

# **BLACK CHILD JOURNAL**

SPRING 2016 GUARDIANS OF THE GENERATIONS

## **CO-PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT**

*We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait. The child cannot.*

*-Nobel Laureate Gabriela Mistral*

The Spring, 2016 Edition—**GUARDIANS OF THE GENERATIONS**” of the **BLACK CHILD JOURNAL** is a continuation of the Winter, 2014 Edition's focus on family and community. The Spring, 2016 Edition focuses on child development in the tradition of interdependence of the generations for safety and well-being based on African survival characteristics and strengths still evident among contemporary Black families in America. In our community, the concept of family is not limited to biological kinship. Strong kinship bonds have included the parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins and the rest of one's relatives--both living and beyond; as well as those of the community who are not blood and kin. The reliance of African--American families on kinship networks for financial, emotional and social support can be traced back to African cultures, where emphasis was on extended families, rather than the nuclear family. Kinship care is acknowledged as critically important in family preservation and stability and in keeping the child connected to family traditions, goals, and values.

Grandparents, particularly, grandmothers in the African-American community have historically provided needed care for their grandchildren. Before there was a child welfare system that only recently addressed the needs of African-American children, there were grandmothers who served as the safety net for their biological, informally adopted grandchildren and other minor relatives.

They cared for grandchildren and others whose birth parents were unable to care for them. In his 1939 book, *The Negro Family in the United States*, sociologist and author E. Franklin Frazier, described Black grandparents, especially grandmothers as the Guardians of the Generations\*. African-American grandmothers became the anchors for many families and preserved their roots. Grandmothers represent the generations of unsung sheroes of our families and communities. They have historically provided the indomitable care, protection, welfare, and socialization/education of the black child; and continue to safeguard and promote childrearing values and practices, and community solidarity from generation to generation.

This edition of the **BLACK CHILD JOURNAL** is dedicated to those community elders and guardians of the Black family and community. It provides an opportunity for a broad spectrum of practitioners, scholars, policy makers and others to address the successes and challenges of community elders and guardians in providing child and youth care, socialization, and education within the family and community--past and present.

For the sake of the child, family and community let the discussion and actions begin--"let the circle continue unbroken."

## **ONWARD AND UPWARD**

paul hill jr

\*Frazier, E. Franklin (1939). *The Negro Family in the United States*. Chicago, IL: University Press.

