

PROJECT SUN

Helping children flourish

Supporting Our Black Children

We all receive powerful messages about race and our racial identity; messages that can significantly affect how we think and feel about ourselves and others. This is especially true for Black children living in a racialized country. Experiences of structural racism and other forms of discrimination are practically unavoidable.

At Project SUN's February Parent Café, speakers will discuss strategies that can help Black children survive and thrive physically, emotionally and psychologically. Presenters will explore:

- Parenting Black children in today's society
- Simple strategies for developing resilient families
- Building and strengthening parent-child communication
- Resources to help empower your child and you as a caregiver

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

February's Parent Café, "Supporting Our Black Children," will be held via webinar Thursday, February 18 from 5:30 - 7:00 PM. To register, visit the Project SUN Facebook page or [CLICK HERE](#).

Black History Month Reading Resources

- [Black History Month: What is it & why do we need it?](#)
- [25 Children's Books About Race & Racism](#)
- [Anti-Racism for Kids: An Age-by-Age Guide to Fighting Hate](#)
- [Black History Month Lessons & Resources for Educators](#)

Guest Speakers:

Grace Thomas

Kankakee County Parent



Dr. Cynthia Taylor, Ph.D., LCPC

*Director, Multiethnic Student Services
Olivet Nazarene University*



Aaron Clark, Pastor

*Youth Violence Prevention Coordinator,
Kankakee School District #111 and
Director, Kankakee City Life Center*



About Black History Month

Initially, Black History Month was a way of teaching students and young people about Black and African-Americans' contributions. Such stories had been largely forgotten and were a neglected part of the national narrative.

Now, it's seen as a celebration of those who've impacted not just the country but the world with their activism and achievements. In the US, the month-long spotlight during February is an opportunity for people to engage with Black histories, go beyond discussions of racism and slavery, and highlight Black leaders and accomplishments.

Source: [weforum.org](#)

Let's Talk: Breaking the Silence on Dating Violence

Dating violence is a pattern of assaultive and controlling behaviors that a person uses in order to gain or maintain power and control in the relationship. The abuser intentionally behaves in ways that cause fear, degradation, and humiliation to control the other person. (michigan.gov/datingviolence)



Our relationships, particularly romantic relationships, can be some of the most impactful experiences in our lives. The devastation of having someone we care about take advantage of our love and trust can lead to significant, even long-term mental health impacts. It's important to know how to define what healthy relationships look like and be able to identify warning signs of dating violence.

Project SUN's "Let's Talk: Breaking the Silence" series for young adults, ages 16-20, will take place online via Zoom Wednesday, February 24, from 6:30 - 8:00 PM. Participants will learn from local professionals and discuss the importance of healthy dating relationships, how to help a friend respond to dating violence, and resources available in our community. Attendees who meet participation requirements will earn a \$25 gift card!

[CLICK HERE to share the registration link.](#)



Helpful Resources

We challenge you to read at least one of these resources!

FRIENDLY READ - Less Than 5 Minutes

- [7 Tips For Talking to a Loved One About Their Mental Health](#) - Simple ways to love someone who is struggling.

REFLECTIVE READ - More than 5 Minutes

- [Teen Dating Violence](#) - February is National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Learn from Harbor House how to recognize early warning signs of dating violence, and what to do if you or a loved one needs help.

ACADEMIC READ - Longer than 10 Minutes

- [The ABC's of Early Childhood](#) - A comprehensive guide to the basics of child development policies and practices.

CULTURAL COMPETENCE RESOURCE

- [How To Talk To Kids About Race And Racism](#) - Navigating conversations about racism and White supremacy with your children - and the risks of staying silent.

Key Takeaways On Addressing Bullying, Including Cyberbullying

January's Parent Café presenters, Tina Stewart, caregiver, PTLM Travis Garcia, School Resource Officer, Hillary Hubert, School Psychologist, and Heather Oosterhoff, School Social Worker, provided many helpful tips, including responses to these participant questions.

What happens if Cyberbullying happens away from school? Can school support staff still address this?

Illinois' Anti-Bullying laws cover cyberbullying and off-campus conduct if it disrupts the education process. For example, children may experience cyberbullying through social media which harms their ability to stay focused and learn while they are at school. This could also include photos posted on the weekend or cyberbullying conversations that occur on devices that are school property. In these cases cyberbullying becomes the school's problem too.

Apart from interventions for the victims and consequences for the bullies, schools' responses might also include support for any witnesses who may have also been impacted.

How can I monitor my childrens' online safety without making them feel like I don't trust them?

The best first step is to have an open family conversation about bullying, cyber safety, and laying a foundation for prevention. Be attentive and genuinely listen to your children! See what they care about, and show them that you have an interest in what they enjoy, as well as their safety. Not sure about an app your children use? Try creating a profile for yourself and explore it on your own.

If you are going to use a security app or monitoring system be transparent with your child about why it is in place. Be careful about crossing the line into over-monitoring your child's conversations. Allow room for your child to have privacy and independence whenever possible.

United Way of Illinois' 21-Week Equity Challenge

Join Project SUN, the United Way of Kankakee & Iroquois Counties, and many other organizations and individuals in this free, 21-week program.

The Equity Challenge encourages Illinois residents to engage in conversations to gain a deeper understanding of the impact systemic racism and inequity have on our state and in our local communities. Participants will receive one email per week, covering topics such as Understanding Privilege, Housing & Redlining, Justice System Inequities, and more.

Sign up today to join in on the challenge! Register at:
unitedwayillinois.org/equity-challenge/

Local activities are being planned to build upon the material in the emails.
Contact Fiana Comer at fiana@myunitedway.org for more information.



March Parent Café - "Early Intervention - Screenings and Assessments"

Save the date! Project SUN's monthly Parent Café series will continue **Thursday, March 18, from 5:30-7:00**, with a presentation on the topic of, "Early Intervention - Screenings and Assessments." To receive event updates and more [CLICK HERE](#) to subscribe to Project SUN's email communications.

Join Us For a System of Care Community Navigator Training!

Learn to use the online Kan-I Help database and scenarios when you might choose to make a referral to Project SUN! Open to all who are interested, this free training is a tool designed to benefit your work, or simply enhance your personal knowledge. **Click a date below to register!**

[WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 9:30 AM - 12:30 PM](#)

[FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 1:30 - 3:30 PM](#)

Any questions? Contact projectsun@cfkvr.org

