



SEE HER BLOOM

UNDERSTANDING BLACK GIRLS'
EXPERIENCES WITH DRUG USE

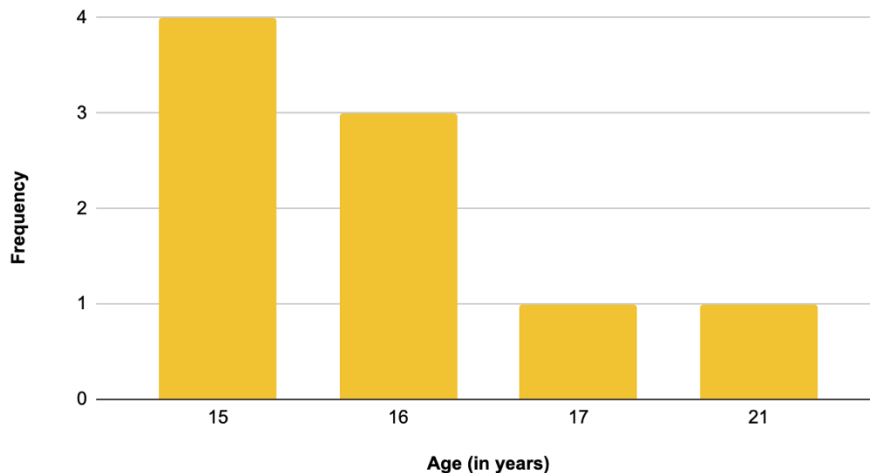
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Introduction

The Center for Collaborative Planning, Public Health Institute commissioned the National Black Women’s Justice Institute (NBWJI) to host conversations with Black girls throughout the state of California to understand their experiences with drugs, why they use them, and what resources they believe would support Black girls’ and young women’s recovery. In total we spoke to 9 young women and girls, ranging from 15 to 21 years of age. The average age of participants was 16 years old. Participants represented cities from across the state, including Sacramento, Walnut, Los Angeles, and Santa Paula. All conversations occurred via Zoom video conference in small groups or individual interviews. All of the girls we spoke to identified as Black except one, who identified as multiracial. Participants responded to questions about their own experiences with drugs, the experiences of people they were close to, why Black girls use substances, their understanding of the effects of drugs, and what recovery strategies Black girls are most likely to benefit from and why.

See Her Bloom Interview Participant Age Distribution



Most Commonly Used Drugs

The girls we spoke to reported that marijuana and vaping were most commonly used by Black girls and their peers. These drugs were most frequently used because they were easiest to access, especially marijuana, which is legal for adults at least 21 years old in California for recreational use and available to youth who are 18 years old with a medical prescription. The legalization of marijuana also reduces its stigma among teens, making them more inclined to use the substance. Many of the girls we spoke to have a friend or family member who uses marijuana. One person explained that marijuana was prevalent at her school, particularly among seniors who could obtain it themselves if they were 18

or from someone close to them. Other drugs they mentioned Black girls and their peers use include: Adderall, speed, tramadol, mushrooms, and “lean” (i.e., promethazine or codeine).

Motivations for Using Drugs

Consistent with the literature on drug use among teens, Black girls use drugs as a coping mechanism to help them deal with stress. Although most of the girls we spoke to reported they had not used drugs themselves, they explained that Black girls who do use drugs and other substances are looking

for an escape or distraction from the personal, school, and familial stressors in their lives. One person we spoke to explained that Black girls’ mental wellness is often overlooked because they are perceived as “strong” and not requiring the same degree of support and attention as other youth. Therefore, Black girls turn to drugs because they are left out and feel there are no support systems created for them.

Drug use is also how some Black girls try to fit in at school. Several of the girls we spoke to said this was particularly the case for Black girls who attend predominantly white schools. They perceived drug use was more common among white youth and a normal part of how they socialize among peers.

