



# Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans

Webinar #1 – Introduction to the Collaborating for Justice Project and Understanding the Importance of Culturally-Specific Organizations



Tuesday, March 19, 2024

# Disclaimer

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# Presenter Introductions

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# National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)

NCALL is committed to creating a world that respects the dignity of older adults and enhances the safety and quality of life of older victims and survivors of abuse. We engage communities to foster a collaborative, inclusive, survivor-centered response to abuse in later life.



# Learning Objectives for Webinar #1

1. Understand the purpose and components of the Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans Guide as well as the Increasing Access Toolkit
2. Describe what culturally-specific organizations are and their importance in advancing elder justice in the African American community.
3. Discuss the impact of historical and present-day racial trauma on older African American survivors and culturally-specific organizations



# Why Address Abuse in Later Life?

# America is Aging



11,200 Americans turn  
65 every day.

Retirement Income Institute Alliance for Lifetime Income, Social Security Administration

Older women comprise more  
than half (55.45%) of the adult  
population age 65 and older.

2020 Profile of Older Americans, AoA, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services

# 65 and Older



- The population age 65 and older increased from 39.6 million in 2009 to 54.1 million in 2019 (a 36% increase).
- By 2040, there will be about 80.8 million older persons, more than twice as many as in 2000.

2020 Profile of Older Americans, AoA, U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services



# Changing Demographics



Older adults are projected to outnumber children under age 18 for the first time in U.S. history by 2034, according to US Census Bureau projections.

*US Census, By 2030, All Baby Boomers Will Be Age 65 or Older*

# What is Abuse in Later Life?



Abuse in Later Life is the nexus between domestic violence, sexual violence, and elder abuse.

National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life,  
An Overview of Abuse in Later Life.

# Abuse in Later Life

- Victims 50+
- Offenders could be an intimate partner, family member, caregiver, or any other trusted person
- Physical, sexual, financial, emotional, psychological, and neglect
- Types of abuse often co-occur
- May occur in private dwellings and facilities

# We All Have Identities



# Purpose of the Collaborating for Justice Guide

- Improving Services to older African American Adults survivors
- Highlight the prevalence of historical and present-day racial trauma for African Americans
- Emphasize the importance of culturally-specific programs and organizations
- Amplify the need for mainstream organizations to equitably partner with culturally-specific programs and organization
- Provide practical strategies for equitable partnerships
- Builds on the Increasing Access to Healing Services & Just Outcomes Toolkit

