



Resources for Talking to Young Children about Race

Why talk to preschoolers about race?

[“Talking to Kids about Race & Racism: A Conversation” with Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, 104-Minute Video](#)

Presentation by the Spellman College Clinical Psychologist and author of *“Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?”* Discovery Museum, 1/27/21



[“Is my skin brown because I drank chocolate milk?” Dr. Beverly Daniel Tatum, 13-Minute video](#) with Dr. Tatum’s thoughts on this question that her son was asked. TEDxStanford, 5/7/17



[7-Minute listen/transcript of interview with author of “Raising White Kids,” Dr. Janice Harvey](#) Discussion on how white parents can talk to their kids about race. Why not talking about race or being “colorblind” is counterproductive. NPR, 5/31/20

[42-Minute presentation](#) by the author and free community discussion guide. 5/23/18

[5-Minute Article and 25-Minute Learning Modules: What Do Young Children Know About Race? You Might Be Surprised](#)

Early Learning Nation, 2/18/21

Article and introduction to the Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences’ two 25-minute learning modules, which include a discussion guide and handout.

- 1) Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow
- 2) “Racing” Toward Equality: Why Talking to Your Kids About Race is Good for Everyone.




Activities for learning together

[CNN & Sesame Street’s Coming Together: Stand Up to Racism town hall](#)

You can watch this with your children. 21-minute, 16-minute and 10-minute chunks. Sesame Street characters, adults, and kids share stories of prejudice, and explain white privilege alongside messages on how adults can talk with kids about racism, ways to take action, and create change. CNN, 6/6/20



 [Drawing Across the Color Lines with Kids: A lesson with 3 children’s book illustrators](#) Look for the shorter (20-minute) child-friendly version of this interview with Grace Lin, Yuyi Morales and Oge Mora, and then use the tips to draw with your children. In addition to the current emphasis on choosing diverse books for your children, the illustrators want to raise the consciousness of identity in children’s drawings, including how they depict themselves, friends and families. Embrace Race, 2/23/21



Talking to Young Children about Racism PBS for Kids

Video, printables, articles, parent-child conversations, book lists and links to other respected sites. Watch episodes of Arthur and Daniel Tiger’s Neighborhood together, read along with Christian Robinson.

Sesame Street: The Power of We

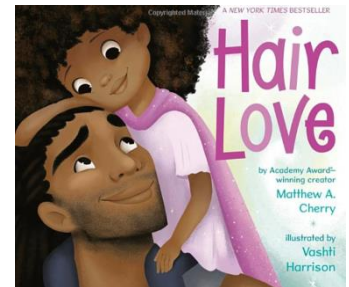
Muppet video clips to watch together and talk about. Craft ideas, songs to sing, and an Ages & Stages of Racial Understanding article to help you gear the conversation toward your child’s current developmental age.

Watch, Read, and Listen to Hair Love

Read the book *Hair Love* by Matthew Cherry, watch the 7-minute Oscar®-Winning Short Film (Full) Sony Pictures Animation short film, then listen to a 2-minute interview with the author and illustrator, Vashti Harrison.

[Raising Antiracist Children | Penguin Random House](#) (interview)

[Hair Love Book Review \(commonsensemedia.org\)](#) (Suggested discussion points for parents with their children)



The importance of diverse children’s literature

A children’s book is a powerful tool...

Leaders in expanding access to diverse children’s literature in the San Francisco Bay area, **Tandem, Partners in Early Learning** educators share the importance of using diverse children’s books as well as their carefully selected book lists. Their philosophy of using children’s books as “mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors” is rooted in the award winning work of Professor Rudine Sims Bishop.



Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors

2-min video with Professor Rudine Sims Bishop: ‘Mother’ of multicultural children’s literature

Article by Robin Chenoweth about OSU Professor Emeritus Bishop and video of Bishop describing the phrase that she coined for using children’s literature to allow ALL children to see themselves in books (as mirrors), to see other worlds and other people (books as windows), and enter worlds different than their own (sliding glass doors). By

exposing all children to colorful and diverse children’s literature, parents and educators help encourage healthy personal identity and promote empathy and inclusion. OSU.EDU, 9/5/19

How to talk to young children about race and racism

Five Ways to Reduce Racial Bias in Your Children

How racial biases form in children and how parents can counteract the bias they may pick up on from society at large, backed up by scientific studies. Six additional recommended resources on this page. Greater Good Magazine, 3/23/17





[Racism & Violence: Using Your Power as a Parent to Support Children Aged 2-5](#)

Thoughts and guidelines from Zero to Three for talking about the complex issues of racism and equality in age-appropriate ways with ideas for answering difficult questions. The mission of Zero to Three is to ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. Available in English & Spanish. 8/21/17

[Anti-Racist Resources for Parents from the Program for Early Parent Support](#)

Articles for raising antiracist children, including those specific to white parents, as well as lists of age-specific picture & adult books. Articles such as:

- Your kids aren't too young to talk about race*
- 100 race-conscious things you can say to your child*
- How to use books to talk about race*
- Resources for anti-racist parenting*
- Talking about race and culture differences with young children*
- Talking about racism and equality in age-appropriate ways (2-5 yrs)*



[5-Minute Raising Antiracist Children Video: A Better Future](#)

Learning guide, coloring page, craft and video interview with Dr. Ibram X Kendi's about his book, *Antiracist Baby*. Website also has a children's book list with many suggestions for further reading:

- [Raising Antiracist Children | Penguin Random House](#)
- [Antiracist-Baby-Glossary-Cards.pdf](#)

More Resources for Finding Diverse Children's Books

[African American Children's Book Project's Best Picture Books of 2020](#)

The AACBP believes that if you want to educate on social justice, you've got to teach Black History. [28 Days Later](#) is a yearly event that takes place every February, highlighting the best picture, middle grade, and young adult novels, written and illustrated by Black creators. Archives back to 2008 are available. Includes author's background and review of each chosen books.



