Talking to Your Child About Racism Resources

Books

- Books to Help You Explain Racism to Kids (PreK- Teens)
- Books, Activities and Media to Help you Talk with Kids About Race and Racism (ages 1-12)
- Books to Nurture Hope and Inspire Activism in Kids (ages 3-7)
- Books about Race and Racism (ages 4 and up)
- Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance

Articles

- How to Help Kids Handle the News
- The Dos and Don'ts of Talking to Kids of Color About White Supremacy
- Tips and Strategies for Talking to White Kids About Race & Racism
- What to Do (and Not Do) When Children Are Anxious: How to respect feelings without empowering fears
- Talking to children after racial incidents
- How to Talk with Children about Hate Speech

Resources for Parents

- Talking about Racism & Bias
- Racial Justice Resources for Families (tips when talking with kids, websites, books)
- Racism and Violence: How to Help Kids Handle the News
- 70+ Race Resources for White People

Resources for Educators/ Providers

- A toolkit to help foster productive conversations about race and civil disobedience
- Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom: A Resource for Educators
- Resources for Talking about Race, Racism, And Racialized Violence with Kids (Interviews from Experts, Articles, and Resource List)
- Resources for Educators Focusing on Anti-Racist Learning and Teaching
- Scaffolded Antiracist Resources

Resources for Everyone

- Talking to Kids About Racism and Justice: a list for parents, caregivers & educators
- Resources for Race, Equity, Anti-Racism, and Inclusion (organizations, books, educational resources)
More Book and Movie Resources

Books for Children


Overview: *Something Happened in Our Town* follows two families — one White, one Black — as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community. The story aims to answer children's questions about such traumatic events, and to help children identify and counter racial injustice in their own lives. Includes an extensive Note to Parents and Caregivers with guidelines for discussing race and racism with children, child-friendly definitions, and sample dialogues.

*Separate is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation.* Written by Duncan Tonatiuh. **Appropriate for K-5.**

Overview: Almost 10 years before "Brown vs. Board of Education," Sylvia Mendez and her parents helped end school segregation in California. An American citizen of Mexican and Puerto Rican heritage who spoke and wrote perfect English, Mendez was denied enrollment to a Whites only school. Her parents took action by organizing the Hispanic community and filing a lawsuit in federal district court. Their success eventually brought an end to the era of segregated education in California.

*The Day You Begin.* Written by Jacqueline Woodson. Illustrated by Rafel Lopez. **Appropriate for K-3.**

Overview: There will be times when you walk into a room and no one there is quite like you. There are many reasons to feel different. Maybe it's how you look or talk, or where you're from; maybe it's what you eat, or something just as random. It's not easy to take those first steps into a place where nobody really knows you yet, but somehow you do it. Jacqueline Woodson's lyrical text and Rafael Lopez's dazzling art reminds us that we all feel like outsiders sometimes-and how brave it is that we go forth anyway. And that sometimes, when we reach out and begin to share our stories, others will be happy to meet us halfway.

*Happy in Our Skin.* Written by Fran Manushkin. Illustrated by Lauren Tobia **Appropriate for PreK-2.**

Overview: Is there anything more splendid than a baby's skin? Cocoa-brown, cinnamon, peaches and cream. As children grow, their clever skin does, too, enjoying hugs and tickles, protecting them inside and out, and making them one of a kind. Fran Manushkin's rollicking text and Lauren Tobia's delicious illustrations paint a breezy and irresistible picture of the human family — and how wonderful it is to be just who you are.

*Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History.* Written by Vashti Harrison. **Appropriate for 3-7.**

Overview: Among these women, you'll find heroes, role models, and everyday women who did extraordinary things - bold women whose actions and beliefs contributed to making the world better for generations of girls and women to come. Whether they were putting pen to paper, soaring through the air or speaking up for the rights of others, the women profiled in these pages were all taking a stand against a world that didn't always accept them. The leaders in this book may be little, but they all did something big and amazing, inspiring generations to come.
Little Legends: Exceptional Men in Black History. Written by Vashti Harrison. **Appropriate for 3-7.**

Overview: An important book for readers of all ages, this beautifully illustrated and engagingly written volume brings to life true stories of black men in history. Among these biographies, readers will find aviators and artists, politicians and pop stars, athletes and activists. The exceptional men featured include writer James Baldwin, artist Aaron Douglas, filmmaker Oscar Devereaux Micheaux, lawman Bass Reeves, civil rights leader John Lewis, dancer Alvin Ailey, and musician Prince.

Maddi’s Fridge. Written by Lois Brandt. Illustrated by Vin Vogel. **Appropriate for K-3.**

Overview: With humor and warmth, this children’s picture book raises awareness about poverty and hunger. Best friends Sofia and Maddi live in the same neighborhood, go to the same school, and play in the same park, but while Sofia’s fridge at home is full of nutritious food, the fridge at Maddi’s house is empty. Sofia learns that Maddi’s family doesn’t have enough money to fill their fridge and promises Maddi she’ll keep this discovery a secret. But because Sofia wants to help her friend, she’s faced with a difficult decision: to keep her promise or tell her parents about Maddi’s empty fridge. Filled with colorful artwork, this storybook addresses issues of poverty with honesty and sensitivity while instilling important lessons in friendship, empathy, trust, and helping others. A call to action section, with six effective ways for children to help fight hunger and information on antihunger groups, is also included.

Hair Love. Written by Matthew A. Cherry. Illustrated by Vashti Harrison. **Appropriate for K-3.** (There is also a short film associated with this. It is free and on YouTube.

Overview: It's up to Daddy to give his daughter an extra-special hair style in this ode to self-confidence and the love between fathers and daughters, from Academy-Award winning director and former NFL wide receiver Matthew A. Cherry and New York Times bestselling illustrator Vashti Harrison. Zuri's hair has a mind of its own. It kinks, coils, and curls every which way. Zuri knows it's beautiful. When Daddy steps in to style it for an extra special occasion, he has a lot to learn. But he LOVES his Zuri, and he'll do anything to make her — and her hair — happy. Tender and empowering, Hair Love is an ode to loving your natural hair — and a celebration of daddies and daughters everywhere.

I Am Enough. Written by Grace Byers. Pictures by Keturah A. Bobo. **Appropriate for PreK-3.**

Overview: I Am Enough is the picture book everyone needs. This is a gorgeous, lyrical ode to loving who you are, respecting others, and being kind to one another—from Empire actor and activist Grace Byers and talented newcomer artist Keturah A. Bobo. This is the perfect gift for mothers and daughters, baby showers, and graduation. We are all here for a purpose. We are more than enough. We just need to believe it.

Fresh Princess. Written by Denene Millner and illustrated by Gladys Jose. **Appropriate for K-4.** (There is a second book called Fresh Princess: Style Rules!)

Overview: Based on The Fresh Prince created by Will Smith, Destiny is the Fresh Princess. Meet Destiny—a cool, energetic, and strong-willed young girl who approaches every day with her own signature style! That is, until she moves to a brand-new neighborhood, where nothing looks quite the same as it did at her old house. Even with new challenges and new friends to make, Destiny always
has a plan. With a few reminders from her loving family and after remembering what being the Fresh Princess is all about, she may just take the leap and jump right in! Written by celebrated author, blogger, and editor Denene Millner and illustrated by Gladys Jose, Fresh Princess is the perfect book to encourage kids to proudly stand out and be themselves!

I Love My Hair. Written by Natasha Anastasia Tarpley. Illustrated by E.B. Lewis. Appropriate for K-3

Overview: In this imaginative, evocative story, a girl named Keyana discovers the beauty and magic of her special hair, encouraging black children to be proud of their heritage and enhancing self-confidence.

