

Racism in Schools

Character Education Resource Center *News You Can Use*

May 2021

We invite you to read our May issue of **News You Can Use** featuring resources about racism in schools. Please share this issue with your friends, colleagues, students and their parents.

If you are a parent [or teacher], regardless of your race or the race of your child, ask your child's teacher or principal: 'What is the school doing to ensure all students, especially Black and Latino students, are getting access to rigorous academic experiences?'

Gloria Lee, founder and CEO of [Educate78](https://www.educate78.com)

Let's Talk About It

- Does racism exist in our schools? What does it sound or look like?
- What would it take to create a truly race-neutral society? Do we want this?
- Am I racist? Why, or why not? Am I open to others' critique when it comes to how I relate to other races?
- Does the rise of certain groups' influence—Latino, Jewish, white, Muslim, or whatever—mean a decline in other groups' well-being? If people say yes, discuss whether this represent a "zero sum" mindset. Is this a mindset we want to communicate to students?
- How can we counter negative stereotypes?
- Are we responsible for teaching students and colleagues to recognize and confront racism?
- What should we do when we inadvertently do or say something racist?
- What do we communicate to the parents of our minority students about our expectations for their children?
- How are we battling the student opinion that academic proficiency is inherently white?
- Do we have a disproportionate number of administrative referrals for our minority students?

9 Tips Teachers Can Use When Talking About Racism

By Anderson, Gatwiri, Riley, Townsend-Cross, THE CONVERSATION, June 2020

1. *Provide accurate, historical context*
2. *Explain racism is not just done by 'bad people'*
3. *Show the impacts of unintended harm*
4. *Encourage students to be brave in calling out racist behavior*
5. *Explain there are hierarchies within racism*
6. *Be aware of students' racial trauma*
7. *Model inclusive behavior*
8. *Ensure diversity in the curriculum*
9. *Focus on change, not blame or shame*

Let's Talk about Racism in Schools

By Rick Wormeli, Educational leadership, November 2016 | Volume 74 | Number 3 Pages 16-22 (edited)

Reviewing and agreeing on the principles below can help us have candid discussions about racism with our students—or among fellow educators.

- Assume that, at any given moment in the conversation, the other person is doing the best he or she can.
- Forgive yourself and others for making mistakes, including inexact wording, muddled thinking, or unintended use of stereotypes.
- Suppress hidden agendas and the urge to preach or politicize.
- Remain nonaccusatory when you see things differently from another. Use phrases like, "It's been my experience that __," "Tell me more about __," or "How did faculty at your last school respond to __?"
- Seek first to understand, then to be understood (Covey, 2013).
- If you disagree with someone, paraphrase that person's point before responding.
- Avoid language that blames ("If it weren't for white people. ..." "They're always speaking Spanish together, so they must not want me around." "You're blind to white privilege.")
- Don't ask anyone to speak for a whole race if there's only one student or colleague in the group from a particular culture or race.
- Acknowledge that candid conversation makes us all vulnerable.
- Avoid associating the quality of a colleague's teaching with exploratory comments offered in conversation about racism.

Resources

[Resources to Support Anti-Racist Learning](#)

[10 Resources for Addressing Anti-Asian Racism in the Classroom](#)

[Anti-Racist Resources: For Families, Educators, and Students](#)

[Resources for Addressing Racism and Hatred in the Classroom](#)

[Why Conversations About Racism Belong in the Classroom](#)

In order to lead this kind of work – lead for racial equity – we had to continually make sense together. And we could only make sense when there was trust and trusting relationships, especially trusting cross-racial relationships.

Teaching the Hard Histories of Racism

by Emily Boudreau, [Usable Knowledge](#), Harvard GSE, February 2021 (edited)

Five principles to guide teachers and others that support students of all ages and grade levels.

1. Create a classroom culture that recognizes and values the students' identities and provides windows into diverse histories and cultures.

Make sure the books and curriculum reflect the diversity of our world and the identities of all students.

2. Use primary sources when possible.

Make sure the learning and primary sources extend into present day, so students recognize that this history part of an ongoing conversation... (and) include documents that showcase a variety of perspectives

3. Ensure content is developmentally appropriate, and recognize that space and support to process emotions is necessary.

Even the youngest learners need the opportunity to process feelings that come up as they learn about these histories.... Google survey can be used to check in on learners and ask them how they're feeling about learning this part of history.

4. Highlight the stories of resistance and resilience alongside hard histories.

Racism and discrimination are not the full story. Include historical narratives that showcase the resilience and resistance of communities throughout history

5. Remember this work takes a whole school.

Including curriculum and sources that deal with both hard histories and narratives of resilience and agency is the job of every teacher, not just those in the history department.

One "key takeaway: *Teacher preparation programs should also think about ways they can support teachers to be prepared to have these conversations and provide these curricula and resources*

If you are a parent [or teacher], regardless of your race or the race of your child, ask your child's teacher or principal: 'What is the school doing to ensure all students, especially Black and Latino students, are getting access to rigorous academic experiences?'

Gloria Lee, founder and CEO of [Educate78](#)

CHARACTER EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER (CERC) Summary:

CERC: What did you choose to focus on? What 1-2 measurable goals did you set? An updated summary.

- 1) Assist and help fund, when possible, guest speakers and workshop leaders in our Saturday Morning Seminars and the summer Conference.
 - 2) Continue to publish a Blog, a Newsletter, and a Message Board that is sent to almost all USD departments, over 200 educators in the county, as well as several colleges and universities.
 - 3) Answering emails sent to us requesting information about resources usually on topics in the news (anti-racism, social justice, bullying, for example) and on school/school district's agendas (for example: implementing character education and social-emotional learning).
-

CHARACTER EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER



We would like to hear your thoughts, questions, and feedback about this special issue of NUCU. What is helpful to you and your students?

Contact us at
character@sandiego.edu.

[Donate](#)

Help us if you can:
annualgiving@sandiego.edu.
