

Running head: CULTURAL ADAPTATION AND CBPR

Adaptation of an Evidence-Based Mental Health Intervention through Community-Based  
Participatory Research

GiShawn A. Mance, Tamar Mendelson, S. Darius Tandon, Jahon Jones, Benjamin Byrd

III

Corresponding Author:

S. Darius Tandon

Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine

Department of Pediatrics

200 North Wolfe Street, Room 2025

Baltimore, MD 21287

(410) 614-0911 (office)

(410) 614-5431 (fax)

standon@jhmi.edu

## **Abstract**

There is increasing interest in adapting evidence-based interventions while preserving intervention fidelity. Yet, few examples exist of how adaptation of evidence-based interventions is conducted, particularly in the field of mental health. This article describes the cultural adaptation of an evidence-based intervention to prevent depression in low-income urban African American adolescents and young adults participating in employment and training programs. Adaptation was conducted using a community-based participatory research (CBPR) approach that equitably involved academic researchers, staff from an employment and training program, and alumni of the program. Structured Psychotherapy for Adolescents Responding to Chronic Stress (SPARCS) was developed for adolescents exposed to trauma or severe stress who continue to experience stressors in their lives. The method of intervention delivery and intervention content were adapted in response to several mismatches between the context in which SPARCS was developed and the context in which it was being replicated. Intervention delivery was adapted to use a peer-led format to alleviate the stigma associated with mental health within this particular community. Intervention content was adapted by increasing the contextual appropriateness of SPARCS sessions and creating new sessions to make the intervention more relevant to intervention recipients. Benefits of adapting an evidence-based intervention are provided, along with implications of using a CBPR approach to conduct the adaptation.

**Key Words:** adaptation, fidelity, intervention, community-based participatory research