Not Quite Snow White. Written by Ashley Franklin and Illustrated by Ebony Glenn. Appropriate for K-3

Overview: Tameika is a girl who belongs on the stage. She loves to act, sing, and dance—and she’s pretty good at it, too. So when her school announces their Snow White musical, Tameika auditions for the lead princess role. But the other kids think she’s “not quite” right to play the role. They whisper, they snicker, and they glare. Will Tameika let their harsh words be her final curtain call? Not Quite Snow White is a delightful and inspiring picture book that highlights the importance of self-confidence while taking an earnest look at what happens when that confidence is shaken or lost. Tameika encourages us all to let our magic shine.

Brown Boy Brown Boy What Can You Be? Written By Ameshia Gabriel Arthur Appropriate for K-1

Overview: Join Matthew as he considers all the things he can accomplish and the careers he can do.

Chocolate Me! Written by Taye Diggs and Illustrated by Shane W. Evans. Appropriate for K-2

Overview: A timely book about how it feels to be teased and taunted, and how each of us is sweet and lovely and delicious on the inside, no matter how we look. The boy is teased for looking different than the other kids. His skin is darker, his hair curly. He tells his mother he wishes he could be more like everyone else. And she helps him to see how beautiful he really, truly is. For years before they both achieved acclaim in their respective professions, good friends Taye Diggs and Shane W. Evans wanted to collaborate on Chocolate Me!, a book based on experiences of being African American, feeling different and trying to fit in as kids. Now, both men are fathers and see more than ever the need for a picture book that encourages all people, especially kids, to love themselves.

The Story of Ruby Ridges by Robert Coles. Illustrated by George Ford. Appropriate for 1-5.

Overview: This beautiful picture book, illustrated by Coretta Scott King Award-illustrator George Ford, and written by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Robert Coles, tells the true story of six-year-old Ruby Bridges. In 1960, Ruby, a young African-American girl, entered a whites-only school in New Orleans. Even though she had to pass through crowds of angry protesters, Ruby bravely walked into the school every day for months, Ruby persevered. White parents pulled their children out of the school, and Ruby and her teacher were alone in the classroom. Still, Ruby and her family would not give in. Both the text and the watercolor paintings of this book capture Ruby’s incredible strength, the love of her family, and the turmoil of America in the early 1960s.

Little Nic’s Big Day. Written by Nic Naitanui and Illustrated by Fatima Anaya. Appropriate for K-3
Overview: A heart-warming celebration of all the wonderful ways kids are truly themselves. Wake up, little Nic. It's your very first day! Your school clothes are ready. Let’s get on our way. Mum, I'm not sure. I'm a little bit wary. Will I make friends? Will it be scary? Nic is nervous about his first day … but with the help of his mum and a whole class of new friends, it might just be the best day ever. 'I wrote this for tots, teens and all human beings. Let’s embrace our differences and celebrate our diversity!' - Nic Naitanui.

What is Race? Who are Racists? Why Does Skin Color Matter? And Other Big Questions. Written by Clair Heuchan and Nikesh Shuka. **Appropriate for 5th grade and up**

Overview: Talk about race is often discouraged, but this book aims to bring everyone into the conversation. It explores the history of race and society, giving context to how racist attitudes come into being. It looks at belonging and identity, the damaging effects of stereotyping and the benefits of positive representation. The authors talk sensitively about how to identify and challenge racism and how to protect against and stop racist behaviour.

**Whoosh!: Lonnie Johnson’s Super-Soaking Stream of Inventions** by Chris Barton and illustrated by Don Tate. **Appropriate for 2nd – 5th grade.**

Overview: A cool idea with a big splash. You know the Super Soaker. It’s one of top twenty toys of all time. And it was invented entirely by accident. Trying to create a new cooling system for refrigerators and air conditioners, impressive inventor Lonnie Johnson instead created the mechanics for the iconic toy. A love for rockets, robots, inventions, and a mind for creativity began early in Lonnie Johnson’s life. Growing up in a house full of brothers and sisters, persistence and a passion for problem solving became the cornerstone for a career as an engineer and his work with NASA. But it is his invention of the Super Soaker water gun that has made his most memorable splash with kids and adults.

**Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness** by Anastasia Higginbotham. **Appropriate for 3rd – 7th grade.**

Overview: Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness is a picture book about racism and racial justice, inviting white children and parents to become curious about racism, accept that it’s real, and cultivate justice.

**All American Boys** by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely. **Appropriate for 6th grade and up.**

Overview: Rashad is absent again today. That’s the sidewalk graffiti that started it all… Well, no, actually, a lady tripping over Rashad at the store, making him drop a bag of chips, was what started it all. Because it didn’t matter what Rashad said next—that it was an accident, that he wasn’t stealing—the cop just kept pounding him. Over and over, pummeling him into the pavement. So then Rashad, an ROTC kid with mad art skills, was absent again…and again…stuck in a hospital room. Why? Because it looked like he was stealing. And he was a black kid in baggy clothes. So he must have been stealing. And that’s how it started. And that’s what Quinn, a white kid, saw. He saw his best friend’s older brother beating the daylights out of a classmate. At first Quinn doesn’t tell a soul…He’s not even sure he understands it. And does it matter? The whole thing was caught on camera, anyway. But when the school—and nation—start to divide on what happens, blame spreads like wildfire fed by ugly words like “racism” and “police brutality.” Quinn realizes he’s got to understand it, because, bystander or not, he’s a part of history. He just has to figure out what side of history that will be.
Rashad and Quinn—one black, one white, both American—face the unspeakable truth that racism and prejudice didn’t die after the civil rights movement. There’s a future at stake, a future where no one else will have to be absent because of police brutality. They just have to risk everything to change the world. Cuz that’s how it can end.

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Hason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi. **Appropriate for 6th grade and up**

Overview: The construct of race has always been used to gain and keep power, to create dynamics that separate and silence. This remarkable reimagining of Dr. Ibram X. Kendi’s National Book Award-winning Stamped from the Beginning reveals the history of racist ideas in America, and inspires hope for an antiracist future. It takes you on a race journey from then to now, shows you why we feel how we feel, and why the poison of racism lingers. It also proves that while racist ideas have always been easy to fabricate and distribute, they can also be discredited. Through a gripping, fast-paced, and energizing narrative written by beloved award-winner Jason Reynolds, this book shines a light on the many insidious forms of racist ideas—and on ways readers can identify and stamp out racist thoughts in their daily lives.

Books for Parents

The ABCs of Diversity: Helping Kids (and Ourselves!) Embrace Our Differences by Carolyn B. Helsel and Y. Joy Harris-Smith

Overview: How do we help our children respect, embrace, and learn from those who look and think differently than they do? Written by two mothers and educators — one black, one white — The ABCs of Diversity equips parents, teachers, and community leaders to address children of all ages on complicated topics of race, gender, class, religion, political affiliation, ability, nationality, and sexual orientation. Such intercultural dialogues can support communities as they work for the mutual well-being of all. This book includes specific resources and activities for younger and older children that parents and community leaders can employ to encourage compassion and empathy. An educational and practical resource for parents, teachers, community leaders, ministry personnel, human resources directors, and librarians. Questions at the end of each chapter invite reflection and group discussion.

