

ANNUAL REPORT 2018

FLORIDA COUNCIL ON THE SOCIAL STATUS OF BLACK MEN AND BOYS





A MESSAGE FROM OUR ATTORNEY GENERAL

It is my privilege to present to you the 2018 Annual Report for the Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys. This year's report highlights the Council's work and impact on the state of Florida. I urge policymakers, local government officials, and community-based organizations to support the important work being done by the Council.

Under the leadership of Dr. Eddie Regnier, the Council has concentrated its efforts on developing programs and services based on sound practices that will improve the lives of black males. In 2018, the Council focused its efforts on researching strategies to help reduce mental and physical health challenges and address the socioeconomic disparities for black males.

It is the Council's hope that this report will bring awareness to both citizens and the leaders of Florida about socioeconomic disparities and the disproportionate number of minority children without access to health care. The Council also hopes that this awareness will encourage community partnerships throughout the state to help local communities and grassroots organizations model effective programs and best practices that will have a positive impact on the lives of Florida's black males.

Sincerely,

Pam Bondi
Attorney General



A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIRMAN

On behalf of The Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys, I am delighted to present this year's annual report to Governor Rick Scott, Speaker of the House Richard Corcoran, Senate President Joe Negron, Attorney General Pam Bondi, state agency heads, community advocates and the citizens of the State of Florida. The Council offers this year's annual report with a vision for the future and hope for a better tomorrow.

This year, the Council began exploring the terrible impact of violent crimes in black communities across the state with the hope of finding suitable solutions. With the help of the Department of Education and Employment Opportunities, the Council has also examined how technological growth will affect future employment for African Americans. Finally, the Council has collaborated with the Office of Surgeon General to find ways to improve access to health care services and address the traditional barriers that keep African Americans away from Health Care systems across the state. It is the Council's hope that the lives of black men and boys will improve through the collective efforts of good men and women across our richly diverse state. The Council is committed to lead us into a healthy and prosperous future that benefits all.

Sincerely,

Eddy M. Regnier, Ph.D.
Chairman

COUNCIL MEMBERS



Council Chair
Eddy M. Regnier, Ph. D.
Clinical/Forensic Psychologist
Assessment and Psychotherapy Services



Council Vice Chair
Paul Wilson, Senior Associate
PCG Education Consulting



Council 1st Vice-Chair
Jerome Hill, Program Operations Administrator
Bureau of Medicaid
Florida Agency for Healthcare Administration



Ramon Alexander, Representative
Florida House



Shila Salem, Bureau Chief
Bureau of One Stop and Program Support
Florida Department Economic Opportunity



Byron Donalds, Representative
Florida House



Ben F. Shirley, Jr., Director
Regional Economic Self Sufficiency
Florida Department of Children and Families



Rod Duckworth, Chancellor
Division of Career and Adult Education
Florida Department of Education



Albert Simpson, Jr., Ph. D., Reverend
Pastor
Philemon Worship Center



William Hardin, Manager
Business Operations Unit
Florida Department of Children and Families



Marcus Smith, Deputy Manager
Office of Prevention and Victim Services
Florida Department of Juvenile Justice



Justine Patterson, Director
Regional 4 Community Corrections
Department of Corrections



Greg Steube, Senator
District 23
Florida Senate



Dr. Owen Quinonez, Officer
Senior Health Equity
Florida Department of Health



Shawn Thomas, Reverend
Youth Paster
Mt. Zion Progressive Missionary Baptist Church