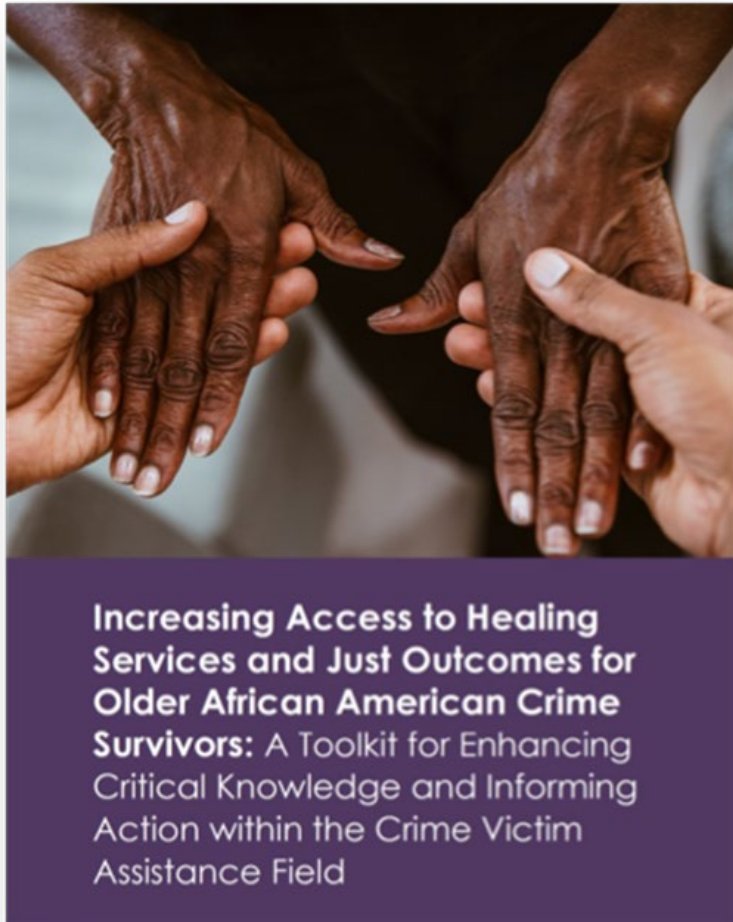
# Increasing Access Toolkit

- In 2020, NCALL & NRCRV published the Increasing Access Toolkit
- Guide for mainstream organizations to improve service provision to older African American adults
- 3-part Toolkit: Resource Guide, Series of Video Clips & Reflections Workbook



**Increasing Access to Healing Services and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors: A Toolkit for Enhancing Critical Knowledge and Informing Action within the Crime Victim Assistance Field**

# Resource Guide



- **Five content modules**
- **Glossary of terms**
- **Appendices**

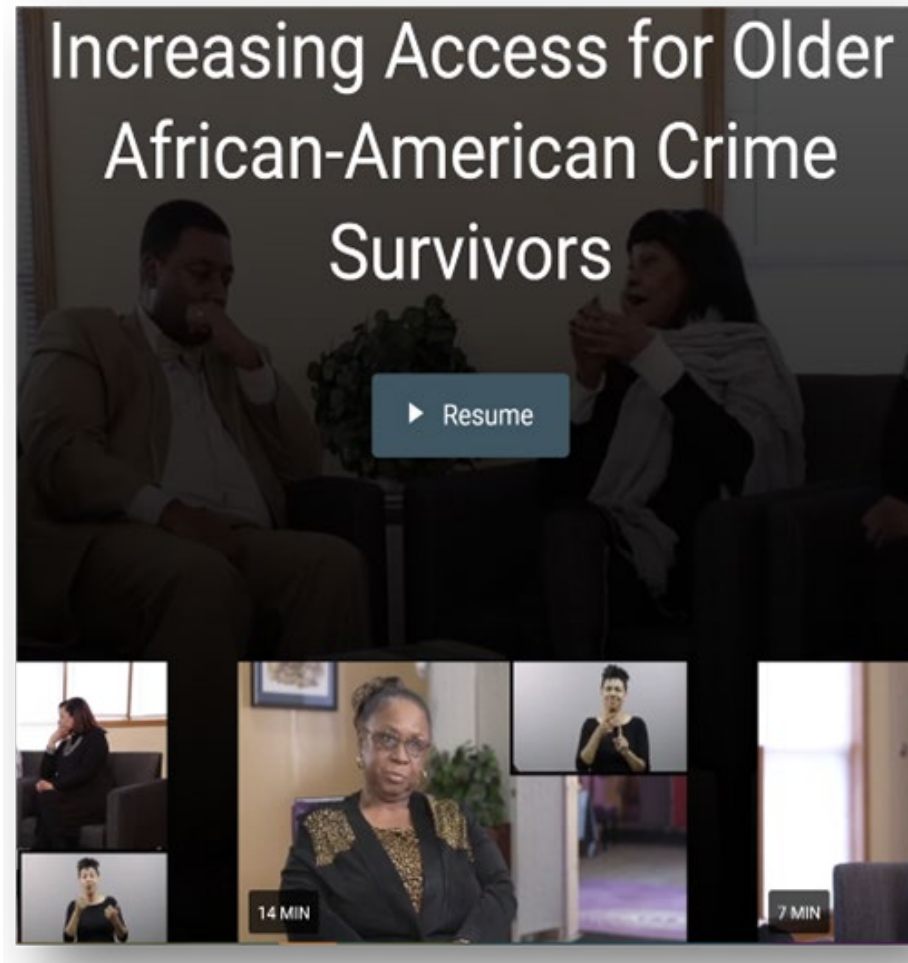
# Reflections Workbook



- **Questions based on each content module**
- **Glossary of terms**
- **Fillable, Printable versions**



