



Center for the Developing Adolescent

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For immediate release.

New Report Examines Intersection of Anti-Black Racism on Youth Development

*National Scientific Council on Adolescence paper highlights research and offers
recommendations for addressing racism and inequity during adolescence*

Los Angeles, Calif., August 16, 2021—[The Center for the Developing Adolescent](#) today released a new report from the National Scientific Council on Adolescence (NSCA) on the magnified effects of racism—and the unique opportunities to mitigate these effects—during the adolescent years.

[The Intersection of Anti-Black Racism and Adolescent Development](#) summarizes research on how racism and related inequities impact key developmental milestones of adolescence and offers recommendations to support Black youth within key social contexts of the middle and high school years.

“The dynamic changes that enable youth to learn from and adapt to the world can also amplify the impact of racism and inequity,” said Dr. Joanna Lee Williams, Co-Director of the NSCA and Associate Professor in the School Psychology Department at Rutgers University. “For our first Council Report, we felt it was essential to make it clear that healthy youth development depends on recognizing how anti-Black racism intersects with core needs and opportunities of adolescence. It also requires efforts to support Black adolescents while addressing root causes of racial inequity through the mitigation and elimination of anti-Black policies, practices, and attitudes.”

Adolescence—beginning around 10 years of age and ending in the early 20s—represents a particularly important period of experience and opportunity during which youth explore the world, develop a sense of agency, and define their identity. Experiences with racism within common contexts and spaces create different experiences for youth along racial lines. Fortunately, the monumental growth and learning that occur during adolescence make it a time when interventions and anti-racist approaches can make a real difference.

“This report follows the research to link positive youth development with efforts to combat and mitigate the effects of racism faced by Black youth in this country,” said Dr. Andrew Fuligni, Co-Executive Director for the UCLA-based Center for the Developing Adolescent and Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry at UCLA. “We’re hoping these recommendations



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contribute to the conversation on how to support Black youth in ways that can benefit not only these young people, but the world they'll come to lead.”

The full report, along with supplemental material can be found at the CDA website at developingadolescent.org/adolescence-and-anti-black-racism.

The [National Scientific Council on Adolescence \(NSCA\)](#) is a group of U.S.-based scientists with expertise in developmental science, including social, affective, and cognitive neuroscience, as well as clinical, educational, public health, cultural, and social perspectives on adolescence, with strong expertise in understanding how social and emotional experiences shape development during adolescence.

The NSCA works to integrate and disseminate scientific knowledge about adolescent development to policymakers, practitioners, and the general public. Their efforts are essential to the Center for the Developing Adolescent’s mission to improve adolescent health, education, and well-being through developmental science.

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About The Center for the Developing Adolescent

The UCLA-based Center for the Developing Adolescent works to equitably improve adolescent health, education, and well-being. We do this by building bridges between research, programs, and policy.