



## **Speak to Your Health! Discrimination & Health in Genesee County**

Previous research in the U.S. has shown that, regardless of race, experiencing discrimination is bad for your health, though African Americans are more likely to experience and perceive racial discrimination. People who report experiencing discrimination rate their health as worse than those who have not experienced discrimination.\* Experiences of discrimination have been found to be related to poorer mental health, high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes. In addition to these health problems, perceived discrimination may also influence how willing patients' are to use health services, satisfaction with health services and how likely patients are to follow their health care providers' advice.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

The Speak to Your Health! Community Survey is a resource that can help us understand discrimination and health in Genesee County. The results of the survey indicate that:

- Over one third (38%) of African Americans in Genesee County report being ignored, treated rudely, or being talked down to because of their race. In contrast, about nine percent of white residents report these experiences.
- African Americans in Genesee County who report experiencing discrimination are more likely than whites to report feeling stressed or overwhelmed by problems and unexpected events.
- African Americans in Genesee County who report experiencing discrimination are also more likely to report symptoms of depression such as feeling lonely, sad, and losing interest in things.

### **WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

Learn more about the causes and consequences of racial discrimination in our society and work to reduce it. Join with members of your neighborhood, place of worship, or workplace to create safe and healthy communities for everyone. Take good care of your own health by eating well, exercising and getting enough sleep.

### **WHERE CAN YOU GET MORE INFORMATION?**

Greater Flint Health Coalition:

Undoing Racism Workshops (810) 232-2228

African American Family Resource Information Ct. & Network (AFRICAN) (810) 237-4426

Flint Area Citizens To End Racism (FACTER), (810) 244-4140

Flint Odyssey House Health Awareness Center (810) 767-1157

Genesee County Health Department, REACH 2010 Program (810) 257-3194

The Community Survey is funded by a grant to the Prevention Research Center of Michigan (PRC/MI) from the CDC, and by the Genesee Co. Health Dept. and the Greater Flint Health Coalition. To see the survey results and learn more about the PRC/MI, visit <http://www.sph.umich.edu/prc>.

\*Most studies of discrimination and health are based on self-reported experiences and perceptions. For example, see: G. C. Gee, A. Ryan, D. J. Laflamme, J. Holt. *Self-Reported Discrimination and Mental Health Status Among African Descendants, Mexican Americans, and Other Latinos in the New Hampshire REACH 2010 Initiative: The Added Dimension of Immigration*. Am J Public Health, Oct **2006**; **96**: 1821 - 1828.