

CLASP

Policy solutions that work for low-income people

Nia West-Bey
Senior Policy Analyst, Youth Policy

Clelie Choute
Raw Uncut Woman

Listening to Young Parents: The Multigenerational Making of Mental Health

May 20, 2020

About CLASP

CLASP is a national, nonpartisan, anti-poverty nonprofit advancing policy solutions for low-income people. We develop practical yet visionary strategies for reducing poverty, promoting economic opportunity, and addressing barriers faced by people of color. With 50 years' experience at the federal, state, and local levels, we're fighting back in today's threatening political climate while advancing our vision for the future.

CLASP's Mental Health Work

- Federal Policy Analysis and Advocacy
- Youth and Young Adult Mental Health
- Maternal Mental Health
- Technical Assistance
- Learning Communities
- Advisory Board



Mental Health Awareness Month



- [New Resources](#)
- [Instagram Profiles](#)
- Webinars
 - Join us **May 27 at 3:00 ET** for a webinar entitled, [“How the History of Racism is Negatively Affecting our Response to the Overdose Epidemic in All Communities.”](#)

Today's Presenters



- Presentation 1: Looking at Life Different

– Nia West-Bey, CLASP

- Presentation 2: Youth Stepping Forward

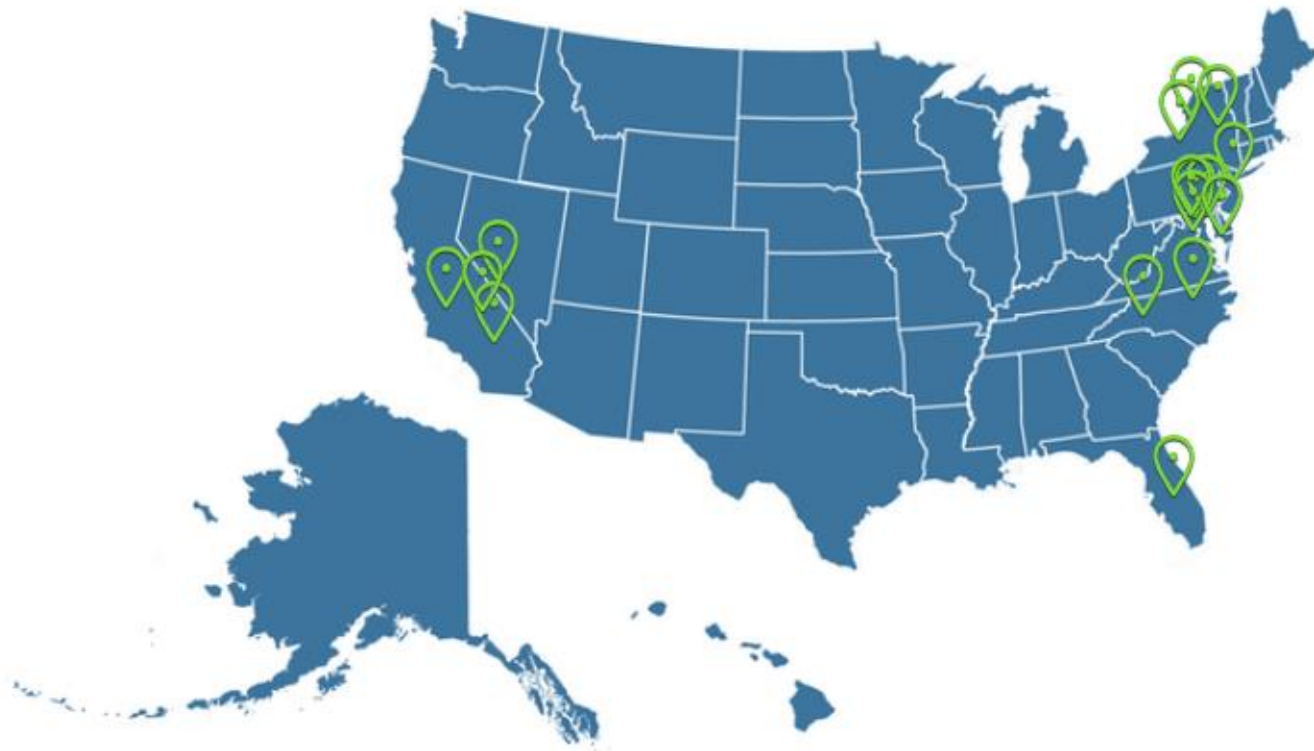
– Clelie Choute, Raw Uncut Woman/
CLASP Mental Health Advisory
Board



