

Strengthening the Capacity of the HIV Prevention Workforce



Key Strategies and Community-Driven Approaches to Addressing Incarceration, HIV, and Black Women in DC



A SERIES FROM THE EFFI BARRY TRAINING INSTITUTE

Strengthening the Capacity of the HIV Prevention Workforce

Effi Barry
Training
Institute

About This Series

The Effi Barry Training Institute (EBTI), led by HealthHIV, equips HIV service providers, community organizations, and public health professionals in DC with the tools to advance equitable HIV prevention and care. Through capacity building assistance, the EBTI provides resources to support program implementation, workforce development, and community engagement.

The “Strengthening the Capacity of the HIV Prevention Workforce” series addresses topics such as:

- ▶ Removing barriers to care
- ▶ Implementing trauma-informed policies, reentry support, and community-driven interventions
- ▶ Recruiting, training, and retaining peer workers
- ▶ Engaging young people (ages 13-24) in HIV prevention efforts

The Series includes these resource materials:

1. Applying Status Neutral Approaches to End the HIV Epidemic in DC
2. Key Strategies and Community-Driven Approaches to Addressing Incarceration, HIV, and Black Women in DC
3. Recruiting and Retaining Peers
4. Increasing HIV Knowledge Among Youth by Engaging the HIV Prevention Workforce

Table of Contents

Supporting Black Women Impacted by Incarceration and HIV in DC.....	3
Local Resources for Black Women in DC.....	7
Effi Barry Training Institute Resources	8
References	9

Supporting Black Women Impacted by Incarceration and HIV in DC



This guide provides policymakers, healthcare providers, advocates, and community organizations with strategies to address the overlapping crises of incarceration, HIV, and racial disparities affecting Black women in Washington, DC. It highlights the systemic challenges these women face, shares a personal narrative to illustrate their experiences, and presents actionable community-driven approaches to improve health and reentry outcomes.

A Crisis at the Intersection of Health and Justice

80% 8 in 10 new HIV diagnoses among women in DC are Black.

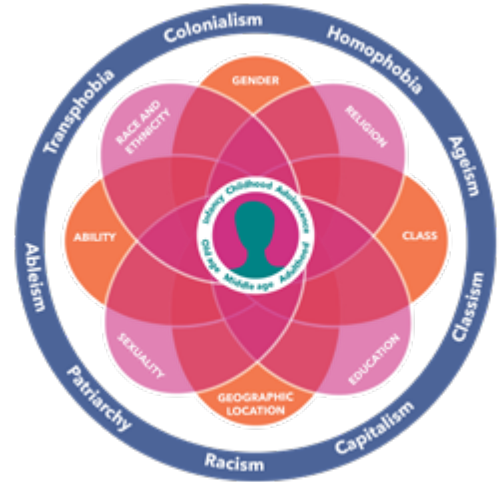
Washington, DC, faces a crisis where Black women represent 79.6% of incarcerated women and account for **8 out of 10** new HIV diagnoses among women.¹ This reflects a system that criminalizes poverty, disproportionately targets Black communities, and perpetuates cycles of stigma and structural racism.

Systemic inequities—poverty, housing instability, and limited education—lead to over-policing and criminalization of health conditions and social vulnerabilities.² Once incarcerated, Black women struggle with healthcare access, and upon release, barriers to healthcare, housing, and employment increase recidivism.³ This fact sheet highlights community-driven solutions to empower Black women and dismantle systemic barriers.

1. Kaiser Family Foundation. (2020). *HIV and the Black community: Key facts*. Retrieved from <https://www.kff.org/hivaids>
2. U.S. Department of Justice. (2016). *Incarceration rates by race and gender in the United States*. Retrieved from <https://www.bjs.gov>
3. Sims, L. M., & Brown, A. J. (2020). Trauma-informed care in correctional facilities: The missing link in health outcomes for incarcerated women. *Public Health Reports*, 135(6), 728–735.

Key Challenges and Community-Driven Strategies in Addressing Incarceration, HIV, and Black Women in DC

Black women in DC experience overlapping systemic inequities that link incarceration, HIV, and racial disparities. Structural neglect, stigma, and inadequate resources perpetuate these challenges, making incarceration a public health crisis. Addressing these systemic barriers requires targeted, community-driven strategies that provide support at every stage—from incarceration to re-entry and long-term stability.



