
Brotherly LOVE



HEALTH OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN PHILADELPHIA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Black men and boys play an integral role in the culture and life of Philadelphia. Historically, as in many other cities around the nation, health outcomes for Black men in Philadelphia are poorer than those of other racial/ethnic groups and women. Despite significant improvements in many aspects of health over the years, Black men and boys continue to lag behind. These persisting disparities illustrate the need for targeted efforts to address the underlying causes of poor health, which for Black men disproportionately involve higher rates of adverse childhood experiences, unemployment, incarceration, racial discrimination, and lower educational attainment.

Key findings from *Brotherly Love*:

Health of Black Men and Boys in Philadelphia include:

HEALTH

- **Life expectancy is lowest among Black men (69.1 years)** compared to any other group – more than 5 years less than other men and 10 years less than women.
- Poorer life expectancy among Black men is largely driven by more **premature death from homicides, early cardiovascular disease, drug overdoses, cancer, and infant deaths.**
- Hypertension and related illnesses (e.g. kidney disease, heart attacks, strokes, etc.) impact Black men earlier and more often than other racial/ethnic groups. **More than 40 percent of Black men have hypertension and nearly 1 in 3 have obesity.**
- **Notably, school-aged Black boys have the lowest rates of obesity** compared to other racial/ethnic groups.
- Asthma is a significant source of morbidity for young Black boys, as **hospitalizations for asthma are nearly 9 times higher** compared to other groups. Asthma is a major cause of missed days of school, likely contributing to educational disparities.
- Gun violence in Philadelphia disproportionately involves Black men — nearly 75% of all victims and known perpetrators are young Black men. **Homicide is the leading cause of death for young Black men ages 15 to 34.**

FACTORS INFLUENCING HEALTH

- Health insurance coverage among Black Philadelphians is at an all-time high following the implementation of ACA Medicaid Expansion — **9 in 10 Black adults have health insurance. Over 96 percent of Black children have health insurance coverage.**
- **There are some signs of growth in economic and educational opportunity for Black men.** Unemployment and poverty rates are declining, while high school, college, and graduate school graduation rates are increasing among Black men. Home ownership has remained stable among Black men, while declining for other racial/ethnic groups.
- Poor health outcomes and behaviors are largely influenced by the long-standing complex social, behavioral, economic, and community circumstances that many Black men experience. Too often, these circumstances include **living in poverty, adverse childhood experiences, economic and educational disadvantages, and exposure to community violence and trauma.**
- **Roughly 23 percent of Black men are living in poverty.** The nearly two-fold poverty gap between Black and White men has narrowed due to significant increases in poverty among White men (fueled by the opioid epidemic) and some improvements among Black men in recent years.
- **Higher rates of unhealthy behaviors among Black men, like smoking and drug use, are linked to higher rates of poverty, unemployment, and targeted marketing in low-income neighborhoods.**
- The effects of racism, racial profiling, and mass incarceration have powerful effects on the health of Black male youth and men, their families, and their communities, and these effects persist over generations. While these issues are far from being solved, and still disproportionately impact Black males, **declining incarceration rates and police stops among Black men in recent years** are signals of some progress.

In addition to presenting these important data, this report also highlights notable Black men from Philadelphia who, while dealing with many of the same health-related issues afflicting men throughout the City, have worked individually or with various organizations to better both their own health and the health and circumstances of other Black men and boys. These individuals and organizations represent progress toward improved health for Black men and boys, but more work is needed.

Brotherly Love: Health of Black Men and Boys in Philadelphia lays the groundwork for healthcare providers, city officials, city residents, and other stakeholders to develop actionable next steps to improve health outcomes for the City's Black men and boys. Some key priorities for public and private stakeholders should include:

- 1** Giving every Black boy a healthy start by tracking disparities in access to preventive health services, like early intervention; educational opportunities, like PHLpre-K; a safe and healthy home environment; and family and social supports to ensure progress in eliminating disparities.
- 2** Strengthening the educational safety net for young Black men to accelerate growth in educational and economic attainment, including connecting disconnected young Black men to educational and employment opportunities.
- 3** Ensuring access to affordable physical and behavioral (including substance use treatment) health care from trusted providers in communities where Black men and boys live.
- 4** Creating public health campaigns and initiatives that promote the use of primary care, preventive services and healthy behaviors among Black men and boys.
- 5** Developing policies and programs that focus on reducing environmental deterrents to healthy living, like neighborhood saturation with unhealthy food, excess density of tobacco and alcohol outlets, predatory marketing of harmful products, and unusable recreational spaces.
- 6** Implementing comprehensive violence reduction strategies that address individual, community, and environmental contributors.
- 7** Combating structural violence and racism through policies and programs that reduce systemic bias and address inequities in environmental conditions in low-income communities, and social action to raise awareness and advocacy for these efforts.

INTRODUCTION

Health is largely influenced by the conditions under which individuals live their lives. Factors like social and economic constraints, the physical environment, who provides health care, and accessibility of resources all impact the decisions people make, their health, and quality of life. This report provides an overview of data from various sources about health outcomes and many of these factors among Black men and boys living in Philadelphia across five areas, summarized below.

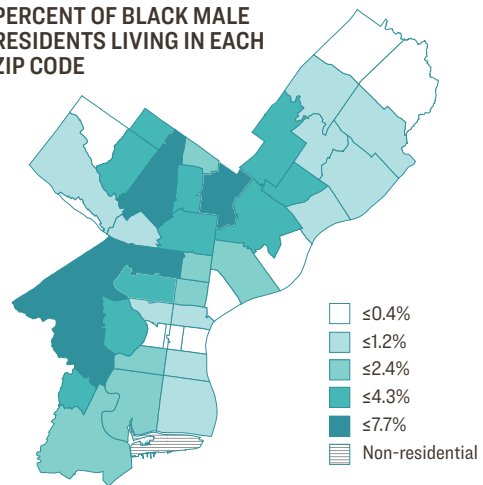
1	HEALTH OUTCOMES	6
	Health Outcomes convey how healthy Black men and boys are, including prominent causes of death; chronic and infectious disease rates; and causes and rates of premature death.	
2	HEALTH BEHAVIORS	18
	Health Behaviors directly impact health outcomes and include alcohol, drug, and tobacco use; nutrition; physical activity; and sexual activity.	
3	MEDICAL CARE	19
	Medical Care describes individuals' ability to access health care and the quality of care available to them.	
4	SOCIAL-ECONOMIC FACTORS	21
	Social and Economic Factors are aspects of individuals' social environments that impact health outcomes, including education, employment, and income.	
5	STRUCTURAL-SOCIETAL FACTORS	28
	Structural and Societal Factors are underlying elements of society which influence individuals' opportunities and daily lives. These factors include racism, policing practices, and incarceration.	
	WHAT CAN BE DONE?	32

BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN PHILADELPHIA



Philadelphia has an estimated population of 301,825 Black boys and men, representing 19% of the City's total population and 40% of the City's male population.

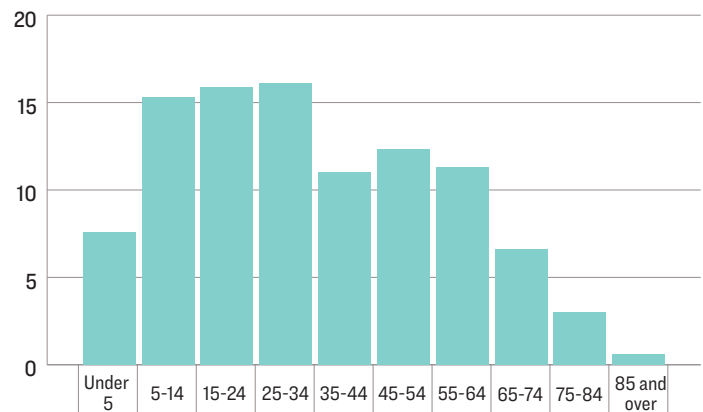
PERCENT OF BLACK MALE RESIDENTS LIVING IN EACH ZIP CODE



Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-year estimates, 2013-2017

Children and young adults ages 5 to 34 make up the largest portion of Philadelphia's Black male population.

AGE DISTRIBUTION OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS IN PHILADELPHIA, 2017

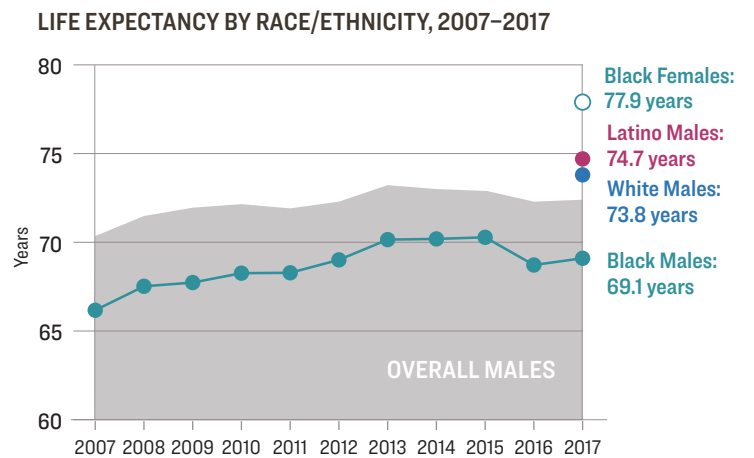


Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2017

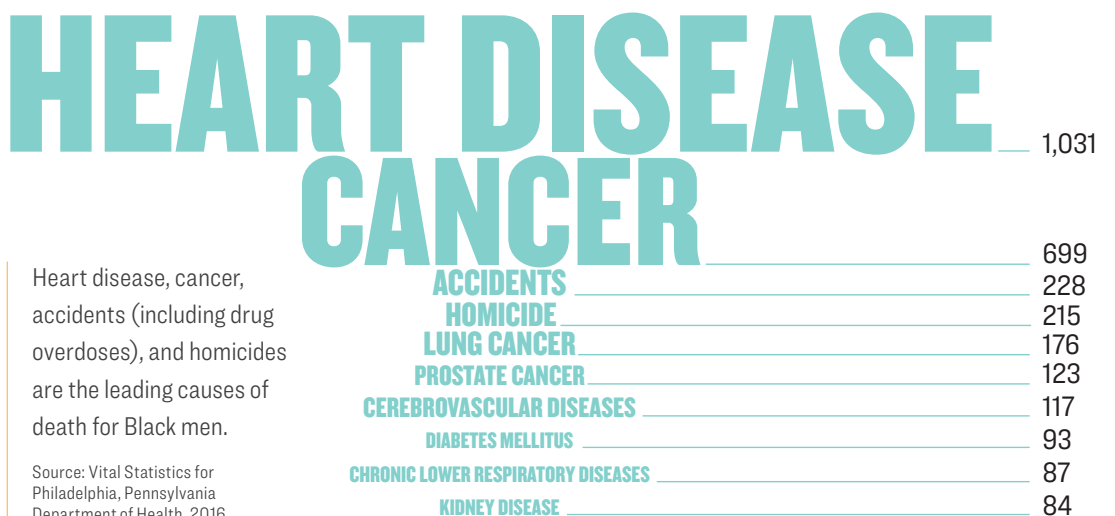
Although many improvements have been made for all men over the past decade, Black men and boys still fare worse in many areas. Additionally, in recent years we have begun to see some of these improvements reverse due to the obesity, opioid, and gun violence crises. Despite this trend, the overall health gains achieved over the years demonstrate that improvements can be made and are encouraging progress for the health of Black men and boys.

Measuring life expectancy and examining trends in death show how Black men are dying and how these deaths may be prevented. Until 2016, life expectancy at birth showed gradual increases each year for most racial and ethnic groups. However, since then, life expectancy stopped increasing or declined across most groups. Most recently, life expectancy at birth for non-Hispanic Black men was 69.1 years.