# Library of Video Clips



- **Four expert panel discussions**
- **Three survivor stories**

# Collaborating for Justice Project

## Audience:

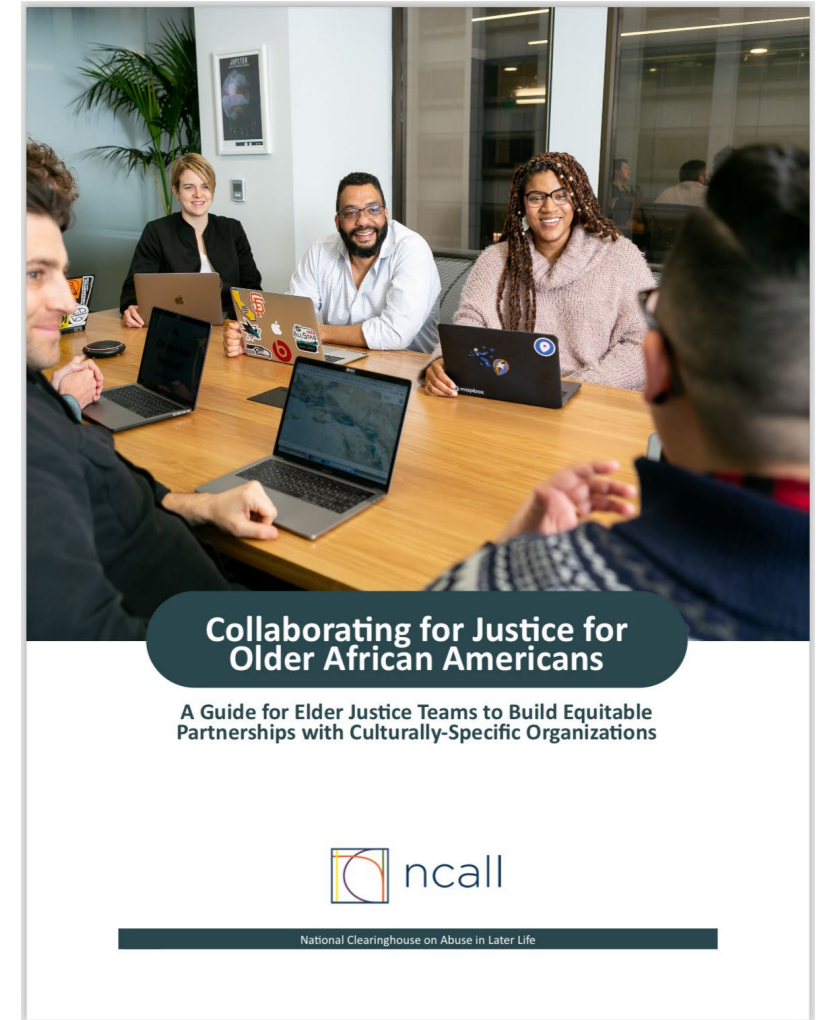
- Elder Justice Community Coordination Teams
  - Taskforces, EMDTs, MDTs, CCRs, etc.

## Purpose:

- Improve services to African American communities through equitable collaborations with culturally-specific programs.

# Stakeholder-Driven

- Project Team
- Interviews, listening sessions, and roundtables
- African American community-based and culturally-specific programs
- Multidisciplinary elder justice partners (mainstream organizations)