Argatha Rigby-Gilmore
Chief of Police
Lake City Police Department



Perry Thurston, Jr., Senator
District 33
Florida Senate

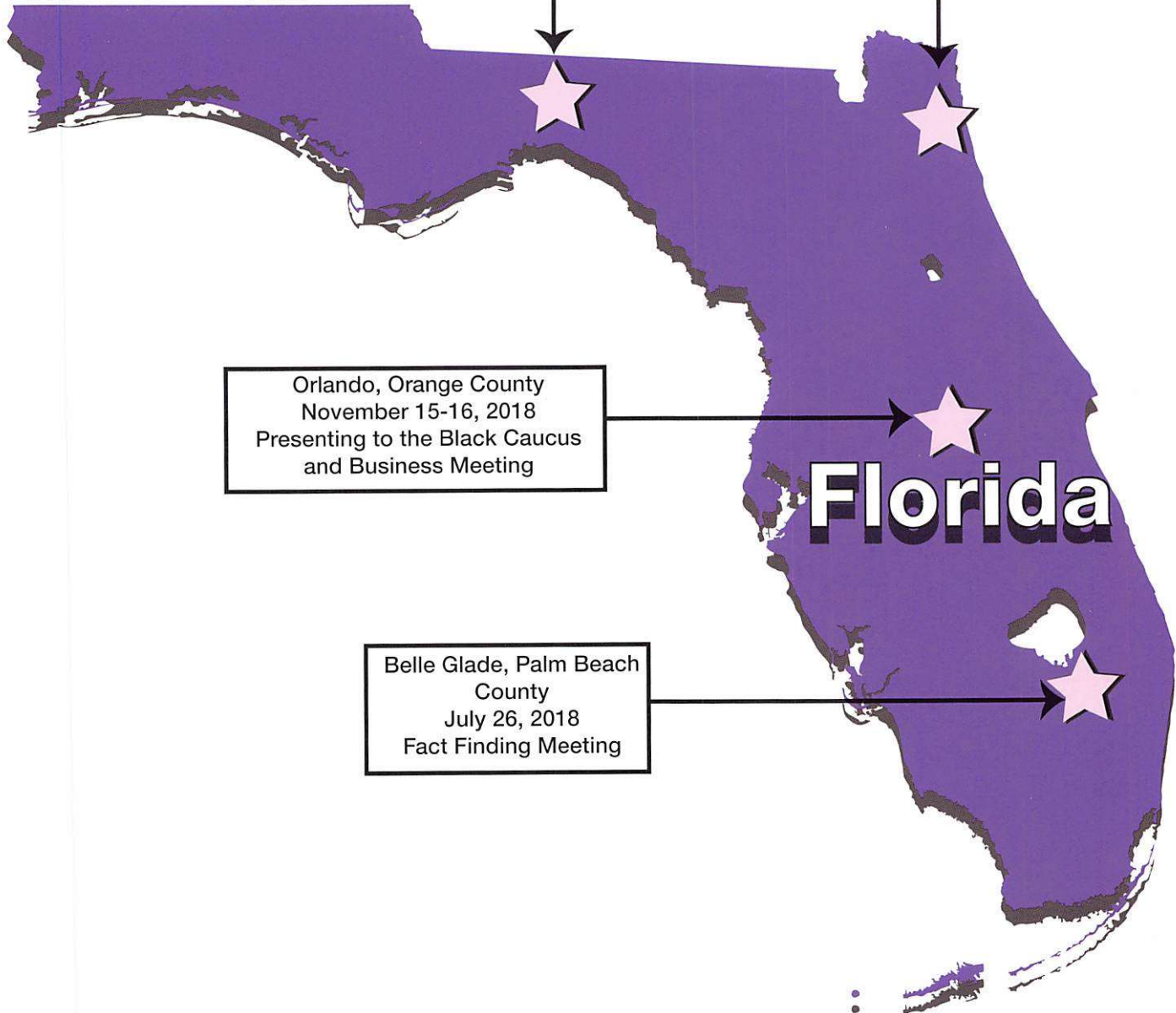
ENGAGING...EDUCATING...EQUIPPING...ENCOURAGING

Tallahassee, Leon County
January 17, 2018
Business Meeting

Jacksonville, Duval County
May 30- June 1, 2018
Teen Workshop and Business
Meeting

Orlando, Orange County
November 15-16, 2018
Presenting to the Black Caucus
and Business Meeting

Belle Glade, Palm Beach
County
July 26, 2018
Fact Finding Meeting



SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

The problem of violence in black urban Florida communities seems on the surface insoluble. Lawless criminals competing for control of territory to foster drug sales, continue to employ deadly force, with the results often ending in murder of the innocent. These criminals operate with wanton disregard for human life and create environments where black males fear walking in their own neighborhoods. Some black inner city communities have been described by others as Urban War Zones. In fact, the patterns of violence faced by some black communities today constitute a social and public health crisis.

The high number of murders and violent crimes in black communities must stop and be replaced with order and safety. However, the problem cannot be resolved without the cooperation of both the black community and law enforcement. Attempts to create safe black communities have been met with differential results and a large number of areas remain unsafe. Law enforcement officers seem overwhelmed with the task of preventing violence and apprehending the criminals. Their efforts have often increased the presence of officers in black communities, creating yet another array of problems. Therefore, there is a need to research and successfully implement best practices across the state of Florida to make even the most dangerous inner city areas safe from violent crimes perpetrated by the criminal element inside those communities.