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2007-2017



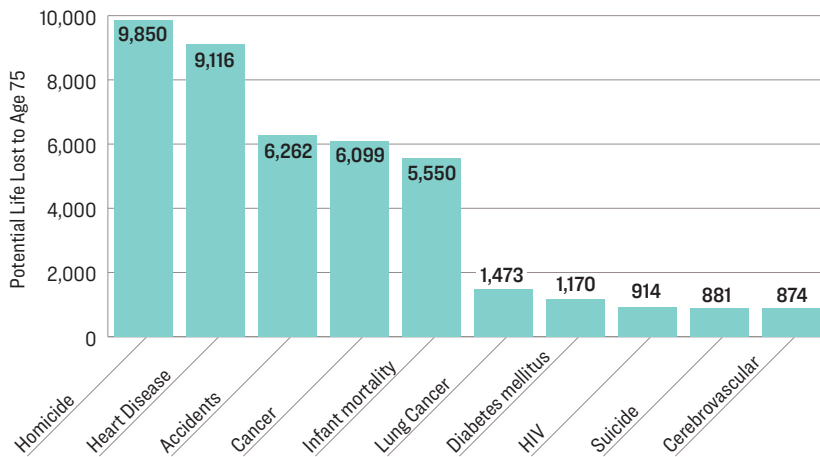
LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH AMONG BLACK MEN, 2016



Heart disease, cancer, accidents (including drug overdoses), and homicides are the leading causes of death for Black men.

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2016

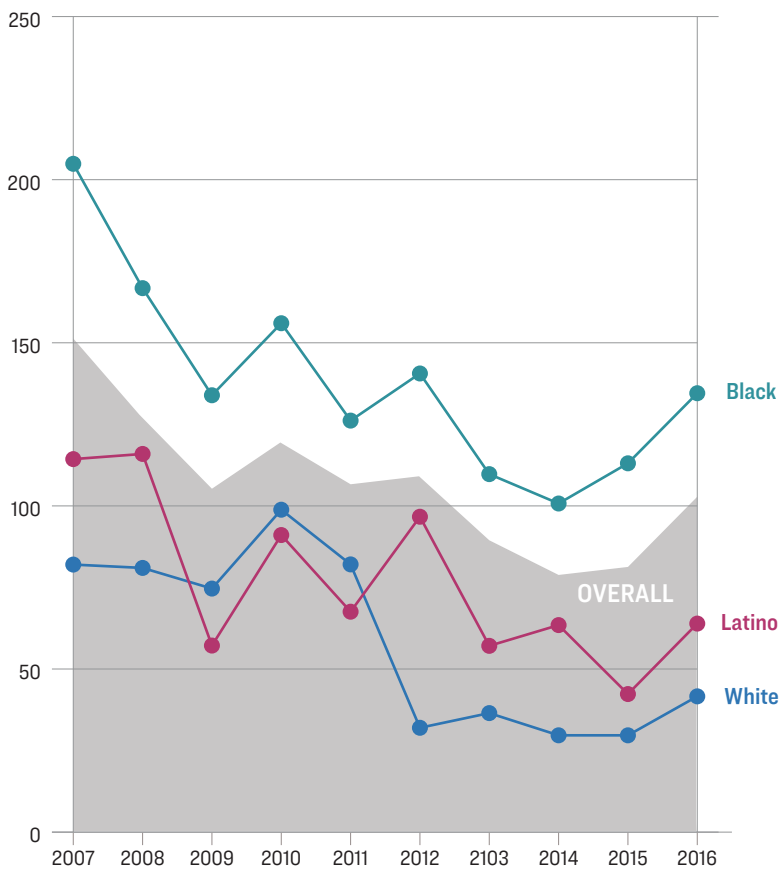
YEARS OF LIFE LOST FROM PREMATURE DEATH AMONG BLACK MEN, 2016



Homicides, early heart disease, and accidents (including drug overdoses) are the leading causes of premature death (before age 75) among Black men in Philadelphia. Many of these deaths may have been preventable, resulting in many years of potential life lost. Because homicide tends to cause death early in life, it is responsible for more years of life lost than any other cause of death.

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2016

MALE YOUTH (AGES 0-19) DEATH RATE, 2007-2016



Death among children (before age 20) should be rare. However, higher rates of infant mortality and teen homicide contribute to significantly higher death rates among Black youth compared to other groups. While death rates among youth citywide have declined over the last decade, Black youth are still more than 3 times more likely to die before age 20 than White youth.

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2007-2016





Entrepreneur | Coach | Mentor

STEVEN JACKSON, MPH

LEADERSHIP BEYOND THE GAME

Realizing that recreational activities, like basketball, can be a gateway to positive role models and mentorship for young black males, Steven Jackson, who grew up in Mt. Airy, founded a basketball and mentorship program – Leadership Beyond the Game.

The program operates primarily in Kensington and assists male youth and young adults, mostly of color, in building strong personal, academic, and professional skills beyond the game of basketball. The program provides mentors that encourage the pursuit of brighter futures through higher education and professional opportunities for employment, in addition to playing basketball at neighborhood recreational facilities.

Steven's desire to be involved in the community came from his late father, who stressed the importance of helping to uplift the community.

At 32, Steven is the founder and CEO of Jackson-Cor LLC., a company focused on helping organizations in the public and private sectors to build transformational digital relationships.

Jackson believes in the transformational power of courageous love. That is not only a business model for him, but it's a lifestyle, an approach to community engagement and basis of his personal friendships. "When I left my full-time job and started my business I knew it would be a special journey," he said. "The success of my business is important to me, and I know that success will be built on relationships. In those relationships, there is no more of a powerful force to inspire commitment and creativity than love."

Steven graduated from Germantown Academy in 2004 and received his MPH from Drexel University in 2014.

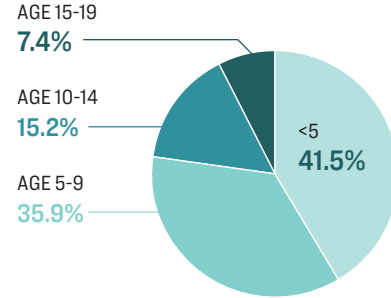
ASTHMA

Asthma is a significant problem for many children in Philadelphia and causes thousands of hospital visits each year. Children with access to appropriate medications and living in homes free of triggers that exacerbate or irritate their asthma, should not need hospital care for their asthma.¹ These hospital stays are a burden on the child and family, resulting in distress, missed school time, and work and avoidable healthcare costs.

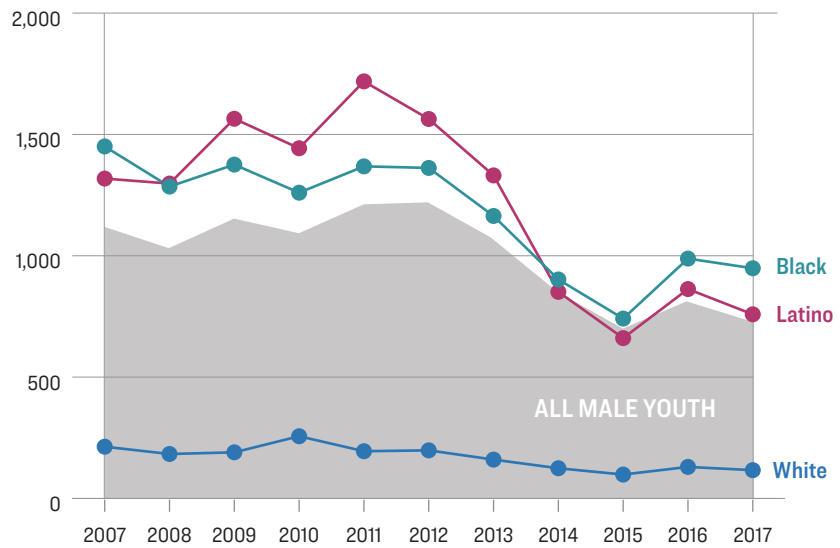
While the rate of asthma-related hospitalizations among Black boys is declining, it remains nearly 9 times higher than White boys. Hospital stays for asthma are most common in younger Black boys.

Source: Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council, 2007-2017

ASTHMA HOSPITAL STAYS FOR BLACK BOYS, 2017



ASTHMA HOSPITAL STAYS FOR BOYS (<18 YEARS), 2007-2017



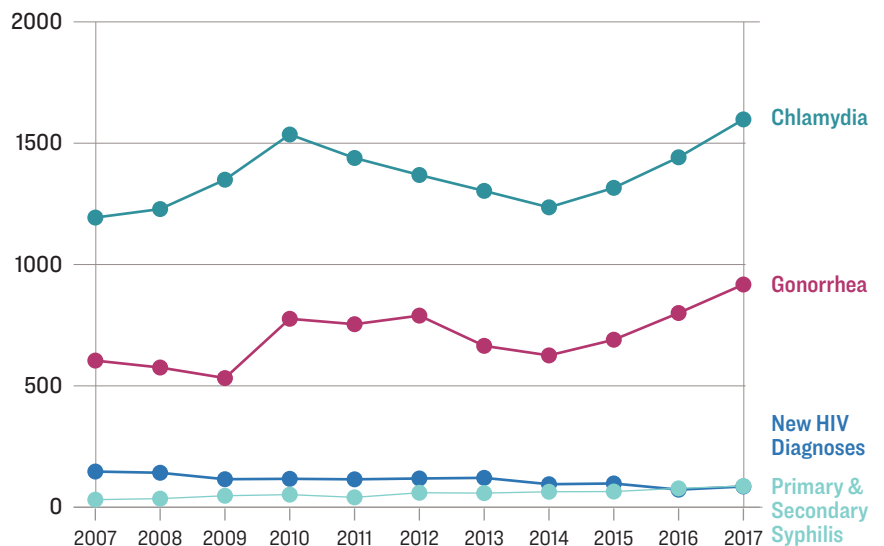
SEXUAL HEALTH

Higher rates of sexually transmitted infections persist among Black men, particularly those ages 15 to 24, compared to other groups. Rates of curable conditions like chlamydia, gonorrhea and syphilis, after improving for several years, are now rapidly rising among Black men. The resurgence of syphilis is predominantly occurring among young Black men who have sex with men (MSM).