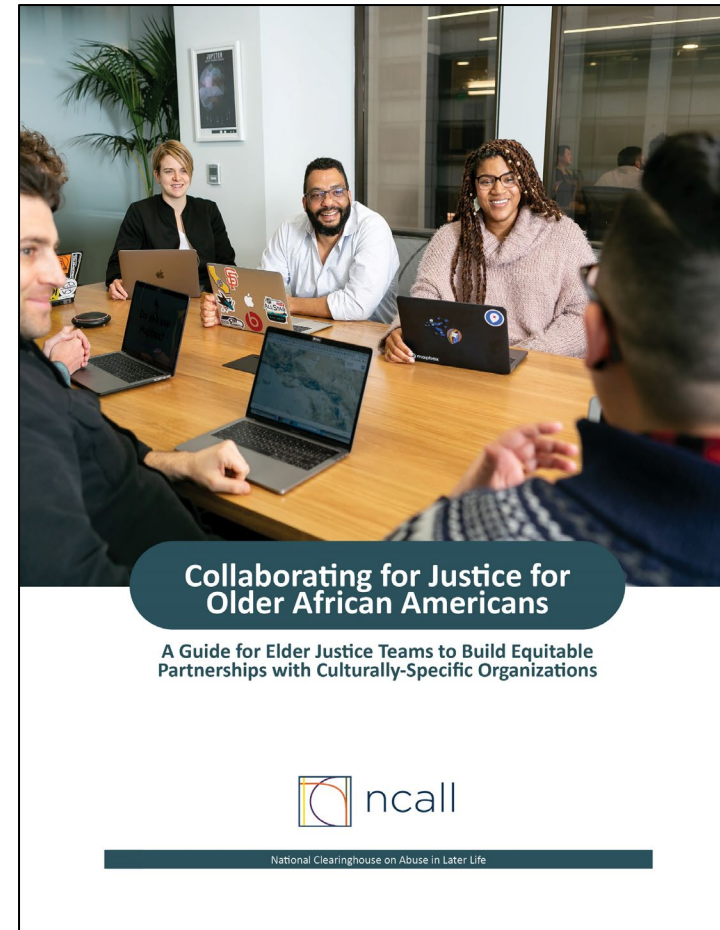


# Topics Explored

- Impact of culturally-specific programs
- Status of current collaboration
- Barriers to collaboration
- What would equitable collaboration look like?

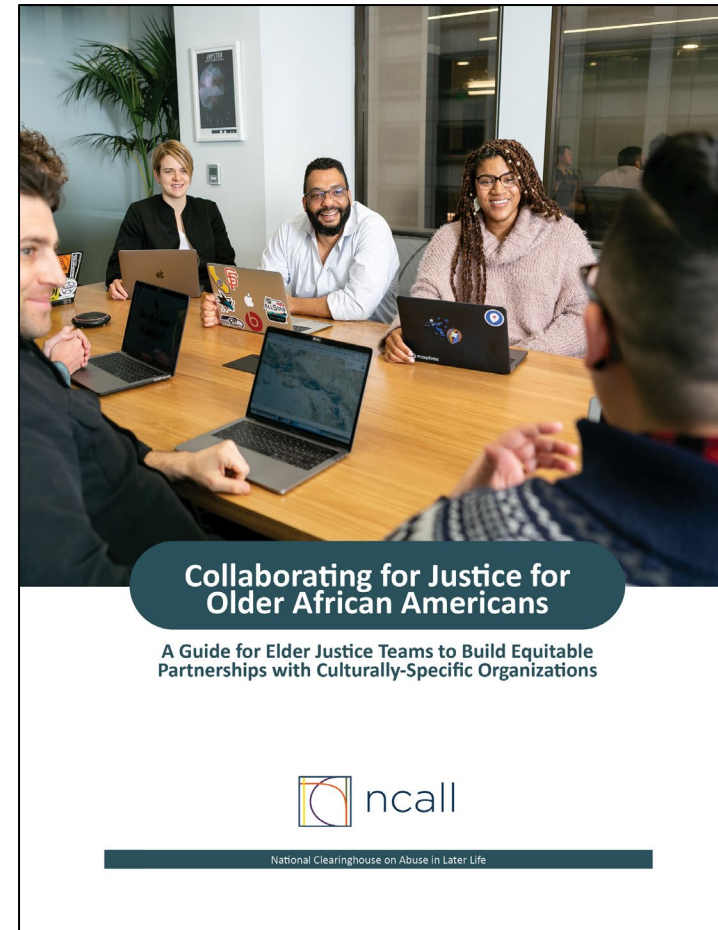
# What Does 'Collaborating for Justice' Include?

- 1) Report
- 2) Conversation Guide
- 3) Community Forum Toolkit




# Component 1: Report

- Discussion of the importance of culturally-specific programs
- Guiding Principles
- Practice Strategies



# Component 2: Conversation Guide

- Guidelines for facilitating a discussion with your elder justice community coordination team on equitable engagement
- Four discussion prompts
- Resources to further your learning.



**Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans**

**Appendix 1: Conversation Guide**

This resource is a companion piece to *Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans, A Guide for Elder Justice Teams to Build Equitable Partnerships with Culturally-Specific Organizations*. In the following pages you will find guidelines for facilitating a discussion with your elder justice community coordination team on equitable engagement, four discussion prompts, and resources to further your learning.

34 National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life Appendix 1

# Component 3: Community Forum Toolkit

- Facilitator Guide
- Sample agendas
- Sample PowerPoint template



## Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans

### Appendix 2: Community Forum Toolkit

The Community Forum Toolkit is a Collaborating for Justice Guide companion piece to equip elder justice teams with resources to bring together partners working with and on behalf of older African Americans to develop a shared understanding of the community efforts already occurring and opportunities to further advance elder justice for the African American community. The toolkit includes a Facilitator Guide, sample agendas, and a sample PowerPoint template.





# Understanding the Need for Culturally-Specific Programs and Organizations

# What are Culturally-Specific Programs?



Programs that are designed for, designed by, and led by the community they intend to serve.



The majority of individuals served are typically representative of the particular community.



Services reflect the cultural values, norms, expectations & attitudes of the group served.

# Cultural Context



"Interpersonal relationships are culturally constructed, and any attempt to understand elder mistreatment ... should take into account cultural context."

M Li, R Chen, XQ Dong, 2020

# Social, Political and Economic Context



In addition to culture, services and community responses will be most effective if they understand and recognize the social, political, and economic realities.

Vann, 2002

# What is the Social, Political and Economic Context?

Historical and present-day racialized oppression and subsequent trauma has resulted in the marginalization of African Americans in communities across the United States.

- Individual
- Interpersonal
- Institutional

As a result, there persist racial disparities in many areas: health, education, economics, housing, politics

# Racial and Cultural Trauma

Race or culture-based trauma occurs from direct acts of violence, vicarious experiences, and frequent microaggressions.

# From 1619 to 2024: Historical & Present-Day Racial Trauma <sup>(1)</sup>

- Enslaved Africans were brought to North America beginning in 1619 and slavery continued almost 100 years into the life of the nation
- Systemic racism continued with failed Reconstruction initiatives, Jim Crow laws, Sharecropping, and domestic terrorism (i.e., lynchings, Ku Klux Klan attacks, etc) through the 1960s

# From 1619 to 2024: Historical & Present-Day Racial Trauma <sup>(2)</sup>

Today, systemic racism continues through:

- Redlining
- Mass Incarceration
- Police Violence & Killings
- Policies fuel poverty, public school inequities, food deserts, and environmental injustices
- Policies to eliminate teaching the history of slavery, racism, and white supremacy



# Ruby Bridges



Infrogmation of New Orleans ([https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ruby\\_Bridges\\_21\\_Sept\\_2010.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ruby_Bridges_21_Sept_2010.JPG)), „Ruby Bridges 21 Sept 2010“, <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/legalcode>

# Group Discussion



What is the impact of this context on the older African American victims you work with?

# Impacts on African American Older Adults (Discussion Points)

- Expending unnecessary emotional labor/energy just to receive support after a victimization
- Life or death for survivor and their families
- Left without holistic supports for healing
- Not included in decision making (for self, for justice process, for family members)
- Cases are underreported
- Older African American adults may be hesitant to seek help

# CRITICAL Framework

- Use of a CRITICAL approach to service provision with African American older adults in paramount
- Important for mainstream organizations to learn and incorporate the CRITICAL framework in praxis and policies

**C**ultural Humility

**R**esponsiveness

**I**ntersectional Lens

**T**rauma-Informed

**I**nstitutional Positionality

**C**entering

**A**ffirming

**L**earning and Unlearning

# Mainstream Practices that Marginalize African American Survivors

→ “One size fits all” approaches

→ Lack of Racial Literacy

→ Discrimination & Not Understanding Trauma Responses of Black Survivors

→ Rigid Focus on Victimization vs Older Adult’s Priorities

→ Responses Centered on Criminal Legal System

→ What else?



