

A Parent Conversation About Race, Activism and Community

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Task #1 TALK IN YOUR FAMILIES ABOUT **RACE AND RACISM**

- Tell the TRUTH Silence is Violence
- Talk from a shared language, vision and understanding.
- Don't sugarcoat or euphemise

In your groups:

Are you talking about race and racism in your family? What does that look like? Do you have a shared language? If you are not talking about race yet then why not?

Task #2 ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR RACIAL EXPERIENCES ARE **NOT THE SAME AS OTHERS**

- Talk about Privilege and Oppression
- Talk about stereotypes and representation (yours and others)
- Talk about people you know and see everyday

In your groups:

What are the different stereotypes faced by People of Color (Black, Native, Latina, Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, Mixed Race, etc.)

In your groups:

What is your racial experience? How is it the same or different than others in your group? Your School? Your Neighborhood? Our City?

Task #3 **RECOGNIZE INJUSTICE AND THAT INJUSTICE HURTS**

- Always ask critical questions
- Do not normalize discrimination
- Counternarratives are key

In your group:

How do racial stereotypes lead to oppression and injustice?

How are you seeing that racial injustice around you today - not just on the news or in the media, but in your life or your school?

Task #4 **UNDERSTAND WHAT SOLIDARITY AND ALLYSHIP LOOK LIKE**

- Avoid Ethnic Tourism, Saviour Complexes, performative allyship
- De-center yourself. Listen and follow.
- Show up when you are needed, not just when you feel like it
- Commit for the long haul - not just for now

In your groups:

None of us are perfect in this. Can you think of ways you have been an imperfect ally? For people of color, how have allies failed to show up for you when they said they could?

Task #5 **ACT TOGETHER TO MAKE CHANGE**

Some Terms

Allyship: An active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person with privilege and power seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group. Allyship is a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people. Allyship is also not self-defined but, rather, must be recognized by the people with whom one seeks to offer allyship. *SOURCE: Anti-Oppression Network*

Anti-Black Racism: The very specific systemic discrimination and racism that Black people face in the US which is different than what other non-Black People of Color face. Modern day anti-black racism is rooted in the Transatlantic slave trade, when European empires kidnapped millions of African people and deported them to the Americas to work as forced laborers.

Internalized Racism: When People of Color internalize and believe white racist attitudes towards members of their own ethnic group, including themselves, which can result in feelings of resentment or rejection of their communities of color as well as self-hate and loathing.

Oppression: Systemic devaluing, undermining, marginalizing, and disadvantaging of certain social identities in contrast to the privileged norm; when some people are denied something of value, while others have ready access. *SOURCE: WPC Glossary from 14th Annual White Privilege Conference Handbook, White Privilege Conference, 2013*

People of Color: Used primarily in the US to describe anyone who is not white (i.e. African American, Native American, Latinx, Pacific Islander, Asian American, etc.). The term encompasses all non-white people to emphasize shared but also different experiences of racism under white supremacy.

Privilege: A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group of people.

Race : A dominant psychosocial belief that human beings can be organized into a handful of racial categories (Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, White) based predominantly on the way we look. Racial categories--or a person's "race"--actually have no basis in science and were politically constructed by whites to maintain their power. Nevertheless the categories, because they have been so deeply entrenched in society, remain a reality and as such are very shaping when we form identities.

Racism: Power plus prejudice. A system of advantages and disadvantages based on race in which white people are seen as supreme, deserving of the most benefits, and granted the most power upon the backs of People of Color who are disadvantaged, disempowered and disenfranchised to varying degrees.

Racial Stereotypes: A damaging system of oversimplified images or ideas and assumptions about "typical" characteristics of people based on their race. Racial stereotypes are conveyed in many ways--through media representation, jokes, epithets and slurs, etc--and are a primary mechanism through which systemic racism is upheld and justified.

White (People): Technically, descendants from any of the so-called white racial groups of Europe, Middle East, and North Africa, or those who self-report as white based on having majority-white ancestry (esp. German, Irish, English, Italian, French, Polish, Scottish, Dutch, Norwegian and Swedish). White people, who constitute the majority in the US, sit at the top of the racial hierarchy and hold the most power.

