Racial and Ethnic Socialization among Families of Color

APA RESilience Initiative

Tiffany G. Townsend, PhD

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Racism and Children

• **RACISM, RACIAL BIAS AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION**
  • **NEGATIVELY IMPACT CHILDREN**
  • **HAVE BEEN SHOWN TO LEAD TO DISPARITIES IN**
    • *EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES*,
    • *DISCIPLINE*,
    • *HEALTH AND DEVELOPMENTAL OUTCOMES AND*
    • *WELL BEING*

• **DECREASES SELF ESTEEM AND SELF CONFIDENCE**
Parental Socialization

• TRANSMIT VALUES, NORMS AND BELIEFS

• FAMILIES OF COLOR HAVE TRADITIONALLY NEEDED TO INCLUDE A RACIAL COMPONENT TO THE SOCIALIZATION PROCESS

• RACIAL AND ETHNIC SOCIALIZATION (RES)
Problem of Color Blind Ideology

• **Kids notice difference**

• **Avoiding discussions of differences gives the message that the topic is taboo**

• **Kids with this ideology are less likely to notice bias**
“The Talk”

P&G | The Talk

It’s time we have “the talk” so we can end the need to have it.

Watch the powerful video ▶

• HTTPS://YOUTU.BE/3s20EPvTaME
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Racial and Ethnic Socialization

RES MESSAGES INCLUDE:

- Things SAID and UNSAID.
- Things DONE and NOT DONE.
- Emotional reactions
Racial and Ethnic Socialization

RES MESSAGES COME FROM EVERYONE AND EVERYWHERE.

• Home
• School
• Neighborhood
• Friends
• Media
• Society
Racial and Ethnic Socialization

Benefits:

• **Children are more respectful of other groups.**
• **Children will have a better understanding and appreciation for their own race, ethnicity and overall identity.**
• **Self-esteem is higher.**
• **Children can recognize and respond to racial bias**
Racial and Ethnic Socialization

HOW TO START:

• **Prepare yourself**

• **Ask yourself the following questions:**
  • Do I understand my feelings about my race and ethnicity?
  • What are the attitudes toward race and ethnicity in my home, family, neighborhood, in my child’s school?
  • How have I been addressing race and ethnicity with my child and how does he/she respond?
  • How have my race-based experiences affected me?
  • What do I understand about race and ethnicity in my society?
  • What do I want my child to know about his/her race and ethnicity?
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IS ACTUALLY NOT ONE “TALK”

• ON GOING PROCESS

• WHAT CAN PARENTS DO:

  Very Young (Ages 3-5)
  • Read books about physical differences in skin, hair, eyes etc.
  • Play music from your culture.
  • Buy toys that look like your children.
  • Watch movies with diverse characters.
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Elementary School Age (Ages 6-11)

• Read books highlighting the beauty of people who look like them. Also read books with main characters who look like them.

• Take trips to museums and other attractions that celebrate their culture or people of their race.

• Be open to answering questions about racial and ethnic backgrounds.

• Start talking about things going on in the news or at school.
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Pre-Teens (Ages 12-13)

• Read books about historical figures and events involving people of your racial and ethnic background.
• Spend time teaching more about ethnic traditions such as cooking.
• Go see plays and other performances showcasing your culture.
• Get them involved in groups and activities related to your culture.
• Begin talking about some of the prejudices they may encounter as a result of their race or ethnicity.
• Emphasize respect of all persons regardless of race or ethnicity.
• Share some of your experiences in dealing with race and ethnicity.
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Teenagers (Ages 14-17)

• Buy books about coming into your own and charting a path to success for your specific race or ethnic group.

• Have open dialogues about their musical tastes, the company they keep and their attitudes towards other groups.

• Have open dialogues about your experiences.

• Continue conversations about challenges they may face as a result of their race or ethnicity and how to handle them.

Young Adults (18+)

• Continue having open conversations to prepare them to deal with any other race and ethnicity experiences they may face as they navigate young adulthood.

• Remain supportive as they learn how best to handle race and ethnicity based situations.
Thank you!