



How to Support Positive Identity Development Among Children of Color

In the November Seedling Mentor Training, participants were introduced to the essential topic of positive racial identity and development. Our guest speaker Starla Simmons, AISD Behavioral Health Specialist and Social Worker, began this important topic by acknowledging that a person's race, ethnicity and culture are an integral part of their self-perception and core to their identity. This truth applies to both children and adults of all groups. And so, to support and nurture the positive identity of a child of color we **must** acknowledge and honor that child's race, ethnicity and culture, as well as recognize any hidden biases we may hold.

Sometimes discussions involving race can result in hurt and uncomfortable feelings, reinforce stereotypes, and generate more questions that may not be answered. We know that a lunchtime training only begins to scratch the surface of understanding this complex issue. We are all in this together! Seedling is committed to continue to have brave conversations with you, our mentors, so that you can be the best caring, listening adult friend to your mentee.

To begin to learn

- how to support a positive racial identity
- about race and culture as protective factors
- how to support your mentee's positive racial identity

please view these power point [slides](#) from the presentation.

For a list of books to support positive racial identity development:

<https://sites.google.com/a/chccs.k12.nc.us/racialid/home/books-to-support-positive-racial-identity-development>

To watch a short video of 12 year old young people talk about their racial identity and navigating day to day racism: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-3159928/I-scared-cops-beat-Eye-opening-video-sees-12-year-olds-backgrounds-sharing-frank-shocking-views-racism-affects-lives.html#v-4353980599001>

Schools, businesses, and communities are working together to challenge racism and promote racial justice. To watch a short video: <http://www.bordercrossers.org/>

If you find yourself wondering, “Should I bring race and ethnicity up when talking to my mentee?” check in with your Mentor Director. A trusting relationship must already be established. Asking questions that encourage your mentee to talk about themselves, their likes, dislikes, their hopes and fears can open the door for you to establish trust. Listening to the child in front of you, laughing with him/her and learning about the unique things that make them who they are is key.