

HARDCOPY INFORMED CONSENT
Informed Consent to Participate in a Research Study

Title of the Research Project: Attitudes Toward Seeking Mental Health Services among Young African American Same-Sex-Oriented Men

Name of Principal Investigator: Anthony E. Fox, MS

Phone Number of Principal Investigator: 601-672-4979

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Anthony E. Fox, a Ph.D. student at Walden University in Counseling, Education, and Supervision, is researching the attitudes toward seeking mental health services among young African American gay and bisexual males between the ages of 18 – 26 years old. The purpose of your participation in this research is to help the researcher examine if attitudes towards seeking counseling services along with current civil unrest, adverse childhood trauma, and COVID-19 are factors that may predict intent to seek counseling services among African American gay and bi-sexual self-identified young men between the ages of 18 and 26 in the Washington, DC Eligible Metropolitan Area (EMA), cities along the Interstate 95 corridor (New York City, NY, Philadelphia, PA, and Baltimore MD) and one southern city (Atlanta, GA). The results of this study will first increase my knowledge base on some of the attitudes toward seeking mental health services that may exist among this targeted community. Secondly, how these attitudes toward seeking counseling, adverse childhood trauma, current civic unrest, and COVID- 19 may impact service utilization. Also, examining contributing factors that are associated with behaviors that can be associated with the stated problem noted for this study. Lastly, it should enhance and further increase the knowledge of counseling education and supervision (CES) professionals on developing culturally and linguistically appropriate services, including outreach for this specific community. You were invited as a possible participant in this study because you meet the inclusion criteria of being between the ages of 18-26 years old, a self-identified gay and bisexual individual and your gender identity is male. Participation in this study is voluntary and there is no compensation. I am looking for approximately 100 individuals to participate

B. PROCEDURES

If you agree to participate in this research study, the following will occur:

You will obtain a hardcopy of the questionnaire from the Researcher. The questionnaire consists of four sections that include, demographic information along with questions related to COVID-19 and Black Lives Matter, the attitudes toward seeking counseling, intentions for seeking counseling services, and the adverse trauma questionnaires. Additionally, there are some demographic questions regarding, suicide, sexual behaviors, and HIV. You will complete the survey and either submit it directly to the Researcher or you may drop it in the designated lock box available at the research site. The lock box will be checked twice a week for completed questionnaires.

The completed survey should take approximately 60 minutes of your time.

C. RISKS

Participating in this study could involve some risk of the minor psychological discomforts that can be encountered in daily life, such as some of the questions within the questionnaire could create some level of discomfort based solely of the context of the question (i.e. questions about suicide, sexual

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behavior, and HIV). Should this happen, you have the right to stop and exit the process. If further assistance is needed, the research site offers available mental health services at a low cost based on a sliding fee scale and/or the use of your private or state-funded insurance can be used. You can reach out to the mental health clinical service at (202)446-1000 should you need assistance. Services will be provided through telehealth for those not residing in the DC EMA or an intentional referral will be made to a service provider in your area. Additionally, if the question brings a level of discomfort, you can skip it. With these protections in place, this study would pose minimal to no risk to your wellbeing.

D. CONFIDENTIALITY

The records from this study will be kept as confidential as possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Additionally, this study will not collect names as a demographic element, however there are other personal identifiable information that is collected but not associated with a name. To secure the remaining personally identifiable data, all data will be stored in a locked box at the research site for participants to submit their written surveys confidentially. This box will be checked twice a week by the Principal Investigator as he will have the key to the lockbox. For emergencies only, the key will be provided to the research site's Director of Clinical Services. The survey tool's virtual format will be Redcap. This a well-known survey and data collection software program that is "a world-class, SOC2 accredited data center". Data collected through this site will be transmitted over secure connections. The data will be accessed and managed mainly by the Principal Investigator/Researcher or designated assistance for cleaning, processing, and analyzing data. The PI will only serve as the data instrument collector during this phase. After the study is completed, the data will be kept for a period of 5 years, as required by Walden University. The data will also be used to help support meeting the mental health needs of the community being served.

E. BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this research study. The anticipated benefit of your participation in this study is to help gain a better understanding of the attitudes toward seeking counseling services that may impact service utilization when there is a greater need for the services from this specific community. Additionally, a summary of the results from this study will be made available on the study's website and Facebook page.

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F. VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION

Your decision whether or not to participate in this study is voluntary and will not affect your relationship with Us Helping Us and the Principal Investigator. If you choose to participate in this study, you can withdraw your consent and discontinue participation at anytime without prejudice.

G. QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Anthony E. Fox by 601-672-4978 aefox64@gmail.com. You can also contact Walden University's IRB at 612-312-1210 or irb@mail.waldenu.edu with any questions about the rights of research participants or research related concerns. Walden University's approval number for this study is **09-03-21-0074395**. It expires on **September 2, 2022.**

You might wish to retain this consent form for your records. For the virtual access of the study, you may download a copy of this consent form to save or print on the virtual questionnaire site or at <https://tinyurl.com/ResearchSurvey2021>. For the hardcopy access of the study, you may ask the researcher or Walden University for a copy using the contact info above.

OBTAINING YOUR CONSENT

If you feel you understand the study and wish to volunteer, please continue to the questionnaire.