HIV rates are declining for Black heterosexual men but remain stable among Black MSM.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2015-2017

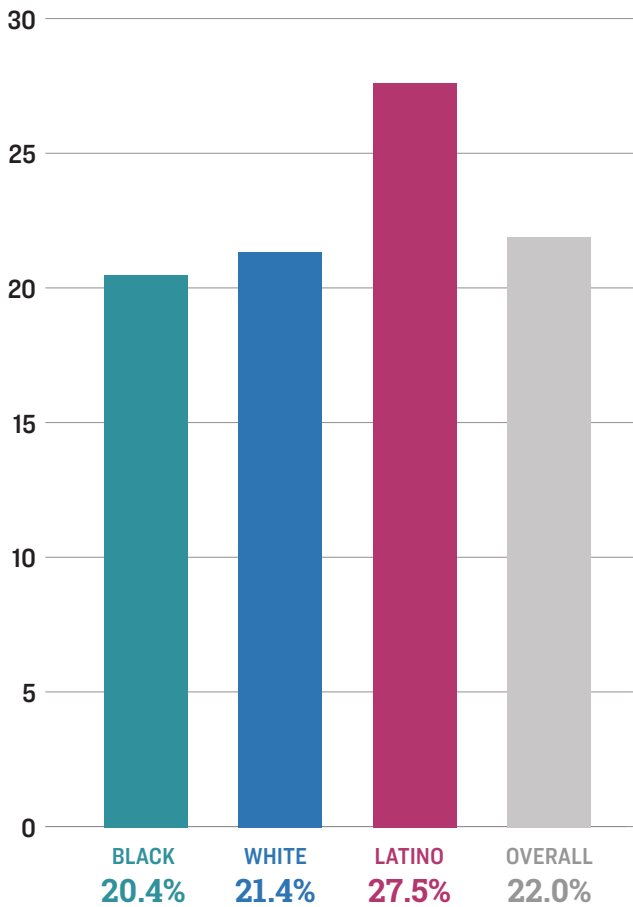
STD DIAGNOSIS RATES AMONG BLACK MALES, 2007-2017



¹ Flores Glenn, Abreu Milagros, Tomany-Korman Sandra, Meurer John. Keeping children with asthma out of hospitals: parents' and physicians' perspectives on how pediatric asthma hospitalizations can be prevented. *Pediatrics*. 2005 Oct;116(4):957-965

OBESITY

OBESITY PREVALENCE AMONG BOYS, 2016-2017



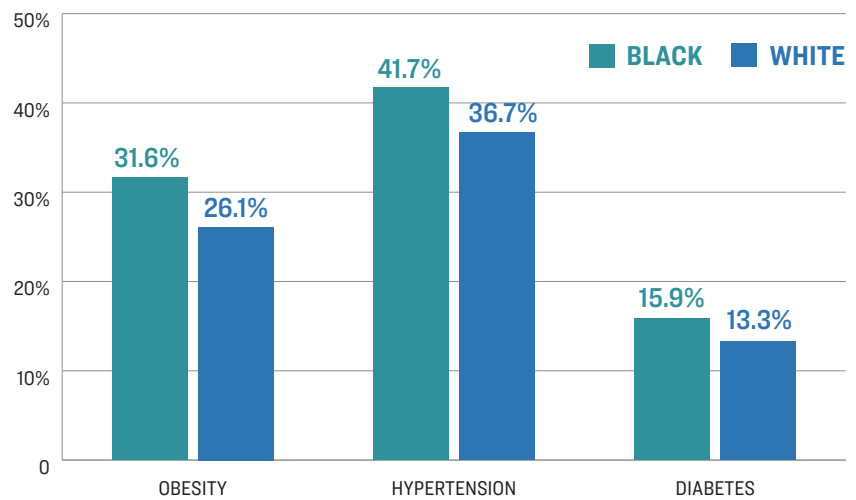
Children with obesity are at increased risk for developing asthma, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and cardiovascular disease later in life.² Childhood obesity rates in boys remain stable, with some slight improvements in younger boys. Rates have been consistently lowest in Black boys (20.4% in 2016/17) compared to other groups.

Source: School District of Philadelphia, 2006/07-2016/17

Nearly 1 in 3 Black men have obesity, putting them at risk for many chronic health conditions, including hypertension, or high blood pressure, and diabetes.³ Hypertension and diabetes rates are higher among Black men (42% and 16%, respectively). Hypertension is caused in part by lifestyle factors like diets high in sodium and low in fruits and vegetables, low levels of physical activity, and unhealthy behaviors like tobacco use and excessive alcohol consumption.⁴

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2015-2017

OBESITY, HYPERTENSION, AND DIABETES IN ADULT MALES, 2015-2017



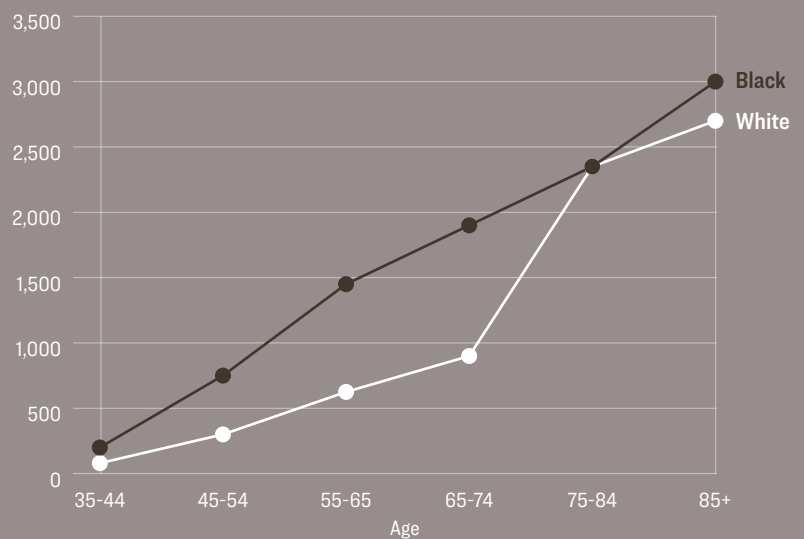
² Simmonds, M., Llewellyn, A., Owen, C. G., & Woolacott, N. (2016). Predicting adult obesity from childhood obesity: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Obesity reviews*, 17(2):95-107. ³ Chaix, B., Bean, K., Leal, C., Thomas, F., Havard, S., Evans, D., ... Pannier, B. (2010). Individual/neighborhood social factors and blood pressure in the RECORD Cohort Study: which risk factors explain the associations? *Hypertension*, 55(3), 769-775. doi:10.1161/hypertensionaha.109.143206 ⁴ Malik, V.S., Popkin, B.M., Bray, G.A., Despres, J.P., Hu, F.B. (2010). Sugar-sweetened beverages, obesity, type 2 diabetes mellitus, and cardiovascular disease risk. *Circulation*, 121(11), 1356-1364.

HYPERTENSION AND CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

Hypertension increases the risk of heart disease, congestive heart failure, kidney disease, and stroke.⁵ The high rates of hypertension among Black men contribute to the higher rates of premature heart disease death. Beyond death, hypertension-related illnesses, like stroke, are a significant source of morbidity and disability for Black men. Black men are twice as likely to be hospitalized for strokes and other cerebrovascular illnesses and this disparity starts as early as age 35. Often these acute hypertension-related events are a result of undiagnosed and/or untreated hypertension.

HOSPITALIZATIONS FOR STROKE AMONG BLACK AND WHITE MEN

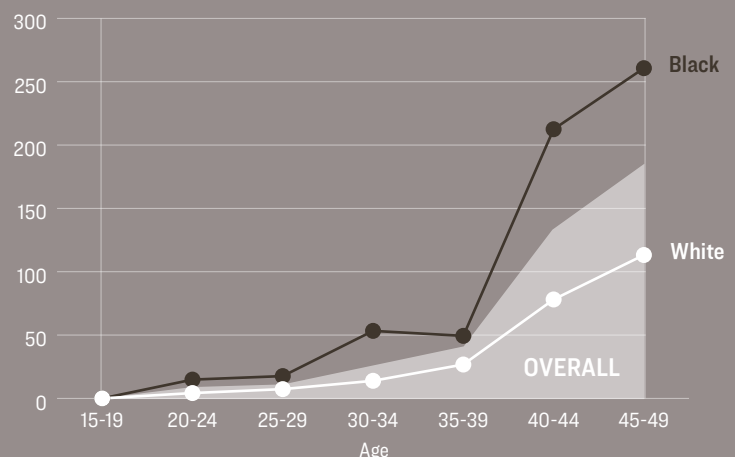
Source: Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council, 2007-2017



Similarly, Black men experience premature cardiovascular disease death at significantly higher rates and earlier ages than other groups. These differences can be seen as early as age 20.

PREMATURE CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE Mortality Rate per 100,000 Males Age 15-49, 2016

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2007-2016



⁵ High Blood Pressure Facts | cdc.gov. (2018). URL: <https://www.cdc.gov/bloodpressure/facts.htm>.

Selling hundreds of thousands of records is a big deal. So is the travel and the fancy cars. But none of that is what keeps hip hop artist Freeway up at night.

FREEWAY

Entertainer |
Community Health
Advocate



What he worried about was whether he would get the kidney transplant that he needed to save his life. In January 2019, he received a call from his physician saying that a suitable kidney had been found, that a transplant could be performed, and that he needed to get down to Baltimore as soon as possible.

A few months later, the procedure has been a success.

Now Freeway wants to take the lessons that he has learned from his health challenge and spread the word about how pervasive high blood pressure and diabetes are causing high rates of kidney failure in African American communities.

He wants his music to carry a message and a vision.

Freeway envisions a world in which everybody has access to the information and resources they need to live healthy lives. “A big part of the problem is that they don’t have the information,” he said. “When I was in school, they taught us about the important food groups and then turned around and fed us junk food in the cafeteria. When you are young, you can ball, but after that if you don’t have the money or time, it gets harder.”

The vision for this mission came after Freeway, whose real name is Leslie Pridgen, was diagnosed with high blood pressure and Type II diabetes in 2012. At first, he was able to change his diet and increase his physical activity. But over time he slipped and returned to his mostly fast food diet.

Then in 2015, Freeway was all set for the 2015 Free Fest Concert in Philadelphia. The huge event was set to feature some of the biggest names in hip hop artists. But Freeway was not feeling well. He was chronically exhausted. He was running back and forth to the bathroom.

It got so bad that friends rushed him to the hospital and doctors there determined that Freeway had kidney failure. He underwent emergency kidney dialysis and began waiting for a kidney transplant.

The experience left him determined to make a difference. With his star power, which includes hits like “Roc Da Mic” with Beanie Sigel and “What we do” with Jay-Z and Sigel, he is getting the word out about diabetes, high blood pressure and kidney failure.

“Here I was walking around with the three major contributors to kidney failure: high blood pressure, Type II diabetes and I am Black,” Freeway said.

While the topics of diabetes and high blood pressure were not openly discussed around the dinner table, the topics did come up. “I have family members that had high blood pressure and diabetes, but I wasn’t really too in tune with what it does to you and the effects that it has on the body,” he said.

Freeway said once his father became a Muslim and stopped eating pork, that set off a big, and, sometimes contentious, trans-generational debate, pitting Freeway’s grandmother’s eating habits against his father’s evolving tastes.

“That’s when I began to think about health and food in the Black community,” said Freeway. “But there was always tension around that. When I’d go by my grandma’s house, she’d say eat this and eat that, chitlins and fried food. She’d say, your dad ain’t here, so you can eat it.

“Once I grew up, I was eating everything: cheese steaks, fried food, lot of sodium, processed food, things you could just pop in the microwave. No pork because I’m a Muslim,” he said. “But it was not only what I was eating but how I was eating. I was eating it anytime of day. Being an artist I was eating that stuff 2 or 3 in the morning. I wasn’t even thinking about my health.”

While waiting for a kidney transplant, Freeway went for dialysis three days a week for a four hour procedure, which sometimes caused severe cramps. The regimen cut deep into Freeway’s work and forced him to reduce his workload.

But the legendary rapper is still in “warrior mode” and focused on health. Last June, he released a CD and a video about his health crisis, both projects titled “Think Free.” He’s done dozens of radio and social media interviews serving up a rhythmic mix of hip hop and the gospel of healthy eating and exercise.

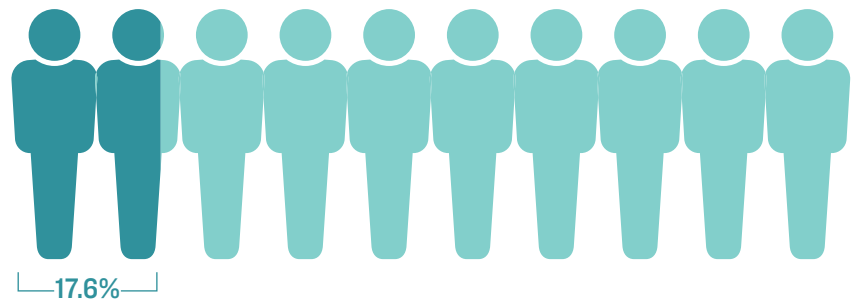
“WALKING AROUND WITH... HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, TYPE II DIABETES, AND I AM BLACK.”