Tell Me Who You Are: Sharing Our Stories of Race, Culture, & Identity by Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi

Overview: An eye-opening exploration of race in America. In this deeply inspiring book, Winona Guo and Priya Vulchi recount their experiences talking to people from all walks of life about race and identity on a cross-country tour of America. Spurred by the realization that they had nearly completed high school without hearing any substantive discussion about racism in school, the two young women deferred college admission for a year to collect first-person accounts of how racism plays out in this country every day—and often in unexpected ways. In Tell Me Who You Are, Guo and Vulchi reveal the lines that separate us based on race or other perceived differences and how telling our stories—and listening deeply to the stories of others—are the first and most crucial steps we can take towards negating racial inequity in our culture. Features interviews with over 150 Americans with their photographs, this intimate toolkit also offers a deep examination of the seeds of racism and strategies for effecting change. This groundbreaking book will inspire readers to join Guo and Vulchi in imagining an America in which we can fully understand and appreciate who we are.
Movies and TV Shows

After watching an episode, the series, or the movie talk with your children afterwards and have an open dialogue of the similarities between the show and our reality. Talk about what things can be pulled out of it and applied in life moving forward. Some of the following movies and shows represent racial and ethnic diversity, some represent race and racism, and others have hints or outright mental health topics in them. All of them are meant to demonstrate to diversity and inclusion and represent that it is okay to be different in any shape or form.

- **Remember the Titans** – **Rating PG**
  - Tackles the issues of race and segregation in the 1970s through American Football

- **The Color of Friendship** – **Rating TV-G**
  - Looks at race through the friendship of two girls of different races and ethnicities in 1970s.

- **Up, Up and Away** - **Rating TV-G**
  - About a black family who are superheroes except from the main character. The main character is called on to save the world and show that you can accomplish anything,

- **The Princess and the Frog** – **Rating G**
  - A waitress, desperate to fulfill her dreams as a restaurant owner, is set on a journey to turn a frog prince back into a human being, but she has to face the same problem after she kisses him. Set in New Orleans and so you get to see the culture and diversity of others.

- **Zootopia** - **Rating PG**
  - In a city of anthropomorphic animals, a rookie bunny cop and a cynical con artist fox must work together to uncover a conspiracy. Challenges many different stereotypes and includes diversity and inclusion values.

- **Moana** - **Rating PG**
  - In Ancient Polynesia, when a terrible curse incurred by the Demigod Maui reaches Moana's island, she answers the Ocean's call to seek out the Demigod to set things right. Represent a culture not often seen in the media and shows the strengths that a female has.

- **Big Hero 6** - **Rating PG**
  - The special bond that develops between plus-sized inflatable robot Baymax, and prodigy Hiro Hamada, who team up with a group of friends of different races and ethnicities to form a band of high-tech heroes.

- **Wonder** - **Rating PG**
  - Based on the New York Times bestseller, this movie tells the incredibly inspiring and heartwarming story of August Pullman, a boy with facial differences who enters the fifth grade, attending a mainstream elementary school for the first time.

- **Hidden Figures** - **Rating PG**
  - The story of a team of female African-American mathematicians who served a vital role in NASA during the early years of the U.S. space program.

- **Akeelah and the Bee** - **Rating PG**
  - A young girl from South Los Angeles tries to make it to the National Spelling Bee. Overcomes the odds and doubts that everyone has about her and where she comes from.

- **Spider-man: Into the Spider-Verse** - **Rating PG**
  - Teen Miles Morales becomes Spider-Man of his reality, crossing his path with five counterparts from other dimensions to stop a threat for all realities.
- **Black Panther - Rating PG-13**
  - T’Challa, heir to the hidden but advanced kingdom of Wakanda, must step forward to lead his people into a new future and must confront a challenger from his country’s past.

- **The Expanding Universe of Ashley Garcia – Appropriate for 11+**
  - Ashley Garcia, the world’s only 15-and-a-half-year-old robotics engineer and rocket scientist, gets the chance to work for NASA. She moves across the country to live with her Uncle Victor, a pro football player turned high school coach.

- **The Healing Powers of Dude – Appropriate for 11+**
  - Noah, an 11-year-old boy with social anxiety disorder, has to start middle school, he turns to a mutt named Dude, a sarcastic emotional support dog who might need Noah as much as Noah needs him.

- **The Dragon Prince – Rating TV-Y7**
  - Two human princes forge an unlikely bond with the elfin assassin sent to kill them, embarking on an epic quest to bring peace to their warring lands.

