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Exploring the Mental Health Experiences of African, Caribbean, and Black Youth in London, Ontario

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This thesis explores how the mental health of African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) youth in London, Ontario has been understood and affected by their identities. Interviews were carried out with thirteen young women and two young men (n=15) between the ages of seventeen and twenty-one. The data revealed various meanings and experiences related to mental health in the lives of ACB youth, such as pressure to stick to restrictive behaviours regarding gender and health, the strategies they used to seek help, and the barriers they faced accessing mental health services. They expressed frustration with the stigma of mental illness in their communities and recommended increased representation of ACB resources. Their insights can provide a sense of assurance to ACB youth in other Canadian cities that there is potential in addressing the stigma, encouraging one another to seek help, and changing the cultural narrative of mental health in future ACB generations.