The Council hopes to work with law enforcement, community leaders, clergy, youth groups and other interested parties that want black communities to become safe havens for all. It is with this goal in mind that the following recommendations are offered.

Recommendations:

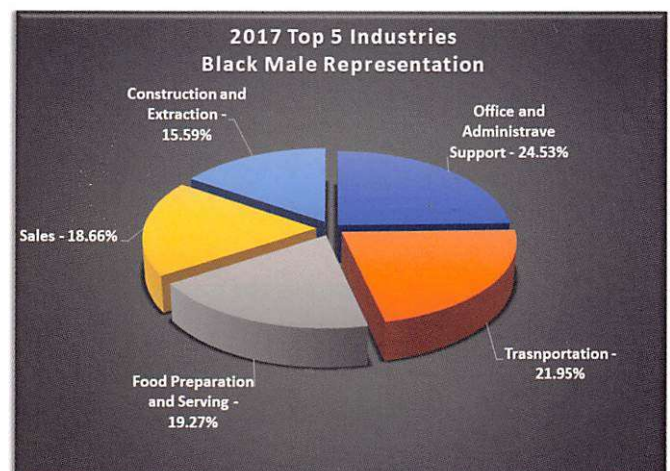
- ❖ The Council should be the catalyst of hope to gather those who are interested in researching best practices for ending this epidemic of violence under the banner of Operation Safety.
- ❖ The Council should advocate collaboration within counties with high violent crime rates with elected officials, law enforcement, clergy, youth groups, NAACP, Department of Education, and other black community leaders to study best practices that can be utilized within their community to improve safety for all.
- ❖ The Council should plan Days of Dialogue within these areas bringing the aforementioned groups together to research, discuss and implement a course of action to better their community.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

EMPLOYMENT & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT

The Florida Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys is committed to ensuring that Black males in Florida have equal access to education and workforce opportunities. Florida's education and workforce systems continue to partner to ensure that the citizens of our state receive high quality education services and workforce training to prepare them to meet the needs of employers. Obtaining and maintaining a job empowers individuals to provide financial support for themselves and their families, infuses a sense of individual self-worth, and supports the achievement of economic prosperity. Florida's Labor Market statistics show that in 2017, Black Males represented over 20% of the civilian labor force in the transportation industry.

The Florida Department of Education and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, along with a host of partners, recognizes the important work underway in our State related to enhancements in the Technology, Logistics and Transportation industries. For example, Enterprise Florida places a focus on the Technology Infrastructure through their work in the Logistics and Distribution sector and works daily to support Florida's extensive multi-modal transportation systems. The Florida Chamber of Commerce recognizes the importance of preparing Florida for a great future through the Autonomous Florida program. Autonomous Florida, a program of the Florida Chamber of Commerce, is working to ensure that Florida continues leading the way in autonomous vehicles. The vision is to make Florida the autonomous capital of North America. To learn more about Autonomous Florida visit this website: <https://autonomous-florida.com/>.



Recommendations:

The Employment and Economics sub-committee recommends:

- ❖ The Council join the Florida Chamber of Commerce as a program partner to engage in the statewide program discussions, implementation and expansion efforts of the Autonomous Florida program to ensure Black males are given equal access to opportunities for this evolving technology sector.
- ❖ The Council continue to support education and workforce initiatives implemented across the state to improve access and outcomes for Black males in the evolving Technology, Logistics and Transportation industries.

SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATES

PHYSICAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH AND FAMILY STABILITY

Disparities in Health Care, and Mental Health across the State of Florida

This section of the report describes and identifies the Council's focus on health disparities of black males, black women and their babies, and makes recommendations to reduce and eventually eliminate such disparities.

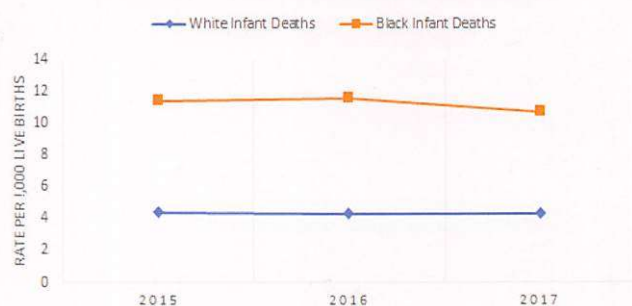
The magnitude of the problem

At no time in history has the health of Blacks equaled that of white Americans. Blacks have experienced poor health outcomes regardless of age, gender, educational achievement, and social economic status. This year the Council is interested in researching disparities in black infant mortality and exploring the effects of mental health disparities on black adult and youth males.

