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Statement from SRCD President Vonnie C. McLoyd and Executive Director Saima K. Hedrick on the Racially Motivated Shooting in Florida

Hate should have no place in our society but hate continues to take the lives of innocent people in America. Three Black people were killed by a white man in Jacksonville, Florida on August 26, adding to the growing list of incidents that continue to happen in our racially charged society. As developmental scientists we know how this continued trauma can affect a developing mind. As human beings, we know that these appalling acts of violence need to end. We are angry, despondent, and grief stricken by the steady stream of racially motivated killings and violence. These horrific events also induce anxiety about our own safety and the safety of our loved ones.

SRCD's Anti-Racism Task Force is critically important in identifying ways to foster diversity, equity, and inclusion at all levels of the organization and ensuring that progress in these areas endures into the future. As we move forward in these efforts and seek to advance scholarship on anti-racism within developmental science, we need to work simultaneously at multiple levels both in and outside of academia to counter racial hate and violence and reinforce our belief that we can make a positive difference, despite the daunting problems we are facing. Working with others can help counter anxiety, pessimism, cynicism, and feelings of hopelessness, and fortify our resolve to excise racial hate and hate harbored against other marginalized groups. We encourage members to support and initiate efforts to prevent and mitigate interpersonal and structural racism in our universities, schools, local communities, cities, and states. It is an arduous, exhausting marathon that we must run if there is any hope of making this a safer, and more just, humane world for all.

Our hearts go out to the victims of these heinous crimes and to our members as they seek to cope with the psychological consequences of these horrific events.

Vonnie C. McLoyd, Ph.D.

SRCD President
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Saima K. Hedrick, MPH, CAE

SRCD Executive Director
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