

Justice for Daniel Prude

The Children's Agenda adds our voice to the thousands of others expressing our deepest sympathy with Daniel Prude's family. Hearing his daughter Tashyra speak out about how her father was killed just days before her high school prom and graduation – and now, as she goes off to college without him – leaves any parent heartbroken.

And angry. Daniel Prude's homicide, as his death has been officially designated by the Monroe County Coroner, should never have happened. It is part of the long, never-ending list of Black men and women who are subject to police violence as a result of ongoing structural racism raging unabated in our community, our state and our nation. We demand change.

Structural racism steals children away from their parents, and parents away from their children, through the criminal justice system, the health care system, the immigration system, the child welfare system, and our economic system. What does that teach our children? That some families deserve to be together more than others, that Black or brown children shouldn't trust or rely on white adults, and that these systems and their personnel deeply threaten the health and safety of Black and brown children.

Children soak up these messages, intentionally or not, from what we do even more powerfully than what we say. So when nightly broadcasts show authorities acting with hostility, violence and lack of humanity, whether toward a naked Black man having a mental health crisis, or protesters rightfully seeking justice, those messages are a crushing lesson for children – and a cause of stress, trauma and powerlessness.

The American Academy of Pediatrics describes adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) as stressful or traumatic events that occur during childhood and are strongly related to a wide range of health problems throughout a person's lifetime. The Monroe County Department of Public Health's [2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey](#) showed that 66% of county high school youth self-report having suffered at least one adverse childhood experience (ACE) in their lifetime, while a devastating 85% of youth in the Rochester City School District have suffered at least one. Fully one out of 4 Monroe County and one out of 3 Rochester City School District youth have suffered 3 or more ACEs, a predictor of lifelong struggles with health and well-being.

The disruptions of these past few months, and the accompanying, growing sense of unreliability of schools, jobs, meals, personal and family safety, are overwhelming to adults, let alone children. White adults particularly have to start behaving like we are responsible and humane, so children of all races can grow up knowing responsibility and humanity.

The Children's Agenda believes [Black Lives Matter](#). We believe [racism is a public health crisis](#). We are [committed to taking action to eliminate structural racism and inequity](#). We operate according to our value statements for family respect, trust and inclusivity; [being culturally responsive](#); saying what we mean and doing what we say; [transparency and accountability](#); helping heal social-emotional needs and preventing harm. We are committed to creating "a future free of structural racism, inequity and exclusion" by acting internally and externally to end white supremacy.

We renew our commitments and make this statement for the children, for Tashyra, and for justice for Daniel Prude.