



**GREETINGS FROM THE
ECHO-LDPP ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM**

Dear Community,

In the past months, we have experienced a global pandemic, as well as reminders of the brutal consequences of institutionalized racism, persistent inequality, and disparity. We witness the long history of police and community violence in the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Philando Castile, Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Ahmaud Arbery, and many others, as well as the deaths of beloved elders, family, and community members from COVID-19. As we consider the impact of these events on our personal lives and our professional roles, we see how contexts influence oral health disparities.

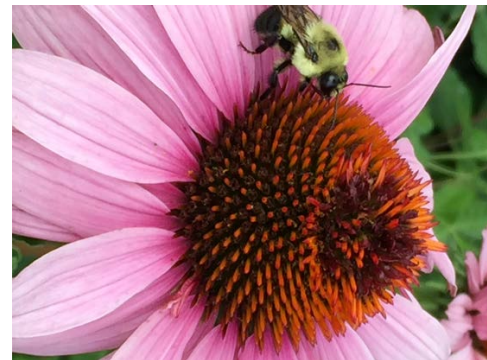
Contexts are the social, historical, political, cultural, and environmental circumstances that are implicated in housing, income, education, health, economic and social disparities. One cannot look at an individual disparity, such as a health or housing disparity, in isolation. It is important to examine the contexts or circumstances that influence the development of the disparity and to understand how it is sustained and how it can be changed. One of the ECHO-LDPP grant deliverables is to “identify contextual barriers to child/youth oral health by assessing families’ existing resources, capacities and challenges influencing access to oral health care; learning about the values, attitudes and oral health care practices of families; and integrating this knowledge in the design and delivery of program interventions.”

As the proposal was developed and written, and after funding and the launch of the LDPP, we were intentional about recognizing that social conditions are part of oral health disparities. This intentionality informed the strengths-based and culturally informed stance of the LDPP and program values for relationships, partnerships, caring, and service. Evidence of this stance is visible across the ECHO-LDPP service delivery systems: screening, oral health education, and field internship training. ECHO-LDPP does not sit in a vacuum, and program services are delivered in communities that experience the intergenerational consequences of trauma, racism, and inequality. The program balances the obligation to address oral health disparities by achieving grant deliverables and by acknowledging that the traumas of COVID-19 and institutionalized violence

affect the ECHO-LDPP community as well as our partner agencies and the communities that we serve.

The “Talking Circle”, held on June 5, represented a first step for the ECHO-LDPP community to come together to examine how the current unrest and the contexts that have produced it affect members of this work community. It offered an opportunity to be present to one another and to bear witness to the thoughts and feelings of participants. A second Talking Circle is planned to invite participants to consider how they might use this knowledge in translating thoughts/feelings into actions.

Traumatic circumstances give rise to growth opportunities and to personal and social change. The outcomes depend on the choices that each individual makes to direct thoughts/feelings into positive action. For example, an individual might think, “I am so enraged and saddened by what I see, that I want to join with others to express my feelings.” This awareness can lead to any number of actions: participate in a demonstration, join an advocacy group, engage in community organizing activities, join a justice rights organization, etc. When one becomes aware of thoughts/feelings, one can make choices about what to do (or not do) with the thoughts/feelings.



The members of the ECHO-LDPP community have demonstrated that each possesses a caring heart. It is this caring heart that is wounded and challenged by recent events and history. As individuals, each member of the ECHO-LDPP community possesses a unique life story or life narrative that influences individual triggers and responses to trauma and loss. We are overflowing with emotional and intellectual reactions.

As thoughts and feelings are labeled, focus and clarity can emerge and lead to actions and responses that are aligned with individual values, hopes, and aspirations.



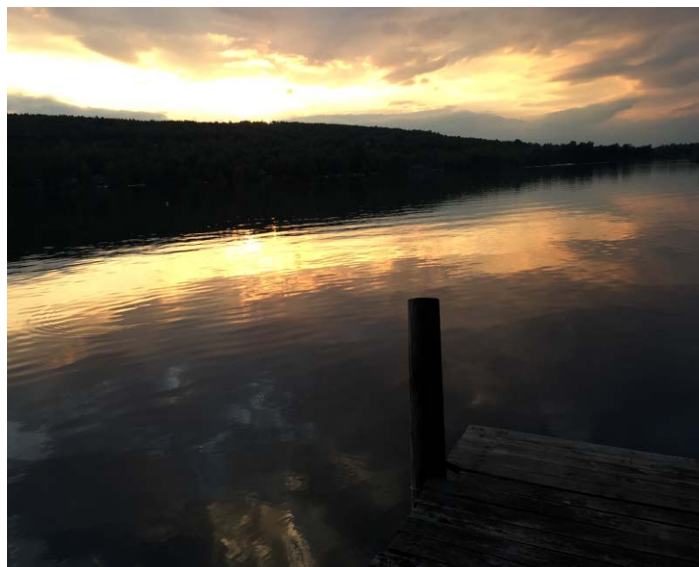
The possibility of individual choice, positive responses, and action creates the opportunity for any member of the community, who wishes to engage with issues at a deeper level, to pursue those efforts. This also creates a platform for the possibility of developing a life-long commitment to social justice and recognizing that this commitment can be expressed in different ways as life unfolds.