Infant mortality

Reports from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggest that the black infant mortality rate is the single cause of the U.S. faring worse than other developed industrialized countries on infant mortality. Congenital malformations, followed by low birth weight and preterm birth, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and maternal complications account for 51.2 percent of infant deaths. These health risks can be eliminated with good nutrition, education and early prenatal and postnatal care. At 11 deaths per 1,000 births, babies born to black women in Florida have more than double the infant mortality rate as babies born to white women. Contributing factors may include maternal health, prenatal and postnatal care, and access to quality health care. Other factors may include being low income, unmarried, and very young (20 years or less), malnourished or obese. Five counties in Florida account for 61 percent of infant deaths. Statewide and especially in these counties, coordination between public health organizations, providers, and community organizations is critical to addressing this complex issue.

**STATE OF FLORIDA INFANT DEATHS BY
RACE
PER 1,000 LIVE BIRTHS
THREE-YEAR TRENDS, 2015-2017**



Mental health

Racial and ethnic minorities may experience high stress environments and have lower access to mental health services than whites. High stress environments, including high crime rates, poverty, homelessness and violence, are associated with greater incidence of psychiatric disorders and drug abuse. Minorities are more likely than whites to delay or not seek mental health treatment and are more likely to receive poor quality care. Suicide related to untreated depression is the third leading cause of death for black males between ages 15-24. The Council recognizes that more research must be done to better understand mental health disparities and to develop culturally competent interventions for minorities in Florida, including Blacks.¹

Recommendations:

- ❖ The Council should establish infant mortality among Black Floridians as a state priority for the next five years.
- ❖ The Council should create a program specifically to reduce black infant mortality rates in the five counties that represent 61% of black infant deaths in 2017.

¹ <http://www.csmbmb.com/reports>.

Community....Connection....Commitment

The Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) critically explores some of the greatest challenges presently faced by black men and boys. Through community dialogue, discussion panels, field experts, and research, the CSSBMB produces vital recommendations that serve as a blue print for policy driven decisions. This year, the CSSBMB fulfilled their legislative mandate through the continued endorsement of research that focuses on the following areas:

- ❖ physical and mental health for black males,
- ❖ black males in employment, and
- ❖ pathways of black youth to the criminal justice system.

Jacksonville - June 1, 2018

Teen Workshop on Effective Youth Engagement: Making IT

The Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) sponsored a teen workshop in conjunction with the Florida Office of Attorney General National Conference on Preventing Crime. The CSSBMB engaged youth in a discussion about their role in facilitating favorable encounters with law enforcement officers. Council and law enforcement presenters engaged youth through discussion and role play to get a deeper understanding of how quickly altercations can escalate between officers and civilians. Youth attendees were also given an opportunity to speak about some of the existing barriers that prevent favorable encounters and ultimately affect their individual lives and communities.

The workshop was held at the Hyatt Regency Jacksonville in Jacksonville, Florida on Friday, June 1, 2018.



Palm Beach - July 26, 2018

Belle Glade Fact Finding Meeting

The Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) attended a one-day fact finding meeting at the City Commission Chambers on Thursday, July 26, 2018. The CSSBMB met with Belle Glade citizens and officials to gain a better understanding of the city's following problem areas:

- ❖ health care disparities related to health care access and poor nutrition,
- ❖ causes of Infant Mortality among black women and women of color,
- ❖ demographic information regarding HIV rates and age of onset, and
- ❖ demographic information regarding diabetes, hypertension and sexually transmitted disease.



Orlando - November 16, 2018

Presentation for the Legislative Black Caucus

The Council on the Social Status of Black Men and Boys (CSSBMB) attended a Florida Legislative Black Caucus Meeting held at the Rosen Shingle Creek on Friday, November 16, 2018 in Orlando, Florida. Chairman Eddie Regnier gave a presentation, highlighting the CSSBMB's work to improve the plight of black men and boys statewide.





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DECEMBER 2018**

**OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL
PL-01, THE CAPITOL
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32399-1050
(850) 414-3300**

WWW.CSSBMB.COM