Drug Education

Black girls obtain most of their information about drugs through the media, especially social media, such as Snapchat and Instagram. According to the girls we spoke to, Snapchat was the main mechanism young people used to share information about drugs because of the built-in privacy features within the application: Young people can talk about drugs with their peers without any record of the communication on their phones. Most of the girls we spoke to said they had not received much formal education about drugs at school or in any

“We’re supposed to be strong Black girls – we are pushed off as ok when we are in need. We are not given the same attention we should be having. We are not given the help that we need because we are seen as the strongest physically and mentally and our needs are not taken seriously. We go to the source that makes us feel good: drugs.”

“It’s come to my understanding that not a lot of people have the “drug talk” at school, and I think that’s really helpful to have some understanding of what [drugs] does to your body, and people don’t realize the effects of it, just what they get out of it.”

other setting. Consequently, young people do not fully understand the effects or potential consequences of substance use and misuse.

Barriers to Getting Help

Getting help for drug use can be difficult for Black girls. Stigma is the most significant barrier. Several of the girls we spoke to explained that substance misuse is taboo in

the Black community, making them reluctant to share what they are experiencing. Those concerns coupled with fears about being judged, ostracized, unheard, or that their needs would be minimized exacerbated their anxieties, making them even more hesitant to disclose substance misuse. Fear of potential consequences, like getting in trouble with their parents, is another barrier to help-seeking among Black girls.

Treatment and Support for Black Girls Struggling with Substance Misuse

When we asked what would best support Black girls struggling with substance misuse, there was strong consensus that we must create communities of support for Black girls. Given the stigma surrounding drug use, they asserted that drug treatment and prevention programming for Black girls must occur in collaborative and non-judgmental spaces that foster a sense of belonging and engender open honest dialogue about one's drug use. What is more, these spaces should be led by Black people, particularly Black women and other Black girls. As they explained, representation matters. All of the girls we spoke to agreed that it would be easier for Black girls working to overcome substance misuse issues to relate and open up to someone from the same background. There was a palpable awareness about racism in medicine and its effect on the kind and quality of treatment Black women receive that made the girls we spoke to distrustful of non-Black providers. While trusted adult Black women are an obvious choice to lead healing spaces for Black girls in drug treatment, the girls we spoke to also highlighted the benefits of peer-to-peer support, asserting that connecting with someone in their age group dealing with similar issues at school, at home, and in their personal lives may have even greater benefits for Black girls. Several of the girls we spoke to described providing peer-to-peer support in informal ways with close friends who have tried to stop using drugs. In addition to programming, the girls we spoke to recommended creating materials and resources for Black girls that clarify the medical and mental health consequences of substance use and

“I feel like, ye, there should be consequences [for drug use], but if your child is more scare of the consequences than getting help, then that’s a problem.”

offer suggestions for healthier coping mechanisms to help Black girls manage stressors in their lives.

Conclusion

Although most of the girls we spoke to did not have personal experience using or misusing substances, they recognized the need for and importance of creating programming and interventions explicitly for Black girls. Although it appears that Black girls and young women may be less inclined to use “hard drugs,” like opioids and stimulants, Black girls need more information about the medical and emotional effects of drug misuse, covering a diversity of substances, from marijuana to codeine. Like many others, Black girls use substances to help them cope with stress, trauma, and pain. Despite this, programming and services for Black girls are not widely available, which may be a consequence of pervasive myths that Black girls’ are strong and impermeable to pain and harm. Concerns about this mythology also make Black girls reluctant to seek out support from white medical and mental health providers. Black girls, sadly, are aware of the racism that permeates the medical establishment in this country and how it negatively impacts the quality of care they may receive. For these reasons, Black girls in drug treatment need and want communities of support led by other Black women and girls. They want to connect and heal alongside other Black women and girls contending with the same challenges.

Recommendations

Create informational resources. Black girls need informational resources designed with them in mind. These tools should address topics such as prevalence, reasons why Black girls use substances, and the different types of drugs in circulation, especially those most commonly used by Black girls. It is important that these tools remind Black girls who are considering using drugs and those who already use drugs that they are not alone and that there are other ways to cope with stressors in their lives. These resources must have an intersectional lens, which is generally overlooked in most substance use-related materials created for teens and young adults. New tools must address how racism contributes to poor mental health and drug use among Black girls and young women. It is important that Black girls see themselves and their experiences represented in materials designed for them. These resources should be created in collaboration with Black girls and young women, particularly those who are in recovery.

