



Campaign for  
Black Male  
Achievement



# **JOURNEY TO RADIANCE:** **HEALTH AND HEALING** **STRATEGIES**

POWERED  
BY



THE  
CALIFORNIA  
ENDOWMENT

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY • 2020**

*“Since launching at the Open Society Foundations in 2008, the Campaign for Black Male Achievement [CBMA] has supported a cross-section of individuals and organizations working on behalf of Black men and boys in a multitude of ways. The first health and healing seed was sown in December 2009, and we have since woven an ethos of holistic wellness into everything we do at CBMA. This shift has seeded systemic changes that will ensure health and healing is a priority within organizations and institutions directly impacting and influencing the lives of Black males and Black communities.”*

**- SHAWN DOVE, CEO, CAMPAIGN FOR BLACK MALE ACHIEVEMENT**

## **JOURNEY TO RADIANCE: HEALTH AND HEALING STRATEGIES LOVE. LEARN. LEAD.**

*Building a Beloved Community  
for Black Men and Boys*

### **Black Male Achievement Health and Healing Strategies**

Black Male Achievement Health and Healing Strategies (BMA HHS) launched in 2016 in the cities of Oakland and Sacramento, California, in partnership with the Oakland and Sacramento City Unified School Districts. Generous funding from The California Endowment and partnerships with community-based organizations, local residents, and thought leaders from across the country fuels the work of BMA HHS.

Under the leadership of Senior Director Dr. Phyllis Hubbard, BMA HHS expands CBMA's efforts to use a culturally responsive, healing-centered approach to improving health and wellness for Black male youth and the people who serve them.



BMA HHS engages and supports “the village” around Black males with the following four focus areas:

- Healing-centered engagement resources to support caregivers
- Wellness Mentoring Circles, which provide academic and developmental support to Black boys and young men of color while also providing training and career support for Black male mentor-facilitators
- Culturally responsive teacher training and professional development to improve staff engagement with Black boys and young men
- Strategic communications and asset-based narrative change resources to help BMA providers talk about their work with the most accurate and powerful language possible

### **BMA Health and Healing Strategies**

**(BMA HHS)** improves health outcomes for Black males by promoting self-empowerment and wellness education among BMA leaders. Journey to Radiance is a process of building self-awareness and utilizing healthy living to create a vibrant and thriving life. The first edition of the Journey to Radiance impact report shares the origins of CBMA’s focus on health and wellness; our vision for what

community healing can look like; and some of the challenges and opportunities we’ve encountered along the way. The report also amplifies the voices of our innovative community leaders, participants, and evaluators to share our findings, accomplishments, and recommendations to help leaders in the field of Black male achievement get started on their own Journeys to Radiance.

CBMA’s national expansion has taken root on the West Coast, with 17 percent of its membership based in California—the second largest local concentration of CBMA members in the country. Strong partnerships with the largest K-12 school districts for each targeted city (Oakland Unified School District and Sacramento City Unified School District) help the work thrive.



**OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
Community Schools, Thriving Students



*“...Unhealthy eating habits and lifestyles found in many communities of color stem far beyond food deserts and other socioeconomic issues. I wanted to directly address unresolved emotional trauma and present it as a deep underlying root cause that, unless properly processed, can jeopardize our success and prevent us from thriving...We have learned that health is much more than something that we do when we have the time. Health is how we live, work, and play. It is how we speak to each other and how we navigate difficult conversations.”*

- DR. PHYLLIS HUBBARD, SENIOR DIRECTOR, BMA HEALTH AND HEALING STRATEGIES

# IMPACT BY THE NUMBERS

Since its official launch in Spring 2016, CBMA Health and Healing Strategies has engaged **2,436** youth, educators, school district personnel, parents/guardians, youth practitioners and community members in various opportunities designed to build transformative leadership and **PROMOTE HEALTH, HEALING AND OVERALL WELLNESS** for Black men and boys, including, but not limited to, the following:

Facilitation of more than 135 Health and Healing workshops, seminars and retreats

