



Race and Racism: Encouraging Understanding and Dialogue to Support the Healthy Development of Students

Webinar Transcription: December 13, 2017

Karmen Rouland:

Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for joining us for today's webinar Race and Racism: Encouraging Understanding and Dialogue to Support the Healthy Development of Students. My name is Karmen Rouland, and I am the Associate Director for Technical Assistance and Training at the Center for Education Equity at MAEC. We are hosting this webinar in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League. If you have thought about this issue or are dealing with this in your own practice or families, then you have come to the right place.

Allow me to provide some context. Exactly one month ago, the FBI released data from the 2016 Universal Crime Report's Hate Crime Statistics Program. In 2016, there were over 6,000 single biased incidents reported to law enforcement agencies. Of that number, approximately 58% were motivated by bias due to race, ethnicity, or ancestry, and 9.9% or 10% of these issues occurred at a school or college. While not all incidents of bias are classified as hate crimes, they occur much too often to be ignored.

The Center for Education Equity is a project of the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium in partnership with WestEd and the American Institutes for Research. It is one of four regional Equity Assistance Centers funded by the US Department of Education under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and serves 15 states and territories in region one.

We seek to improve and sustain the systemic capacity of public education systems to address problems caused by segregation and inequities. We also seek to increase equitable educational opportunities for all students regardless of race, gender, religion, and national origin.

Today's presenters Charo Basterra, Jinnie Spiegler, Jason Sirois, and I will share diverse perspectives in addressing today's webinar topics. Through this webinar, we hope you will gain an understanding of how children develop racial awareness and attitudes about race identify strategies parents can employ to support children dealing with issues of race, gain an understanding about anti-bias, anti-bias training for different age groups, and learn best practices for bringing stakeholders together to support the positive social-emotional development of students.

Now I will turn it over to one of our facilitators for today, Noelle Haile. Noelle?

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Noelle Haile: Sure. Thank you, Karmen. Hi, everyone. Today me and Pam MacDougall from WestEd will be your facilitators. If you have any questions for us and if you have any technical difficulties, please make sure to text us in the chat box. Today's webinar, all participants will be muted. If you have any questions, please ask us in the Q&A box found on the right-hand side of your panel, and for comments in response to presenter questions, please also respond in the comments box on the right-hand side of your panel.

At the end of this webinar, we will be giving you a brief survey. Please complete the survey, so that we can improve our webinars continuously for you and also learn about other topics that you'd like us to present.

At this time I would like to share the ... give it to Charo Basterra who'll be presenting the first part of this webinar.

Charo Basterra: Good afternoon, everyone. We're going to be talking about developmental considerations regarding the concept of race and there's this idea that children, they're young, are colorblind and they don't distinguish any differences in terms of race. The first thing that I want to do is a poll, and the question of the poll is at what age do children start developing the concept of race. Please enter your response to the poll questions on the right-hand side panel.

Noelle Haile: Everyone, the questions will be on the right-hand side of the panel. You can click on your response and hit submit at the bottom of your panel. We have a few more seconds before the poll closes. Okay, and the poll is closed. We should be getting responses soon.

Thank you, everyone. We see that we have a lot of people who responded three years of age the most and then there are people who responded four years of age. Charo?

Charo Basterra: Okay. As we'll see, young children start developing the concept of race actually when they are babies. They start noticing differences in skin colors at around six months of age. Does that mean that they have the concept of race? No, it's a process and this process starts very early. By one and two years old, children start noticing physical characteristics, color, hair texture, and gender, and they can also match based on these physical characteristics.

By three and four they can identify and match people according to racial and physical characteristics and groups, but sometimes they get confused. For example, a child is of a mixed race, it's kind of a concept that's going to take a while as you could see to have what is called a gender and racial constancy. By three and four, they are not yet clear. For example, children might think we will always be black or we will always be white, we will always be a girl or a boy.

We have to follow in the developmental theory of particularly of Jean Piaget, we can see that children are kind of slaves of what they see. It's the perceptual, the concrete aspects of objects and reality that really are kind of the lead for developmental concepts. However, by age three and four, they can absorb societal stereotypes from people and that's what they can hear or they can see, particularly TV or any other medium where they can actually associate certain kind of judgments or certain kind of criteria for a different group, and that's why it's a very important thing to consider it's the effect of the media on children's development of the concept of race.

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As you can see, these are some examples of children how the way they perceive reality has an impact on how they develop concepts. For example, "Why am I called black if my skin is brown?" or "Will my skin color black come off in the bathtub?" or a white 4-year-old ask a mix Indian from India, a white boy, "Are you Indian?" and the boy says "Yes" and "Which part of you is Indian?" and again we're talking about show me something that tells me that you're Indian. The boy is surprised. He doesn't know what to say, look at the arms and says "It might be this side because it's darker." Again, we can see how children based on what they perceive, they start developing this concept of race.

Changes start to occur at ages five and six, and that's when they really become interested in how people get their skin color, not just what they see but how does that happen. They can understand simple explanation. Sometimes people adults get kind of concerned how to respond to young children about these differences. Sometimes it's an issue that is difficult for them, but children are not expecting this kind of complex kind of rationale or answers. They ask the simple questions that actually are aligned to where they are in their development, so very straightforward, simple answers will help the kids develop a healthy idea of what a race is.

They start developing constancy in terms of gender and race, but they may also use insults to other children or adults and this is based on what they have actually seen on TV or interactions they have seen in more people, they know that they can hurt and they still can say it. Again, that's the importance, the influence that society has on young children. They can also select what children they want to play with, and they can give rationale like, for example, I want to play with all of them because they are white and I'm white, or I don't want to play with these kids because they are black, or any kind of these comments, again, are based on what they perceive in society, what they see, what message are we giving them.

