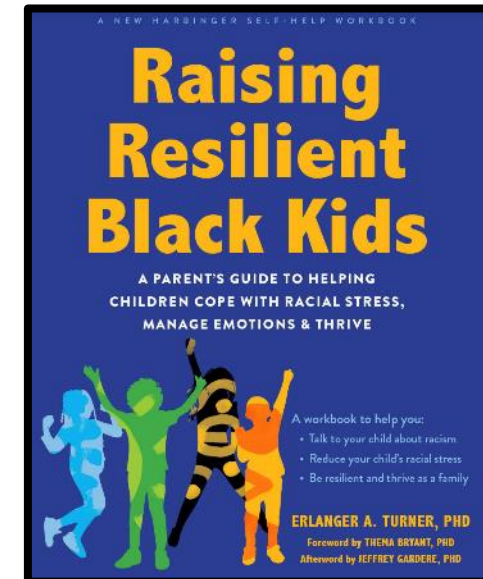
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- Monitor
- Model
- Motivate



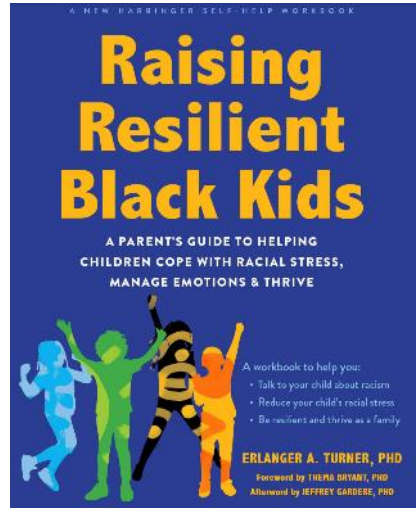
Skills-Based Activities to Support Black Youth

The book using evidence-based *cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) skills with mindfulness and liberation psychology* to help your kids cope with race-based stress, challenge systemic oppression and marginalization, and thrive.



Skills-Based Activities (cont).

Raising Resilient Black Kids



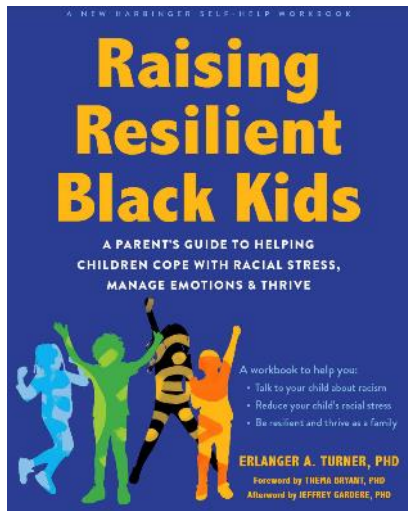
Connect with Us!
@BlackKidsThrive

Self-Care Activity Schedule

Self-Care Activity Schedule

Day	Plan for Self-Care Activity
Monday	
Tuesday	
Wednesday	
Thursday	

Skills-Based Activities (cont).



- Journal Prompts
- Reflection Questions
- Conversation Starters
- Breathing Exercises
- Activity Checklists
- Racial Pride Worksheet
- Activism and Racial Literacy Tools
- Resources: Books & Movies

Connect with Us!

@BlackKidsThrive

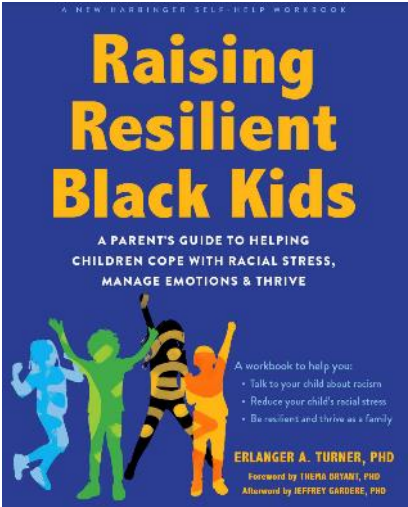
Skills-Based Activities (cont).

Raising Resilient Black Kids

Mind, Body, and Soul Worksheet

Mind, Body, and Soul Worksheet

Using the worksheet below, discuss with your child how experiencing racism impacts your mind, body, and soul. This is an opportunity to check in with yourself and your child.



Connect with Us!