[African American Literature Book Club Lists of Children's Picture Books](#)

Lists of books and movies reviewed by the oldest and largest online bookstore dedicated to African American and black literature from around the world.

[Latinxs in Kid Lit](#)

Picture books and early readers which are by/for/about Latinx, with priority given to books by Latinx creators with Latinx content. Click on the book for a review. Reviewers have a wide variety of backgrounds and expertise including writers, librarians and teachers, connected to Puerto Rico, Brazil, Mexico, and Central/South America.

[Interracial Children's Picture Books](#)

Many books with descriptions and diverse themes including interracial families, tribal stories, adoption, intergenerational families, immigrant families, all with appropriate age-ranges listed composed by Cynthia Leitich Smith.



[Representations of Asians and Asian-Americans in Recent Picture Books](#)

290+ books with Chinese, Japanese, Indian, Korean and other Asian ethnicity characters.



[We Need Diverse Books](#) is a non-profit grassroots organization of children's book lovers that advocates essential changes in the publishing industry to produce and promote literature that reflects and honors the lives of all young people. The **OurStory App** allows you to search for books featuring specific or general characters and content focused on cultures that include Black, African, Asian, Latinx, Native American, Multi-race, Arab, Middle Eastern and more.

[Lee & Low Books: About Everyone, For Everyone](#)

Culturally responsive book collections, helpful for school libraries, that are grouped by ages and themes such as social-emotional learning, social studies and history, STEM, Native American, Black, Asian American, Adoption, Spanish-Bilingual and more. Website also has resources for grants to help build diverse books libraries.

Local Library Resources Promoting Anti-Racism

Acton Memorial Library - Race, Racism & Resistance: E-books to Support Conversations:

<http://library.booksite.com/7537/nl/?list=CNL1&group=EB243>

Bedford Public Library – Black Lives Matter Picture Book List & Latinx and Hispanic Heritage Month Book List

<https://www.bedfordlibrary.net/kids/booklists/>

Sargent Memorial Library, Boxboro – Racial Equity Resource List with book Lists, movies, podcasts, TED Talks

<https://boxlib.org/services/social-justice>

Gleason Library, Carlisle – Anti-Racism and Social Justice Resources

<https://gleasonlibrary.org/anti-racism-and-social-justice-resources/>

Concord Public Library – Curated Picture Book Recommendations on Facebook:

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month Kids Books on Hoopla

It's #Juneteenth – Learn More About the Holiday and History of Black Americans List

<https://www.facebook.com/concordlibrary/photos/a.1648045105357679/1588160168012840/?type=3&theater>

Books and Media about Racism resource list:

<https://concordlibrary.org/resources/booklist/books-about-racism>

Lincoln Public Library - Talking About Race with Kids Lincoln Children's Librarians booklist:

https://www.lincolnpl.org/images/pdf/updated_race_booklist_61720.pdf

Social Justice and Black Voices for adults and teens booklist (Minuteman Library Network):

<https://www.minlib.net/booklists/recommended-reads/social-justice-and-black-voices>

Goodnow Library, Sudbury – Antiracism Resources for Children booklist:

<https://goodnowlibrary.org/anti-racism-children/>

Shop Local for Diverse Books

Silver Unicorn Books, 12 Spruce Street, West Acton, 978-274-2757, info@silverunicornbooks.com
Frequent author visits (currently virtual, previously in person), storytimes, book launches. Purchase in store, online, contactless pickup & shipping; book group supplies. *Antiracism & African American History* reading list online under the “Recommendations” tab. Weekly newsletter. <https://www.silverunicornbooks.com/>

More Than Words, 56 Felton St., Waltham, 781-788-0035, esaurwald@mtwyouth.org <https://mtwyouth.org/>
Job training and youth development program for vulnerable teens and young adults in foster care, court involved, homeless or out of school. (4/7/21: “Reopening soon”) The store is operating online via the “shop” button with curbside pickup. Donation boxes onsite. Click on the *Black Authors* button for a collection of adult and children’s books: [Read Black Authors — More Than Words \(mtwyouth.org\)](#)

Valley Wild Books, 492 King Street, Littleton, 978-339-4523, valleywildbooks@gmail.com
New and used books, records, CDs, cassettes, DVDs and blue rays, comics, gift items. Donate used books or get store credit. In-store or contactless pickup available. <https://www.valleywildbookstore.com/>

The Concord Book Shop, 65 Main St., Concord Center, 978-369-2405, books@concordbookshop.com
Author visits, signed books, in-store, shipped, or curbside pickups. Libro.fm audio books partnership. <https://www.concordbookshop.com/>

Credits

This project was inspired by a call to action through the Listen, Learn, Lift initiative at Justice Resource Institute. Resources and links were compiled and reviewed in collaboration with First Connections’ Parent Council and our CHNA15 Racial Equity Symposium community partners, including: Lovingsky Jasmin, Founder Black Lives for Racial Justice, Boxborough, Maria Albarran, SLP Program Coordinator, Minute Man Arc Early Intervention, and Peishan Bartley, Director, Sargent Memorial Library, Boxborough. Funding specific to this project was provided by the Emerson Hospital Community Benefits Grant, Acton Congregational Church, and the MA Cultural Council. Thank you to our funders, the many creators of these online resources, and to those who helped to inspire and complete this guide to expand the capacity of families to engage in discussions about race and racism. Let us continue to learn and grow together as we build compassionate, kind, anti-racist communities.

To submit your suggestions/feedback or to report a broken link, please contact Linda at First Connections (lmattews@JRI.org). Last updated 5/30/2021.

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