Logistics

- Share questions and comments in the chat box
 - We'll come back to them at the end
- Have your phones ready for text/online polls
 - We'll also drop the poll links in the chat box
- We will send out the recording and slides
 - Will include live links to report and citations

Where are you joining from today?



🗨️ When poll is active, respond at PollEv.com/youthteam426

📱 Text **YOUTHTEAM426** to **22333** once to join

What is one thing that you're hoping to get out of today's webinar?

“audrey mitchell ”

“What to know this to help families through this pandemic?”

“Strategy to assist today's youth”

“Strategies to help families”

“How to help students who do not have supportive adults at home.”

“NY”

“Newburgh, Y”

“Better engaging and empowering young adult parents as leaders and advocates for their communities.”

“Ideas on how to support my students who are parents.”

CLASP

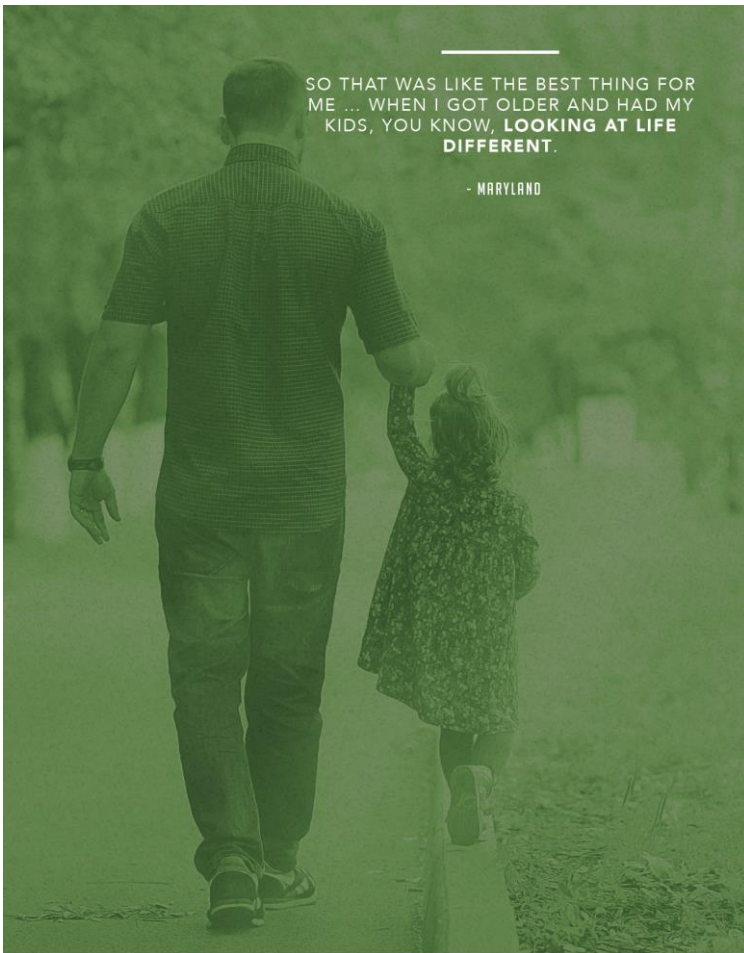
Policy solutions that work for low-income people

Nia West-Bey

Senior Policy Analyst, Youth Policy

Looking at Life Different: Equitable Mental Health Supports for Young Adult Parents

Overview



- In their own Words: Who are Young Parents?
- Trauma and Chronic Stress: What are the Challenges?
- Equitable Supports: What are the Needs?
- Policy and Practice Recommendations

Focus Group Participants

- Conversations held in 2017 and 2018
- Demographics
 - Rural and urban African American young parents (NC, AL)
 - urban Native young parents (CO, MD)
 - Latina young parents (TX, CA)
 - Ages 16 to 24
 - Most were mothers, one young father
- Recruited in partnership with community-based organizations:
 - serving youth experiencing homelessness
 - supporting opportunity youth to earn their GEDs
 - offering cultural, health, and practical supports to Native youth

In their own words: Who are young parents?