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

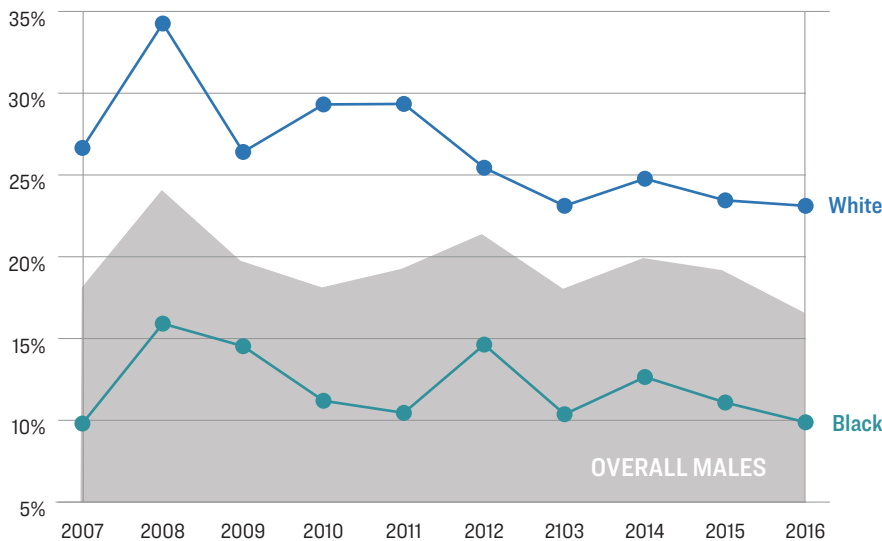
About 18 percent of men in Philadelphia have a diagnosed depressive disorder at some point in their lives. While rates are similar across groups, these figures only include individuals who have received a diagnosis of depression from a healthcare provider and are likely an underestimate of the prevalence of depressive disorders in men. Research has also shown that depression can sometimes present differently in Black men than in other groups, making diagnosis difficult and further underestimating prevalence.⁶

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2015-2017

PROPORTION OF BLACK MALES EVER DIAGNOSED WITH DEPRESSION, 2015-2017



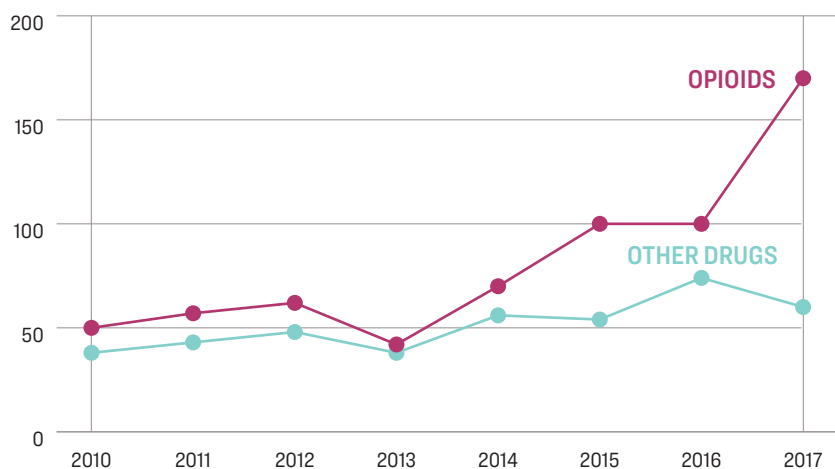
AGE-ADJUSTED SUICIDE MORTALITY RATE PER 100,00 MALES, 2007-2016



Suicide death rates are much lower among Black men compared to White men by nearly 50 percent.

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2007-2016

DRUG OVERDOSE DEATHS AMONG BLACK MEN, 2010-2017

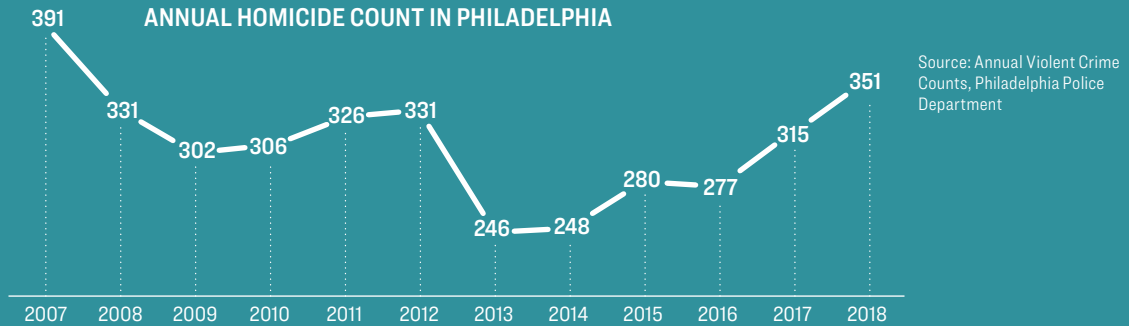


In 2013, drug overdose deaths in Philadelphia began a steep increase toward the height of the opioid epidemic. The rise in overdose deaths can be largely attributed to increased opioid dependence due to overprescribing of pharmaceutical opioids and the introduction of fentanyl, a lethal synthetic opioid, into the illicit drug market. While the epidemic is disproportionately impacting Whites and Hispanics, the rate of drug overdose deaths among Black men has doubled due to increases in opioid-related deaths.

Source: Medical Examiner's Office, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2007-2016

GUN VIOLENCE

For decades the gun violence rate in Philadelphia has been among the highest in the U.S. After declining for several years, the homicide rate is rising. There were 351 total homicides in 2018; most involved a firearm (~84 percent) and young Black men (~75 percent).

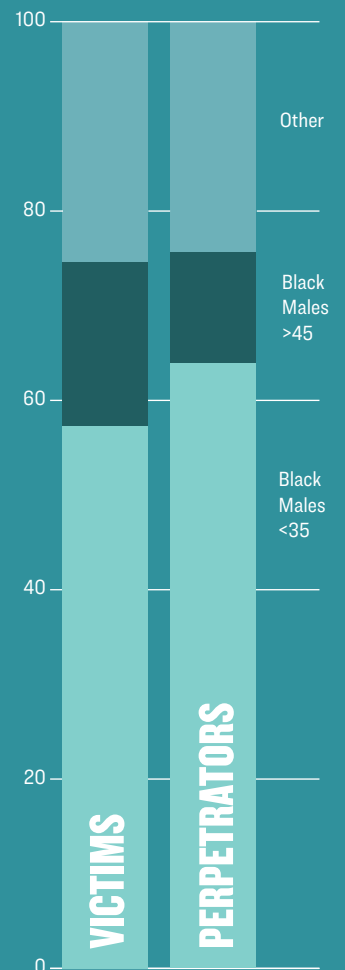


While much of the increase in recent years has been attributed to increased drug- and gang-related activity fueled by the ongoing opioid epidemic, gun violence is not a new problem for young Black men in Philadelphia. It continues to be the leading cause of death for young Black men ages 15 to 34, driving the high rates of premature death among Black men.

Most victims and perpetrators of gun violence have complex personal histories, involving substance abuse, mental health conditions, and adverse childhood experiences, and are often exposed to poor socioeconomic and environmental conditions, all of which results in extreme trauma and contributes to or mediates their involvement in community violence.

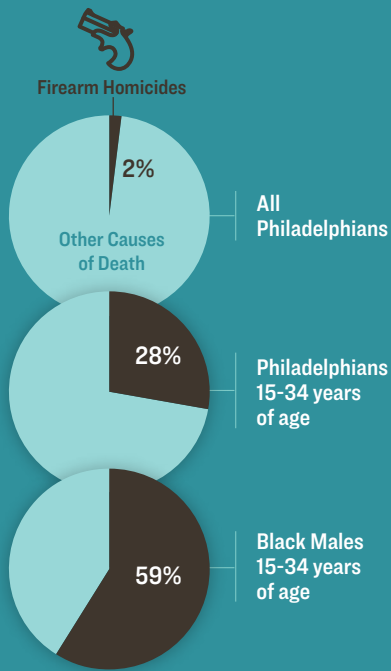
Additionally, opportunity youth, ages 16 to 24 without a high school diploma or a job, are more likely to be involved in community violence. Young Black men are nearly twice as likely to be disconnected from school and work. There are roughly 29,000 opportunity youth in Philadelphia – half of those are Black males.

SHOOTING VICTIMS & PERPETRATORS



Source: 2017 Shooting Victims and Perpetrators, Philadelphia Police Department

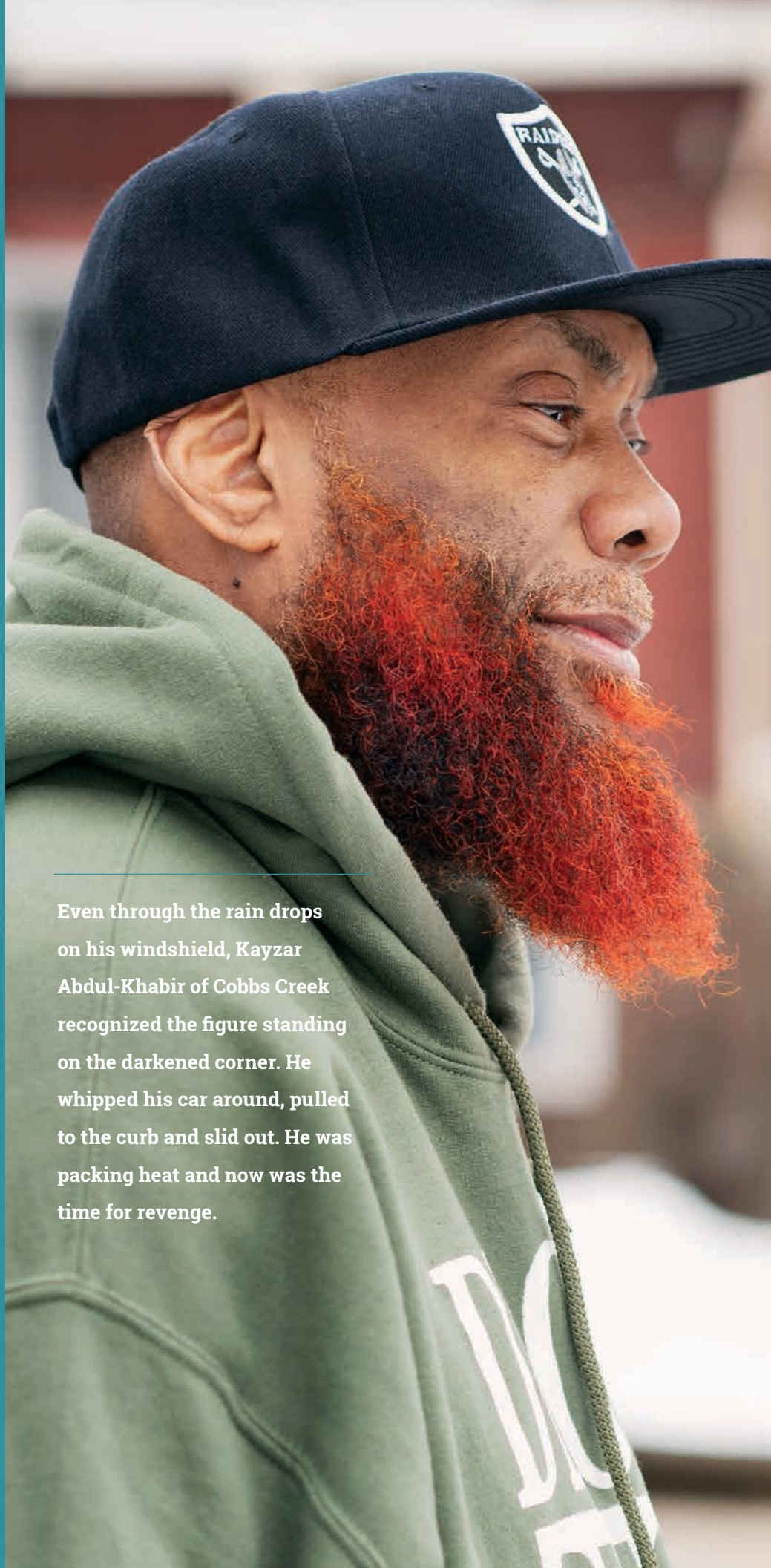
PERCENTAGE OF DEATHS FROM FIREARM HOMICIDES



Most of these homicide deaths occurred in young men. For non-Hispanic Black men in particular, firearm homicide accounted for 59% of deaths in individuals 15-34 years of age. Overall, firearm homicides occur most often in men 20-24 years of age (48.9 deaths per 100,000).

