

# RACIAL TRAUMA: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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## OVERVIEW OF PRESENTATION



BACKGROUND AND  
CONTEXT



DEFINITIONS



STRUCTURE OF  
LITERATURE REVIEW

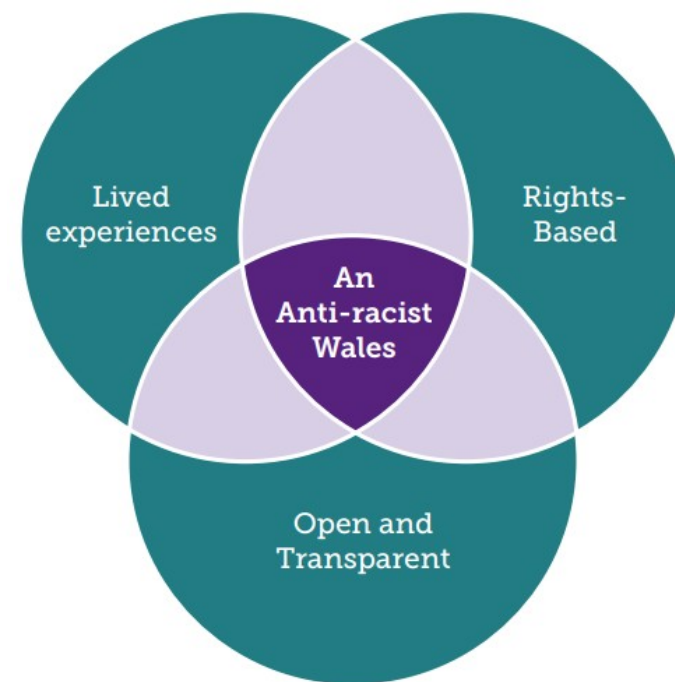


NEXT STEPS

## BACKGROUND: POLICY CONTEXT

- Nation of Sanctuary
- Anti-Racism Action Plan for Wales (2022)
- The Criminal Justice System (CJS)  
Anti-Racism plan
- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)  
Hub Wales

Trauma-informed Wales Framework





### COMMUNICATIONS AND POSITIVE LANGUAGE

- Consider verbal communication style.
- Open body language.
- Calm tone, pitch, and scale.
- Clear speech and positive eye contact.
- Friendly manner, building rapport and respect.
- Consider language barriers.



### SUPPORT

- Perpetrator may also be a victim.
- Mistrust of criminal justice system and experience of Racism.
- Building an understanding of their needs.
- Challenge any bias and don't judge.
- Person-lead intervention plan.
- If appropriate ask their ethnicity and discuss anti-racism.
- You are supporting desistance and change to a better life and self.



### COMMON CHALLENGES

- Racial Trauma.
- Substance use.
- Mental health and self-harm.
- Emotional management.
- Healthy relationships.
- Adverse childhood experiences and trauma.
- Education, employment, and training.
- Poverty.
- Parental responsibilities.



### HIGHLY TRAINED PRACTITIONERS

- Anti-Racist Practice.
- Racial Trauma-informed.
- Gender-informed.
- Holistic / Needs-Led Intervention Development.
- Reflective Practice.
- Police in custody suite.
- Intervention Providers.
- Solicitors & Lawyers.
- Restorative Justice Mentors.
- Diversion specialists.



### PROMOTING DIVERSION

- Be mindful of potential racial biases and engage in discussions to justify decisions, considering the experiences of ethnic minorities with racism in society and the justice system.
- Prioritise diversion for individuals under 18, involving services like Point of Arrest Diversion and Youth Offending Service, with a focus on family involvement.
- Tailor approaches for women, integrating them into community settings, considering parental responsibilities, and utilising women's centres/services where possible.
- Opt for the lowest level of diversion instead of escalating charges.
- Provide multiple opportunities for diversion, even for individuals with prior low-level convictions.
- Collaborate with independent Restorative Justice mentors or diversion specialists to assist in decision-making.
- Support the broader family unit and offer guidance on the benefits of diversion.
- Ensure legal representatives understand the advantages of diversion.



