



There Can Be no Pride Until Black Lives Matter

Every June, CCYJ joins countless others in recognizing the achievements and contributions of the LGBTQ+ community and reflecting on this community's rich history of resiliency and advancing toward full civil and human rights. We join the greater community in celebrating Pride.

This year is different. Frankly, we are finding it difficult to celebrate in the midst of a global pandemic and persistent racism, emblemized by the brutal killings of Black people across this country. We are weary, grieving, and cognizant of the enormous impact these crises have on LGBTQ+ young people in systems of care--juvenile courts, in foster care, and homeless youth services.

This group of young people also face greater isolation with the shutdown resulting from COVID-19. The side effect of the Stay Home, Stay Healthy Order--while necessary to protect our health--has meant severe limitations on education, recreation, and socialization. For LGBTQ+ youth without either support in the home or a home at all, these can be lifelines. Isolation can lead to substance abuse, mental health challenges, and suicide.

LGBTQ+ youth of color not only face such isolation, they also continue to face disproportionate representation in systems and poorer outcomes. Of LGBTQ+ youth in juvenile justice facilities, 85 percent are youth of color,¹ which may follow from the fact that they are disproportionately targeted with school discipline policies and by police and have fewer competent community-based resources.² What is more, LGBTQ+ youth of color stay longer in systems and experience more violence and discrimination while in them.³

Black LGBTQ+ youth carry all of this *and* belong to a community whose members are all too often murdered by the police or civilian perpetrators who elude justice. For Black transgender women, the murder rate is more than seven times as high as the general population.⁴

That is why *there can be no Pride until Black Lives Matter, until Black Transgender Lives Matter*. We can no longer remain silent while the Black LGBTQ+ community oscillates between being targets of violence and existing at the margins of the advocacy community's conscience.

While we are not doing much celebrating this year, we are certainly redoubling our efforts to support LGBTQ+ youth. And we are [committing ourselves to centering anti-racism in this work](#). While we have enjoyed the parades and parties of the past and will again in the future, we are making Pride 2020 the Pride of listening to, reflecting on the experiences of, and planning for bold action in solidarity with Black LGBTQ+ young people.

To learn more about our work, join our virtual eQuality Convening on June 24th. Register [HERE](#).

¹ <https://www.lgbtmap.org/file/lgbtq-incarcerated-youth.pdf>

² <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBTQ-YOC-Social-Services-Jul-2019.pdf>

³ <http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/LGBTQ-YOC-Social-Services-Jul-2019.pdf>

⁴ <https://www.yesmagazine.org/social-justice/2019/11/12/black-trans-women-pay/>