Establish in-person and virtual communities of support for Black girls. Black girls struggling with substance misuse need communities of support. These should be spaces that foster a sense of belonging and open dialogue without stigma and judgment. Both in-person and virtual spaces would be beneficial for Black girls. One possibility is for See Her Bloom to create a regulated chat room on the

website to foster community and dialogue among Black women and girls struggling with drug misuse and working toward recovery. These settings, whether in-person or virtual, can offer formal or informal drug prevention and treatment for Black girls and can be led by trusted adults or their peers. Regardless of the format or structure, these should be spaces that are led by Black women and girls.

Target outreach to Black women providers. It is vital that Black girls who have substance misuse issues have access to medical, mental health, and drug treatment providers that they trust, preferably providers who are also Black women. See Her Bloom should target outreach to Black women medical, mental health, and drug treatment providers, especially ones working with Black teens and young adults. It is important that this community of providers is aware of See Her Bloom and encouraged to share the information and resources it offers with their clients and throughout their networks. Given the difficulty Black girls have identifying providers, See Her Bloom may also consider developing a directory of Black women providers in California and nationally that offer culturally and gender-responsive drug treatment and mental health care services.

Review of Risk Factors, Prevention, and Interventions for Drug (Mis)Use Among Black Girls

This literature review of substance misuse programs focuses on culturally relevant, gender responsive prevention and intervention programs for Black girls and gender-expansive youth. The scan included studies that were specific to Black girls, adolescents in general, or about specific substance use intervention or prevention programs. The subsequent annotated bibliography aims to identify and understand the needs of Black girls as it relates to substance use and misuse, and to inform updates to the See Her Bloom website, future programming efforts by Center for Collaborative Planning (CCP), and investments into development of intervention and prevention efforts.

In all, we found that there is an urgent need for more research, development, and evaluation of substance use intervention, and prevention programs for Black youth, specifically Black girls. Many of the current intervention programs do not have a specific focus on Black girls, and much of the national evaluation data available is not disaggregated to include statistics on Black girls. Various studies in the literature review supported the notion that stronger parental bonds have significant mitigating factors against Black youth misusing substances, and community programs that present a coordinated, comprehensive message that addresses multiple risk factors show promise in terms of changed behavior. CCP and See Her Bloom should ultimately consider composing an advisory group of adolescent Black girls, their families, and interested community partners to inform updates to their programming.

[Prevalence, Risk & Protective Factors in Opioid Misuse](#)

[Prevention & Treatment Interventions for Adolescents](#)

[Race or Gender Focused Prevention & Treatment Intervention Research](#)

[Black Girl Focused Prevention & Treatment Intervention Research](#)

[Key Takeaways](#)

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Prevalence, Risk & Protective Factors in Opioid Misuse

Ford & Rigg (2015). [Racial/Ethnic Differences in Factors That Place Adolescents at Risk for Prescription Opioid Misuse](#)

This research contributes to this literature review because it looks at factors that place youth at risk for opioid misuse through the lens of race and ethnicity. It notes that prescription opioid misuse (POM) is more prevalent amongst white adolescents, but it is still an issue among Black youth. The findings from this study suggest that POM risk profiles for Whites may look considerably different than that of Blacks and Hispanics. More research is clearly needed to gain a more accurate picture about why Black youth begin to misuse opioids. For Black adolescents, the risk of POM increased with residential instability, delinquency, depression, weak bonds to parents, peers that use drugs, having or being exposed to attitudes that do not reject drug use, and the use of other drugs.

Most important from this study was the author's recommendations that prevention programs that target Black youth go beyond "objective information" or "scare tactics", and use a broader range of prevention strategies. **In terms of See Her Bloom's prevention and intervention work, updates to the website and programming would do well to consider how information about opioid misuse is presented. CCP could consider convening an advisory group of Black girls to inform the development of informational materials.** The study's results also demonstrate the importance of parents as a protective factor, as demonstrated by other articles in this literature review. The authors found that Black adolescents who had stronger parental bonds and whose parents had stronger attitudes against drug use were significantly less likely to misuse opioids. **A closer evaluation of how best to involve parents in discussions about Black girls' use of opioids would also be beneficial.**