PARENT IDENTITY

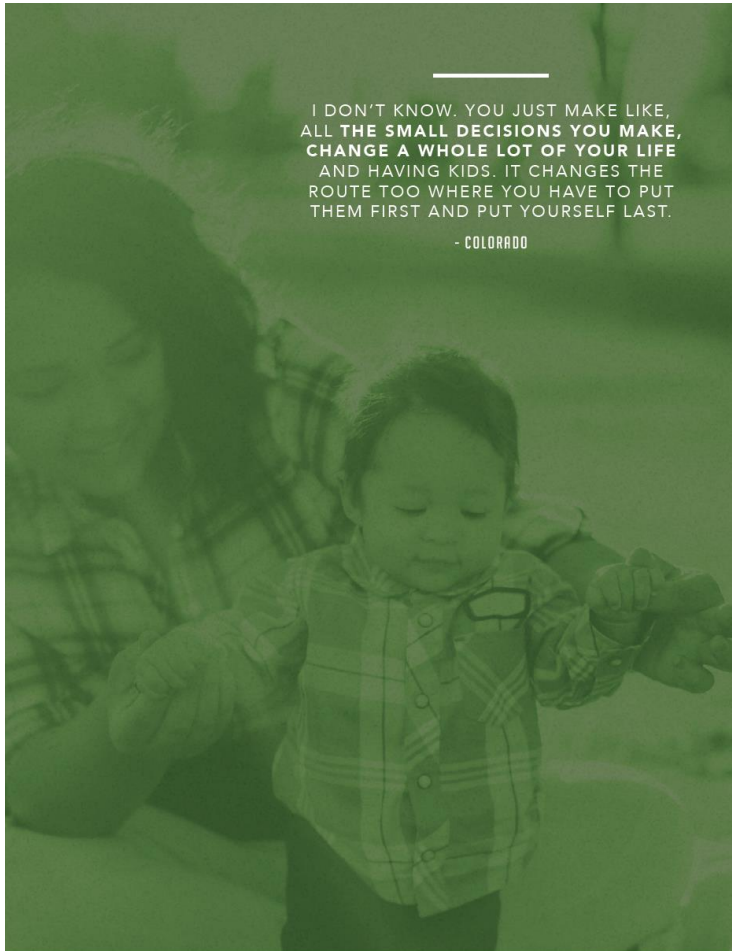
This identity changing episode forces a renegotiation of social roles; new parents become providers of care rather than recipients.



Everybody goes through different things, but I feel like women generally are strong because we deal with a lot of things growing up, especially being young moms, being single mothers. You gotta be strong to be able to take it. You have to be strong enough to take it. Not everybody is strong enough to take it.

ALABAMA

In their own words: Kids Change You



CHANGE

Young parents described the need to put their children's well-being ahead of their own, in everything from appearance to the way they make decisions about housing, education, career goals, and jobs.

In their own words: Wanting Better

...YEAH, I WANTED SOMETHING BETTER FOR MY **CHILD AND NOT SLEEPING IN CONCRETE**, AND NOT GOING TO A HOMELESS SHELTER, AND HAVE MY BABY THERE, AND WORRY ABOUT WHAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN. AND SO I HAD TO CHOOSE. AND I ENDED UP GETTING TO THEIR PROGRAM.

