

The Michael Brown Creating Resilient Outcomes through Wider Networks (C.R.O.W.N.) Act of 2021



FINDINGS

- Violence at the hands of law enforcement officers continues to be an ongoing problem in the United States.
- As a result of unwarranted force that often results in death or serious bodily injury, black people are more likely to be killed by law enforcement officers than any other race and are killed at higher rates by law enforcement officers than other races.
- Currently, no federally funded program exists to provide mental health support for victims of police brutality, the family members of individuals affected by police violence, or witnesses to police violence.
- In certain states, crime victims and their families can apply for assistance to pay for funeral costs, counseling, medical fees, and other expenses that occur due to crime. However, the vast majority of individuals who experience violence at the hands of law enforcement do not qualify for victim compensation funds.
- Publicly-funded services, including counseling or compensation, are rarely made available to family members of individuals who are injured or killed by law enforcement officers – even when law enforcement officers are suspected of being involved in crime.
- The failure to provide sufficient community-based services (such as supportive housing, assertive community treatment, mobile crisis units, peer support, and supportive employment) after individuals are injured, brutalized, or killed due to police violence would lead to lower rates of mental illness, trauma, and interactions with law enforcement.



EVIDENCE

Black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by police and one out of every 1,000 young black men will be killed by the police.

Police violence creates stress, which we know affects a range of health outcomes. Those are experiences that cause stress and that wear and tear the body systems of people of color that increase the allostatic load and cause weathering.

Police killings of unarmed black Americans are responsible for more than 50 million additional days of poor mental health per year among Black Americans.

Many states pay compensation to the dependents and families of violent crime victims. The requirements of cooperating with law enforcement and being “innocent” of wrongdoing, however, frequently bar victims of police violence from consideration.



How Congress Can Help:

- **Provide comprehensive mental health services and supports to assist individuals in communities and schools (including schools funded by the Bureau of Indian Education), dealing with traumatic experiences, grief, bereavement, risk of suicide, and violence, as a result of police violence.**
- **Implement school and community-based mental health programs that:**
 - Build awareness of individual, community, and intergenerational trauma as a result of witnessing or experience police violence;
 - Train staff and volunteers to identify, and screen for, signs of trauma exposure, mental health disorders, and risk of suicide in the wake of police violence;
 - Incorporate community interventions, family engagement, student supports, and intergenerational counseling that encourage the development of positive mental health, prevent mental health disorders, and diminish the impact of trauma resulting from police violence;
 - Provide technical assistance to schools or community-based organizations regarding the development of programs described in the preceding paragraphs;
 - Facilitate partnerships among families, students, education agencies, mental health and substance use disorder providers, family-based mental health and substance use disorder providers, child welfare providers, trauma networks, and health care providers; and
 - Establish mechanisms for individuals, families, and children who have witnessed or experienced police violence to report incidents of violence or plans to commit violence.
- **Hire, employ, train, and dispatch mental health professionals to provide services to individuals who have experienced or witnessed police violence, and are in a mental health crisis, may have a mental illness, and/or have been identified as having a mental illness by a first responder, staff, or volunteer of a community-based organization or school.**

