



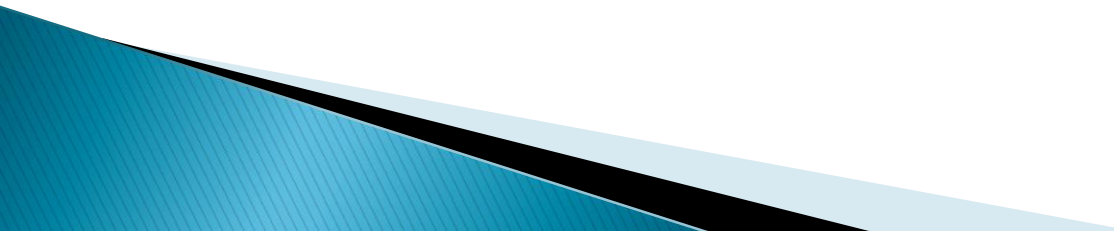
Young Black Males  
vs.  
Adult Manhood

Black Men Healing Conference  
June 24, 2011

# *Your Presenter*

- LaRone R. Greer, MSW
  - Masters in Social Work from University of St. Thomas.
  - Director of Project Imani.
  - Co-Executive Director of Project Nguzo Saba.
  - County Senior Social Worker in Family Assessment / Child Protection & Children's Mental Health Case Management.
  - Director of African American Professionals for Mental Health Town Hall Meeting.
  - Served as an Advisory Commissioner for the African-American Men's Project.
  - Served as an Advisory Council Committee member for the Urban Learner Framework for Hamline College.
  - Board Member, STARS for Children's Mental Health Governance Board.
  - A seasoned mental health practitioner in school-based mental health. I believe a "multi-systemic therapy" is the best approach to therapy that includes the patient, as well as caregivers.
  - Has spoken locally in Minnesota, as well as nationally, on topics that range from Juvenile Justice to African American Children's Mental Health to Children in the System of Care.

# Disclaimer

- ▶ I respect your commitment to working with youth
  - ▶ I respect your expertise and experience
  - ▶ There are no miracle solutions
  - ▶ Factors beyond the school must be addressed
  - ▶ Professionals and parents must understand the culture of today's youth
- 

# STAGES OF LISTENING & PARTICIPATION

\*\* Hostage: acting as if they were locked up

\*\* Challenger: waiting to become confrontational

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\*\* Daydreamer: mind wanders throughout the discussion

\*\* Adventurer: open-minded – willing to expand ideas and concepts

# TRAINING OBJECTIVES

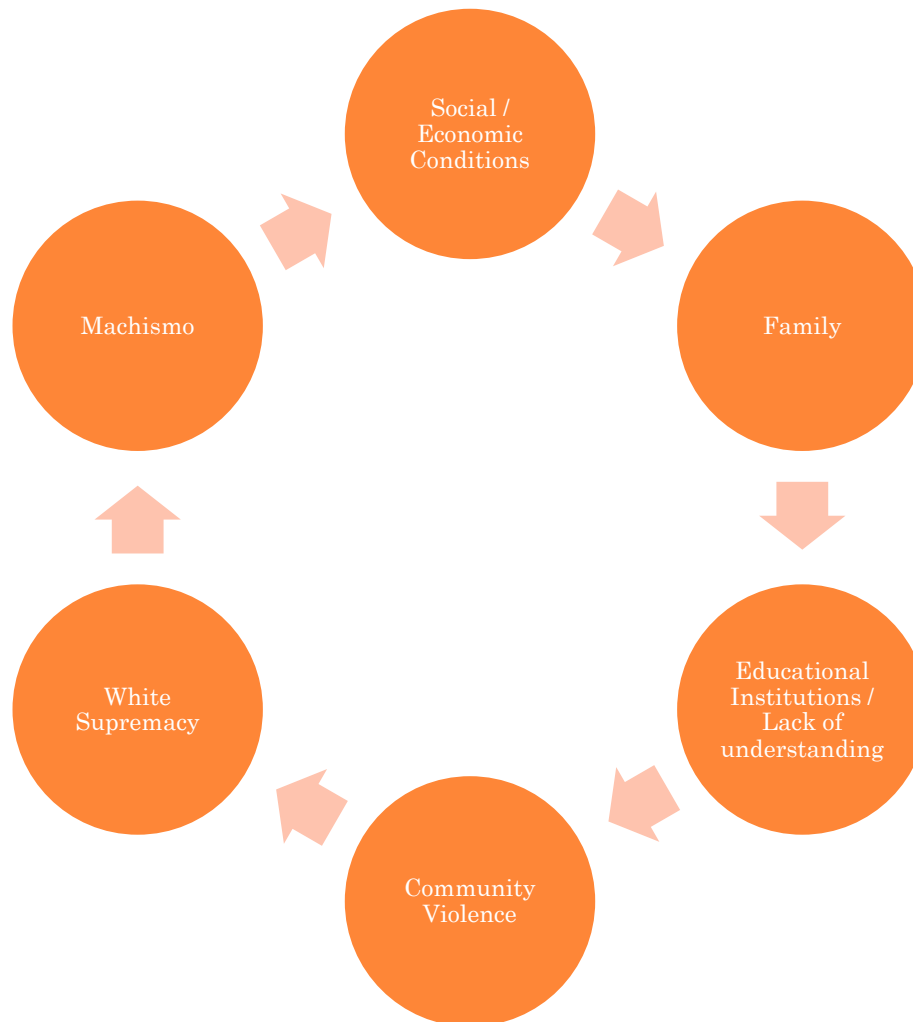


- Describe the critical issues facing young black males going into manhood by chronological age, maturity, cultural identity, fatherlessness, community & generational isolation.
- Learn about strategies designed to engage African American males around issues related to manhood throughout their life course.
- Explore the importance of using culturally-relevant life skills models to engage adolescent African American males with the utilization of Nguzo Saba and the Rites of Passage in dealing with manhood.

