

# THE FORGOTTEN LINK:

HOW STUDENTS OF COLOUR GET LEFT BEHIND  
IN THE MOVEMENT FOR MENTAL HEALTH

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The land we are standing on today is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaty signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.

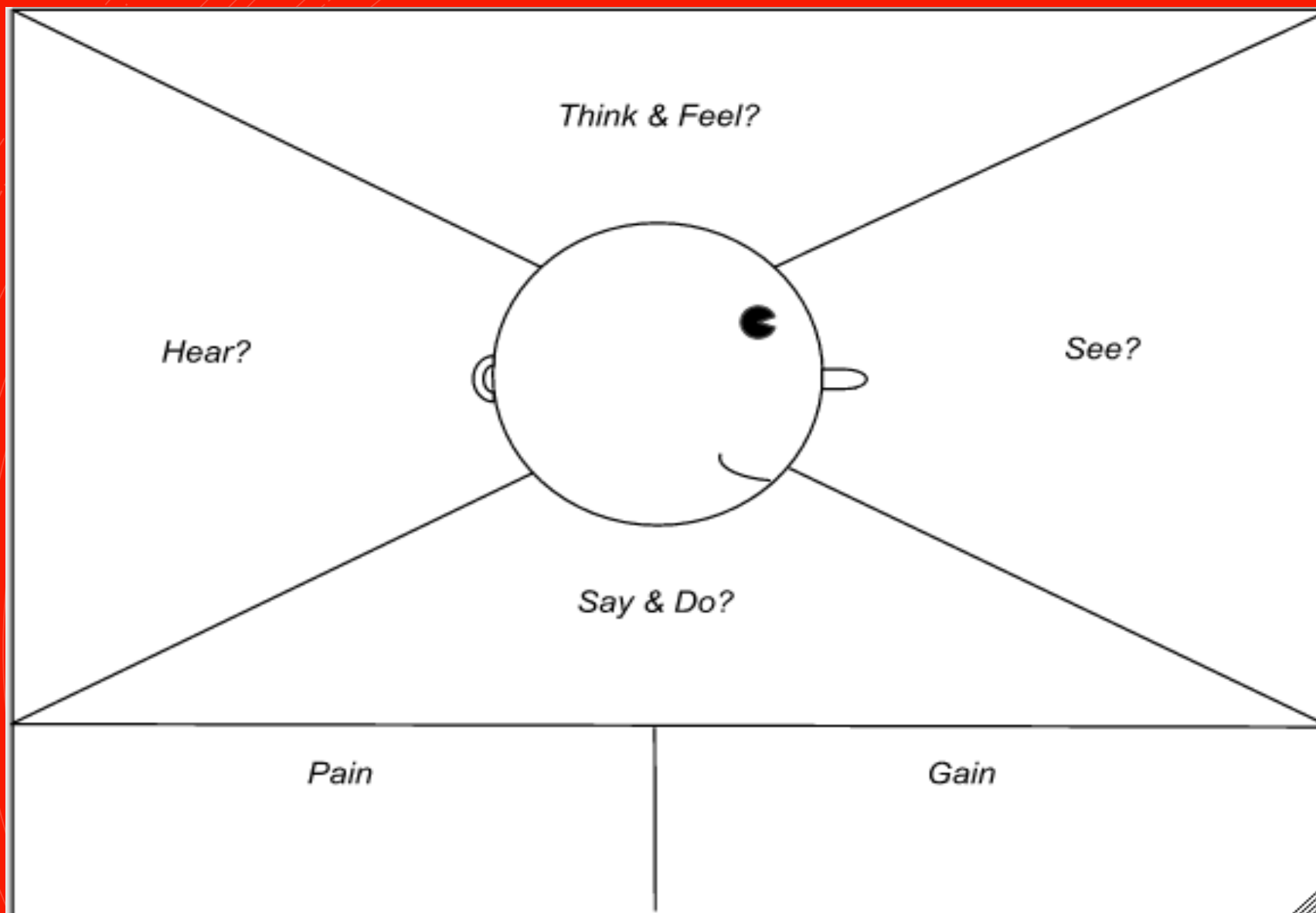
## **Territorial Land Acknowledgement**

- Interactive Activity
- Key terms
- Social Determinants of Health
- Physiological Impacts of Perceived Racism
- Psychological Impacts of Perceived Racism
- How does racism impact the well-being of students?
- The eRACEr report
- What we did to address this on our campus

# OVERVIEW

A red speech bubble with a white outline and a downward-pointing tail. The text 'Interactive Activity' is centered inside in white. The background features faint, overlapping concentric circles and dashed lines in light gray.

