

KID CONNECTS WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: DIVERSITY, INCLUSION & PRIVILEGE

Issue 8: June 15th, 2020

FOR ADDITIONAL SUPPORT:

Contact our warm line at, (303) 245-4418, to talk directly to an Early Childhood Mental Health Consultant.



The death of George Floyd and the many others that came before him, have shed light on the injustices caused by systemic racism. Kid Connects acknowledges racism and the impacts it has on families and children of color. In this issue we wanted to provide resources to caregivers so that they can begin their own self-reflection on race and privilege. We also included resources to help caregivers talk with children about race. The topic of racism is complex and nuanced. This newsletter is not meant to be comprehensive. It is meant to be a starting point. As always, please reach out if you have any questions or would like to continue a dialogue about this challenging topic.

Children's Developmental Understanding of Race and Ethnicity

Research shows that children are aware of racial difference at very young age. In fact, at 6 months infants noticed racial differences.¹ When considering a child's developmental understanding of race and ethnicity it is important to emphasize three points. First, children are aware of race and their beliefs about race are shaped by their social world. Second, children form racial identities. Third, research shows that not talking about race with children increases racism.² As you talk to your children and students about race, racism and racial identity, it is important that your discussion is shaped by a child's developmental understanding of race. Here are some resources that are helpful!

- 1. Race Today: What Do Kids Know as They Grow:** <http://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/race-today-what-kids-know-as-they-grow/acknowledgments/>
- 2. How Do Children Process, Learn About Race:** <https://www.npr.org/transcripts/97019614>
- 3. Race Relations Through Children's Eyes:** <https://www.cnn.com/videos/bestoftv/2012/04/03/ac-pkg-doll-test-part-one.cnn>

Talking to Children About Race

Not only is it appropriate to talk to small children about race, it is important! Talking to children about race and racism can be uncomfortable and overwhelming. We might worry about sharing issues related to racism with children who are young or feel uncomfortable discussing something we do not fully understand.³ Children

¹ Ashaunta, A & Douge, J (2019) Talking to Children About Racial Bias. HealthyChildren.Org. <https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Racial-Bias.aspx>

² Rogers, Onnie (2016) Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow. University of Washington: Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences. <http://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/race-today-what-kids-know-as-they-grow/acknowledgments/>

³ *Talking to your kids about racism: How to start the important conversation and keep it going,* UNICEF (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>

are constantly looking to adults for guidance and information. Given the devastating impacts of discrimination and racism in our society, being silent on the topic is not an option if we want to raise a generation of thoughtful, compassionate, and responsible people. You do not have to have all the answers to start the conversation. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach, these resources will help you talk to you little ones about race.



Articles

1. “Guidelines for Talking About Racism and Violence,” Zero to Three
<https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1598-racism-and-violence-using-your-power-as-a-parent-to-support-children-aged-two-to-five>
2. “Talking to Children About Racial Biases,” healthychildren.org
<https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/emotional-wellness/Building-Resilience/Pages/Talking-to-Children-About-Racial-Bias.aspx>
3. “Talking to your kids about racism: *How to start the important conversation and keep it going,*” UNICEF
<https://www.unicef.org/parenting/talking-to-your-kids-about-racism>

Watch Together

1. Sesame Street Townhall on Race
<https://www.cnn.com/2020/06/06/app-news-section/cnn-sesame-street-race-town-hall-app-june-6-2020-app/index.html>

Virtual Presentations and Podcasts

1. “Your Kid’s Aren’t Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup”, Pretty Good
<https://www.prettygooddesign.org/blog/Blog%20Post%20Title%20One-5new4>
2. “Talking to Your Children About Race and Racism,” PBS
<https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism>
3. “Talking Race with Young Children,” part 1 & 2, NPR
<https://www.npr.org/2019/04/24/716700866/talking-race-with-young-children>

Recommended Books

Years of research indicates that reading to children is critical for a variety of reasons. To strengthen bonds, build vocabulary, increase social emotional development, and to learn, see and experience different things, are just a few reasons. With recent injustices, many parents are turning to books to talk with their children about diversity, inclusivity, race, racism, anti-racism, and social justice. While this is a wonderful way to talk with kids about complex issues, it is important that parents and teachers alike carefully think through the books they are choosing to share.

Here is a resource to consider when choosing books featuring diverse and Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) characters:

[8 Tips for choosing "good" picture books featuring diverse, BIPOC characters](#)

Other resources with excellent suggestions on children's books about race and tolerance:



[21 children's books to spark important discussions about race + tolerance](#)

[Common Sense Media- Books with Characters of Color](#)

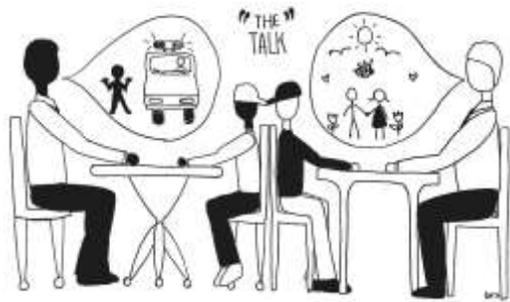
Social media accounts that offer changing book suggestions:

Instagram: @inclusivestorytime (<https://inclusivestorytime.com/>)

Instagram: @booksfordiversity (<https://www.booksfordiversity.com/>)

"When children can see themselves in books, it's affirming and validating. When children can develop empathy for others through books, we can transform the world. Expanding a bookshelf can expand a child's world and start conversations that create change".⁴

Privilege



Almost every person benefits from some form of privilege. The definition of privilege is, "a special right, advantage or immunity granted or available to a particular person or group."⁵ One can benefit from privilege based on their race, gender, religion, socio-economic status, and/or education, etc. Recognizing our own privilege is an important step in confronting injustices. By acknowledging that we have benefited from systems that disadvantage others, we can begin to reflect on how we came to have that advantage, question its fairness, and begin to confront our own

biases and ways in which we contribute to systems of oppression.

It can be uncomfortable and hard work to learn about privilege and acknowledge it in our own lives as well as others. Below are three additional resources about breaking down privilege related specifically to white privilege and how to have conversations with children about white privilege.

1. What is White Privilege Really? by Cory Collins

<https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/fall-2018/what-is-white-privilege-really>

2. White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh

⁴ Inclusive Story Time. (2020). Retrieved from: <https://inclusivestorytime.com/>.

⁵ Collins English Dictionary. (2012). Complete & Unabridged digital edition. Retrieved from <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/privilege?s=t>

https://nationalseedproject.org/images/documents/Knapsack_plus_Notes-Peggy_McIntosh.pdf

3. How to talk to kids about White Privilege by Jen Lumanlan

<https://redtri.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-white-privilege/>