



Dear ACES Members,

It is with sadness that ACES reaches out to all of you following the recent events of violence perpetrated against Black Americans. We stand with the American Counseling Association (ACA) and its statement regarding undue police violence. We also recognize the need to support our members and to provide resources to assist with trauma associated with a long history of oppression and injustice, as well as the murders of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd. Within the next week we will be starting a Slack group for members to provide resources to assist others in dealing with racial trauma and undue police violence, along with resources pertaining to advocacy and social justice.

Here are some resources we are recommending right now:

Singh, A. (2019). The racial healing handbook: Practical activities to help you challenge privilege, confront systemic racism, and engage in collective healing (The Social Justice Handbook Series). Raincoat Books.

Krista M. Malott, Tina R. Paone, Scott Schaeffle & Jiabao Gao (2015) Is it Racist? Addressing Racial Microaggressions in Counselor Training, *Journal of Creativity in Mental Health*, 10:3, 386-398, DOI: [10.1080/15401383.2014.988312](https://doi.org/10.1080/15401383.2014.988312)

Alex L. Pieterse (2018) Attending to racial trauma in clinical supervision: Enhancing client and supervisee outcomes, *The Clinical Supervisor*, 37:1, 204-220, DOI: [10.1080/07325223.2018.1443304](https://doi.org/10.1080/07325223.2018.1443304)

We hope you are all practicing self-care during this difficult time. We also hope you are surrounding yourselves with supportive friends and family members. Please let us know what else we can do to be of support to you.

ACES endorses the statement posted by ACA on May 18, 2020 in regard to undue police violence which follows.

The American Counseling Association (ACA) is committed to promoting counselor competence as it relates to addressing individuals and communities who have been negatively affected by instances of undue police violence and similar racially motivated acts.

The ACA acknowledges the traumatic impact of undue use of violence in policing, racially motivated violent incidents, and implicit bias, characterized by excessive force and negligence. Whereas, we support and value the role of positive law enforcement and ethical policing conducted daily in this occupation, the ACA condemns incidents of undue violence and stands in solidarity with the individuals, families, and communities impacted by such occurrences. Furthermore, the ACA supports the efforts of counselors who counsel and advocate on behalf of those who experienced such encounters.

Undue police violence refers to the use of excessive or disproportionate force that results in physical or psychological harm to others. These incidents may result in a post-traumatic effect that impacts the well-being of individuals and communities. Further, the historical context and trans-generational trauma associated with these incidents may have cumulative effects. While anyone can experience undue police violence, certain racial groups, particularly those identifying as Black or African American, are disproportionately affected by these traumatic occurrences and their resulting aftermath. Professional counselors are called to support affected individuals and populations through trauma-informed and culturally-responsive practice.

The ACA and its members are dedicated to supporting the human rights and wellness of all individuals regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, culture, physical ability, age, sexual or affectional identity, religion, nationality, and socioeconomic status. Further, the ACA is committed to **promoting counselor competence** as it relates to addressing individuals and communities who have been negatively affected by instances of undue police violence and similar racially motivated acts. The ACA stands in solidarity with counselors who serve and support those directly and indirectly affected by instances of violent or negligent policing.

Moreover, the ACA encourages its members and all counselors across various settings to engage in professional action, such as clinical practice, community outreach, research, advocacy, and education that supports the wellness of individuals and communities who face violent or negligent policing.

With highest regards,

*Heather Ambrose*

Incoming ACES President (2020-2021)