**Interactive Activity**



# KEY TERMS

- **Racialized:** process of ascribing a race/ethnicity to a group that did not identify itself as such (Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System, 1995).
- **BIPOC:** black and indigenous people of colour
- **Determinants of Health:** factors that can contribute to the state of one's health or wellbeing (Mikonnen & Raphael, 2010).
- **Racism:** system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on race, that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities and advantages others (Commission on Systemic Racism in the Ontario Criminal Justice System, 1995).
- **Intersectionality:** A term coined by civil rights activist Kimberlé Crenshaw. The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage (Crenshaw, 1994).

# Social Determinants of Health

- Disability
- Income and Income Distribution
- Early Childhood Development
- Education
- Employment and Working Conditions
- Food Insecurity
- Gender
- Race
- Social Exclusion
- Indigenous Status

The background features several concentric circles of varying radii, some solid and some dashed, creating a ripple effect. A prominent red speech bubble is centered on the page, containing white text. The speech bubble has a rectangular body and a pointed tail at the bottom center.

How did we get  
involved with  
social action for  
racial justice?

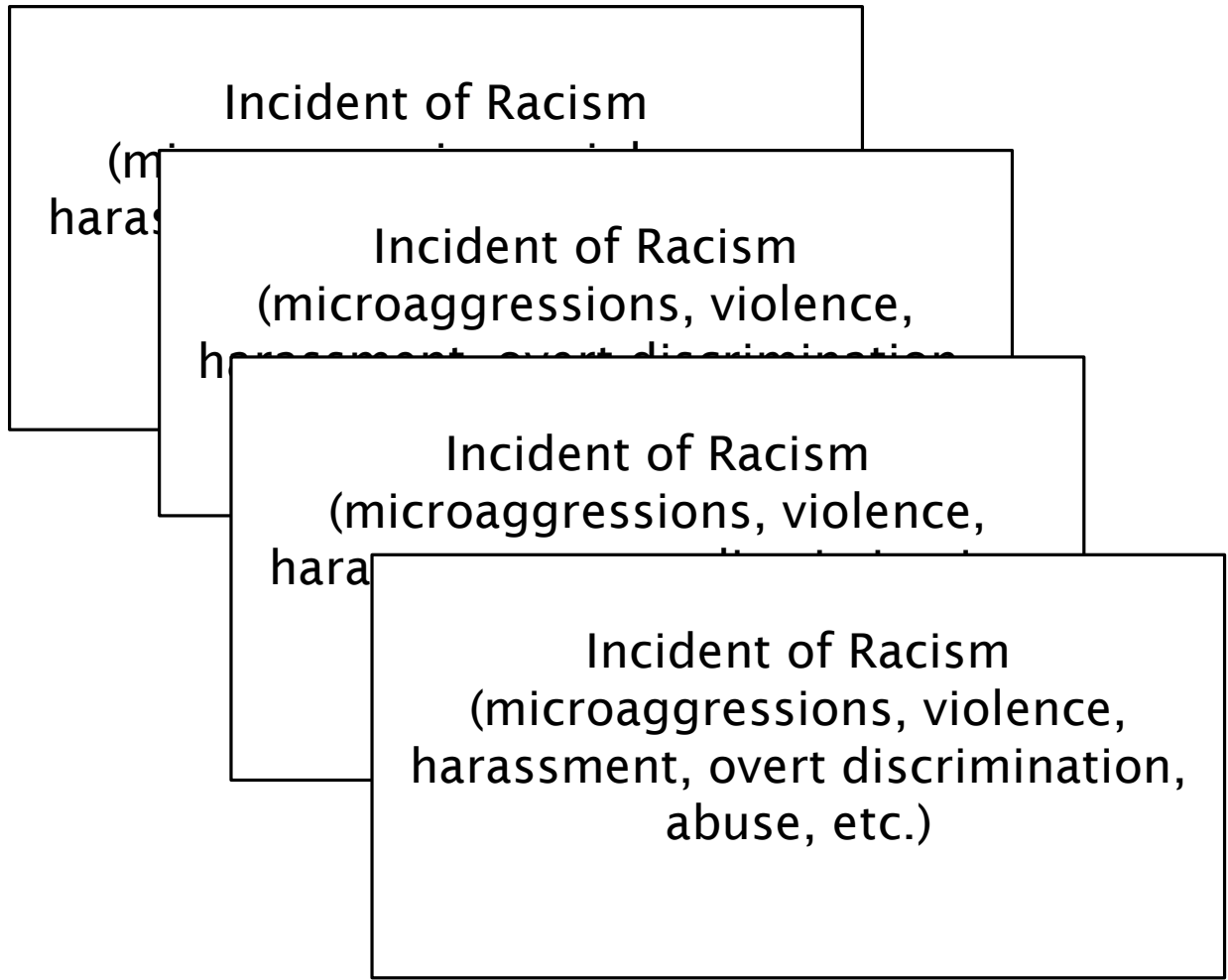




# PHYSIOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS

- The effects of racism are far-reaching. When an individual perceives an act of racism. A few of the physiological symptoms include (Harrell et al, 2003):
  - Increased activity associated with cholinergic pathways related to anxiety
  - Increased cortisol levels in the blood
  - Increased prevalence of hypertension and high blood pressure (both systolic and diastolic)
  - Heart Disease
  - Higher rates of mortality (National Research council Panel on Race..., 2004)



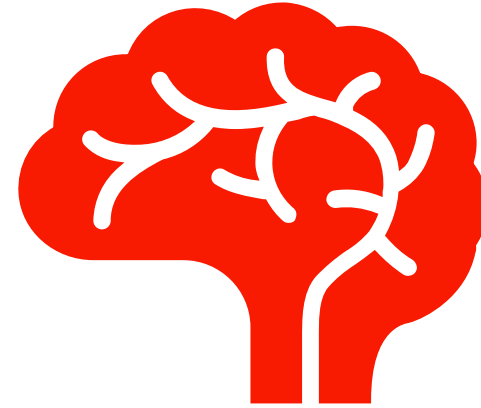


Months to  
Years

**CHRONIC STRESS**

**ALLOSTATIC OVERLOAD**

# PSYCHOLOGICAL SYMPTOMS



- Low Sense of Belonging