# What Makes Culturally-Specific Programs and Organizations Unique?

# Elements of African American Culturally-Specific Programs

- Community driven
- Racially and culturally literate
- Culturally grounded
- Peer support
- Holistic view of well-being
- Community based vs criminal justice based

# Community-Driven



“We’ve always existed and found solutions to problems in our community, and we need to amplify those culturally appropriate solutions that are based in our pleasure, wellness, care and families, and ask that institutions of power and funding get on board with what the community says we need and what we say works.”

Latonya Maley, Executive Director Affinity Community Services, Chicago IL



# Racially and Culturally Literate



“We knew even back then that Black women didn't like going to mainstream programs, didn't like telling their story to white women who were looking at them like they're crazy. They placed judgment on them, treated them like they didn't matter. This has always been an issue.”

Antonia Norton, Director, The Asha Project, Milwaukee, WI

# Culturally Grounded



“Culture cures and history  
heals; everything has a cultural  
nuance.”

Kalimah Johnson, Executive Director Sasha  
Center, Inc., Detroit, MI

# Peer Support



We are collectively healing together. It's not “us” and “them” – it's “we.”

Kalimah Johnson, Executive Director Sasha Center, Inc., Detroit, MI

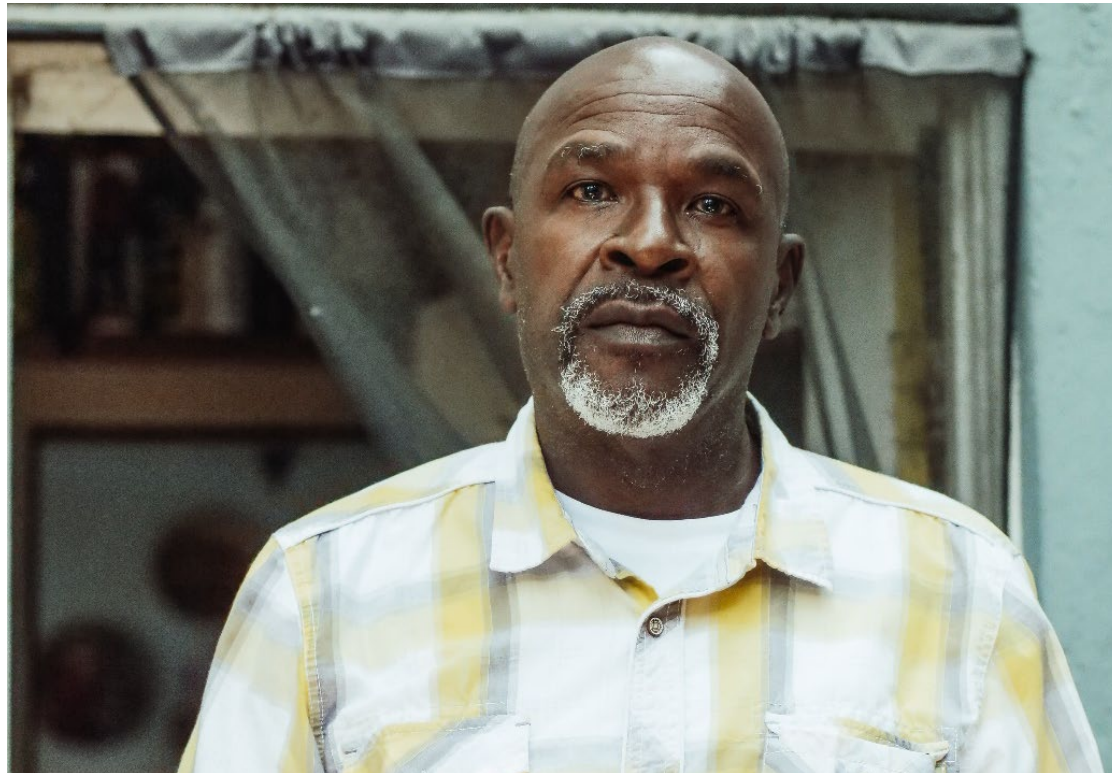
# Holistic View of Well-being



"What is missing in mainstream is the lack of holistic approaches to healing. For me it is important to not just work with the survivor but also the children, extended family members and the offenders. All individuals needs services in order to break the cycle of violence."

