


# Disrupting Dehumanization of COVID-19 on Communities of Color



---

## Leaders Speak Out

Howard C. Stevenson, Ph.D.

Constance E Clayton Professor of Urban Education

Racial Empowerment Collaborative

University of Pennsylvania

# What is a Healthy Village?

*It takes a village to raise a child,  
but what does it take to create healthy villages?*

Healthy villages are nourishing ecosystems of loving, sheltering, and accountable relationships that enable boys and young men of color to ***heal, grow and thrive.***

# Dehumanization

- persistent invalidation of characteristic (Haslem, 2006):
  - uniquely human : “You are an Animal”
  - human nature: “You are an Object”
- through perceptions or actual treatment
- animalistic distortion
- idea that POC are unworthy of and do not need basic human dignities
- threatens the health of BYMOC and their villages
- manifests in the narratives, policies, and practices that impact them

# Forward Promise Initiative

**Dehumanization**



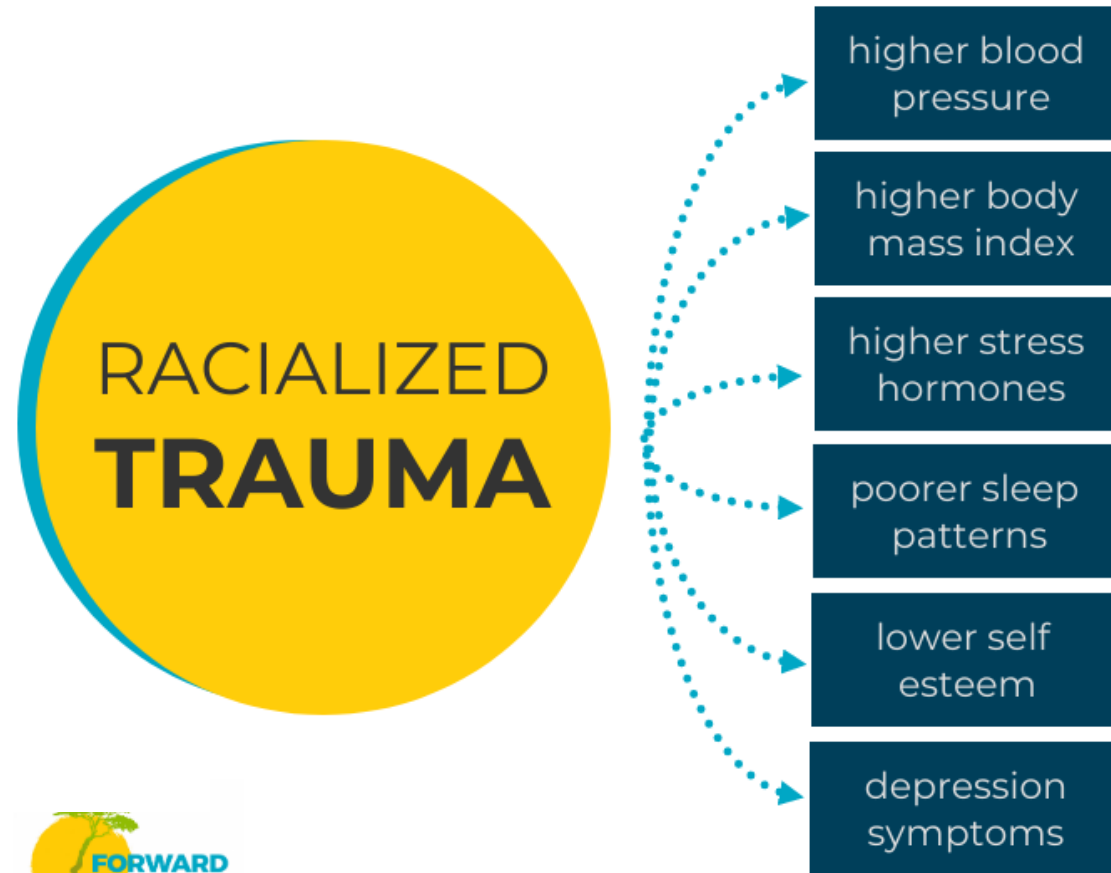
**Racial/Colonization  
trauma**



**Failure to thrive**



# Impact of Dehumanization on Youth Health



---

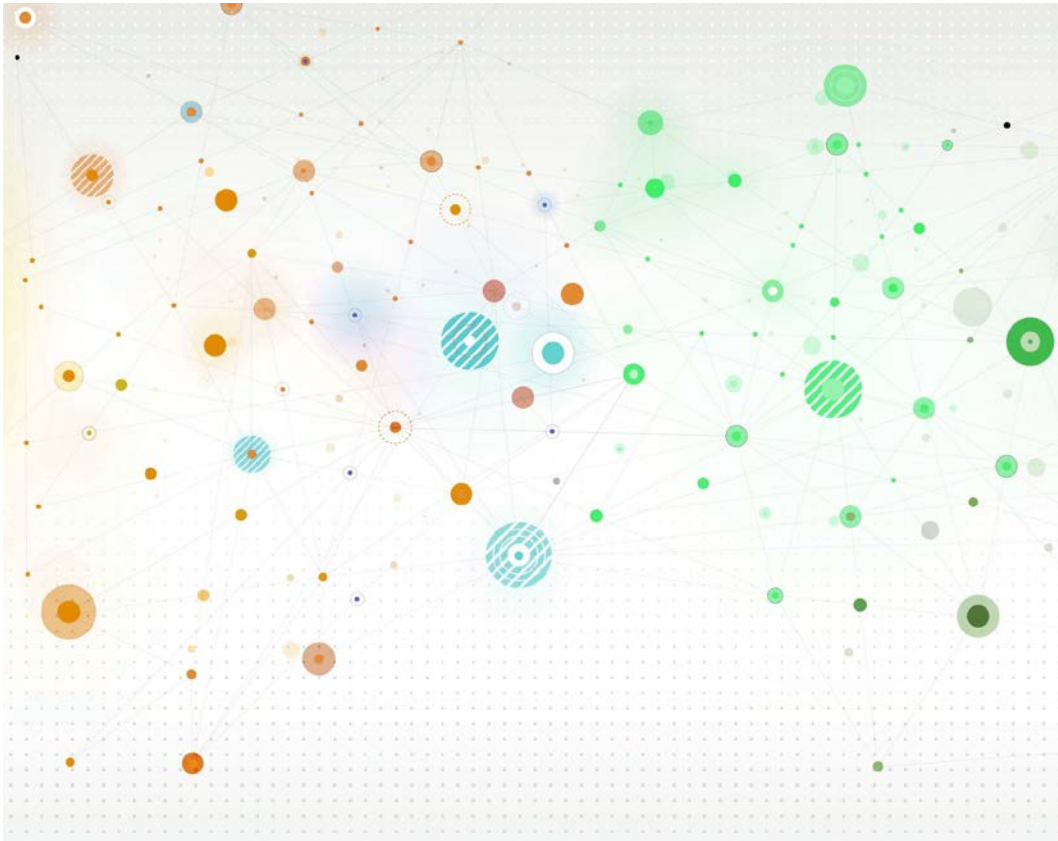
# Healing- Centered Engagement vs Trauma- Informed Care

---

- Trauma-Informed Care
  - What happened to you? instead of “What’s wrong with you?”
  - ACES- omits hx & racial trauma
  - Focus -severe harm to whole person’s emotional, physical, mental health
    - Not just symptoms or behaviors
- Healing-Centered Engagement (Ginwright, 2018)
  - What’s right with you?
  - Political activism can be healing
- Historical Colonization & Racial Trauma
  - Resilience?
    - individual not collective
    - omits persistence of dehumanization in air
  - “If the water is polluted, . . .”

# Report on “COVID-19 -Community Impact and Response


[www.forwardpromise.org](http://www.forwardpromise.org)