- **Avatar: The Last Airbender – Rating TV-Y7**
  - In a war-torn world of elemental magic, a young boy reawakens to undertake a dangerous mystic quest to fulfill his destiny as the Avatar, and bring peace to the world.

- **The Loud House – Rating TV-Y7**
  - Lincoln Loud is an eleven-year-old boy who lives with ten sisters. With the help of his right-hand man Clyde, Lincoln finds new ways to survive in such a large family every day.

- **The Legend of Korra - Rating TV-Y7**
  - Avatar Korra fights to keep Republic City safe from the evil forces of both the physical and spiritual worlds.

- **Motown Magic – Appropriate for 3+**
  - Imaginative boy Ben transforms his city by bringing colorful street art to life, armed with a magic paintbrush -- and the classic sounds of Motown.
Children’s books: Race, culture, diversity and inclusion

*The Colors of US* by Karen Katz

*Ten Tiny Babies* by Karen Katz

*A Kids Book About Racism* by Jelani Memory

*We’re Different, We’re the Same – Sesame Street*

*When We Were Alone* by David A. Robertson

*Little People, Big Dreams: Wilma Rudolph* by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara

*Something Happened in Our Town: A Child’s Story about Racial Injustice* by Marietta Collins

*Harlem’s Little Blackbird: The Story of Florence Mills* by Renée Watson

*Voice of Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford

*The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats
A Letter to Amy by Ezra Jack Keats

Whistle for Willie by Ezra Jack Keats

Viola Desmond Won’t Be Budged! by Jody Nyasha Warner and Richard Rudnicki

Saturday by Oge Mora

Hair Love by Matthew A. Cherry

Kamala and Maya’s Big Idea by Meena Harris

The Youngest Marcher Cynthia Levinson

AntiRacist Baby by Ibram X. Kendi

“More More More,” Said the Baby by Vera B. Williams

A is for Activist by Innosanto Nagara
Counting on Community by InnoSanto Nagara

Let’s Talk About Race by Julius Lester

Last Stop on Market Street by Matt De La Peña

I Am Enough by Grace Byers

Gordon Parks: How the Photographer Captured Black and White America by Carole Boston Weatherford

Ruth and the Green Book by Calvin Alexander Ramsey

Preaching to the Chickens: The Story of Young John Lewis by Jabari Asim

Island Born by Junot Díaz

Hidden Figures by Margot Lee Shetterly
The Other Side by Jacqueline Woodson

The Story of Ruby Bridges by Robert Coles

We March by Shane W. Evans

Coretta Scott by Ntozake Shange

Whoever You Are by Mem Fox

Little People, Big Dreams: Harriet Tubman by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara

Let It Shine: Stories of Black Women Freedom Fighters by Andrea Davis Pinkney

Sulwe by Lupita Nyong’o

Everyone Matters by Pat Thomas
Happy In Our Skin by Fran Manushkin

African American Legends for Little Learners from Heritage Arts

Mae Among The Stars by Roda Ahmed

Same, Same but Different by Jenny Sue Kostecki-Shaw

The Skin You Live In by Michael Tyler

Let the Children March by Monica Clark-Robinson

Malcom Little: The Boy Who Gre Up to Become Malcolm X by Ilyasah Shabazz

Separate is Never Equal by Duncan Tonatium

Henry’s Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad by Ellen Levine
Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History by Vashti Harrison

Julián is a Mermaid by Jessica Love

Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment by Parker Curry

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson

Early adolescence and adolescence books:
All American Boys by Jason Reynolds and Brendan Kiely

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You by Jason Reynolds and Ibram X. Kendi
Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness
Anastasia Higginbotham
Resist by Veronic
The Hate U Give by Angie Thomas
To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

We Love you, Charlie Freeman

Parent resources:
Motherhood So White by Nefertiti Austin

White Fragility by Robin Diangelo