Key Challenges

1. Incarceration as a Public Health Crisis

- ▶ Black women in DC are incarcerated at disproportionate rates.
- ▶ Incarceration exacerbates HIV, trauma, and mental health disparities.

2. Re-entry Disrupts Health Outcomes

- ▶ 80% of formerly incarcerated Black women experience HIV treatment interruptions.
- ▶ Lack of stable housing and employment increases recidivism and health risks.

3. HIV and Incarceration are Intertwined by Stigma

- ▶ Dual stigma delays HIV diagnoses and treatment.
- ▶ Fear and discrimination prevent access to care and resources.

4. Lack of Trauma-Informed Care

- ▶ 70% of incarcerated women report trauma, but few DC facilities provide trauma-informed care.
- ▶ Untreated trauma increases mental health struggles and recidivism risks.

5. Investing in Black Women Strengthens Communities

- ▶ Peer advocacy networks increase healthcare engagement by 60%.
- ▶ Community-based programs reduce recidivism and improve long-term outcomes.

TANYA'S STORY: RESILIENCE AND RE-ENTRY

Tanya, a 32-year-old Black woman, was diagnosed with HIV while incarcerated in DC. While she received initial treatment, her release brought overwhelming challenges—her housing was gone, her Medicaid had expired, and she had no access to mental health care. Struggling to refill her medication and find stable shelter, she faced constant setbacks that deepened her anxiety and isolation.

After months of navigating fragmented systems, Tanya connected with a peer advocacy program that changed her trajectory. A mentor helped her re-enroll in Medicaid, access transitional housing, and connect with mental health services. With stable care and support, Tanya secured a job and began using her story to advocate for other women facing similar barriers.

Her journey highlights the transformative impact of community-driven solutions, proving that with the right resources, re-entry can be a pathway to empowerment rather than a cycle of struggle.



Community-Driven Strategies

To combat these challenges, holistic and community-led strategies must focus on stabilizing re-entry, expanding healthcare access, and reducing stigma.

1. Re-entry Support

- ▶ Coordinated access to housing, healthcare, and employment eases reintegration.

2. Medicaid Expansion & Mobile Clinics

- ▶ Ensuring continuous care prevents treatment interruptions.

3. Justice Navigators

- ▶ Personalized case management and resource connections support successful re-entry.

4. Peer Advocacy Networks

- ▶ Formerly incarcerated Black women mentor and empower others navigating re-entry.

5. Trauma-Informed Training

- ▶ Training correctional and healthcare staff to provide trauma-responsive care improves mental health support.

6. Public Awareness and Stigma Reduction

- ▶ Storytelling campaigns amplify lived experiences, reduce stigma, and reshape public perception.

By implementing these strategies, we can dismantle barriers, improve health outcomes, and build a future of justice and equity for Black women in DC.

Moving Forward

- ▶ **Expand Medicaid coverage** for justice-involved individuals to ensure uninterrupted healthcare.
- ▶ **Increase funding for reentry programs** that address housing, employment, and health services.
- ▶ **Mandate trauma-informed training** for correctional and healthcare staff.
- ▶ **Develop peer-led advocacy networks** that support formerly incarcerated Black women.
- ▶ **Invest in community-based initiatives** that provide direct resources and long-term support.



By prioritizing these systemic strategies, we can break cycles of incarceration, improve health outcomes, and advance equity for Black women in DC.

Local Resources for Black Women in DC

Housing and Re-entry Support

- ▶ **Homes for Hope**
Affordable housing and case management.
www.homesforhopeinc.org
- ▶ **Voices for a Second Chance**
Re-entry services, mental health, and jobs.
www.vscdc.org
- ▶ **The National Reentry Network for Returning Citizens**
Employment, housing, and mental health support.
www.thenationalreentrynetwork.org
- ▶ **Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs (MORCA)**
Employment, health, education, and housing assistance.
communityaffairs.dc.gov
- ▶ **Welcome Home Reentry Program**
Mentoring and employment support.
www.catholiccharitiesdc.org
- ▶ **Together We Bake**
Workforce training and personal development for returning citizens.
www.togetherwebake.org

