



## Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness

### **A Call for Racial Justice**

The Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness (SIPCW) stands with our community in this difficult time as we struggle with yet another senseless and tragic death of a Black person, George Floyd, by agents of law enforcement. These deaths have become all too familiar, and remain, as always, unacceptable. After Eric Garner's death, Staten Island community leaders and NYPD came together to work towards more equitable strategies like community policing. However, we all recognize that there remains much to be done to combat the systemic racism that persists in policing locally and nationwide. Police violence is a public health issue.

As a public health agency, SIPCW has been engaged in systems change work and is committed to go deeper to address racial injustice with our partners. Our work is rooted in the knowledge that the conditions that shape health extend far beyond personal behavior. We understand that the implicit bias that Black and Brown communities experience in every aspect of their lives from educational opportunities, housing, food access, delivery of healthcare, to law enforcement can be just as dangerous as extreme and overt acts of racism. We are able to connect the dots between the actions of Amy Cooper last week in Central Park to the murder of George Floyd in Minneapolis. Racism is a public health issue. One that is clearly being witnessed in the way COVID-19 is disproportionately impacting Black and Brown communities across the nation and in our borough.

Many of us are exhausted, heartbroken, and frustrated, but we are not in complete despair. We are at a pivotal point. The voices of our grassroots partners are strong, the willingness of organizations and government agencies to reflect and redesign is present. At this moment, we are hearing more people refusing to return to the "normal" of our everyday lives. We need a new normal where racial equity is realized and all children and families can thrive on Staten Island regardless of their skin color.

We encourage our partners to take this time with us to listen, educate ourselves, and amplify Black and Brown voices. As an organization that supports coalitions, we will

continue to provide our partners with a space to collaborate across sectors to create long term solutions and opportunities to advocate for policies that support the physical and mental health of Black and Brown communities.

Many partners have already reached out looking for resources. A multitude of excellent tools exist, here are two that the staff at SIPCW have found useful in centering equity in our work.

- [Racial Equity Tools](#) is designed to support individuals and groups working to achieve racial equity. This site offers tools, research, tips, curricula and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working toward justice at every level – in systems, organizations, communities and the culture at large.
- [Equity in the Center](#) works to shift mindsets, practices, and systems within the social sector to increase race equity.

SIPCW is committed to dismantling racism in Staten Island organizations. Join us and many community leaders in this effort to support partners in creating policies and spaces for the Black workforce to grieve, heal, and excel.

In solidarity,

### **Staten Island Partnership for Community Wellness**

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