Hudgins, Porter, Monuteaux, & Bourgeois (2019). [Prescription opioid use and misuse among adolescents and young adults in the United States: A national survey study](#)

This national study found that significantly more females than males (30.3% versus 24.8%) reported using any prescription opioid, and non-Hispanic whites and Blacks were more likely to have had any opioid use compared to Hispanics. Among those misusing opioids, 55.7% obtained them from friends or relatives, 25.4% from the healthcare system, and 18.9% through other means, but obtaining opioids free from friends and

relatives was the most common source for both adolescents and young adults. Those with opioid misuse reported high prevalence of prior cocaine (35.5%), hallucinogen (49.4%), heroin (8.7%), and inhalant (30.4%) use.

Researchers also evaluated the Strengthening Families Program and the Life Skills Training Program, and found them to be promising, multi-session, universal prevention programs for adolescents, with effects lasting into emerging adulthood. The authors concluded that interventions should be informed by behavior change theories (i.e., motivational interviewing), and cognitive behavioral therapy. While this study is not specific to Black girls, it provides national data on opioid misuse amongst adolescents, including data on how youth obtain opioids. The findings are in line with what we have heard in interviews with Black girls about obtaining opioids, with most girls mentioning that they received substances from friends or relatives.

Rigg & Johnson (2022). [Preventing Adolescent Opioid Misuse: Racial/Ethnic Differences in the Protective Effects of Extracurricular Activities](#)

This study is unique in that it focused on the racial and ethnic differences in opioid misuse amongst justice-involved youth, and examined the protective effects that extracurricular activities have on prevention. Some studies estimate substance use prevalence among justice-involved adolescents (JIAs) to be as high as 80%. This study also found that participation in extracurricular activities was protective against adolescent opioid misuse, when not disaggregated by race, lowering risk by 36%. However, the authors found that although involvement in extracurricular activities was protective for White and Latinx youth, Black youth received no such protective effect. It's unclear why these racial/ethnic differences exist, but the authors offer several possible explanations. For example, extracurricular activities that Black youth have access to may be of a poorer quality, Black youth may not be offered the types of extracurricular activities that provide the most protection against opioid misuse, or potentially Black youth may tend to experience differential treatment, like discrimination, during their involvement. This is in line with the findings of another study presented in this literature review which might suggest that reliance on involvement in extracurricular activities to mitigate against opioid misuse amongst Black youth may be futile. This study does have its limitations on usefulness for the purposes of See Her Bloom because it does not disaggregate the data by gender, nor provide analysis on protective effects of extracurricular activities on justice-involved Black girls.

SAMHSA (2020). [The Opioid Crisis and the Black/African American Population: An Urgent Issue.](#)

In this issue brief prepared for SAMHSA, the authors provided recent data on the prevalence of opioid misuse and opioid overdose death rates among Black people in the U.S.; discussed contextual factors that impact the opioid epidemic in these communities; and highlighted innovative outreach and engagement strategies that have the potential to connect individuals with evidence-based prevention, treatment and recovery. While the brief did not explicitly focus on adolescents or girls, it still offers useful race-specific data about prevalence, context, and strategies.

- **Prevalence:** the opioid misuse rate among non-Hispanic Blacks mirrors the national population at about 4 percent, and Blacks have the third highest opioid-related overdose death rate compared to other races at 12.9 deaths per 100,000 people.
- **Context:** Although pathways to opioid misuse and overdose death include excessive prescribing, Blacks are significantly less likely to be prescribed opioid prescriptions for pain from medical providers relative to White patients. Other pathways include the use of illicit drugs like heroin and cocaine, and street drugs that are increasingly laced with fentanyl. Notable challenges to prevention, treatment and recovery include: intergenerational substance/polysubstance use; misperceptions and faulty explanations about addiction and opioids; lack of culturally responsive care and culturally irrelevant prevention efforts.
- Of the **strategies** presented to address opioid misuse and opioid use disorder (OUD) in Black communities, the most relevant to CCP and See Her Bloom are increasing culturally relevant public awareness and employing culturally specific engagement strategies. Notably, efforts that leverage technology to provide awareness and education on substance misuse and SUD were noted as innovative, current, inexpensive, and easily accessible. **CCP may consider utilizing podcasts and similar online social media such as Facebook Live in public awareness campaigns targeting young Black women and girls to discuss important but stigmatized health issues.**