Source: Vital Statistics for Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Department of Health, 2016

Even through the rain drops on his windshield, Kayzar Abdul-Khabir of Cobbs Creek recognized the figure standing on the darkened corner. He whipped his car around, pulled to the curb and slid out. He was packing heat and now was the time for revenge.



Father | Activist | Community Outreach Worker at Sayre Health Center

KAYZAR ABDUL-KHABIR

He took his time walking down the street, wanting to surprise his target. When he finally eased upon him, the man spun around and stared at Kayzar through crazy, glassy eyes. “What you want old head?”, the young man barked.

Kayzar stared back at him. His finger was not yet on the trigger of the gun he held behind his back. He was debating whether to kill the man who had been convicted of murdering his son. One thought that raced through Kayzar’s mind stuck: the man was high on “wet”, a combination of PCP and marijuana. “If that is what he was smoking,” Kayzar thought, “I might as well let him go — he’s dead already.”

Kayzar told the man he mistook him for somebody else and turned and walked away.

“I went back to the car and I sat there and cried because I wanted to kill that kid,” Kayzar recalled. “He killed my baby. I watched my son being born. He was the first born.”

Instead of revenge, Kayzar now focuses on community activism. Kayzar had to slog through innumerable challenges and missteps before finding his passion.

Though his grandmother and other family members were active in their communities, Kayzar chose the wrong role models. “When the streets call you with illusions about the good life, it’s hard to resist,” he said. “I thought it was going to be about fancy cars, women, and the good life.”

“I guess you could say it is a story similar to Malcolm X’s,” said Kayzar referring to the late Nation of Islam spokesman who became a widely revered African American leader in the 1960s. “He went to prison and evolved.”

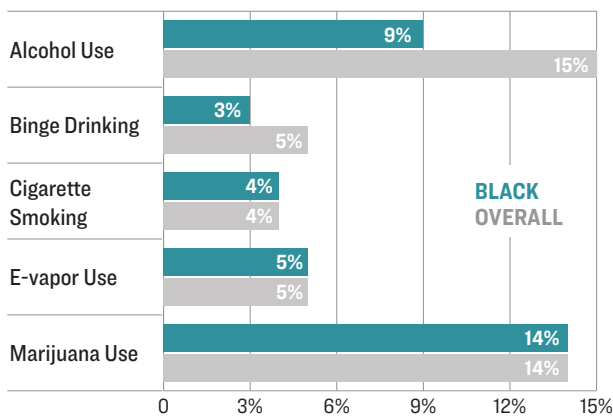
Kayzar, who works full time as an outreach worker at the Sayre Health Center, said the decisive moment in his evolution came one day when he was walking down the street in West Philadelphia and saw two men fighting. One man pulled a gun and started firing. A stray bullet wounded a man walking home from work. “That’s when I said, ‘hey look, I can do more to make our community a better place,’” Kayzar said.

Over the years, his anti-gun violence work has expanded to include helping to provide food, housing and utilities for neighbors in his Cobbs Creek neighborhood. “I’m proud of the work we do,” he said. “It has made me a better person.”

**“I CAN DO MORE TO MAKE OUR COMMUNITY
A BETTER PLACE”**

Changing health behaviors and making changes to communities to make them supportive of healthy living is one key step in improving Black men’s health outcomes. Adopting healthy behaviors can help prevent chronic health conditions such as heart disease, diabetes, and high blood pressure, which are sources of early death and morbidity for Black men. Additionally, focus on teen health behaviors is critical, as many behaviors started during this period persist into adulthood.

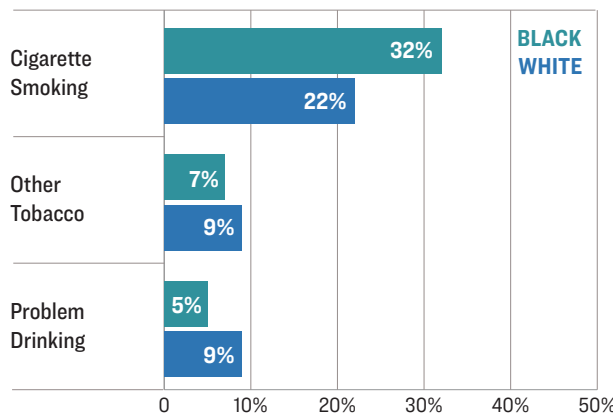
CURRENT SUBSTANCE USE PREVALENCE AMONG MALE TEENS, 2017



Citywide, fewer teen-aged Philadelphians drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes than in previous years. Black teens are less likely to use alcohol than other teens and only 4 percent smoked cigarettes in 2017. Yet, national research shows skyrocketing rates of e-vapor use among teens of all racial/ethnic groups in 2018, and multiple studies link these products with higher rates of future combustible cigarette use.⁷ Roughly 14 percent of Black teens smoke marijuana. Teens commonly smoke marijuana using tobacco blunt wraps, which are made from tobacco leaf and contain similar toxic chemicals as other tobacco products.

Source: Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS), 2017

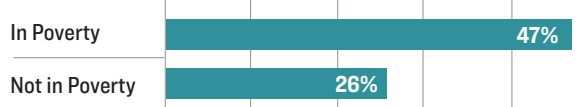
CURRENT SUBSTANCE USE PREVALENCE IN ADULT MALES, 2012-2015



More Black men smoke cigarettes than White men. These higher rates of cigarette smoking are largely related to higher rates of poverty among Black men. After accounting for income, smoking rates in Black and White men are similar. Fewer Black men engage in excessive alcohol consumption.

Source: Public Health Management Corporation (PHMC) Household Health Survey, 2012-2015

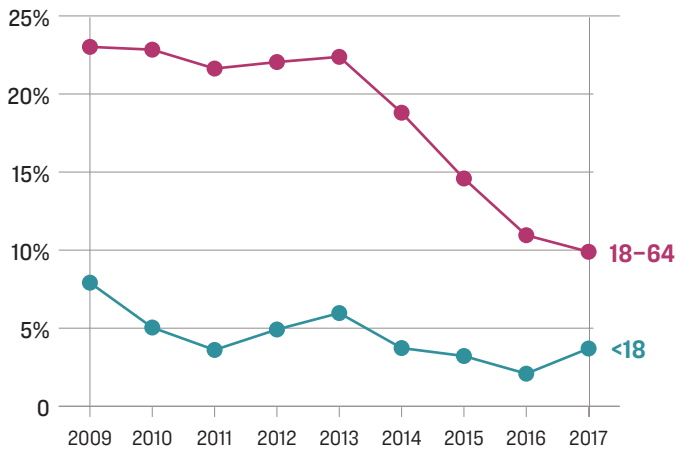
CURRENT CIGARETTE SMOKING PREVALENCE IN ADULT BLACK MALES BY POVERTY STATUS, 2012-2015



⁷ Cullen KA, Ambrose BK, Gentzke AS, Apelberg BJ, Jamal A, King BA. Notes from the Field: Use of Electronic Cigarettes and Any Tobacco Product Among Middle and High School Students — United States, 2011–2018. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2018;67:1276–1277. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6745a5>

The ability to access medical care depends on many factors including health insurance coverage, out-of-pocket costs, and the availability of providers. Providers' cultural competence and perceived trustworthiness also play a role in clinical care, particularly for Black men, though these factors can be difficult to measure. A history of discrimination in the health care system has left many Black men wary of seeking care and following recommendations from providers who are not known and trusted, which can limit access to care and worsen health outcomes. Recent research suggests, though, that Black men have better communication with and are more likely to follow recommendations from Black male physicians.⁸ But nationally, while the number of Black doctors is increasing, the proportion of Black male doctors is declining.

PERCENT OF UNINSURED BLACK RESIDENTS, BY AGE GROUP, 2009-2017



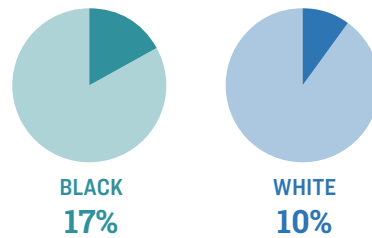
Health insurance coverage among Black Philadelphians is at an all-time high following the implementation of ACA Medicaid Expansion — 9 in 10 Black adults have health insurance. Over 96 percent of Black children have health insurance coverage.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2007-2017

While more Black men have health insurance, nearly 1 in 6 do not seek or forgo care because of cost.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2015-2017

MEN FORGOING CARE DUE TO COST, 2015-2017



⁸ Alsan M, Garrick O, Graziani GC (2018) Does diversity matter for health? Experimental evidence from Oakland. National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, MA

KAPSI ACHIEVEMENT ACADEMY



A group of African American men gave Troy Robinson a great gift before he left his North Philadelphia community to go to college.

The gift he received was his participation in the Kappa Alpha Psi Fraternity's Achievement Academy, a multifaceted mentoring, counseling and training program designed to support African American male youth from 9 to 18 years of age. The program focuses on the development of life skills and educational accomplishment. The Achievement Academy serves as a vehicle to allow students to learn about key life-related topics that are not commonly incorporated in the traditional school curriculum and fosters achievement in the classroom and in the real world. Topics include a range of issues, like time management, sex education, social justice, financial aid and college prep, and health and mental health.

"I am the second generation in my family to go to college," said Robinson. "Participating in the Achievement Academy sharpened my skills and made me more aware of the challenges young black men face. The academy had a big impact on me. I think it helped me to better understand myself as a black man."

Mentors like Troy Robinson, who graduated from Philadelphia's Science Leadership Academy, received his Bachelor of Arts in Economics from Morehouse College, and is currently working on a Master of Business Administration at Drexel University, are invaluable assets for guiding and improving the health and well-being of the next generation of Black male youth in Philadelphia.

"Coming back and giving back was one of the things I really felt passionate about," Robinson said. "While programs like this won't eliminate all the challenges that black men face, they will help counter some of the negativity."

"WHILE PROGRAMS LIKE THIS WON'T ELIMINATE ALL THE CHALLENGES THAT BLACK MEN FACE, THEY WILL HELP..."