Healthcare and HIV Support

- ▶ **The Women's Collective (TWC)**
HIV and AIDS care and prevention.
www.womenscollective.org
- ▶ **HealthHIV's Empower Program**
HIV and STI prevention and care for Black women.
healthhiv.org/empower/
- ▶ **DC Health's Black Women's Health Initiative**
Sexual health resources and advocacy.
www.dchealth.dc.gov
- ▶ **Us Helping Us, People Into Living, Inc.**
HIV testing, treatment, and prevention for Black communities.
www.uhupil.org

Advocacy and Empowerment

- ▶ **The Safe Sisters Circle**
Legal representation and support for survivors of domestic violence
www.spurlocal.org
- ▶ **Black Women's Health Imperative**
Health advocacy and education for Black women.
www.bwhi.org
- ▶ **Community Family Life Services (CFLS)**
Mental health counseling and family support.
www.cflsdc.org
- ▶ **Mamatoto Village**
Support for maternal health and reproductive justice.
www.mamatotovillage.org

Effi Barry Training Institute Resources

The Effi Barry Training Institute offers other valuable resources to help strengthen the HIV Prevention workforce such as:

- ▶ Training library with live and self-paced webinars, toolkits, and resources
- ▶ Capacity Connection monthly newsletter
- ▶ Rooted in Wellness podcast series
- ▶ Technical assistance

e-Learning Modules

Breaking Barriers: HIV Awareness, Prevention, and Advocacy for Black Women and Girls

This webinar delves into the context and state of the HIV epidemic, different forms of PrEP and PrEP formulations, how PrEP is utilized, side effects of PrEP use, and barriers to accessing methods of HIV prevention and treatment. The faculty will present case studies to illustrate these topics, and will also provide strategies for implementing biomedical interventions with the goal of furthering health equity.

<https://effibarryinstitute.org/tools-resources/modules/>

Black Women's Health Across the Lifespan Part 1: Black Adolescent & Young Women: Sex Positivity and Healthy Relationships

Black adolescent and adult women in the U.S. are disproportionately affected by HIV, STIs, COVID-19, intimate partner violence, stigma, and poor maternal and child health outcomes. The impact of these inequities on Black adolescent and adult women can accumulate across the lifespan, undermining their overall health outcomes.

<https://effibarryinstitute.org/tools-resources/resources-directory/>

Podcasts

A podcast series dedicated to exploring holistic approaches to health and well-being. Join us as we delve into topics such as trauma, HIV, mental wellness, and the social determinants of health, all to help you cultivate a balanced and thriving life.

<https://effibarryinstitute.org/podcast/rooted-in-wellness/>



Technical Assistance

If you prefer a more hands-on, interactive approach, HealthHIV also offers one-on-one capacity building services to support organizations in the Fee-for-Service business process; basic HIV service competencies; advanced skills in health care systems, data and health informatics; high-impact prevention programs, including biomedical; and emerging evidence-based or informed approaches through a series of group-level trainings, boot camps, community forums, and individual consultation.

To request technical assistance directly from HealthHIV's EBTI, beyond the capacity building prescribed by your Program Officer, please submit a Technical Assistance Request form.

<https://effibarryinstitute.org/ta-request/>

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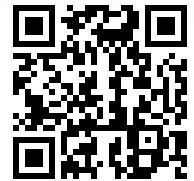
Effi Barry Training Institute

EffiBarryInstitute.org

The Effi Barry Training Institute, led by HealthHIV, provides training and technical assistance to support current and prospective HAHSTA grantees and community-based organizations. The Institute strengthens the capacity of the HIV care and prevention workforce to optimally plan, implement, and sustain high-impact HIV prevention (HIP) and HIV care interventions and strategies. Capacity building offerings also cover a wide range of content areas including HIV care and treatment, mental health, faith-based community engagement, stigma reduction, trauma-informed care, healthcare access, and more.



Organizations interested in tailored Capacity Building Assistance (CBA) can scan the QR code or visit HealthHIV.salsalabs.org/cba/index.html to submit a request.



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HealthHIV

HealthHIV.org

HealthHIV is a national non-profit organization advancing public health through medical and consumer education, capacity building, health services research, advocacy, and communications. Based in Washington, D.C., HealthHIV offers training and certification programs, technical assistance for healthcare providers and community organizations, and capacity building to address organization sustainability, leadership development, harm reduction, and health equity. To learn more about HealthHIV's capacity building programs, scan the QR code or visit HealthHIV.org.



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