

African Americans and Problem Gambling

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African Americans and Problem Gambling: What do we know?

- Limited research on African Americans and problem gambling
- Why?—many don't seek treatment and don't participate in research studies (Harvey, 1996)
- Why?—sociopolitical history (Sue & Sue, 1978; Helms & Cook, 1999)
- Many use socio supports: religious/spiritual networks (Boyd-Franklin, 1989; Helms & Cook, 1999)

African Americans: What is Needed?

- Clinicians will need to move outside of traditional roles and meet client in their environment; integrate cultural influences
- Understand the *invisibility syndrome* that exists among African American males and how substance use and gambling may provide *false sense of power*
- **How has society contributed to this invisibility syndrome (Franklin, 2004).**

African Americans: Types of Gambling

- “Numbers running” (historical vocation)
- Lottery
- Scratch Offs
- Video Slot Machines located in community
- Casinos (women, older adults, nursing homes)
- Race Tracks (men)

African Americans: Type of Gambling

- Street Dice games (and in school among youth)
- Card games: Pinochle, Baccarat (e.g., Gladys Knight)

Key: Is gambling considered a problem within the context of this culture and community?

Why Don't African Americans Seek Treatment?

- Mistrust of “White” institutions dating back to slavery
- Mistrust of agencies which have oppressed Blacks (e.g., police, foster care systems)
- Lack of Insurance and Finances to Pay
- Lack of Transportation (Sue & Sue, 1999)

African Americans: Culturally Relevant Treatment

Community Mental Health Approaches:

Extend their interventions beyond “troubled individuals” to the community and to social systems that are important in socializing, supporting, and controlling people (e.g., school system, churches, prisons, judicial systems)

African Americans: Outreach Efforts

Community psychology approaches:

- *Have an organizational-community, non-deficit, competence-building, and primary prevention focus*

*Key Element: **Empowerment** (Boyd-Franklin, 1989)*

African American: Treatment and Outreach

- Emphasis on ecological validity—advocate and deliver treatment in the community
- Emphasis on multi problem approach—service deliverers are charged with recognizing and responding to a *range* of presenting needs: clinicians must assume many roles—teacher/therapist/advocate
- Use paraprofessionals—one of the best ways to use indigenous resources (Zondervan, 2002)

Case Illustrations: Gloria

- Consider case of Gloria: SA and PG issues? Prioritize treatment concerns
- What will be obstacles?
- How can you integrate cultural values and beliefs into treatment?
- Any potential obstacles with GA and NA?

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