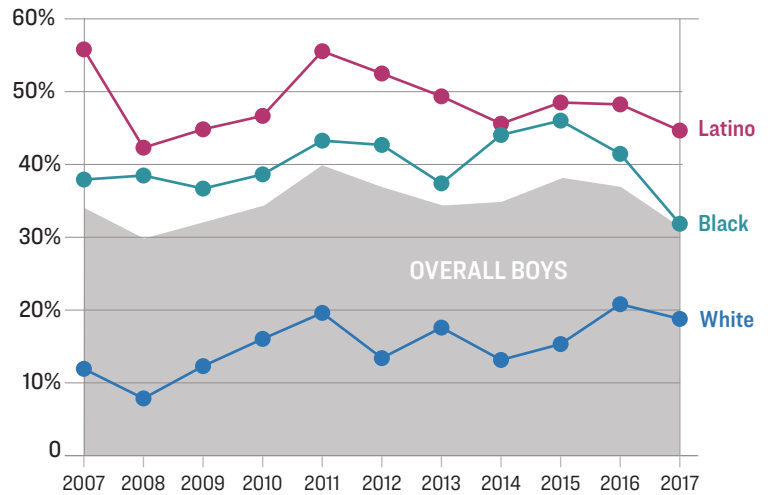
-Troy Robinson, Chair, KAPSI Achievement Academy

Social and economic determinants of health, such as education, social support, and income, have a profound effect on health and must be addressed to narrow the disparities between Black men and men of other racial/ethnic groups in Philadelphia. Social determinants of health affect health behaviors, access to care, and ultimately health outcomes, and can therefore be immense drivers of change.

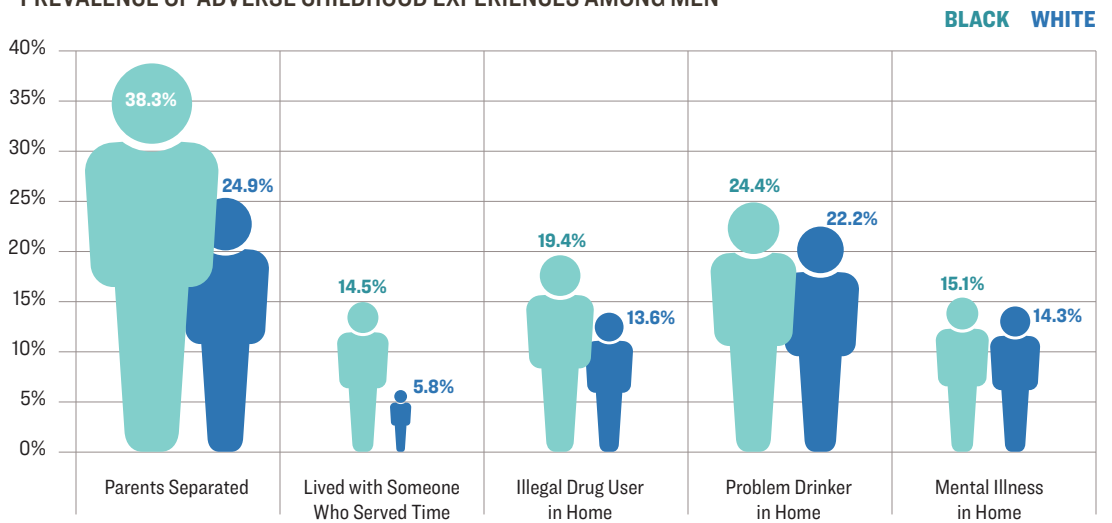
The number of Black boys living in poverty is extremely high, but starting to decline in Philadelphia. Nearly 1 in 3 Black boys live in poverty — significantly more than White boys, but much less than Latino boys.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2007-2017

PERCENT OF BOYS IN POVERTY, 2007-2017



PREVALENCE OF ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES AMONG MEN



Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) are circumstances in childhood that can result in trauma and poorer health outcomes later in life. Many ACEs are correlated with poverty. Black boys are more likely to experience ACEs compared to White boys – particularly living in single parent households or having an incarcerated parent.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2016

AKIL CHIONESU

Social Worker |
Community
Advocate

Akil Chionesu, now 65 and living in the Northeast, was raised by his mother and grandmother, both of whom worked in the laundry shop at the Valley Forge Military Academy.

His mother was a teenager when she gave birth to him. His father was not involved in his life. With this backdrop, Chionesu devoted his career in public service to helping and supporting families, many of color, navigate complex social, economic, and health circumstances.

Since retiring as a Casework Supervisor at the Department of Human Services, Chionesu remains just as committed to serving his community. He spends a lot of his time tutoring people preparing for the Graduate Equivalence Diploma (GED) Test and teaching classes at the Pan-African Studies Community Education Program, a low-cost, non-credit continuing education service sponsored by Temple University. Chionesu believes in the value of community service and “[doesn’t] think of it as giving back, it’s more about fighting back and building our own institutions that will support us.” He is also involved in several other community organizations including The Frator Heru Institute, The Black Male Development Symposium, and regularly supports events hosted by the Mayor’s Office on Black Male Engagement

“I’m a logical thinker,” Chionesu said. “I know that black men are up against a complex set of systems deliberately designed to keep us down... Our self-image is constantly under attack...We must create our own value system.” he said.

Chionesu believes Black men have the greatest opportunity to influence and shape the trajectory of Black boys in Philadelphia. He says, “As Black men we need to stop shaking our heads when we read or hear about our children acting up and become involved in their lives and give positive direction.”

As a social worker, Chionesu experienced first-hand that, particularly for Black men, maintaining good health is challenged by “health conditions like high blood pressure and diabetes, mental health, stress, and men’s tendency to not seek or trust health care.” Chionesu said “sometimes those challenges seem insurmountable, but community engagement and service are key to making progress forward. [Black men] can’t wait for help from outside our community. Our only choice is to get involved at all levels.”

“...BLACK MEN ARE UP AGAINST A COMPLEX SET OF SYSTEMS DELIBERATELY DESIGNED TO KEEP US DOWN.”



REVEREND LEROY MILES

Faith Leader

Philadelphia's Black neighborhoods draw people from across the state and nation. While the geography of origin may differ, most of those Black communities that people leave look very similar to Black neighborhoods across Philadelphia.

LeRoy Miles came to the City from Aliquippa, a tiny, still shrinking town in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. Most of the Black residents found their way to Aliquippa to escape brutal, Southern Jim Crow and in pursuit of jobs, schools and housing.

But the change of location did not lift his burdens. The baggage of anger, frustration and disappointment came with the family. Miles watched his father trudge off to a dead-end job in the morning and try to drown himself in liquor at night. It killed him. His brother's life ended in an alcohol- fueled single car accident.

While trying to find his course in life, Miles promised himself that he would try to help others by taking on the complex social and economic forces that deformed the lives of so many others he knew, especially Black men. He now serves as Associate Pastor of Counseling and Pastoral Care at Enon Tabernacle Baptist Church, one of the city's largest and most active congregations. With its 15,000 members, the church has become well-known for its community engagement.

Rev. Miles is also responsible for the church's Brother's Keepers initiative, which operates like a Sunday school for men, giving them an opportunity to voice their frustrations and discuss and envision solutions to the challenges they face.

"Even though my father could not read, he stressed education," Miles said as he explained his commitment to working with Brother's Keepers. "When he dressed to go to the steel mill, I remember him telling me, 'You don't want this.'"

"He never told me what I should want. He just said go to school and make something of yourself," Miles said. "He died in my senior year in high school, and in my freshmen year in college I wanted to drop out. I remember my mother saying, 'the best thing you can do for your father and me is stay in school' and that is what I did."

Miles said one of Enon's aims is to help people to understand and control the narratives that shape their lives. That is one of the purposes of the church's Men of Iron group, which focuses on financial, social, spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental well-being. Miles also leads Enon's Know Your Numbers event, an annual summit focused on the health of Black men and boys. The summit, which attracts hundreds of Black males of all ages from around the City, provides access to health education, on-site screenings and preventive care, and other health resources.



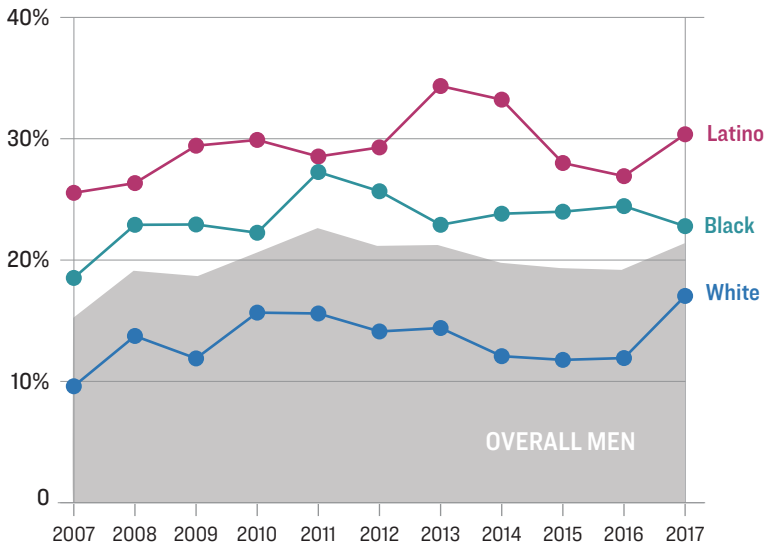
**“THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO...
IS STAY IN SCHOOL.”**

POVERTY AND UNEMPLOYMENT

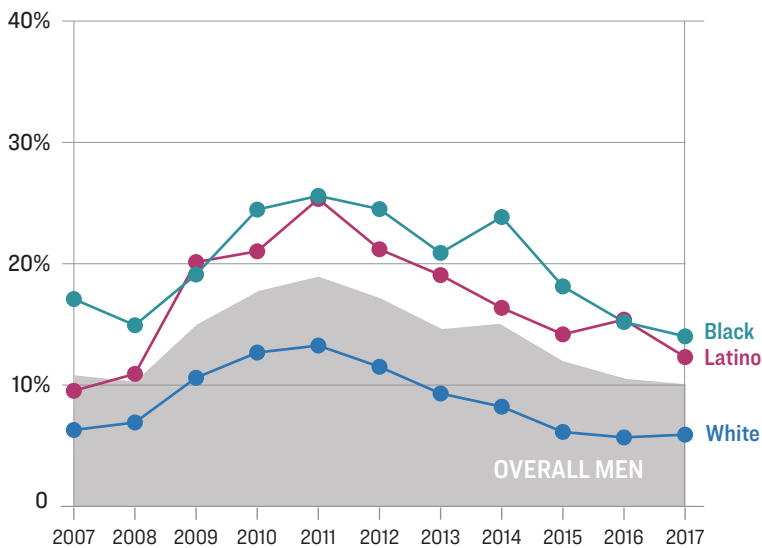
Poverty and unemployment rates among Black men have been declining since 2011, following the Great Recession. The poverty gap between Black and White men is closing, but this is mostly driven by increasing poverty among White men, likely related to the opioid epidemic. Of note, unemployment rates among Black and Latino men remain 2 times higher than White men.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2007-2017

POVERTY AMONG MEN >17 YEARS, 2007-2017



UNEMPLOYMENT AMONG MEN >15 YEARS, 2007-2017

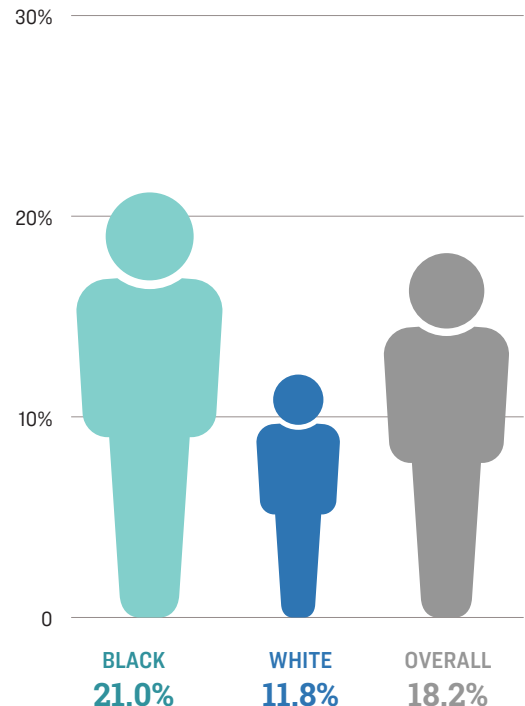


NUTRITION

Adequate nutrition and safe housing are key determinants of health. Food and housing insecurity are significant concerns for men who are not employed and/or living in poverty. More than 1 in 5 Black men routinely skip meals due to the lack of money.

