

## Racial Justice News Items

### May 2020

Derrick Anderson is a member:

[\[Audio\] Charlotte Talks: Ahmaud Arbery And The Danger Of 'Running While Black'](#)  
[WFAE](#)

A young black man is shot while jogging. Over two months pass before arrests are made and charges are filed. As America grapples with yet another killing of a young black person, we ask: why does this keep happening? **GUESTS: Khalil Gibran Muhammad**, professor of history, race and public policy at [Harvard University](#) and author of "The Condemnation of Blackness: Race, Crime and the Making of Modern Urban America"; **Braxton Winston**, at-large representative of [Charlotte City Council](#); **Derrick Anderson**, executive director, [Race Matters for Juvenile Justice](#).

### June 2020

Malyna Kettavong is a member:

[Breaking Point: Why the George Floyd Case Set America Off](#)  
[nbconnecticut.com](#)

"It's a lot to unpack, so I encourage parents to really have this ongoing conversation with their children. So, really just be honest with your kids and open. Nobody has all the answers, so it's OK to say 'I don't know'," said **Malyna Kettavong, LCSW** at [Kettavong Counseling in Norwich](#). "When we talk about resiliency, the most important factor is a healthy relationship with one strong adult, so anyone can be that adult for that kid," said Kettavong.

[Study examines black male youth reactions to social media videos of community violence](#)

[Washington University in St. Louis](#)

New research from the [Race and Opportunity Lab](#) in the Brown School's Center for Social Development at Washington University in St. Louis sheds light on youths' reactions to social media videos showing violence in their communities. **Published in the journal *Social Work Research***, [the study](#) presents findings from a survey of black male youths incarcerated in the St. Louis city jail. The U.S. Department of Justice's Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funded the work, which is part of a larger study assessing the effects of the Fathers Make a Difference Project.

Kyle Hillman, director of legislative affairs at NASW-IL:

[Bill to Ban Seclusion and Face-Down Restraints in Illinois Schools Gets Sidelined After Pushback From Administrators](#)

[ProPublica Illinois](#)

**Kyle Hillman, director of legislative affairs for the National Association of Social Workers**, which supported the measure, said he was disappointed that opposition derailed the bill after months of negotiations. "We have said from the

beginning that ... ultimately the bad actors in this state are not willingly going to end this abusive practice," he wrote in a statement. "We continue to hold out hope our elected officials step up and end this practice now before this becomes another Illinois tragedy story."

[Minneapolis police killing: George Floyd's deadly arrest reopens wounds in Chicago](#)  
[abc7chicago.com](#)

**Licensed clinical social worker Natalie Graves** said the unrest has an emotional toll on a community already hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. "I see that trauma, the fear, the anxiety, the depression, substance abuse, trying to cope and the anger, and all of that is impacting folks because of an injustice," Graves said.

Devon Lewis-Buchanan is a member:

[WLRN Connects: Handling Anxiety Amid The Pandemic And Racial Justice Protests](#)  
[WLRN](#)

**Devon Lewis-Buchanan is a registered clinical social worker** and former college athlete. He's the founder of [Inspire Youths](#), an organization that brings behavioral health education to marginalized communities in Palm Beach County. He says representation in the mental health field is an important factor to alleviate trauma in distressed communities; young black boys relate to him but he also "sees himself in a lot of the young men he serves."

Hayden Dawes is a member:

[Hayden Dawes: An Invitation to White therapists](#)  
[Medium](#)

Since 2012, I have fallen in love with the art, science, and practice of psychotherapy. Spaces created by this discipline serve as oxygen to the crushing suffocation of the anti-black, homophobic circumstances permeating the air, which I strive to breathe. Learning how to be a therapist has not only sharpened my eyes to see myself more clearly, but it has honed my ability to see my colleagues and the world. **I believe the world can be changed by clearly seeing ourselves and others.** It is with love and dedication to help us see ourselves, as therapists, that I offer this invitation.

Letter to WSJ from Angelo McClain:

[Social Workers Cooperate With Police Forces](#)  
[The Wall Street Journal](#)

**Social workers already work alongside and in partnership with police departments across the nation.** Strengthening social worker and police partnerships can be an effective strategy in addressing behavioral health, mental health, substance use, homelessness, family disputes and other similar calls to 911 emergency response lines. In fact, social workers are playing an increasingly integral role in police forces, helping officers do their jobs more effectively and humanely and become better attuned to cultural and racial biases.

Victor Armstrong is a member:

[For Black youth, a time of upheaval takes a toll on mental health](#)  
[STAT](#)

There are also cultural barriers, including a stigma about mental health issues, **Victor Armstrong, director of mental health, developmental disabilities, and substance abuse services at the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services**, told STAT. “Rather than being able to express the pain, fear and anger, what we’re told when we’re young is that we should suck it up and be strong — our great-great grandparents survived slavery and our grandparents survived Jim Crow,” said Armstrong, a clinical social worker.

Amber Kelly is a member:

[Should police be social workers?](#)

**CT Mirror**

But change is possible. **Amber Kelly, a clinical social worker based in New Haven and an assistant professor at Quinnipiac University**, said it is a “failure of imagination” to rely on police to solve such nuanced social and public health dilemmas. “We need to come up with systems other than policing to deal with these social problems.”