Prevention & Treatment Interventions for Adolescents

Griffin & Botvin (2010). [Evidence-Based Interventions for Preventing Substance Use Disorders in Adolescents](#)

This study examined various settings for evidence-based interventions for preventing substance use disorder. School-based prevention programs that have been tested and proven effective focus on building drug resistance skills, general self-regulation and social skills, and/or changing normative expectations regarding inaccurate beliefs about the high prevalence of substance use. The most effective programs are highly interactive in nature, skills-focused, and implemented over multiple years. Family-based prevention programs typically emphasize parenting skills training and/or improving family functioning, communication, and family rules regarding substance abuse. Those family interventions that combine parenting skills and family bonding components appear to be the most effective. Community-based drug abuse prevention programs include some combination of school, family, mass media, public policy, and community organization components. **Community programs that present a coordinated, comprehensive message across multiple delivery components are most effective in terms of changing behavior.** These findings offer important insight into the effectiveness of different settings for delivery of prevention programs. **This can inform See Her Bloom's determination of the best delivery method for future programming, and partnerships.**

Hale, Fitzgerald-Yau, & Viner (2014). [A Systematic Review of Effective Interventions for Reducing Multiple Health Risk Behaviors in Adolescence](#)

This study makes the case for targeting multiple health risk behaviors (MHRBs) as more effective and efficient than targeting single risk behavior. A growing body of research suggests that health risk behaviors often do not occur in isolation. Smoking, drinking, illicit drug use, sexual risk, and aggressive behaviors are all mutually predictive. For drug use and some forms of sexual risk, co-occurrence with other risk behaviors is essentially normative. Previous research suggests that co-occurrence of risk behaviors is driven by shared risk factors such as peer influences or sensation seeking or by state-specific traits such as the direct effects of substance use or aggression on other risk behaviors. This is in line with what we have heard in the interviews with several adolescents so far, with many of them pointing to peer influence, or the desire to “fit in”, as a reason for drug use in general.

The authors offer limitations in funding for prevention interventions, and time constraints as reasons why coordinated interventions for multiple risks should be considered more often. **See Her Bloom may consider how interventions that account for multiple risks, or that at least address in some part multiple risks, may be implemented into their programming. See Her Bloom could possibly partner with another community organization that provides interventions for another risk factor for more reach.**

SAMHSA (2019). [Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration: Substance Misuse Prevention for Young Adults](#)

This research report by SAMHSA suggests that prevention programs demonstrating evidence of effectiveness in reducing substance misuse in young adulthood often incorporate practices informed by theories that explain what might cause substance misuse and what might change factors that contribute to it. This finding is supported by previous studies in this literature review that recommend further exploration of the systems level conditions and compounding factors that drive youth to substance use and misuse. The majority of the programs focus on alcohol misuse and more research is needed to understand whether existing programs and practices that are tested and proven effective with alcohol can be adapted to address other substances. This article also acknowledges that youth use online technology to seek health information, and that there needs to be further exploration of how online and mobile health technologies can be used to address substance misuse among youth.

SAMHSA highlighted the AIM (Adults in the Making) program, a family-centered intervention designed to promote resilience and prevent substance use by enhancing protective factors for African American youth as they enter adulthood. AIM is particularly interesting because it has a specific focus on providing Black youth with coping mechanisms for the mental health effects of racism. AIM seeks to safeguard against the negative impact of life stressors on African American youth in rural areas by promoting positive family relationships so that youth are better suited to handle life stressors and less inclined to engage in risky substance use as they grow into adulthood. AIM also places emphasis on positive family relationships, providing separate skill building courses for parents and youth, followed by a joint parent-youth session, where parents are able to exhibit the skills they learned in the skill-building training. AIM is most effective for individuals with more contextual risk factors. Contextual risk factors include conflict with parents, friends who engage in alcohol and other substances, and perceived racial discrimination.