# BAGGAGE ASSESSMENT

- What are you bringing to the table to assist with young black males?
- Why should a young male trust you?
- How do you know you are ready / equipped to deal with young black males and their manhood?

# CHALLENGES TO WORKING WITH AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES



# What is Manhood?

- Manhood is defined as:

“crossing the river of childhood to enter the land of maturity, adolescence can be thought of as the search for the proper vessel to set sail in & complete the journey. The “proper vessel” that was once supplied by formalized Rites of Passage has been lost.

The results have been described in the book Isaiah, Ch. 3, “The Lord will let the people be governed by immature boys. Everyone will take advantage of everyone else. Young people will not respect their elders...”. However, Proverbs 22:6 states, “Train up a child in the way he would go and when he is old he will not depart from it.”

--- from Paul Hill, Jr.'s “Coming of Age”

- [Play I Am a Man video](#)





# The Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles) Minimum Value System

- Discuss the meaning of the Seven Principles
  - Memorize and recite the African American pledge
  - Memorize and recite the Black National Anthem (Lift Every Voice)
- 
- **SOCIALIZATION**
    - The interactive process by which individuals acquire some of the values, attitudes, skills, and knowledge of the society they belong

SOURCE: Oliver, W. (1989). Black Males and Social Problems: Prevention Through Afrocentric Socialization. *Journal of Black Studies*, 20 (1), 15-39.

# **Develop an understanding of African & African American History and culture**

- Define his-tory and my-story
- Understand the differences in slavery as practiced by Africans, Arabs, and Europeans
- Discuss identity...know who we are.

# I Am The Black Child

- ▶ I am special, ridicule cannot sway me
- ▶ I am strong, obstacles cannot stop me
- ▶ I hold my head high, proudly proclaiming my uniqueness
- ▶ I hold my pace, continuing forward through adversity
- ▶ I am proud of my culture & my heritage
- ▶ I am confident that I can achieve my every goal
- ▶ I am becoming all that I can be
- ▶ I am the black child, I am a child of God.

• Mychal Wynn



# The Importance of Wellness

- Understand the importance of proper nutrition
- Demonstrate physical fitness ability
- Define human sexuality – sexual responsibility and sexual liability, i.e. AIDS, STDs, pregnancy

» Play Soul Food video here

# The Importance of Spirituality

- Discuss spirituality
- Discuss the significance of traditional African rituals and libation
- Discuss how Africans were denied the worship of their traditional religion

# **DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF COOPERATIVE ECONOMIC SYSTEMS**

- **Differentiate between “wants” & “needs”**
- **Understand a system & institution**
- **Explain economic problems facing the African American community (differentiate between consumers & producers)**
- **Welfare system**





## Race & Child Welfare Project at the Center for Study of Social Policy fact sheet had this conclusion:

“African American children and families are significantly more likely to be torn apart by the local child welfare agency than any other racial group in the country --- despite the fact that multiple national research studies prove that African American families are not more likely to abuse or neglect their children.”

SOURCE: M. Ryn and S. Phelan. (2010). *Potential Contribution of Implicit Bias to Racial Disparities in Child Welfare*. Dept. of Family Medicine and Community Health – University of Minnesota.



# Develop decision-making skills for self-awareness & personal planning

- Identify one's life as related to present and future visions
- Establish goals and objectives
- Develop a career plan
- 32% of black males who graduate are proficient

# The Importance of Leadership

- Identify the qualities of leadership
- Understand the differences between a leader and a follower
- Identify and discuss historical and contemporary leaders
- African Americans account for 49% of the prison population nationally, but only represent 13% of the overall population

SOURCE: Fox, J. and Swatt, M. (2008). The Recent Surge in Homicides involving Young Black Males and Guns: Time to Reinvest in Prevention and Crime Control. Boston: Northeastern University.

# Understanding the concept of Community Services

- Define community
- Define the relationship between self / family / community
- Understand the difference between organizing and providing services to address community needs and issues
- Harambee means working together for a common purpose

# Develop an understanding of government

- > Discuss and understand purposes and need for government
- > Discuss the concept of power
- > Understand a two-party system
- > Discuss independent party politics (Tea Party)
- > Barack Obama, the 44<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S.

# DEVELOP AN UNDERSTANDING OF MANHOOD & WOMANHOOD

- Differentiate between males & men, females & women
- Discuss male & female stereotypes
- Identify the male code of conduct
- Identify some of the consequences of acting tough
- Sexuality
- Impact of fatherlessness within the African American community

○ Play Beyond Beats video



# THE VILLAGE

- Community / elders / adults are responsible for helping / teaching / guiding young Black males to become responsible adults
- Young Black males can not sufficiently teach themselves to become responsible adults
- The socialization (maturation) of Black males must be challenged through institutions that provide them with critical life-sustaining support systems
- When the above three principles do not occur, we should not expect Black males to be totally responsible for their actions which are counter productive to the welfare of the community



***"I FOR ONE BELIEVE THAT IF  
YOU GIVE PEOPLE A  
THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING  
OF WHAT CONFRONTS THEM  
AND THE BASIC CAUSES THAT  
PRODUCE IT, THEY'LL CREATE  
THEIR OWN PROGRAM, AND  
WHEN THE PEOPLE CREATE A  
PROGRAM, YOU GET ACTION."***



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Malcolm X



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