- TEXAS



WELL, I GUESS IN A WAY, **IT MAKES ME WANT TO GET MY SHIT TOGETHER**, SO MY KIDS WON'T HAVE TO GROW UP WITH A HALF-ASS PARENT, OR WITH A HALF-ASS PARENT, OR WITH A PARENT THAT JUST DOESN'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE DOING, AND HE ENDS UP HURTING THE KIDS IN THE END. A PARENT THAT JUST, LIKE, TURNS THEIR BACK ON THEIR KIDS WHEN THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO BE THE ONES THERE.

- TEXAS



Trauma and Chronic Stress: Infant Mortality

“

Well, when my daughter passed away, I shut down I was so angry at everything. I was so angry at the doctors at the—at everything. I shut down, and it really didn't get me nowhere, and made me lose my job, and made me really, I guess, what the doctors classified within psychotic. And I had to go and spend a few days at a hospital because of what was going on.

TEXAS



DEATH RATE

The post-neonatal death rate is up to 3 times higher for parents age 24 and under compared to parents ages 25 to 29.

Trauma and Chronic Stress: Environmental Stress



ENVIRONMENTAL STRESS

Parents described their fears about their children going outside to play unsupervised, checking the area, and fears that the external environment would undermine their parenting efforts.

I DON'T WANT TO RAISE HIM IN BIRMINGHAM; I DO NOT. I MEAN, THE WAY YOU RAISE YOUR CHILD IS THE WAY THEY'RE GOING TO BE REGARDLESS OF THEIR ENVIRONMENT, BUT I MAY RAISE HIM TO BE A GOOD MAN, BUT IT'S STILL SOMEBODY ELSE THAT'S RAISED DIFFERENTLY THAT'S GOING TO LOOK AT MY SON A CERTAIN WAY. **THEY MAY WANT TO HARM HIM, OR MAY PUT HIM IN A POSITION THAT HE MAY HAVE TO HARM SOMEBODY, SO.** I JUST WANT TO GET HIM OUT OF BIRMINGHAM HONESTLY. I PLAN ON BE GOING SOMEWHERE BY THE TIME HE'S 18 MONTHS OLD.

- ALABAMA

Trauma and Chronic Stress: Dreams Deferred

“

...being able to be on my own is like the hardest, because I thought it was going to be, not easy, but I didn't think it was going to be this much work to just continue, like, each day instead of, like, back then it was like, oh a month's over—you know, like, we're all thinking about the future, and now we're, like, we got to think about the day and then prepare for the next day. You know, we can't even think about the future. We have to think about the present and try to get to another day. So that's pretty much all.

CALIFORNIA

Trauma and Chronic Stress: Policy and Program Barriers



POLICY & PROGRAM BARRIERS

Key barriers identified by young parents included health insurance covered benefits as well as several structural barriers to employment.

“

Just even for, 'cause I wanted to have a water birth, and the insurance just doesn't cover that. You have to pay out of your own pocket... Yeah, they were saying things, the Medicaid covered for birth. Like, I was trying to have one. At first, we were talking about having it at my own place, like a midwife, but that didn't work. The insurance didn't work with a midwife, so I had to actually go to the hospital and give birth there.

TEXAS

IF THEY'RE TRYING TO SUPPORT, YOU KNOW, TEEN MOMS, BECAUSE I KNOW THOSE ARE THE ONES THAT NEED THE HELP THE MOST AND BECAUSE THEY CAN'T WORK FULL TIME... IF IT WAS EASIER, YOU KNOW, I COULD GO FIND MYSELF, YOU KNOW, NOT HAVING TO BE 18 OR I COULD GO OUT AND LOOK FOR A PART-TIME—NOT PART-TIME—FULL-TIME JOBS, YOU KNOW, BECAUSE I CAN'T GO TO SCHOOL. BECAUSE I HAVE A CHILD, YOU KNOW. **I HAVE A CHILD THAT I HAVE TO PROVIDE FOR, SO THAT'S THE KIND OF HELP I THINK WOULD BE REALLY HELPFUL.**

- CALIFORNIA

SHE'S FROM MEXICO... SHE CAN'T FIND A JOB THAT EASY, AND SHE HAS A KID—SO, YOU KNOW, **HOW IS SHE SUPPOSED TO PROVIDE FOR HER BABY IF SHE CAN'T GET A JOB**, BECAUSE SHE SIMPLY DOESN'T—SHE'S NOT FROM HERE. AND IT'S ACTUALLY HARDER ON IMMIGRANTS, SO THAT WOULD HELP, YOU KNOW, THEY COULD GET JOBS WITHOUT HAVING TO NEED THAT.