135

Recruitment and training of 240 mentors

240

Engagement of 440 middle school boys in Wellness Mentoring Circles

440

Facilitation of informational workshops and caregiver retreats with 354 parents, grandparents and or guardians

354

Production of 13 BMA HHS podcasts and 2 webisodes containing Health and Healing demonstrations

13/2

Development of 27 BMA Health and Healing Strategies blogs and educational posts

27

## HHS Workshop participant overall post-assessment findings:



91%

MOTIVATED TO INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



82%

LEARNED SKILLS TO HELP REDUCE THE NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF STRESS AND TRAUMA

The numbers above offer a glimpse into the rich story of BMA HHS and its ability to access nearly 2500 individuals over three years. Engagement takes place through Health and Healing workshops, seminars, retreats; Wellness Mentoring Circles; dynamic online content; and informational sessions. 91% of workshop participants report feeling motivated to increase their physical activity while 82% say they gained skills to help them address and reduce the effects of stress and trauma.

CBMA is committed to measuring and understanding the impact of BMA HHS. During year two, CBMA worked with local evaluation partners, Innovation Bridge, to capture, document, and analyze impact. Innovation Bridge uses a methodology that “seeks to illuminate the complex dimensions of goodness” (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 1997, p. xvi), meaning they use an asset-based lens, departing from the dominant culture norm of documenting failure in communities of color.

# WHAT WORKS ENGINE

**The following summarizes the Health and Healing Strategies found to be most impactful within the implementation and evaluation of this initiative.**

**The practices highlighted may be applicable for individuals looking to begin or enhance their personal Journey to Radiance, as well as those supporting others on their paths to health and healing.**

## **CONFIRM SPECIFIC LANGUAGE**

**Wellness and narrative change begin with the introduction of acronyms, phrases, slogans, etc. that speak to health and healing.**

## **CREATE SAFE SPACE**

**Cultivating safe spaces is essential for the facilitation of meaningful healing.**

## **ALLOW PERMISSION FOR SELF-CARE**

**Self-awareness, and healing are cultivated through an assent in prioritization of overall wellness of self.**

## **CONNECT TO BODY**

**Whether it be through movement, breathing, or nutrition, programming that teaches participants how to listen and connect to their bodies is essential for emotional and mental balance.\***

## **BUILD COMMUNITY**

**Healing is not done in isolation, but as part of a collective. Explicit connections with the community promote health and healing in the places that young Black males live.**

## **ENGAGE ROLE MODELS**

**Incorporating intergenerational role models—youth, adults, and elders—is important toward re-imagining and affirming the greatness in Black males.**

\* Check out the Journey to Radiance Top 10 Health and Healing Strategies (page 25) for guidance on developing your own path to Radiance!

## Key Takeaways

- To expand BMA HHS within schools and districts they must secure buy-in from institutional partners at all levels, and streamline access to program participants.
- To change the narrative about Black males within school districts, White staff and school personnel must actively engage in and work to facilitate health and healing strategies to create healthier learning environments.
- Institutional decision makers must understand how practices around background checks impact some Black men's ability to be present. BMA HHS partners and participants have noted how the work around background check reform is incomplete and, in some ways, self-defeating.

# CALL TO ACTION

If you are interested in incorporating Health and Healing Strategies in your efforts to support Black male achievement, consider the following first steps:

- ➔ **JOIN** the Campaign for Black Male Achievement. Visit [www.cbma.org/join](http://www.cbma.org/join) to become a member.
- ➔ **SHARE** this report to begin a dialogue on health and healing.
- ➔ **PLEDGE** to actively engage in your own self care, beginning with the 10 Health and Healing Strategies on page 25 and promote those strategies among the young men you serve.
- ➔ **CELEBRATE** your successes on social media. #BMARadiant #LoveLearnLead #JourneytoRadiance

For additional information, resources and tools for supporting Black male achievement in your community, visit [www.cbma.org](http://www.cbma.org).





[www.blackmaleachievement.org](http://www.blackmaleachievement.org)