The AIM program can provide some helpful insight for the See Her Bloom project, as it focuses specifically on Black youth, and specifically aims to mitigate against the damaging effects of racism. Most of the other research in this literature review did not specifically mention mitigation against racism, although it is well documented the negative mental health effects that racism has on Black youth, girls in particular.

Race or Gender Focused Prevention & Treatment Intervention Research

Brody, Yu, Chen, Kogan, & Smith (2012). [The Adults in the Making Program: Long-term Protective Stabilizing Effects on Alcohol Use and Substance Use Problems for Rural African American Emerging Adults](#)

This study examined the impact of the AIM (Adults in the Making) intervention program on rural African American youth. Although AIM was designed to deter escalation of alcohol use and the development of problems associated with substance use among adolescents dealing with challenging contextual risks. In addition to previously identified risks like parental involvement, and academic achievement, this study identified racial discrimination as a risk factor. The authors noted that racial discrimination is a stressor that induces anger, frustration, and depressive symptoms, which can compromise physical and mental health outcomes over time. Numerous studies support this, indicating that racial discrimination forecasts alcohol consumption, smoking, and the use and abuse of other drugs. Of particular import are findings demonstrating that the direction of causality flows from perceived discrimination to outcomes and not the reverse. The authors identify appropriate protective parenting processes and learned self-regulatory skills as interventions for the relative disinterest in alcohol use, and prevention of substance misuse.

This study is especially important in our literature review because it identifies racial discrimination as a risk factor in the development of youth substance misuse. **See Her Bloom may consider learning more about how to incorporate coping mechanisms for dealing with perceived racial discrimination, as this study suggests that perceived racial discrimination is a major risk factor in substance misuse. More research is needed to educate the field on the effects of racial discrimination on negative mental health amongst Black youth, and its correlation to opioid misuse.**

Hanlon, Simon, O'Grady, Carswell, & Callaman (2009). [The Effectiveness of an After-school Program Targeting Urban African American Youth](#)

Researchers implemented an intervention program for Black youth and their parents, developed by Black professionals that employed culturally responsive principles and methods. The intervention program was administered after-school, and included the following components: structured group mentoring, parental empowerment and support services, and community outreach services. The authors found no conclusive correlation between the after-school program and the mitigation of problem behaviors; this conclusion is consistent with the findings of previous studies in this literature review. These findings further suggest that an after-school model of intervention may not be as useful for Black youth, and other modes of delivery may be more beneficial. But, the authors did note that there was an increase in grade point average amongst those who participated in the intervention, and they specifically noted that interventions that promote academic achievement have the potential to reduce the risk for subsequent problem behavior, including substance abuse. The study found that greater parental involvement was related to increased grade point average scores, which further demonstrates that parental practices and involvement have an impact on the overall wellness and achievement of youth. This supports multiple other studies in this literature review that suggest that parental involvement is an important mitigating factor in substance misuse, and this study further demonstrates that specifically for Black youth.

Potentially, See Her Bloom could highlight the importance of academic achievement in their prevention programming for Black girls. It is also becoming more clear that See Her Bloom should consider developing information materials and programming for parents and families as well.

Kumpfer, Smith, & Summerhays (2008). [A Wakeup Call to the Prevention Field: Are Prevention Programs for Substance Use Effective for Girls?](#)

The authors conducted a review of the literature related to the etiology of substance misuse by girls, and provided a brief review of the status of prevention efforts aimed at decreasing substance misuse among girls. The authors concluded that there is insufficient research evidence or published articles to conclude whether most alcohol and drug prevention programs that demonstrate effectiveness for the overall adolescent population are as effective for girls specifically. They also noted that there was no clear distinction that making evidence based programs more gender specific would improve outcomes for girls. However, the authors shared that based on the significant overlap of substance use/misuse, delinquency, and eating disorders, there is an obvious need for girl-specific effective prevention interventions to address both problem behaviors simultaneously.