- CALIFORNIA

Equitable Supports: What are the Needs?

Co-parenting: Highly valued, poorly supported

“

I was actually in their housing program for young parents, young mothers. Sometimes the fathers can't get in the program, depending on their age... But the way I did it was I had to leave. Sadly, the father of my child had to be in the streets for me to be able to get in the program. And when I got in the program, I basically told them that I have seriously PTSD. I cannot be left alone in an apartment by myself because I will freak out... So I was able to ask the landlord and the people of the program to see if he qualified, and eventually he did qualify for the program. So we were both able to get into the apartment.

TEXAS

Equitable Supports: What are the Needs?

Supportive Community: It takes a Village

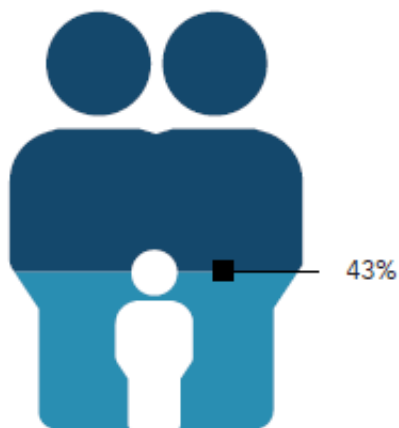
“

And that small little, you know, apartment complex—it's so family oriented. Like when you find that like neighbors are watching you know watching your kid when you know I'm trying to pick up her clothes. My daughter one time had went to the parking lot without me knowing right and cars are coming fast. Someone said hey M- your mom is going to spank you and she ran and I'm like oh my God thank you so much. I got you I know, I know you know like seeing that like oh I got your back don't worry about it. You know that family oriented you know.

CALIFORNIA

Equitable Supports: What are the Needs?

Meeting Immediate Needs: Building a Cushion



EQUITABLE SUPPORTS

Only 14% of young parents receive housing assistance, and less than 5% receive child care assistance, TANF, transportation assistance, or general assistance. A full 43% of young parents do not receive any public benefits at all.

