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Promising Practice – The Resilient  
Roots Project Parenting Program

# A Promising Practice

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## **The Resilient Roots Project Parenting Program**

**(Overview - A Healing-Centered, Culturally Grounded  
Framework for Raising Black Children)**

Developed by

**Dr. Carlian Dawson**

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**Resilient Roots Project™ Parenting Program and the 3 Cs Framework™ are proprietary frameworks developed by Dr. Carlian W. Dawson.**

# Northern California – The Great Sequoias



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# The Resilient Roots Project Parenting Program

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- Built on the **3 Cs Framework of Culture, Connection, and Care:**
  - **Culture** grounds identity and belonging.
  - **Connection** regulates the nervous system.
  - **Care** is how love shows up daily. Shared care reduces burnout and builds safety.

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# Why the Resilient Roots Project Exists...

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- **After enslavement, Jim Crow, redlining, the Civil Rights Movement, and Black Lives Matter, support was never offered to the Black community.**  
No counseling. No collective healing. No space to rest or recover.  
Trauma was inherited without intervention.
    - **Intergenerational trauma**
    - **Racialized parenting stress**
    - **Lack of culturally centered programs**
  - Black families deserve support that reflects our reality, not someone else's assumptions.

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# Black families have never lacked strength

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- What we have lacked is **space** - space to heal without judgment, space to rest without penalty, and space to parent without constantly preparing our children to survive systems that were never designed for them.

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# What Makes Resilient Roots Different?

- Black families are not included in RRP PP, we are **centered**.
- Culture is not an add-on, it is the **foundation**.
- This work is trauma-informed, healing-centered, and intentionally integrates **science** and **spirit**.

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# Why Parenting is Need From Birth through “30-ish”



- **Brain development continues into late 20s and early 30s**
- **Trauma disrupts development**
- **Parenting evolves beyond age 18**

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# The Structure of Resilient Roots

- The Resilient Roots Project includes **9 sequential modules** that can be delivered in community, faith-based, educational, correctional, and public health settings.
  - **Module 1: Healing While Black**
    - Module one names the trauma Black families have endured and reframes survival behaviors as adaptive, not pathological. It also introduces parenting while healing recognizing that many parents are raising children while still carrying unmet needs from their own childhoods.
  - **Module 2: Being Unapologetically Me**
    - Children who know who they are and where they come from are more resilient.
  - **Module 3: I Am Because We Are**
    - This module restores the understanding that parenting was never meant to be done alone

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# The Structure of Resilient Roots

- **Module 4: Regulate Before Directing**
  - This module teaches parents to regulate themselves before correcting children. When bodies feel safe, behavior changes. This is trauma-informed parenting made practical.
- **Module 5: Connection Is Protection**
  - This module explicitly names joy, play, and rest as biological necessities, not rewards for surviving. Joy helps the nervous system learn that danger is not always present.
- **Module 6: Lessons for Living While Black**
  - This module names the adaptive lessons passed down in Black families around policing, code-switching, excellence, and silence. And the importance of joy.

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# Impact & Outcomes

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- **Increased regulation**
  - **Stronger family bonds**
  - **Reduced shame and burnout**
  - **Resilient children**

Resilient Roots strengthens families from the inside out. The outcomes are prevention, continuity, and long-term resilience.

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# Impact & Outcomes

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*“When the roots are deep, there is no reason to fear the wind.”*  
— African Proverb

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# PROMISING PRACTICE

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- The Resilient Roots Project Parenting Program fits squarely within the promising practice category because it:
  - Is grounded in trauma science, public health, and child development
  - Is culturally responsive and community-informed
  - Addresses gaps traditional evidence-based programs often miss
  - Has a clear framework (3Cs: Culture, Connection, Care)
  - Is designed for replication and scaling

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# Target Population

- The Resilient Roots Project serves Black parents and caregivers raising children from birth through young adulthood (approximately age 30), including parents, grandparents, kinship caregivers, and fictive kin.
- The program is appropriate for this population because:
- Black families experience chronic, racialized stress and intergenerational trauma that directly affects parenting capacity
- Many mainstream parenting programs are not culturally responsive and fail to address historical context, collective care, and identity
- Black children are often expected to mature early without adequate emotional or developmental support
- Resilient Roots meets caregivers where they are without deficit framing and centers their lived experience as a source of wisdom.

# THE RESILIENT ROOTS PROJECT

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## *Theory of Change*

Black families experience cumulative, racialized stress and intergenerational trauma that affects caregiver regulation, parenting capacity, and child well-being. Traditional parenting programs often overlook culture, collective care, and historical context.

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# INPUTS

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- Resilient Roots Project Parenting Program (9 modules)
- 3Cs Framework: **Culture | Connection | Care**
- Trained, culturally responsive facilitators
- Community-based delivery settings
- Group-based learning and collective support
- Caregivers' lived experience and wisdom

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# CORE ACTIVITIES

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- Healing-centered parenting education
- Nervous system regulation and stress awareness
- Cultural identity and ancestral grounding
- Skill-building (pause before reacting, repair, boundaries, dignified discipline)
- Collective learning, reflection, and co-regulation
- Leadership development and community collaboration

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# IMMEDIATE OUTCOMES

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- **Caregivers gain:**
  - Awareness of stress and trauma responses
  - Increased emotional regulation
  - Reduced shame and self-blame
  - Increased parenting confidence

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# LONG-TERM IMPACT

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- **Communities achieve:**
  - Increased family stability and emotional safety
  - Improved child well-being and development
  - Reduced intergenerational transmission of trauma
  - Strengthened leadership capacity and collective care
  - Resilient families able to thrive not just survive

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# CORE ASSUMPTION

- When caregivers are supported in restoring regulation, reconnecting to culture, and rebuilding collective care, they are better able to parent from presence rather than survival creating conditions for healing across generations.

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# EQUITY & CULTURE

- Culture is not an add-on.  
Connection is the mechanism.  
Care is the sustaining force.

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When caregivers heal through culture, connection, and care, families stabilize, children thrive, and communities build lasting resilience.

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