



San Gabriel Valley African American Infant & Maternal Mortality (AAIMM) Initiative Black Maternal Mental Health Support Group

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ABSTRACT

SGV AAIMM Black
Maternal Mental Health Support
Group (BMMHS)

The BMMHS Group, facilitated by a Black identifying Mental Health practitioner, met one time monthly from August 2022 until February 2023. The therapeutic group was provided to offer Black mothers a safe space to discuss their motherhood journeys and empower wellness strategies and community connection. The project offered measurement based care, crisis intervention and outreach based in psychoeducation, arts and play-based activities.

Main Elements / Model

*Group offered in a Hybrid Format ((In-Person and Virtual) - interest tracked via Eventbrite, Facebook, Intake Q and Blueprint Health.

*Group activity kits delivered or picked up by virtual participants

*Targeted social media, community outreach and newsletters utilized to identify participants.

*Guest Wellness Practitioners to expose participants to nontraditional modalities such as sound healing, yoga, reiki, etc.

Outcomes

*Priority enrollment with incentives for timely completion of intakes & assessments, like \$5 - \$25 Amazon gift cards.

*Found that multiple reminders (calls & emails) in addition to a reminder call the day of group was very helpful.

*Measurement based care and enrollment paperwork were a barrier to some. We had a higher rate of interest compared to actual engagement.

*Provided incentives which increased completion & participation rates by about 50% for every group.



**Total Virtual & In-Person
Participants: 37 Total**

PROJECT TIMELINE



- **August 2022** – Parenting Skills 101- Ask A Village
- **September 2022** – Journaling Book; The New Me
- **October 2022** – Memory Box- Ask A Village
- **November 2022** - Dream Catcher
- **December 2022** – Worry Doll
- **January 2023** – Sip & Paint Affirmations; A Souvenir to Remember Joy
- **February 2023** – I am loved and valued! : Know your love language

Target Audience

Black mothers and their families.

Our goal is to reduce the disparities in services provided to Black bodies, de-stigmatize mental health, and improve birth outcomes and family health in the Black community.

Communication & Accessibility

By strategically placing the program in the San Gabriel Valley and offering an online hybrid format, we were able to increase accessibility for LA County program participants. To spread the word, we utilized social media, physical fliers, attended community stakeholder meetings, and networked with key contacts. We also created an Eventbrite page and digital intake form to facilitate registration and provide necessary information. To ensure easy access and completion of behavioral assessments, we utilized a web-based platform and sent out invitations via email. Finally, participants had the option to join virtually as well.



REFLECTIONS

- One surprise was the success of the incentive program, which increased completion and participation rates by about 50 percent for every group.
- We also found that individuals who were not Black mothers were interested in attending the support group, which was unexpected.
- If we knew then what we know now, we would have put more emphasis on marketing the program to Black mothers and providing more incentives for timely completion of intakes and assessments.

CONCLUSION

Through Healthy Living Grant, The Therapeutic Play Foundation has been able to provide Black mothers with a safe space to discuss their lived experiences, share advice and support, and engage in holistic physical activities such as yoga, dance, and meditation. The team has faced challenges such as getting Black mothers to register and complete their intakes/assessments and having people who are not Black mothers try to register for the support group. To address these challenges, the team implemented incentives such as Amazon/Starbucks gift cards. To date, the support group has served 37 Black mothers. The Therapeutic Play Foundation is grateful for City of Hope's support in making the Black Maternal Mental Health Support Group successful!

SOCIAL IMPACT

- BMHSG acted as a feeder to TPF's Mommy Matters program from the non-Black participants who sought to participate.
- TPF was able to recruit 11 Black mothers for a LACDMH cohort and 12 Black mother for a Black Maternal Health Center of Excellence cohort, with the SGV AAIMM BMHSG being primary entry point.

**Providing Safe Spaces
with Providers Who
Look Like the
Community they
Serve**