@BlackKidsThrive

After witnessing or experiencing racism, my thoughts are:	My experience	My child's experience
confused		
upset		
hopeless		
other:		
other:		
After witnessing or experiencing racism, my body is:	My experience	My child's experience
tense or tight		
restless or fidgety		
drained or tired		
other:		
other:		

Resources For Parents

Therapy for Black Kids' Website

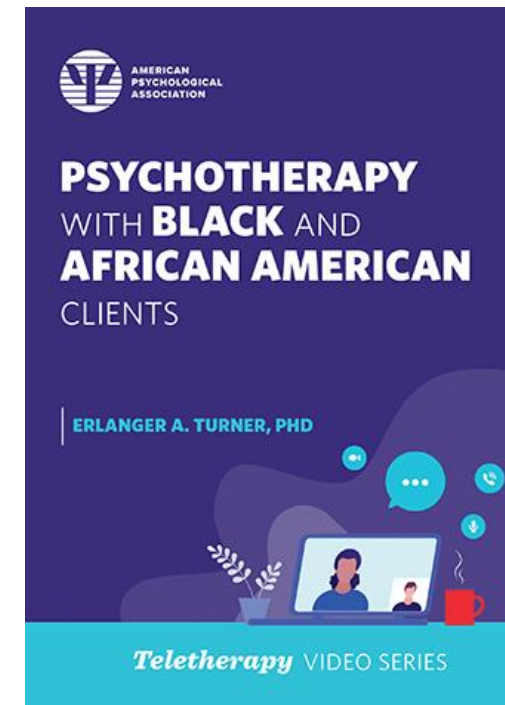
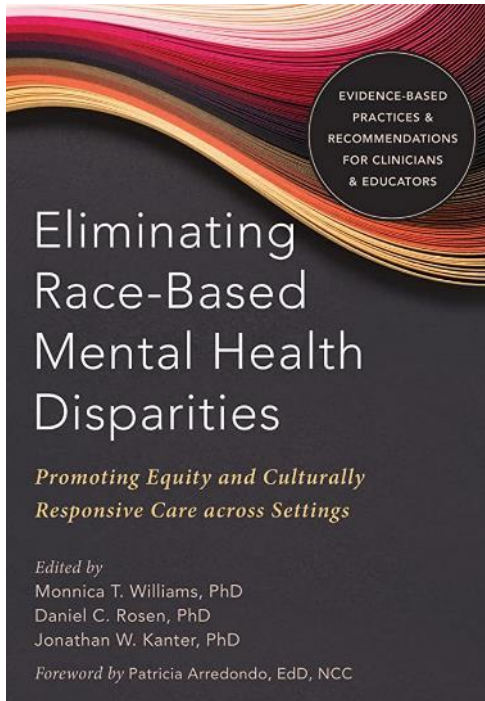
- <https://www.therapyforblackkids.org/>