The term “white” was used to give privileges to poor whites in order to separate them from African and indigenous people and to stop them from forming political and other ties with African and Indian people whose economic reality more closely matched theirs than the reality of the ruling white elites. The term was created to prevent lower class and poor folks from different continents from organizing together around their common class oppression. We use the term “white” to recognize that historical reality and present reality of this category that helps communities with wealth and state power build more numerical power by giving some privileges to people who look like them. *SOURCE: Coalition of Anti-Racist Whites*

White Privilege: The *unearned* collection of benefits that white people receive in a racially structured society in which they are at the top of the racial hierarchy. Examples include: being automatically trusted by others, being automatically seen as “American” and belonging in the US,, being able to find makeup in one’s skin tone, and being able to easily find oneself represented in media.

White Supremacy: The belief, put into daily practice by individuals and society via systemic racism, that white people are superior to those of all other races (especially Black people in the US) and should therefore dominate society.

White supremacy is colonial, transnational and historically based; an institutionally perpetuated system of exploitation and oppression of continents, nations and peoples of color by white peoples and nations of the European continent; for the purpose of maintaining and defending a system of wealth, power and privilege. *SOURCE: Challenging White Supremacy Workshop, Sharon Martinas. Fourth Revision. 1995*

Video Resources:

A Conversation About Growing Up Black | Op-Docs | The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000003670178/a-conversation-about-growing-up-black.html>

A Conversation With Black Women on Race | Op-Docs

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004050379/a-conversation-with-black-women-on-race.html>

A Conversation With Native Americans on Race | Op-Docs

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000005352074/a-conversation-with-native-americans-on-race.html>

A Conversation With Latinos on Race | Op-Docs

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004237305/a-conversation-with-latinos-on-race.html>

A Conversation With Asian Americans on Race | Op-Docs

<https://www.nytimes.com/video/opinion/100000004308529/a-conversation-with-asians-on-race.html>

Raising Mixed Race with Sharon H Chang at Kinokuniya Seattle

https://youtu.be/_99v0nab61o

Raising Mixed Race - a conversation at Elliott Bay Books with Sharon H Chang

<https://youtu.be/Fd-mvA5vFyQ>

Notes from “Talking to Your Kids About Race” - Sharon H Chang at GLES 3/20/18

Research shows as young as infancy children begin showing racial recognition and by 5-6 years old they not only have a fairly advanced understanding of how racism works but are using racism in their interactions with peers and others. **You should be talking to your children about race by now** and if you aren't, you need to start immediately. But... how do we talk to our kids about race?

- Have a serious talk with **yourself**:
 - What is race? What is racism? What is the racial hierarchy?
 - What are the benefits/privileges and disadvantages of your race?
 - Do you discuss race and its history with your kids? Do you know its history?
 - The system allows white people to dodge talking about and dealing with race, but not POC.
 - Get an accountability partner (can be your kid)

- Don't just talk about race but **racism**.

- Talk about **privilege**.
 - White people need to
 - Learn to see privilege and acknowledge that they get it on the backs of POC.
 - Unpack internalized racial superiority and take responsibility.
 - POC needs:
 - Language and analysis of why white privilege is not for all people
 - Support from community and healing from any internalized racism
 - Non-black POC need to learn about anti-black racism; not all discrimination is the same. Even POC can practice anti-blackness.

- Talk about **oppression**.
 - Recognize unfairness and that it hurts (we're taught not to see it)
 - What's that like for different POC and indigenous people (we're esp taught not to see indigenous people), for all POC (Latinx, Pacific Islanders, Asians, mixed race...)
 - How will you ask/tell your kids about this? What are the questions?

- Talk about doing something and **do it**.
 - Don't just talk, ACT.
 - How will you extend beyond “doing good” in whitewashed ways, from white safe spaces and with a “white savior” complex?
 - Art, films, books, media of all sorts by, for and representing POC (esp centering POC doing regular, daily activities, not just protesting, etc). Demand drives production. Ask your librarians, buy the media, etc.
 - Exposure: go out to places with more diverse representation: festivals, neighborhoods, etc.
 - Remind kids of their privilege (where they live, having housing at all, food, etc)
 - Support POC-run businesses and restaurants; go out in the ID and other neighborhoods.