**COVID-19  
Community Impact  
and Response**

April 2020

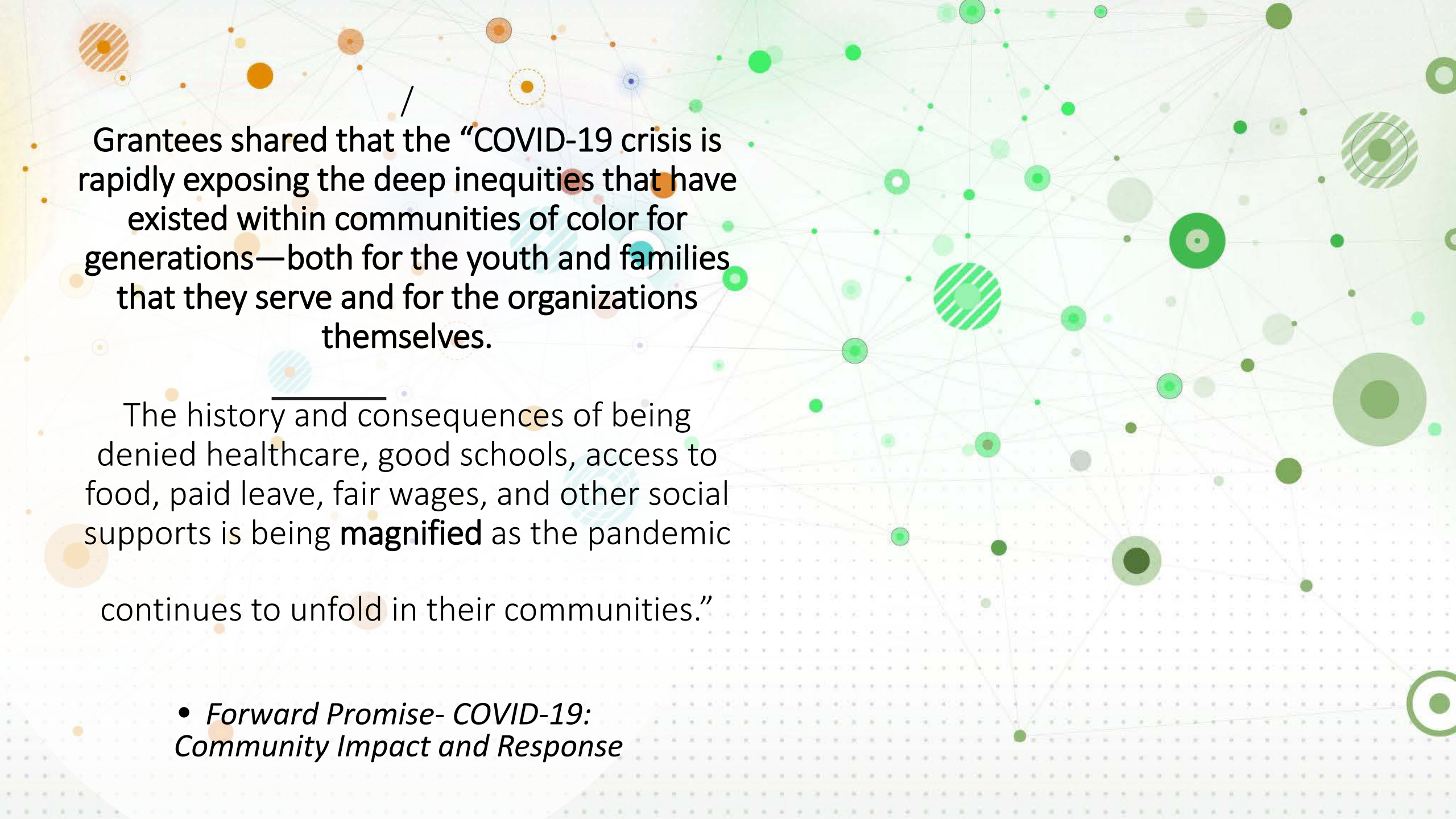




*History, as nearly no one seems to know, is not merely something to be read. And it does not refer merely, or even principally, to the past. On the contrary, the great force of history comes from the fact that we carry it within us."*

---

*Baldwin, 1965, "The White Problem in America," Ebony*




Grantees shared that the “COVID-19 crisis is rapidly exposing the deep inequities that have existed within communities of color for generations—both for the youth and families that they serve and for the organizations themselves.

The history and consequences of being denied healthcare, good schools, access to food, paid leave, fair wages, and other social supports is being **magnified** as the pandemic continues to unfold in their communities.”

- *Forward Promise- COVID-19: Community Impact and Response*

# Concerns: Ignorance, Exacerbation, Incompetence

- Ignorance of historical trauma through racial/colonial dehumanization
  - underestimate intergenerational trauma of BIPOC lives Pre-Post-Covid 19
  - failure to entertain white supremacy and dehumanization in system policies
  - We can identify disparities without preparation for future catastrophes
- Exacerbation/Magnification of trauma from COVID-19
  - Mental health outcomes are → Basic food and cash assistance
  - Essential worker vulnerabilities → “to survive is to get sick”
  - Blocked access to “medicine” -cultural and indigenous healing practices
- Incompetence in cultural frames in research and services
  - Study stress but not racial or colonialism discrimination stress
  - Provide services without culturally competent literacy skill sets




# “The structure of colonialism and how its tied to reservations”

---

Anpao Duta Flying Earth,  
Director of the Native  
American Community  
Academy in Albuquerque.







# “We’re still here”


---

Anpao Duta Flying Earth,  
Director of the Native  
American Community  
Academy in Albuquerque.



# Healing Takeaways

- Knowing the stories of communities of color can help address the historical dehumanization that undermines present health policies and practices
- Finding Ways to Heal and Disrupt Dehumanization in policies and practices
- Both-And- “We’re Still Here”



“We can’t  
forget the  
genius in our  
communities”.

---

Anpao Duta Flying Earth,  
Director of the Native  
American Community  
Academy in Albuquerque.



# Podcast on “HGT- Managing COVID- 19 for Communities of Color

[www.forwardpromise.org](http://www.forwardpromise.org)





“

**“The Lion’s Story will Never Be Known As  
Long as the Hunter is the One to Tell It”**

African proverb