### OFFERING DIVERSION

- You don't need admission of guilt – seek to support the 'whole' person and needs.
- Conduct diversion assessments within 48 hours, involving specialists like Restorative Justice mentor/ Diversion specialist.
- Document diversion as a positive outcome in data records and systems.



### DEVELOPING INTERVENTION PLAN

- Needs led and holistic.
- Choice and control.
- Positive from arrest.
- Strengths-based approach.
- Don't over-burden / light touch approach.
- Weekly support for 3 months minimum and 3-5 interventions.
- Appropriate to developmental needs – cognitive, emotional, social, and educational.



### INTERVENTION NEEDS

- Employment and training opportunities.
- Restorative Justice and community approach.
- Therapeutic support for mental health.
- Emotional and social support.
- Developing healthy relationships.
- Substance use support.
- Modular learning & support.
- Gender-based violence and abuse support.
- Education with no judgement.
- Reflection, discussion, and respect in support relationships.
- Sharing power and working together – experts through experience support.
- Specialist independent of statutory criminal justice system providers.
- Building positive pro-social identities.
- Developing responsibility and accountability for self and behaviour.



### RESTORATIVE JUSTICE

- Include the Victim at all stages.
- Seek for the perpetrator to take responsibility for the offence and don't focus on admission of 'guilt'.
- Specialist intervention providers.
- Child first if child.
- Women specific.



## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES: WHAT IS RACIAL TRAUMA?

1. Key terminology around racial trauma
  - i. What are the various definitions of racial trauma?
  - ii. How does the terminology vary?
  - iii. Which terms are used interchangeably, or in specific contexts?
  
2. Contexts impacting experiences of racial trauma
  - Individual
  - Relationships
  - Community
  - Society



## Methodology



**Stage One:** A wide-ranging search of the literature



*Search terms*



*Timescale*



*Location*



**Supplementary search:** Books and theses



**Stage Two:** Government, third sector and charity websites.

## WHAT IS RACIAL TRAUMA?

No universal  
definition

Impact

Differing  
definitions

Changing  
definitions

Different  
experiences







# EVOLUTION OF TERMS LEADING TO THE CURRENT DEFINITION OF 'RACIAL TRAUMA'

## BRAVEHEART-JORDAN (1995)

"Collective and compounding emotional and psychological injury over the lifespan that is multigenerational and resulting from a history of genocide"

## MARSH (2015)

The term historical trauma, cumulative trauma, soul wound, and intergenerational trauma is cumulative emotional and psychological harm experienced throughout an individual's lifespan and through subsequent generations.

## WILLIAMS ET AL. (2021)

Severe psychological response to the cumulative traumatic effect of racism.

1998

2007

2015

2019

2021

2022

## RACE BASED TRAUMATIC STRESS (CARTER, 2007)

Events of danger related to real or perceived experience of racial discrimination. These include threats of harm and injury, humiliating and shaming events, and witnessing harm to other POCI due to real or perceived racism.

## COMAZ-DIAZ ET AL. (2019)

A form of race-based stress, refers to reactions to dangerous events and real or perceived experiences of racial discriminations.

## CENAT (2022)

Cumulative impact of race-based traumatic experiences at individual, institutional and systemic levels of racial trauma has significant effects on mental and physical health as well as on social and economic aspects of victims lives.

## RACIAL TRAUMA- TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITIONS

- Location
- Settings
- Experiences
- Intersectionality



## RACIAL TRAUMA– INDIVIDUAL AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Key events
- Personal experiences
- Identity
- Relationships
- Friendships



## RACIAL TRAUMA—COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY

- Institutional
- Systemic
- Community
- Society



## RACIAL TRAUMA–SOCIETY

- Institutional
- Systemic
- Structural
- Community



## RACIAL TRAUMA—NEXT STEPS

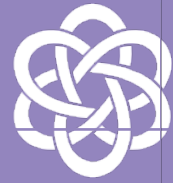
- Interventions
- Populations
- Evidence based
- Context



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