

which they develop their distinctive cultural behavior” (Scott and Marshall, 2009). Ethnicities may be differentiated from one another by customs and language and may influence family structure, food preferences, and expressions of emotion. The composition and definition of ethnic and racial groups can be fluid in response to changes in geography (i.e., moving from one country to another) and changing social definitions over time (Roberts, 2011). Race and ethnicity influence a family's health when they are used as criteria by which a child or family is discriminated against. There is a significant body of work that describes this. In fact, 100 years of research describe racial gaps in health (Williams, 2012).

Racism remains an important social determinant of health (Smedley, 2012). According to Williams (2012), for minority or other groups who experience stigmatization, “inequalities in health are created by larger inequalities in society,” meaning that prevailing social conditions and obstacles to equal opportunities for all influences the health of all individuals. For example, from birth forward, African-American and Native American children have a higher mortality rate than Caucasian children in general. There is also a higher death rate for babies of African-American and Hispanic women versus Caucasian women. Even when controlling for maternal levels of education, the infant mortality rate for college-educated African-American women is 2.5 times higher than Hispanic and Caucasian women of similar education level (Williams, 2012). These numbers demonstrate that children and families ultimately feel the effects of such health disparities.

Children and families may also experience perceived racism, which also has negative consequences. For example, in a study of more than 5000 fifth-graders, 15% of Hispanic youth and 20% of African-American youth reported that they had experienced racial discrimination. Such experiences were then associated with a higher risk of mental health symptoms (Coker, Elliot, Kanouse, et al, 2009). Teens also report racial discrimination through online communities, social networking sites, and texting, which is related to increased anxiety and depression (Tynes, Giang, Williams, et al, 2008).

Ethnocentrism is the emotional attitude that one's own ethnic group is superior to others; that one's values, beliefs, and perceptions are the correct ones; and that the group's ways of living