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2012

MEN WHO HAVE SKIPPED MEALS DUE TO MONEY, 2012

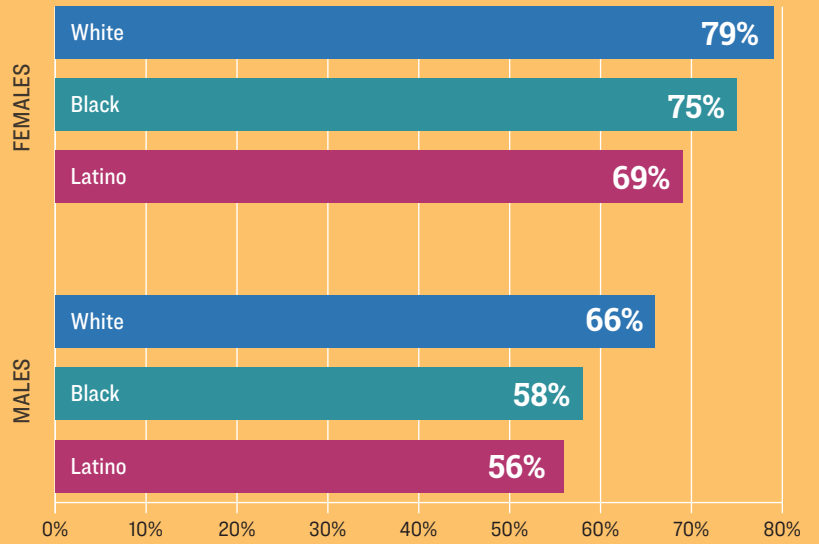


Educational attainment is a key component to reducing poverty and unemployment.

Graduation rates among public school students in Philadelphia continue to improve overall — but Black boys fare worse than many of their peers with only 58% completing high school on-time.⁹

Source: School District of Philadelphia

ON-TIME PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION, 2014-2015 COHORT

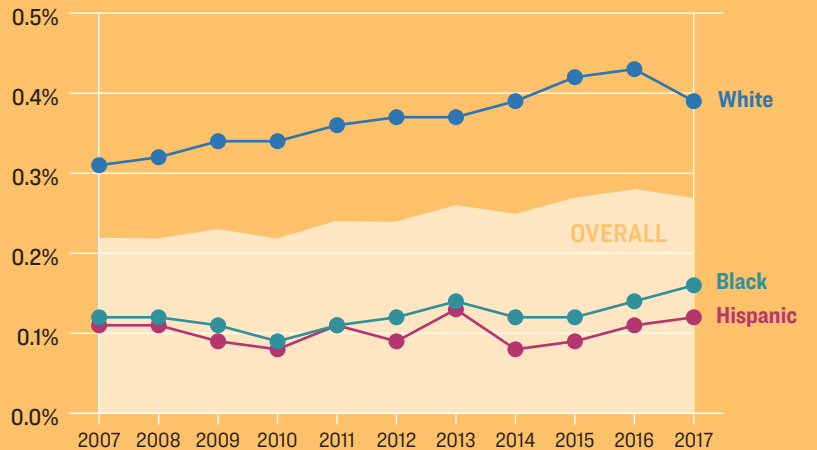


Fortunately, educational attainment for Black men is showing signs of progress.

More Black men are completing college or graduate degrees than in years past — 20 percent more over the last decade.

Source: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 1-year estimates, 2007-2017

MEN (>24 YEARS) WITH BACHELOR'S OR GRADUATE/ PROFESSIONAL DEGREE, 2007-2017



⁹ District Focus Series: Anchor Goal 1 - Graduation Rates for First Time 9th Grade Students in 2014-2015 and Matriculation Rates for 2018 Graduates



SHARIF

Sharif El-Mekki's parents had high hopes for him and their radical dreams.

EL-MEKKI

Principal | Founder,
The Fellowship: Black Male Educators for Social Justice

They sent their son to a freedom school that sacked the traditional curriculum for an academic approach designed to instill pride, resilience and a long-haul commitment to the struggle for justice for Black Americans and other poor and marginalized people.

This experience inspired El-Mekki to become a committed educator and co-founder of The Fellowship: Black Male Educators for Social Justice. Today, roughly 27 percent of students in the School District of Philadelphia are Black male youth and only about 4 percent of all teachers are Black men. The Fellowship is a professional membership and activist organization seeking to change this paradigm by advancing the recruitment, development, and retention of Black male educators in Philadelphia. The organization’s mission is to triple the number of Black male teachers in the Philadelphia School District by 2025.

El-Mekki credits the freedom school he attended with providing him the skills he needed to navigate the many challenges he faced as a Black man, including being a victim of gun violence when he was in high school. “Even as I close in on 50 years old,” he said. “I still think of the lessons I learned there.” Beyond the academic and life lessons learned, “it was a school where Black identity was affirmed,” he said. “The teachers wanted to create a safe space culturally, emotionally and intellectually. I still remember my teachers and I just love them deeply.” Ensuring Black male youth in Philadelphia have an opportunity to have this type of connection with teachers that look like themselves is the driving force behind The Fellowship.

A graduate of Indiana University of Pennsylvania, El-Mekki received his undergraduate degree in criminal justice from Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He later found out about an initiative jointly sponsored by the City of Philadelphia, Concerned Black Men and Cheyney University designed to recruit Black men into the teaching profession. El-Mekki went on to become an eighth-grade social studies teacher at Turner Middle school, eventually obtaining his current role as Principal at Mastery Charter High School.

“[THE] MISSION IS TO TRIPLE THE NUMBER OF BLACK MALE TEACHERS IN THE PHILADELPHIA SCHOOL DISTRICT BY 2025.”

STRUCTURAL & SOCIETAL DETERMINANTS

5

Structural and societal factors underlie much health-related behavior and health. While making changes to these factors can be a difficult process, the potential impact to the health of Black men and boys make the efforts essential.



JUSTICE INVOLVEMENT

Historically, relationships between Black men and law enforcement have been fraught with mistrust and tension. In Philadelphia and many cities around the country, policing practices like stop-and-frisk and inappropriate racial profiling have added further pressure to these relationships. Police stops among Black men are down more than 21 percent since 2015. Yet, Black men are still involved in about 3.5 times more police stops than men of other racial/ethnic groups.

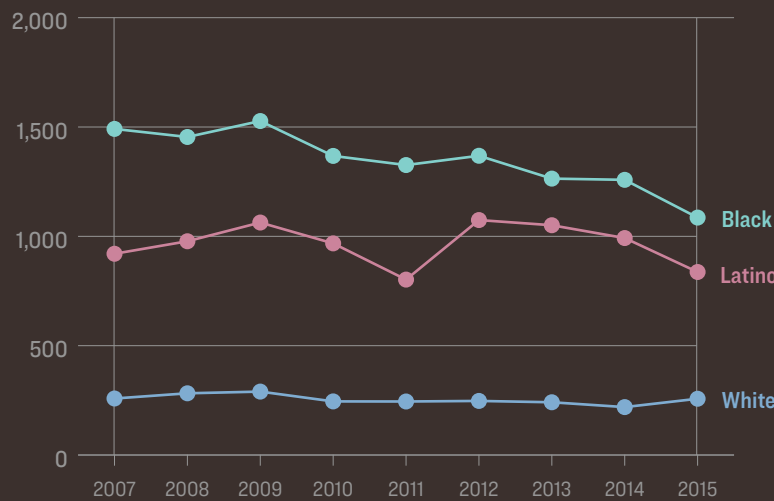
POLICE STOPS

2015

25%
REDUCTION

2018

INCARCERATION (AGE 15-64), 2007-2015



Incarceration rates for Black adults, particularly men, are declining — down over 27 percent. Criminal justice reforms to prevent excessive and inappropriate bail and sentencing practices are a key contributor to these improvements. Yet, there are still 4 times as many Blacks in jail, and 90% of those are Black men.

Source: Vera Institute of Justice, 2007-2015

Research has shown that incarceration temporarily improves the health outcomes of Black men, likely due to increased access to medical care and less risk of death from homicide and injuries. However, incarceration can also increase depression, and individuals re-entering society after incarceration frequently experience barriers to finding employment and accessing medical care and social services. Death rates following incarceration are more than 3 times as high as those in the general population and more than 10 times as high during the 2 weeks after incarceration. Having an incarcerated parent is also considered an adverse childhood experience and can affect health outcomes throughout life.

JOHN

At the age of 17, John Thompson was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

THOMPSON

Despite the severity of this sentence, at that time Thompson says, “the bottom fell out of my stomach, but I didn’t really understand what it meant or take it seriously.”

The path that led Thompson to prison was filled with many problems, starting with the loss of his father, his idol and role model, just after he turned 13. During the years prior to his incarceration, there was little he took seriously besides partying with his buddies, his part-time job at an auto shop, and small-time hustle selling marijuana.

He often skipped classes at Olney High School and eventually dropped out completely at the 11th grade. While enrolled in high school classes, Thompson could not read or write. His lack of literacy was his secret alone. His teachers didn’t know, and it got by his parents, too. It was a shame that he held as tight as his fists.

He eventually quit his part-time job to hustle full-time. He went from selling weed to selling meth. He stole racks of leather and cashmere coats from department stores, burglarized homes, and carried a gun in his waistband. Beyond these crimes there was violence. Thompson reflected “being in that world, running with the rough crowd, you find a way to navigate. I got along with most people, but in that environment, you had to know how to become aggressive and that sometimes meant violence. You didn’t need to be literate.”

That put him on the path to doom and incarceration. While incarcerated, Thompson found another way. He learned new people and professional skills and became a “better person”. A 2012 U.S. Supreme Court struck down a law permitting juveniles to be sentenced to life without parole, and opened a legal path for an appeal that set Thompson free.

Now Thompson spends his days working with The Center for Returning Citizens. The center helps returning citizens in the transition from incarceration to society by providing job training, housing assistance, counseling services, legal aid, and referrals. The group advocates for individuals, families and communities dealing with the trauma of mass incarceration.

“ ...A 2012 U.S. SUPREME COURT DECISION... OPENED A PATH.”

What is and can be done to improve the health and well-being of Black men and boys in Philadelphia?



PROVIDE A HEALTHY START

STRENGTHEN EDUCATION

ENSURE ACCESS

PROMOTE HEALTHY LIVING

REDUCE DETERRENTS

DECREASE VIOLENCE

COMBAT RACISM

Some key strategies that public and private stakeholders should pursue:

- Giving every Black boy a healthy start – including access to preventive health services, like immunizations and early intervention; educational opportunities, like PHLpre-K; a safe and healthy living space; and family and social supports.
- Strengthening the educational safety net for young Black men to accelerate growth in educational and economic attainment, including connecting disconnected young Black men to educational and employment opportunities.
- Ensuring access to affordable physical and behavioral (including substance use treatment) health care from trusted providers in communities where Black men and boys live.
- Creating public health campaigns and initiatives that promote the use of primary care, preventive services and healthy behaviors among Black men and boys.
- Developing policies and programs that focus on reducing environmental deterrents to healthy living, like neighborhood saturation with unhealthy food, excess density of tobacco and alcohol outlets, predatory marketing of harmful products, and unusable recreational spaces.
- Implementing comprehensive violence reduction strategies that address individual, community, and environmental contributors.
- Combating structural violence and racism through policies and programs that reduce systemic bias and address inequities in environmental conditions in low-income communities, and social action to raise awareness and advocacy for these efforts.