- Imposter Syndrome
- Stress & Anxiety
- Sleep Deprivation
- Fear of Safety
- Stereotype Threat
- Binge drinking
- Disordered Eating
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

(Williams, et al. 2014; Williams 2015; Mackenzie 2015)



How does racism  
impact the  
well-being  
of students?

This doesn't  
happen just in  
post-  
secondary

- A study by the Australian National University, Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, and the University of Michigan found that children of color face significant racial stereotyping from adults who work with them
- This can manifest itself in disproportionate discipline practices
- In a 2014 report the U.S. Department of Education revealed that Black children represent 48% of students receiving suspensions (though they represent 18% of preschool enrollment)

## Why is it necessary to highlight racism in post-secondary?

- All the information we learn is in a Western context. important to recognize that this education may erase the complex histories of other communities
- Race is still a taboo topic in our society
- The “Colourblindness” approach erases the experiences of people of colour
- Post-secondary institutions don't exist in a vacuum – the broader social climate influences every facet of our campuses

## Waterloo Regional Police 4 times more likely to stop you if you are black

Police Chief Bryan Larkin can't explain why his officers stop and question black people at a rate far higher than their share of population

NEWS Mar 25, 2016 by Jeff Outbit Waterloo Region Record

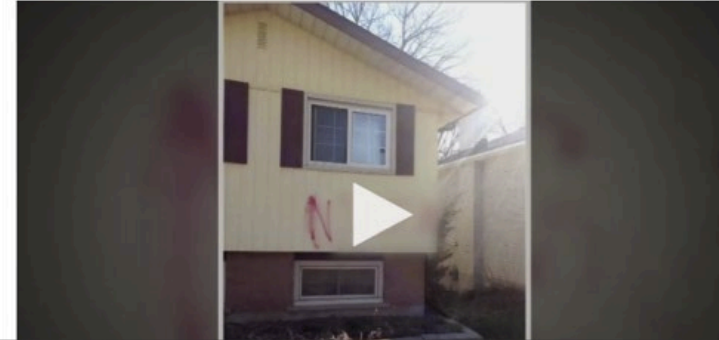


Marcia Smellie, president of the local chapter of the Congress of Black Women of Canada Ontario, is disheartened to hear that Waterloo Regional Police are more likely to stop black people to record names without laying a charge. - David Bebee, Record staff

**WATERLOO REGION** — If you are black, Waterloo Regional Police are four times more likely to stop you on the street and ask your identity without accusing you of a crime.

