



Resources for Black Families in the Wake of Racist Violence

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This document contains resources for parents/guardians who are navigating the difficult task of raising Black children in the wake of the recent horrific violence against Black lives and the historical patterns of violence that have existed for centuries. As Black children grow, their ability to internalize racism and bias increases unless there is active and consistent intervention. The development of Black children's positive racial identity prevents children from internalizing anti-Black racism and builds resilience to the negative implications of experiencing racism across their lifespan.

Page 1: An overview of positive racial identity development, also known as racial socialization.

Page 2: A sample script for talking to Black grade school children about the recent killings of Black people.

Page 3: A set of activities created by Wee the People, and a list of sources for further study.

What is a positive racial identity?

1. **Attitudes:** I feel good about being part of the diaspora of Black people.
2. **Perceptions:** When I observe Black people, I feel proud, connected, and positive.
3. **Beliefs:** I believe that Black people are a good people, a hardworking people. I believe Black people can strive and survive and that they have contributed enormously to the world.

Strategies for positive racial socialization of Black children

1. **Affirmations:** Children are exposed to so many negative messages and stereotypical representations of Black people. Affirmations are the antidote to negative external media. Examples: "I am beautiful. I am smart. I am a good person. I'm not better than anyone. No one's better than me."
2. **Conversations:** Ask your child about their day and dig deep. When racial incidents occur, respond with support and affirmations to build them up. Use picture books, movies, and Youtube videos to spark conversation. Use your conversations to do the Big 3:
 - a. Cultivate a sense of self-esteem and pride in their racial identity.
 - b. Give children a clear sense of the realities of racism and the challenges Black people face. There are people in the world who judge and hurt and are mean to Black people because of the color of their skin. This is wrong.
 - c. Acknowledge that Black people bravely fight for their rights and many good people of different races have stood in solidarity with us to also demand justice and equal rights. There will be people of all races who will not hurt us, and will instead build great relationships with us.
3. **Experiences:** Immerse your child in experiences that represent the Black diaspora. Attend plays, dance classes, community events, and find online experiences that celebrate Black people and culture.

George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery

A Sample Script for Parents with Grade-school Children

First, remember that in order to raise our children we must take care of ourselves. [Here are some self-care tips for Black people at this time.](#)

Share facts and clarify what you'll talk about:

"Recently several Black people have been hurt and killed by White people in different parts of our country, including a White police officer hurting a Black man named George Floyd on video. All kinds of different people of all different races are very sad and mad, because the people who are hurting Black people haven't always gotten in trouble for it. Have you heard about this? What have you heard?"

"We aren't going to go into detail about the actual violence that occurred because we want to honor the memories and lives of the people who were hurt. Their names are George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. We should know that George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery were all Black people who were hurt badly and killed by White people, and in some cases this happened on video. People are very upset and mad and sad because Black people are being hurt and killed. I am here—as your important grownup-- to help you figure out how to make sense of this."

Build racial identity:

"There are people in the world who judge and hurt and in some cases kill Black people because of the color of their skin. Sometimes those people are also police officers. There are also many many more people of all different races working to try to stop them. I hope you know that we as Black people are good people and all Black people deserve to live freely without fear. We are an important part of this world and community. I will keep you safe and there are other people who love you and want you to be safe too. People are working to make new rules to keep us safer. Can you think of any people, besides me, who love us and want us to be safe?"

"Here is a picture of thousands of people who recently gathered to stand up for Black lives in a park called Franklin Park in Boston. Each little dot in this photo is someone who wants to stand up for Black lives. How do you want to stand up for our people?"



Activities for Standing Up from Wee the People

“SIDEWALK CHALK ART: Talk with kids and neighbors and create some bold, artful messaging for everyone who walks by. What do you want them to know and do right now? What kind of change do you want to see in the world?

SIGN-MAKING: Invite children and neighbors to make signs and post them for the community to see.

TOY PROTEST: Make mini-protest signs with tape and small pieces of paper. Grab your stuffies, action figures, and dolls and give them their own voice about what needs to change.

8-WORD PROTEST POEM: As multi-generational as it gets: Invite young and old to create poems as long or short as feels right, incorporating the following **EIGHT WORDS** that resonate with this moment: **POWER * JUSTICE * UNITY * CIRCLE * LISTEN * STAND * HEAL * RESPECT**

CANDLES: Light a candle (or several) for the Black and Brown lives impacted and lost to the pandemic, to racism, and to White supremacist ideology.

PLAYLIST PROTEST: Make/share a playlist of protest songs in honor of Black and Brown lives. Send us a youtube video of the protest song that most speaks to this moment and Wee will post it! Wee will also be posting/sharing our own faves throughout the day.

SAY THEIR NAMES: Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, and George Floyd -- each one of them belonged to their own loved ones, their own families, their own communities. Design their names in chalk, in a notebook, on a T-shirt, with a paintbrush.”

Sources

[P.R.I.D.E.: Positive Racial Identity Development in Early Education by Aisha White and Shannon B. Wanless](#): A study published in the Journal of Curriculum

[In My Skin: Supporting Positive Racial Identity Development in Black Children](#): A webinar from Embrace Race

[Wee the People](#): A social justice project for kids

[My 6-year-old grandson thought a book character’s skin was ‘too dark.’ Here’s how I handled it by Aisha White](#)

[Self-Care Tips for Black People Who Are Struggling With This Very Painful Week](#)