There is not one path to advocacy and justice, and freedom of choice allows one to select the path that is best for the individual circumstance. A person who examines reactions to suffering has the opportunity to better understand one's self and others, to develop new responses, to cultivate strengths, and to grow resilience. If we scratch the surface, we will find a story of suffering or loss within each individual. Every member of the community can tenderly and respectfully hold this knowledge, that all humans suffer, while trusting our thoughtful minds and caring hearts to guide us as we continue the work of addressing oral health disparities.

We send wishes for clarity, strength, and peace to all.

The ECHO-LDPP Administrative Team

- Dr. Rita Ledesma
- Dr. Ashley Munger
- Ms. Jacquelyn Ramos
- Ms. Gabby Cardenas
- Ms. Luz Reyes
- Dr. Allison Fuligni
- Dr. Monique Smith



President Covino: Message about George Floyd

ECHO-LDPP, as a member of the University community, acknowledges that the message from President Covino aligns with our values. We encourage all to review his letter.

Follow this link for the message: [President Covino's Link](#)

Congratulations Health Education Team!

The Health Education Team continues to move forward in achieving grant deliverables.

- Health Education curricula have been modified and are ready for public presentation on virtual platforms.
- Bryan Santamaria and the entire team worked on a lovely video that will be posted on our website. Each HE sends, "Una Palabra", to our community partners. We will alert you as soon as it is posted.
- Wendy Avila, Aby Munoz-Ramos and Jessica Sandez-Ruiz provided a presentation at the United American Indian Involvement, "Teen Hour" on June 4, 2020. Patrick Gaylican worked on the research and preparation of the Jeopardy game that was played with the UAI teens last week.
- Cabrina Nelson and Michelle Ilan will present at the United American Indian Involvement, "Toddler Time" gathering for parents/caregivers of children 0-5 years old on Wednesday, June 10, 2020.
- Team Leaders, Dalila Georgestone, Michelle Ilan and Wendy Avila offered two presentations on "Oral Health for Parents" on Thursday, May 28, 2020 for the Baldwin Park Unified School District (BPUSD) Parent Meeting in English (Dalila and Michelle) and Spanish (Wendy and Michelle).

The ECHO-LDPP community sends congratulations and gratitude to all who participated in and supported these efforts!

Congratulations



Great News!

Distribution of oral health supplies will begin soon, thanks to the efforts of Melissa Sanchez and Yvonne Razon. Melissa and Yvonne are preparing packages of supplies for Health Educators to pick up and prepare for distribution to agencies and stakeholders. It has taken a lot of work and effort to organize and coordinate this task. Our partners and the families, who receive supplies, join the entire ECHO-LDPP team in gratitude for your efforts. We will keep you posted on this important development.

CROSS CULTURAL CENTER is offering **HEALING SPACES** for the Cal State LA Community. Continue to check their website for updates on activities:

Community Healing Space

Thursday, June 11, 12 to 1:30 p.m.

[ZOOM LINK](#)

Meeting ID: 812 0280 4282

Password: BLM

Combating Anti-Blackness: A Teach-In

Monday, June 15, 4 to 5:30 p.m.

[ZOOM LINK](#)

Meeting ID: 882 3081 7206

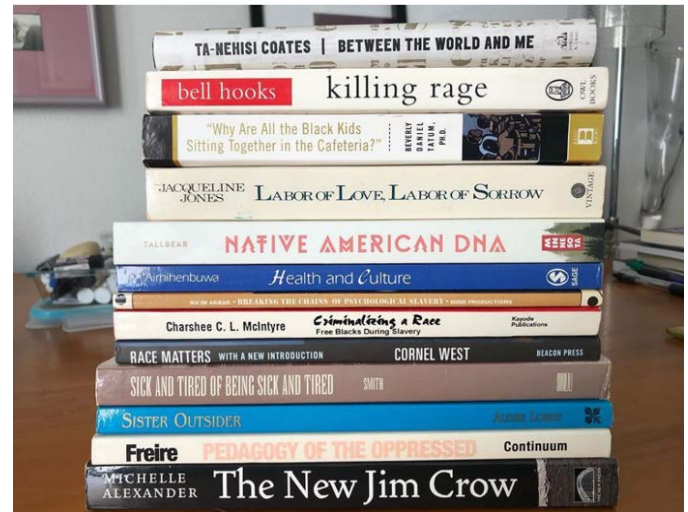
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Recommendations: Books and Films

Dr. Angela Cooke-Jackson offers excellent resources for deepening your knowledge about the social, political, cultural and historical contexts and to increase your understanding of the experiences of Black and Brown people. Her hope is to shift the understanding of what race, racism, and systematic oppression mean. She encourages people to pick a few books from this collection and to read them. They cover everything from health disparities in the United States and the histories of marginalization, *"Sick and Tired"* to the state of the

prison industry, *"The New Jim Crow Era"* to *"Killing Rage"* and *"Between the World and Me,"* Ta-Nehisi Coates's letter to his black son about white America.



Another sound resource she provides is her collection of recommended documentaries.



She encourages viewers to watch in the recommended order to provide a rich context of structural systems, race, racism, and oppression in the United States. As you watch, give yourself time to process the content. Read Camara Phyllis Jones's article, *'Level's of Racism: A Theoretic Framework and Gardener's Tale'* to ground your understanding.