The Record discovered this in comparing 62,350 people stopped by police over a decade to the regional population.

## 'This doesn't happen here': Racial slur spray-painted on Waterloo home



CTV Kitchener: Racial slur spray-painted

Graphic and racial graffiti left in Waterloo has some people wondering what was behind the vandalism. Tyler Calver has more.

CTV Kitchener: Graffiti in Waterloo

An investigation has been launched after racial graffiti was left on a house in Waterloo. Tyler Calver has details.

## 'What do you say to that?' Waterloo man shocked by response to job application at Kitchener business



Employer says job candidate wasn't qualified for the position

Kate Bueckert · CBC News · Posted: Jul 07, 2016 10:43 AM ET | Last Updated: July 8, 2016



Jama Hagi-Yusuf graduated from the University of Waterloo in 2015. (Submitted photo)



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# The e(RACE)r Summit Report

# About

- March 21, 2016
- Partnerships:
  - Laurier Diversity and Equity Office
  - Office of Aboriginal Initiatives
- 150 participants
- 19 Institutions Represented (3 Colleges, 16 Universities)
- Panelists Included
  - Renu Mandhane (Chief Commissioner, Ontario Human Rights Commission)
  - Dr. Alvin Curling (Former Speaker of the House in Ontario)
  - MPP Catherine Fife

# 3 Biggest Challenges to Bringing Racial Justice on Campus

Participant Response	Number of Responses
<b>1. Absence of "Pro-Active" Anti-Racism Measures</b>	
• Lack of accountability	19
• Need for Appropriate Resources	13
• Lack of "Safety" to Raise Concerns	11
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>2. Insufficient Educational Supports for Racial Justice</b>	
• Lack of Training/ Education	13
• Whiteness and the Need for Diverse Faculty and Curriculum	12
• Racist Stereotypes and Campus Culture	3
• Complexities of <u>Intersectionality</u> and Racial Justice	1
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>3. Systemic Perpetuation of Racism</b>	
• Lack of Anti-Racist Community	10
• Lack of Institutional Support	6
• Lack of Policy	5
• Lack of Institutional Research	2
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>TOTAL RESPONSES:</b>	<b>95</b>

# Calls to Action

1. Sector-wide Anti-racism Task Force
2. Sector-wide Anti-racism Training for Senior Administration
3. Sector-wide Anti-racism Training for Faculty
4. Sector-wide Community of Practice for Racial Justice
5. Sector-wide Anti-racism Policy

# How we mobilized around RAISE

- Racial Advocacy for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity
- This came from many of our friends telling us about the racist experiences they were having while on campus
- It was very difficult for us to comfort our friends when we were experiencing the same traumas.
- This service was not a novel idea.
- In November, Fiqir made a twitter thread on how we had been asked to collect statistics on how many people of colour were on campus.





But, this service  
wasn't met  
without  
opposition...

# Main Dissenting Opinions

- There is no need nor evidence justifying a service like this
- UW (like other post-secondary institutions) is a meritocracy
- A service addressing racism would overburden the student budget

March 21, 2018

Despite opposition,  
students voted  
overwhelmingly in  
favour of a service  
for racialized  
students





# What this service will do

- Peer support hours from a trained volunteer/executive from 11am-1pm
- Events and socials
- A formal racism incident reporting mechanism
- Advocacy in inclusive student policies and anti-oppression training for staff, students and faculty

# Limitations

- Student-run service
- Limited resources

- Collect race-based statistics
- Develop a thriving, present and relevant diversity and equity office.
- Support religious and cultural clubs
- Start anti-oppression training
- Listen to students
- Engage in meaningful allyship

In summary,  
here's how  
Universities Can  
Address Racism

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