Myrna McNitt is a member:

[Activists: Public 'tipping point' may be at hand over structural racism, but changing the system will take time](#)

**The Herald-Palladium (MI)**

Structural racism is the racism that has been historically embedded in our society through its institutions: schools, housing, the economy, health care and government — “virtually every area of social interaction,” said Myrna McNitt, a Lake Michigan College sociology professor. “Racism holds a place in our implicit and explicit biases toward other people and that’s how it gets expressed as an individual, as well as on the structural level.” **McNitt is a clinical social worker and does community development work all around the world, in addition to teaching sociology.**

Beryl Cohen is executive director of NASW-IN:

[‘Defund’ police is a lofty demand, but not totally unfeasible in Indy](#)

**Indianapolis Recorder**

**Beryl Cohen, executive director of the National Association of Social Workers Indiana Chapter**, said it’s not enough to simply move in a direction where social workers and other service providers are the ones responding to non-violent scenes, though. The details matter. Are service providers part of the police department? Do they come through a partnership with a local clinic? Is there an armed officer nearby in case of an emergency? “If there was one, easy solution to this whole problem, we would’ve done it a long time ago,” Cohen said.

[Albuquerque will begin sending unarmed social workers in response to some 911 calls](#)

**The Denver Channel**

The city of Albuquerque, New Mexico, is answering calls to “defund the police” by creating a new public safety department that will **send unarmed social workers instead of police officers** in response to some 911 calls. On Monday, Albuquerque

Mayor Tim Keller (D) said his administration would form a new city department, Albuquerque Community Safety, whose personnel would respond to some emergency calls.

Marline Francois-Madden is a member:

[A Therapist Explains Why Activists Should Take Care of Their Mental Health - and How to Do It](#)

Yahoo Life

Participating in protests that amplify those voices and those issues can feel freeing and fulfilling, because "you are addressing social issues and racial injustices that matters to you," said **Marline Francois-Madden, LCSW, an author and licensed clinical social worker in New Jersey.** "What I've heard, specifically from protesters, is 'I didn't realize how much I needed that.'"

Chanté Gamby is a member:

[8 Black Therapists on Their Best Advice for Coping Right Now](#)

SELF

Ask someone you trust to back up your feelings. "We need to remind ourselves that we are [entitled to our feelings](#)—every single one of us. If you believe that other people have a right to have varying feelings, then you also have that right. I would also recommend reaching out to trusted support systems who can validate those feelings." —**Chante' Gamby, L.C.S.W.**

[State leaders, organizations speak out after House, Senate pass bill to change state flag](#)  
WLBT

From the **National Association of Social Workers MS Chapter:** "NASW-MS Chapter and its members are proud of the bipartisan support by our Mississippi Legislature and leadership for taking a bold step of progress. We join together with other organizations in ensuring advocacy, change, and inclusion for all Mississippians."

Kathryn Wehrmann was president of NASW:

[Social workers for police reform](#)

The News-Gazette (Champaign, IL)

**As the president of the National Association of Social Workers,** I would like to share the stand we take with regard to the administration's executive order on policing. It is wholly inadequate. The Justice in Policing Act (H.R. 7120), introduced on June 8 by social worker Rep. Karen Bass, D-Calif., chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, comes close to getting it right.

Claire Green-Forde is executive director of NASW-NYC:

[\[Video\] City Considering Letting Social Workers Take Lead When NYPD Responds To Calls Involving People With Mental Illness](#)

CBS-NY

It comes as city leaders consider transferring the responsibility of responding to people with mental illness from police to social workers as part of broader reform efforts. "My

approach has to be one of understanding that I am not reasoning with a mind that is fully there,” said **Dr. Claire Green-Forde, the executive director of New York City’s chapter of the National Association of Social Workers.**

Ryan Ivory is a member, and regional director of NASW-OH Region 7:

[IDEAS: Why is racism a public health crisis? How does declaring it one help?](#)

**Dayton Daily News**

As stated in our proposal, “By redefining racism as the embedded and entrenched belief system, we can create new ways of living, policing and governing, as well as ways of distributing resources more equitably because we see our collective common interests.”

By naming racism a crisis, the momentum of this moment enables us **to begin having honest anti-racism conversations through all sectors of society: social work, law, counseling, medicine, sociology, etc.**

Donna Oriowo is a member:

[What Is Fetishizing? Here's Why This Racist Behavior Isn't OK](#)

**Elite Daily**

When you hear the word "fetish," what comes to mind? Probably feet, or generally, the idea of getting sexual gratification from objects or body parts that aren't typically seen as sexual. You can also have a fetish toward a particular kind of sex, like anal or group sex. Fetishes aren't particularly unhealthy — the word is often used interchangeably with "kink" — but when it comes to [fetishizing people of color](#) for stereotypical or race-related attributes, you're engaging in extremely harmful behavior that puts unwarranted emphasis on race by sexualizing it. According to **[Dr. Donna Oriowo, LICSW and founder of AnnodRight](#)**, a therapy clinic geared towards women of color with a focus on sex and relationships, fetishizing POC for their race is offensive, no matter which way you spin it.