Patricia Davenport, Executive Director, Our House, Inc., Greenville, MS

# Community-Based vs Criminal Justice System-based



“We need to spend more time creating solutions that don't involve the state into the Black home, that often hasn't been a place of support and care.”

Latonya Maley, Executive Director Affinity Community Services, Chicago, IL

# Community-Based vs Criminal Justice System-based (2)



“The people I work with often won’t call the police--so how do we create safety plans that work for you?”

Maria Santiago, Elder Justice Advocate, The Healing Center, New York, NY

# Examples of Culturally-Specific Programming

## Affinity Community Services - Chicago, IL

- Holds community gatherings with younger and older adults to deepen understanding amongst generations and to address harm that may have occurred between groups
- Hosts Peer-Led groups to reach diverse identities in their community
  - Example - Trailblazers (60+) peer group that centers experiences of LGBTQ+ women of color



# Examples of Culturally-Specific Programming

## SASHA Center – Detroit, MI

- Explores the resiliency of black people through the use of art, culture, dance and language
- SASHA Poetry group – a writing workshop for supporters and survivors
- Survivors Healing Retreat – Addressing how culture cures and history heals black women survivors
- Thoughts of a Black Man Series – A conversation series with black men leaders uplifting healthy relationships and providing resources to men



# Importance of Food in Culturally-Specific Programming

- Many culturally-specific programming leaders indicate that providing nourishing, comfort meals is extremely helpful connecting with survivors
- Food often meets the immediate needs of survivors and helps to build relationships and establish trust



# Challenges faced by Culturally-Specific Organizations

- Misunderstood by mainstream counterparts
- Lack funding and support that mainstream organizations have
- Often tokenized on community coordination teams
- Not included in initiatives to seek funding as a partner
- Lack public support surrounding racial justice
- Law enforcement has not demonstrated consistent respect of African American community



# Discussion | Q + A | Homework

# Discussion Questions

- What aspects of today's webinar are resonating with you? Did you learn anything new?

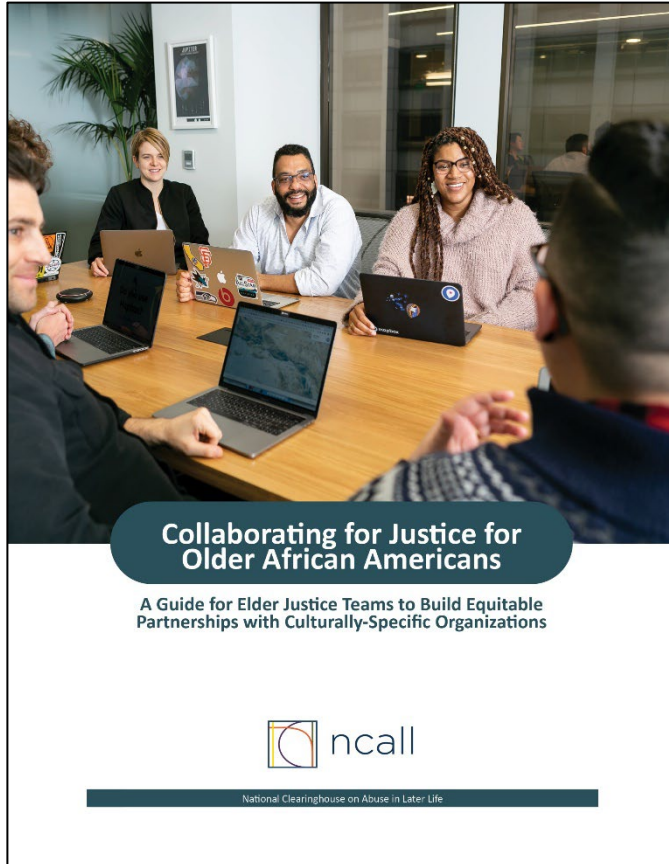
# Discussion Questions

- Are you aware of any culturally-specific organizations in your community?
  - If so, do you have a relationship with them?
  - What is the status of your relationship? Do you know why?