- Positive Energy, Safety, Support
- Child Care
- Resources

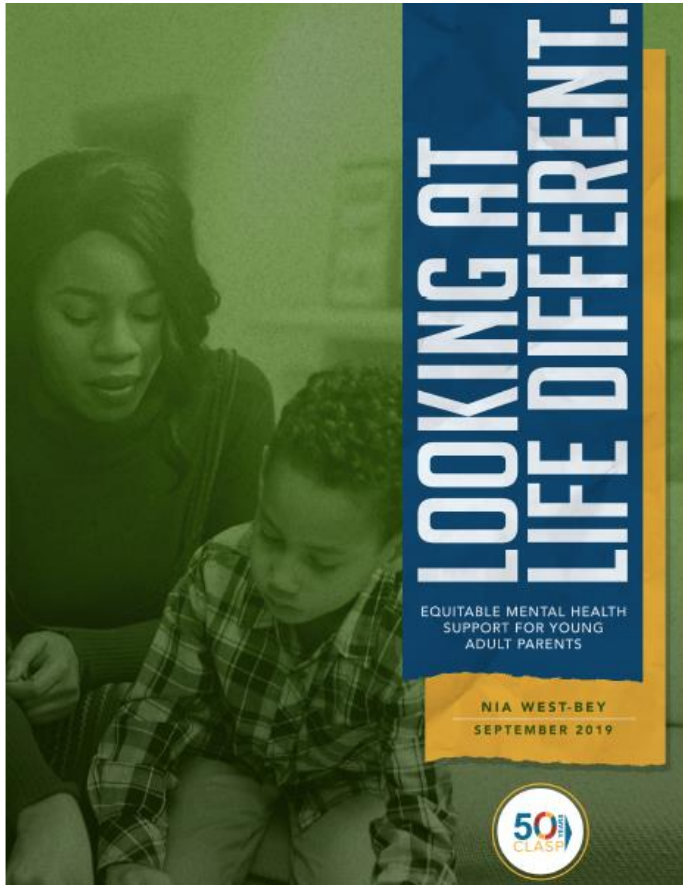
Policy and Practice Recommendations

- Recognize young parents' role as parents as an asset to be affirmed.
- Eliminate programmatic and policy barriers to co-parenting.
- Recognize the importance of choices around prenatal care, birth, and post-partum care through an equity and cultural-relevance lens.
- All systems that support young parents must be trauma informed.

Policy and Practice Recommendations

- An economic justice agenda is core to a mental health agenda for young parents.
- Maximize young parents' access to public benefits and supports
- Expand investments in federal programs that reconnect opportunity youth to education, employment, and service pathways.
- Employ community-wide strategies that build social capital and address the structural factors that foster community violence.

Contact Information



Nia West-Bey
Senior Policy Analyst-
Youth Policy

nwestbey@clasp.org

[Full Report](#)

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**BREAKING CYCLES OF
INTERGENERATIONAL
TRAUMA AMONGST FAMILIES
OF COLOR**

Clelie Choute

Raw Uncut Woman

Raw Uncut Woman

Raw Uncut Woman is a local non-profit organization based in Detroit, MI with an objective to bring cognizance of perinatal and post-natal anxieties to present day society. Its work ranges from eliminating barriers and stigmas in order to overcome postpartum obstacles, to providing resources and aid for young women of color and collecting local qualitative data for local institutions looking to improve our communities.

Overview

- Defining Intergenerational Trauma
 - Youth and their Families
 - Experiences vs. Statistics
 - Evidence based data
 - Focus Groups
- Policy Recommendations/Best Practices

What is intergenerational trauma?

Transmission of mental and historical
oppression along with its negative
consequences.

How is it passed from generation to generation between family members?

- Inheritance
- Representation
- Lack of cognizance of the
need for mental health care

What are the youth saying
about the influence of their
parent's decisions—in their
life?

Why families of color are more
susceptible to trauma?

- Youth say parents ARE at the center of their decision making
- Families of color living in poverty tend to have less viable resources

Experience vs. Statistics

- Why lived experience tends to be more conclusive for data
- How statistics are manipulated when community members are not involved in the process

Evidence-based data that correlates mental health care with raising children

- Youth say parents are at the center of their decision making
- Families of color living in poverty tend to have less viable resources

Focus groups/Living Room

Link-Ups

- Three focus groups were held in Detroit, Houston and Atlanta metro areas
- 2 “Living Room link-ups” were hosted in Detroit with our advocacy members and five community members to discuss ideas for policy solutions and community engagement

Parents Speak-Up: “If I knew better, I would have done better”

- Parents open up about their struggles and what they wish they had to improve their parenting skills
- Mothers compare and contrast the social struggles their daughters are facing to their own upbringing

Policy Recommendations

- Building a community initiative for parents and pre-teen and teenage youth to have open dialogue
 - Provide funding for local non-profits in affected communities to create a peer advocacy program for youth
 - Ensuring parents are utilizing benefits they qualify for by improving data tracking and community outreach
- Encouraging DHHS to partner up with local organizations to produce literature on home-front strategies for young parents

Placing and Improving Better Practices Amongst Families

- Encouraging willing parent-child participants to give insight on strategic plans for parental relationships

Contact Information

Clelie Choute

Founder of Raw Uncut Woman
rawuncutwoman@yahoo.com

Questions?



Respond at PolleEv.com/youthteam426

Text **YOUTHTEAM426** to **22333** once to join, then text your message

What is one thing that you learned today that will change your work going forward?