In the last few years, the City of Philadelphia has developed new and expanded several existing initiatives that, while not all exclusively serving Black men and boys, are improving their health and well-being. These include:

IMPROVING HEALTH



A Running Start – Health

A Running Start – Health launched in 2017 to coordinate City agencies, healthcare providers, nonprofits, philanthropy, business, and others to improve children’s health in Philadelphia. The initiative focuses on 10 critical interventions to reduce 8 key risks to prevent 7 adverse outcomes for children. Launched in July 2017, A Running Start – Health is governed by a Steering Committee of 13 organizations representing the City government, local nonprofits, and philanthropy.

For more information, visit: <http://runningstarthealth.phila.gov/>



Engaging Males of Color

Engaging Males of Color (EMOC) is a targeted initiative designed to address the impact of health, economic, and educational disparities experienced by males of color. The DBHIDS EMOC Committee is made up of a culturally diverse group of men of all ages working in collaboration with community members, academic advisers and system partners to achieve its Vision and Mission. This initiative seeks to promote an enhanced awareness of the behavioral health challenges experienced by males of color across Philadelphia. EMOC’s goal is to improve the health status of males of color by increasing behavioral health literacy and access to resources and services, while reducing stigma and known disparities and building system capacity, in order to sustain wellness.

For more information, visit: <https://dbhids.org/emocphilly>

If you have a mental health emergency, please call the Suicide and Crisis Intervention Hotline at 215-686-4420.

For help with substance use, please contact Behavioral Health Special Initiative (BHSI) at 215-546-1200, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

For non-urgent mental health needs, please call 1-888-545-2600.

To learn about Mental Health First Aid certification, visit <https://healthymindsphilly.org>



City of Philadelphia Health Centers

City health centers, operated by the Department of Public Health, provide comprehensive primary care services to residents with and without health insurance. They accept most insurance options and if you are uninsured, the centers will also help you apply for affordable health insurance. The health centers provide translation and interpretation services for health center patients and their families.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/services/mental-physical-health/city-health-centers/>

To find a health center near your community, call 3-1-1 or visit <http://phl.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Viewer/index.html?appid=6e4688c9e7ad403498dcf184ea758bef>.



Get Healthy Philly

Get Healthy Philly is dedicated to helping Philadelphians enjoy long and productive lives free from disease, disability, and premature death. The program’s vision is a smoke-free city where healthy eating and active living are easy choices for all residents. Many Philadelphians live in environments that make unhealthy choices the default. Get Healthy Philly works to change policies, systems, and environments and seeks to make healthy eating and active, smoke-free living the norm for all of Philadelphia’s communities.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/programs/get-healthy-philly/>

To learn about healthy food initiatives in your community, visit: <http://foodfitphilly.org/>

To learn about fitness and exercise events in your community, visit: <http://phillypowered.org/>

INCREASING ECONOMIC AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY



A Running Start Philadelphia

A Running Start Philadelphia is the city's early learning plan to provide our children with the best possible beginnings in life. Early learning is a critical piece to avoid passing on the crippling legacy of poverty to a new generation. The plan is designed to meet a two-pronged challenge: (1) ensure the early learning services that currently exist in child care centers and in homes are of the highest quality, and (2) expand opportunities so the majority of Philadelphia's families with young children can benefit. The initiative creates a public-private organization to coordinate with all stakeholders, including parents and caregivers; more than 3,000 licensed child care providers; early childhood funders; local, state, and federal agencies; advocacy groups; philanthropic organizations; businesses leaders; and providers of technical assistance and professional development.

For more information, visit: www.sharedprosperityphila.org/our-initiatives/a-running-start/

Community Schools Initiative

Community Schools are public schools where a full-time coordinator works with the entire school community — students, parents, teachers, administrators, service providers, and neighbors — to identify the community's most pressing needs, such as expanded medical services, after-school programming, and job training. The coordinator then works with service providers and City agencies to bring these targeted resources directly into the school. Over the next five years, the City will invest nearly \$40 million to transform 20 existing public schools into community schools. Successful community schools leverage public, private, and philanthropic resources to help schools become neighborhood centers, improving access to programs and services for students, families, and neighbors.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/programs/community-schools/>

TODAY'S CHOICE. TOMORROW'S GRADUATE.

PHLpreK

PHLpreK is the City of Philadelphia's free, quality pre-K program. Since January 2017 almost 4,000 students and families have participated in PHLpreK. PHLpreK currently funds 2,250 seats in 80+ pre-K locations across Philadelphia. PHLpreK is funded by the Philadelphia Beverage Tax. Mayor Kenney's plan is to create 5,500 new locally-funded, quality pre-K seats in Philadelphia. To achieve this, the program is partnering with dozens of early childhood education providers, including the School District of Philadelphia.

For more information, visit: <http://www.phlprek.org/>

To find a pre-K or quality child care program for you kids age birth to 5, call 1-844-PHL-PREK



Shared Prosperity

Shared Prosperity is Philadelphia's comprehensive strategy to lift residents and communities out of poverty and increase opportunities for low-income individuals and families. The Office of Community Empowerment and Opportunity (CEO), Philadelphia's Community Action Agency, serves as the backbone agency for this collective impact effort. CEO convenes stakeholders from the government, philanthropy, academia, business and resident communities to achieve a common understanding of poverty in Philadelphia and everyone's role in the solution. As a part of this initiative, CEO and partners have BenePhilly centers in existing community sites that employ staff familiar with neighborhood culture and language to offer consistent, customized access to benefits and resources using a single application.

For more information, visit: www.sharedprosperityphila.org/

To learn more about BenePhilly Centers or apply today call 1-844-848-4376 or visit www.sharedprosperityphila.org/our-initiatives/benephilly/



West Philadelphia Promise Zone

The West Philadelphia Promise Zone aims to reduce poverty and bring greater opportunity to people living and working in West Philadelphia. The initiative helps organizations work together to connect residents to high quality education, well-paying jobs, affordable housing, health services, and safe, economically healthy places to live. The West Philadelphia Promise Zone helps existing organizations work together to increase opportunities for residents living, working, and going to school within its boundaries

For more information, visit: www.sharedprosperityphila.org/our-initiatives/promise-zone/

REDUCING STRUCTURAL AND COMMUNITY VIOLENCE

My Brother's Keeper

My Brother's Keeper (MBK) Philly empowers Philadelphians to dismantle systems of inequality. The goal is to close opportunity gaps for boys and young men of color and create measurable change for youth. This program is part of the MBK Alliance, a nonprofit managed by the Obama Foundation. An important offering of MBK Philly is the Community Conversations Initiative (CCI), a monthly forum for community members and leaders. Attendees discuss challenges, opportunities, and solutions to address the inequities that impact men and boys of color in Philadelphia.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/programs/my-brothers-keeper-philly/>



Philadelphia Resilience Project

In October 2018, Mayor Jim Kenney signed an executive order to combat the opioid crisis. This order activated 35 City offices for a joint emergency response to the epidemic. The Philadelphia Resilience Project focuses on the most pressing needs and critical neighborhoods, including Kensington and surrounding areas. The project's seven key mission areas are: clearing major encampments, reducing criminal activity, reducing the number of unsheltered individuals, reducing trash and litter, reducing overdoses and the spread of infectious diseases, increasing treatment options and mobilizing community resources. The Philadelphia Resilience Project has made significant progress on its immediate and short-term goals; the coordinated emergency response will run at least through June 2019.



Philadelphia Roadmap to Safer Communities

In response to the Mayor Kenney's urgent Call to Action, City leadership developed and is implementing a comprehensive strategy for gun violence prevention and to reduce the rising gun violence rates, entitled *The Philadelphia Roadmap to Safer Communities*. This plan takes a public health approach to violence reduction that uses science and data to better understand the problem and address underlying drivers of violence (e.g. poverty, blight, disconnected youth), increases technology and analytic capacity of law enforcement agencies, and establishes new infrastructure for engaging returning citizens. The plan includes strategies to connect youth and families to resources, strengthen community engagement and partnerships, increase coordination among city services and agencies around violence reduction, and to make communities safer and healthier.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/documents/the-philadelphia-roadmap-to-safer-communities/>

To learn more about some violence reduction programs for youth, call: 215-940-0550.

Rebuild

There are more than 400 neighborhood parks, recreation centers, and libraries in Philadelphia. However, about 90 percent of these places are in need of investment. Made possible by the Philadelphia Beverage Tax, Rebuild is investing hundreds of millions of dollars in improving community facilities. Through its projects, Rebuild will make physical improvements to parks, recreation centers, and libraries; promote diversity and economic inclusion by supporting minorities and women who work (or want to work) in the design and construction industries; and engage with community members to leverage their knowledge, power, and expertise, using community feedback to inform the improvements that are made to facilities.

For more information, visit: <https://www.phila.gov/programs/rebuild/>



The Mayor's Commission on African-American Males (MCAAM) was established to assist the City in addressing the myriad issues faced by Black men and boys. In 1991, a group of African American men met once a month to discuss issues affecting the Black community, specifically Black men. Out of these discussions Mayor W. Wilson Goode, Sr. was presented with the recommendation to create a Commission on African American Men. In December 1991, Mayor Goode signed the Executive Order establishing the MCAAM, but it would not be instituted for nearly 20 years. In 2010, a group of Black men, under the leadership of the Father's Day Rally Committee, developed a ten-year plan called "The Agenda" (a cooperative approach towards addressing critical issues among Black Men in Philadelphia). In 2011, the Executive Order for MCAAM to be re-established was signed by Mayor Michael Nutter. Today, MCAAM actively encourages, supports and advocates for the development and implementation of policies, programs and practices specifically intended to improve conditions affecting the well-being of Black men and boys in Philadelphia. The Commission operationalizes its efforts through four committees: Economic Development, Education, Health & Wellness, and Social Justice.



In 2016, Mayor Kenney established the Mayor's Office of Black Male Engagement (OBME) as a part of the Office of Public Engagement. OBME works to close the opportunity divide for men and boys of color. OBME listens to and is voice for communities and advocates for the reduction of economic and social disparities that affect them. OBME supports the efforts of the MCAAM as well as coordinates the Obama Foundation's My Brother's Keeper Initiative in Philadelphia, a program that aims to dismantle systems of inequality.



The Philadelphia Department of Public Health (PDPH) promotes and protects the health of all Philadelphians and provides a safety net for the most vulnerable. The agency leads programs to prevent communicable diseases; prevent chronic diseases and promote healthy behaviors; prevent environmental health risks; investigate outbreaks of disease; respond to public health emergencies; and promote the health of women, children, and families. In addition, the department operates the eight City Health Centers that provide primary care to more than 80,000 Philadelphians. PDPH has been on the vanguard of public health, proposing policy solutions to problems like smoking and obesity, and intends to continue that tradition with creative solutions to both long-standing urban health problems and new crises.

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Mayor's Office of Public Engagement

Ajeenah Amir, MS
Director

Octavius Blount, MSW
Coordinator, Mayor's Office
of Black Male Engagement

Dwayne Wharton, MEd
Vice-Chair, Mayor's Commission
on African American Males

Philadelphia Department of Public Health

Cheryl Bettigole, MD, MPH
Director, Division of Chronic Disease
and Injury Prevention

Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Health Commissioner

Terry Johnson
Communications, Division of Chronic
Disease and Injury Prevention

Xavier Lofton
Health Justice Fellow, Division of
Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention

Alison Roberts
Urban Health Policy Fellow

Raynard Washington, PhD
Chief Epidemiologist

Jessica Whitley, MPH
Epidemiologist

Design: Maskar Design, Philadelphia