

Promoting Bodily Autonomy

in Michigan Black Communities to Prevent Sexual Violence



Did you know?

53.8%

of Black women in Michigan have experienced unwanted sexual contact in their lifetime

SOURCE: NISVS 2010-2012 STATE REPORT

19.4%

of Black men in the U.S. have experienced unwanted sexual contact in their lifetime

SOURCE: NISVS 2010-2012 STATE REPORT

9.6%

of Black Michigan high school students have experienced sexual violence

SOURCE: YRBS HIGH SCHOOL DATA, 2019

'Sexual violence' is any sexual activity that happens without consent, including sexual assault, harassment, abuse, and rape.

There is hope!



Black communities and allies can help prevent sexual violence by increasing

Protective Factors

which are strengths that make it less likely that someone will experience sexual violence or choose to commit sexual violence.

Bodily Autonomy

is an important protective factor for Black communities in Michigan.



What is Bodily Autonomy?

Bodily autonomy means I have complete say over my body. No one else gets to control what happens to it.

Bodily autonomy means I am free to make choices about my sexuality, and medical care without others getting in the way.

The Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA) heard from Black community members around the state about how to increase bodily autonomy. The following page shares needs and actions you can take to help prevent sexual violence in Michigan Black communities.

What are the needs?

More conversations with youth about harmful gender myths and social norms.

End the harmful belief that Black women's bodies belong to Black men.

Change oppressive views and expectations of Black women.



Increased faith-based leadership in support of Bodily Autonomy among Black community members.

Leaders need to speak out about respect for our own and other's bodies.

Black churches need to have **candid discussions** about safety and intimacy.

What can you do?

- **Normalize** talking to your children regularly about sexuality, healthy choices about sexual behavior and relationships, and sexual assault.
- **Discuss** sexual education resources, videos, and readings together as a family.
- **Encourage** faith-based leaders and communities to have conversations about sexual and domestic violence, consent, and respecting your partner.



Your voice is your power, and you have a right to utilize it. Knowing that there are boundaries that shouldn't be crossed, and if they are, this is how you address it.

-CSVPA
interview participant

Background: These are select findings from the Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA). The CSVPA included interviews with individuals from Michigan's Black communities, guidance from an Advisory Council including Black professionals working in the field of sexual violence prevention, and secondary data collection. To learn more about the CSVPA and sexual violence prevention work in Michigan, visit: www.mphi.org/svp

1. Smith, S.G., Chen, J. & Basile, K.C. et al. (2017). The national intimate partner and sexual violence survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report. [Table 3.11.b]. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs-staterreportbook.pdf>
2. Smith, S.G., Chen, J. & Basile, K.C. et al. (2017). The national intimate partner and sexual violence survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 state report. [Table 3.6] <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs-staterreportbook.pdf>
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2019). High school youth risk behavior survey data. <https://yrbs-explorer.services.cdc.gov/#/graphs?questionCode=H20&topicCode=C01&location=Ml&year=2019>