The Colorado Health Foundation™

Black Coloradans' Perspectives on 2020: Financial Stress, COVID-19 and Police Violence

As we approach the end of 2020, it's important to look back at this truly unprecedented year, even if we're eager to leave it all behind. Many of us will remember a pandemic year where we've had to worry more about our health, keep our distance from family and friends, and struggle through home schooling our kids.?

But many Black and African American Coloradans may remember 2020 for more than the COVID-19 pandemic. On top of the health and financial struggles brought on by the coronavirus, Black Coloradans have watched more episodes of police violence in our state and across the country. They've poured into the streets to protest racism and injustice. They've been joined by their some of their White friends and neighbors who are just beginning to understand this country's history of racism, a reality they've known their entire lives.

For Black Coloradans, a year like 2020 has brought increased trauma. We know that from the conversations we've had with community leaders across the state and from ***Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll***. When we asked Black Coloradans to tell us what's keeping them up at night, what's bringing them joy and what the state needs to do to support health, we heard about the particular toll the year has taken:

1. **Black Coloradans are more concerned about the coronavirus than White Coloradans.**

- Nearly 9 out of 10 (88%) Black Coloradans think harm to the economy from COVID-19 is a serious problem; 64% think illness and deaths from the coronavirus are a serious problem.
- An overwhelming majority of Black Coloradans support proposals to address the coronavirus pandemic, including: providing free testing, providing the COVID-19 vaccine for free and requiring that all individuals wear a mask to prevent the spread of the virus.

2. **Black Coloradans are experiencing greater financial insecurity than their White counterparts.**
    - 37% of Black Coloradans are worried about losing their home because they can't pay their rent or mortgage, compared to 19% of White Coloradans.
    - 31% of Black Coloradans are worried about being able to afford food to feed their families, compared to 17% of White Coloradans.

3. **Black Coloradans are more likely to fear the police and to believe police violence and misconduct is a problem.**
    - 42% of Black Coloradans have felt afraid of police in the last year, compared to 14% of White Coloradans. 18% of Black Coloradans have had a negative experience with police in the last year.
    - A majority of all Coloradans (58%) think that Black Coloradans are more likely to be treated unfairly by police; 70% of Black Coloradans think that.
    - 63% of Black Coloradans believe police violence and misconduct is an extremely or very serious problem in Colorado, compared to 35% of White Coloradans.

These findings are a reminder that racism continues to impact Black communities' economic and physical health – and did so long before cell phones captured

footage for the rest of us. We will track this data again in 2021 to see how Black Coloradans' experiences and perceptions change over time.

Learn more about ***Pulse: The Colorado Health Foundation Poll*** and use our interactive dashboard to dig deeper into the data. Black Coloradans aren't alone in facing challenges this year; check out our other blog posts highlighting the experiences of Coloradans living on lower incomes and Latinx Coloradans.

TYPE

Blog

POST DATE

Dec 3, 2020