These findings support the findings of an earlier study in this literature review, and support the use of measures that address additional factors that typically compound with substance use disorders, like adverse mental health, the negative effects of racism, and sexism. **Perhaps See Her Bloom should consider how their resources and programming can incorporate education about mitigating against compounding factors. CCP's advocacy efforts should focus on increasing the development, research, and evaluation of intervention programs that focus specifically on adolescent Black girls.**

Black Girl Focused Prevention & Treatment Intervention Research

Opara et al. (2022). [A Systematic Review on Sexual Health and Drug Use Prevention Interventions for Black Girls](#)

This systematic review of studies on sexual health and drug use prevention interventions for Black girls found that many interventions were not catered specifically for Black adolescent girls, but it is essential that interventions provided to Black adolescent girls incorporate the various identity intersections that Black girls belong to. The authors recommend the development of interventions that go beyond the individual level and address systemic racism and sexism which contribute to how Black adolescent girls view themselves and are treated in society.

This article is important because it highlights the need for additional development, research, and evaluation of drug use prevention interventions for Black girls, specifically. It also makes specific note of the importance of intersectionality in developing prevention programs and interventions. The authors highlight the importance of developing interventions that address systemic racism and sexism, beyond the individual level. It implores stakeholders to take an approach that addresses systems level change as a viable option for prevention of Black girls' opioid misuse. **CCP and the See Her Bloom project may consider a wider advocacy campaign that includes systems level leaders and diverse stakeholders in their prevention and intervention efforts.**

Schinke, Fang, & Cole (2011). [Preventing Substance Abuse among Black and Hispanic Adolescent Girls: Results from a Computer-Delivered, Mother-Daughter Intervention Approach](#)

This 2008 study found evidence to support the use of computer-based and gender-specific intervention programs for Black girls' and their mothers. Following their completion of the intervention program, girls who participated in the intervention reported lower levels of depression, and higher levels of self-efficacy about their ability to avoid cigarette

smoking, alcohol consumption, and drug use. Girls who participated in the interventions also reported lower intentions to smoke, drink, and use drugs when they were adults. **This may be interesting to CCP and the See Her Bloom project because if computer-based, gender-specific intervention programs have promising effects, even into adulthood, then See Her Bloom could explore development of further programming that makes use of computer-based adaptations. This could also expand the reach of the program, while mitigating against increased costs of in-person interventions.**

This study found that several barriers remain to implementing family-centered strategies, most notably cost and recruitment and retention of parents as well. As a result, few families receive the intervention they need to help their adolescent children avoid substance use, especially Black and brown families. The authors recommend that family approaches to substance abuse prevention be engaging, affordable, and flexible, meet tight scheduling demands, and demonstrate fidelity. Self-paced programs also make the intervention more accessible because participants can work when and where they feel most comfortable.

Key Takeaways

This scan of the literature offers a few key takeaways that are particularly important for CCP and the See Her Bloom project:

- There is an urgent need for additional development, research, and evaluation of drug use prevention interventions for Black girls, specifically.
- Racial discrimination is a risk factor in the development of Black youth substance misuse, and more attention should be paid to the effects of racism on Black girls' mental, emotional, and physical health.
- Measures that address factors that typically compound with substance use disorders, like adverse mental health, the negative effects of racism, and sexism, are important in mitigating against adverse behaviors in Black adolescent girls.
- Limitations in funding for prevention interventions, and time constraints suggest that coordinated interventions for multiple risks should be considered as sustainable and effective programming efforts.
- It is important that prevention programs that target Black youth go beyond "objective information" or "scare tactics", and use a broader range of prevention strategies.

- Black adolescents who have stronger parental bonds and whose parents have stronger attitudes against drug use are significantly less likely to misuse opioids.
- Family approaches to substance abuse prevention need to be engaging, affordable, and flexible, and meet tight scheduling demands.
- Self-paced programs make interventions more accessible because participants can work when and where they feel most comfortable.
- Community programs that present a coordinated, comprehensive message across multiple delivery components are most effective in terms of changing behavior.

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ABOUT NBWJI

NATIONAL BLACK WOMEN'S JUSTICE INSTITUTE

We research, elevate, and educate the public about innovative, community-led solutions to address the criminalization of Black women and girls. Through research, policy, and capacity building, we aim to dismantle the racist and patriarchal U.S. criminal-legal system and build, in its place, pathways to opportunity and healing.



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