
Racism is an IVP Emergency!



SAFE STATES

A Call to Action: Racism is an Injury and Violence Prevention Emergency

A Statement from Safe States Executive Director Rich Hamburg, MPA

Our hearts at the Safe States Alliance are heavy. While it's difficult to fathom what we individually and as an organization can do, our mission at Safe States is clear – to strengthen the practice of injury and violence prevention – and be a leader and driving force in understanding and preventing injuries and violence. We take that responsibility seriously, particularly in tough times like this.

We acknowledge that generations-long social, economic and environmental inequities result in adverse health outcomes, including injuries and violence. We respect and value diverse life experiences and heritages, and that includes standing in solidarity with the African-American community against the systematic racism and oppression that occurs in this country. We stand alongside our African-American members and colleagues for change and accountability.

From an action standpoint, Safe States is committed to advocating for **public policies that promote diversity, inclusion and equity and will challenge systems and policies that create inequity, oppression and disparity**. Policymakers have a responsibility to protect the health and well-being of all vulnerable people, including women, children, and those who have been historically marginalized. Adding in adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), which include potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood, people within these populations are more likely to live in poverty, have poor access to education, live in substandard housing, and experience traumatizing events throughout their lives. These circumstances can lead to or exacerbate many adverse issues, including child abuse and neglect, domestic violence, and community violence.

We are committed to **maintaining an ongoing dialogue**. We must work to prevent violence before it ever occurs to ensure that all people have an opportunity to achieve economic, scholastic, and personal success throughout their lifetime.

We intend on doing our part to convene our members and partners to have meaningful dialogue, and urge all of you to reach out to friends and initiate thoughtful discussion, speak to your children, and think about what you can do to combat systematic racism. Our membership had already decided to focus our upcoming annual conference on advancing equity and strengthening prevention, but now more than ever we must act and be united in our ongoing efforts.

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