# Homework

- If you don't know of or have a relationship with a culturally-specific organization in your community, take some time to research and identify one and share with your organization. Also, look for national culturally-specific organizations.
- Once you identify an organization(s), learn more about their programming, initiatives, events, services provided, etc.
- Read and/or review the Collaborating for Justice Report

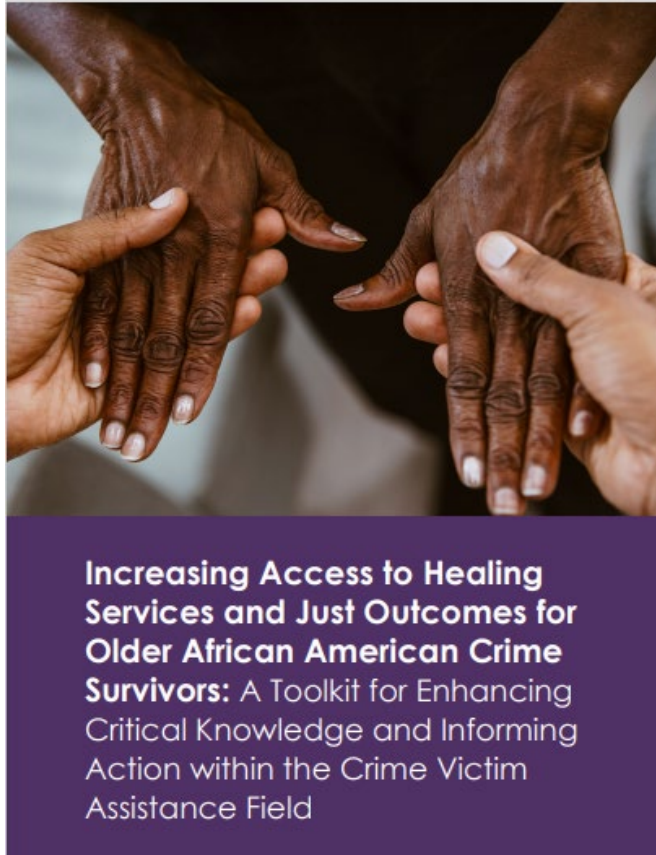
# Access the Collaborating for Justice Guide



Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans: A Guide for Elder Justice Teams to Build Equitable Partnerships with Culturally-Specific Organizations



# Access the Increasing Access Toolkit



Increasing Access to Healing Services and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors





# Upcoming Collaborating for Justice Webinars

## Webinar #2 – “The Guiding Principles of Equitable Partnerships and Collaborations”

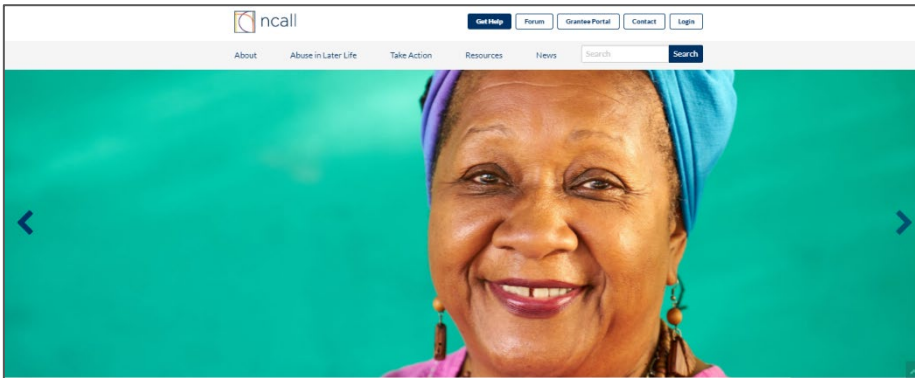
- Next Tuesday, March 26 at 2pm ET/1pm CT/12pm MT/11am PT

## Webinar #3 – “ A Conversation with Culturally-Specific Organization Leaders”

- Tuesday, April 16<sup>th</sup> at 2pm ET/1pm CT/12pm MT/11am PT

# Staying Connected to NCALL

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Questions/Comments?

# Thank You!

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