Uplifting Youth Through Healthy Communication About Race

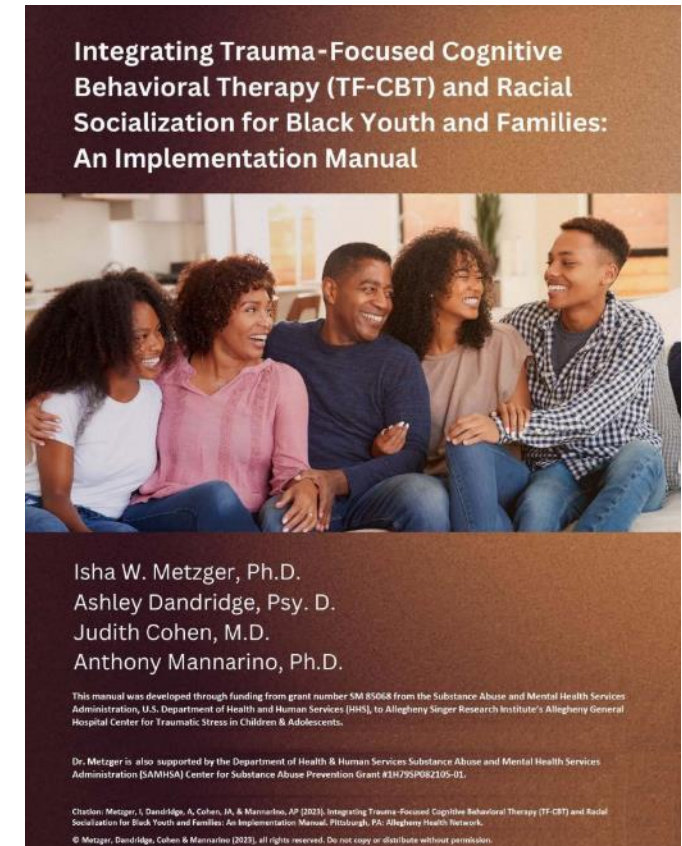
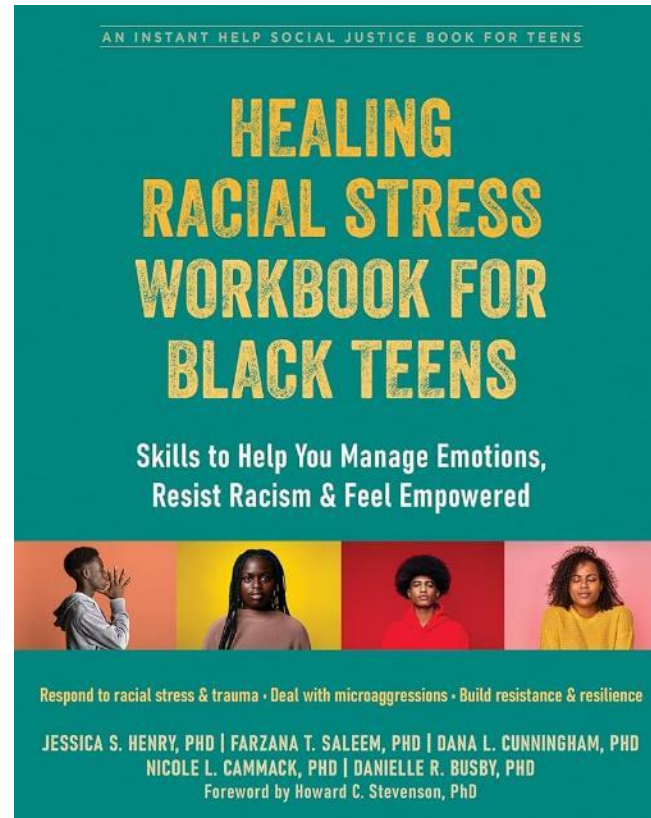
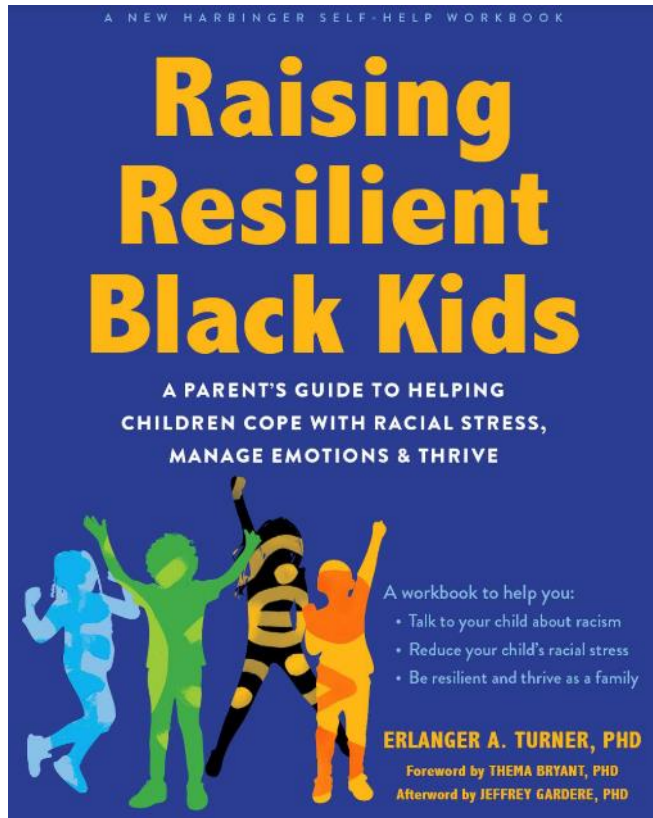
- <https://www.apa.org/res/parent-resources>



Additional Resources



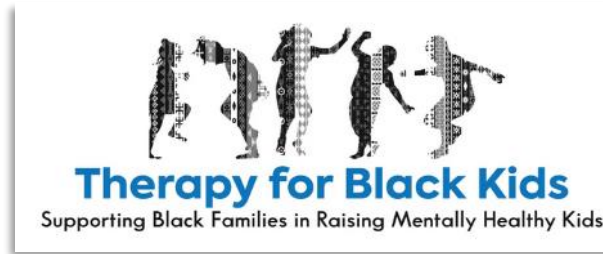
Additional Resources



Connect on Social Media



(open smartphone
camera to access link)



@TherapyforBlackKids

@BlackKidsThrive



Q&A With Dr. Turner



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