

Developed through collaboration among The Resilience Project, the Newton-Wellesley Hospital Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry and the Newton-Wellesley Hospital Health Equity Task Force.



# Tips and Tools for Parenting in the Face of Racial Oppression

Children start to internalize racial bias between ages two and four. By age 12, many children are set in their racial belief systems. Educating children early can help to create the foundations for self-confidence, good “[upstander](#)” behavior and lifelong resilience.

## For Parents of Color

- Practice good self-care. Recognize that racism and other forms of oppression can be corrosive and can impact the stamina it takes to nurture your children in a racially traumatizing world.
- Seek support around your experiences of discrimination, abuse and trauma in whatever way feels safest to you. You deserve to have your experiences of racial aggression acknowledged, addressed and healed in community.
- Help your children cultivate strong appreciation for their racial and ethnic inheritances. Lift up your freedom fighters by telling them stories of resistance and resilience.
- Normalize racial, ethnic and other kinds of diversity in the stories you read to your children, in art you have in your household and in your friend circle.
- Educate yourself and your children (in age-appropriate fashion) about their own history and the history of other historically marginalized people.
- Teach your children to safely [stand up](#) if they see someone else being bullied, shamed or excluded.

Teach your children early and often about [the nuances of consent](#). Model these behaviors *with* them and *for* them. Intervene when family members do or say things that are racist, xenophobic, sexist, transphobic or otherwise oppressive to other people, no matter how subtle.

### Resources:

[APA Resilience Initiative – Supporting Racial and Ethnic Socialization of Youth of Color](#)  
[Resonance Networks](#)  
[Parenting for Liberation](#)  
[Chicana M\(other\)work](#)  
[We Live for the We: The Political Power of Black Motherhood by Dani McClain](#)  
[The Asian Mental Health Project](#)  
[National Queer and Trans Therapists of Color Network](#)  
[Therapy for Black Girls](#)  
[Brown Girl Therapy Newsletter](#)  
[Latinx Therapy](#)  
[South Asian Mental Health Initiative & Network](#)

## For White Parents of White Children

- Practice good self-care. Cultivate equanimity. If you are anxious and afraid of difference, your children will be too.
- Start the conversation early. Don't wait.
- Confront your own biases and be transparent with your children about your process of uprooting the racism, xenophobia and other forms of oppression you inherited when you were growing up.
- Normalize racial, ethnic and other kinds of diversity in the stories you read to your children, in art you have in your household and in your friend circle.
- Educate yourself and your children (in age-appropriate fashion) about the history of historically marginalized people.
- Teach your children to safely [stand up](#) if they see someone else being bullied, shamed or excluded. Teach your children early and often about [the nuances of consent](#). Model these behaviors *with* them and *for* them. Intervene when family members do or say things that are racist, xenophobic, sexist, transphobic or otherwise oppressive to other people, no matter how subtle.

### Resources:

- [The Conversation We Must Have With Our White Children](#)
- [Teaching about Race, Racism and Police Violence: Resources for Educators and Parents](#)
- [A Incomplete Reading/Viewing List for Those of Us Who Aren't Black](#)

## For White Parents Seeking to Nurture Their Children of Color

- Practice good self-care. Recognize that parenting across racial difference takes skill and attunement and will require your best self.
- Help your children cultivate strong appreciation for their racial and ethnic inheritance.
- Ensure that your children can “see” themselves in the books you read to them, the art you have in your home and in your friend circle.
- Educate yourself and your children (in age-appropriate fashion) about their own history and the history of other historically marginalized people.
- Ensure that your children have ample connection to their home communities in whatever fashion is most appropriate.
- Teach your children to safely [stand up](#) if they see someone else being bullied, shamed or excluded. Teach your children early and often about [the nuances of consent](#). Model these behaviors *with* them and *for* them. Intervene when family members do or say things that are racist, xenophobic, sexist, transphobic or otherwise oppressive to other people, no matter how subtle.

### Resources:

- [VOA Connect: Transracial Adoption](#)
- [Code Switch: Transracial Adoptees On Their Racial Identity And Sense Of Self](#)
- [The Realities of Raising a Kid of a Different Race](#)

## For All Parents

- Emphasize that violence, abuse and bullying are not okay.
- No matter what, keep talking and keep engaging.
- Plan for a marathon, not a sprint.
- You know your child and your family best. Adapt all the above suggestions accordingly.

### Resources:

- [Embrace Race](#)
- [Raising Race Conscious Children](#)
- [HealthyChildren.org](#) (In English y en Español)
- [AAP Statement on The Impact of Racism on Child and Adolescent Health](#)
- [Diverse Book Finder](#)
- [Diverse Children's Books to Support LGBTQ Inclusion](#)