Again, this is the positive side of how can we really help children is that they do enjoy exploring similarities and differences related to physical characteristics. At the preschool level, young children can be exposed to books that talk about different skin color or how we're all the same and how we are different, and it's very important to actually talk about this in a positive way how we differ in terms of color of hair or skin, but presenting all this information in a positive way.

They can identify stereotypes if you provide children read stories about how some ideas that we might have of certain groups are not accurate, or we can actually go and present some accurate information and messages about different groups of people in a positive way. What I call engage in social justice activities, it's pretty much something that you could do in say what is fair, how do we relate to other people, what is the right way of interacting, how can we actually develop very positive relationship with people from diverse races, languages, and so on and so forth.

One of the interesting issues, and this is something that I am very interested in exploring, is that they might be differences in developmental patterns. I mean what role does society plays and how the children absorb these influences from society. For example, some research conducted by Fishbein in 2002 shows that between the ages four to six, black children develop a pro-white bias and with pro-black affinities developing between the ages of seven to 10, and finally more negative attitudes towards life around the age of 14 to 18. Society has a very important role in how children perceive themselves and how they relate or what kind of bias they have for a certain group of people or against a group of people or even more important

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The same other research by Connolly in 2002 also show that children as young as five downplay their own South Asian identities in favor of whiteness. We see a pattern that they may be this tendency to see white as better. As adult and educators, we need to be very aware of that fact so that we can counteract these patterns. Actually you can see something is very important is that, yeah, society has a very important role in determining some developmental patterns in young children.

There's another piece of research that was kind of interesting and see in fact that certain races of a groups of people can actually have a faster awareness of race. For example, black children are more aware of the concepts of race than Latino and white children. This is research conducted using different assessments. Actually, why is that? Why do black children develop this awareness earlier than other children? At the same time the same study found that Latino children reported more discriminatory encounters than black children.

Something is happening in society why this research was conducted in Alabama and included different groups of white, African-American and Latino children. This difference actually let us know the impact of the relationship between young kids with children of other races with adults of other races and it's important to know this, so we can actually do something to help the students. Perhaps an interesting thing to think about is the impact, how can actual society impact the development of certain concepts or the feelings in terms of how children feel regarding discrimination at the young age. This is seven to 12.

For example black children were 2.5x more likely than Latino children to report that people were afraid of them because of their race, but at the same time, Latino children reported that people thought they were inferior because of their race. It's important to see how we can actually either help young children from a very young age as they start developing these concepts, and also give us a message of how important it is for parents and for educators to play a significant role in this.

Now I'm going to pass this to Noelle.

Noelle Haile: Thank you, Charo. We have a few minutes. We're going to take some questions for Charo. Please type in your questions in the Q&A box found on the right-hand side of the panel. I'll be reading out your questions to Charo. We have the first question from Karen. Do five and six-year-olds choose to play with children of the same race and/or gender, or do their parents choose for them who playmates will be or is it both?

Charo Basterra: That's a very interesting question. Well research shows that it is not like a pattern that, for example, all white children choose to play with all white children or black children with black children. It differs. It depends pretty much on the environment. Like, for example, if children grow in multicultural settings where in fact, for example, the preschool program, the issue of playing with different children and looking at race difference in a positive way, the likelihood of that happening is of children just choosing their own is limited, but parents do have a very important role and there have been some interviews to children where they were asked "Why don't you want to play with such-and-such?" and they say "Because my parents don't like me

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to be friends with such an exception, racial group."

You can see the answer to that it depends on the context, it depends on the parents, but actually parents do play a very important role in actually either creating a bias free and encouraging children to interact in a positive way with others, or they might start creating this idea that because you are white, you also only play white children, or because you are black, it's better to, yes, play with black children and so on and so forth.

Noelle Haile: Thank you. You have a second question from Virginia. In what way might parents encourage their children towards positive interactions with children who are different than they are?

Charo Basterra: That's another great question. As you know, from a very, very young ages, as we show in terms of the developmental patterns of children, you could start even by very simple things getting, for example, dolls of different skin color, books about people and how they're different and the same, celebrating these differences, kind of inviting kids from diverse racial groups to play together, even the preschool program that you go to, it's important to when you go before you enroll your child to visit the program, see what kind of relationships, how the teacher actually help children interact with children from other races, multicultural approach that the schools have.

Very important it is that, as I mentioned earlier, that children, particularly young age is what they perceive what they see. Any books that, of course, should be selected according to developmental level, but any books, any material, any objects that actually help them with the process of looking at differences in a positive way is highly, highly recommended. Then conversations with your children and talking about this difference in a very positive, natural way, not like it's a secret I'm going to be sharing or something. It's like part of life.

Differences are part of life and similarities are part of life, and there are wonderful books about people. For example, I don't remember the author, but it just explores the color of hair, the color of skin, differences and similarities, and just by sharing our own kind of attitudes towards other people from diverse races and languages and cultures, we are very important as parents... very important person in sharing these perceptions with our children. Children absorb this like sponges, all the things that they see, actually, as you can see, have an impact on how they develop the concept of race and how to relate to people from diverse backgrounds.

Noelle Haile: We have one more question for Charo. This is from Shirley. She says I have pondered as to why in spite of how my granddaughter is raised as to why she makes some racial comments more now at age 15 years old?

Charo Basterra: Yeah, another very important question. As you can see, the younger you start with kids kinda of helping them with the differences, the better. You could see the research that I show where in fact at the beginning this research was on black children, how at the beginning they kind of go through a process of thinking that why is better, people that are white are better, and then they go kind of a different process, and at the end they develop these kind of attitudes towards I only want to be with my group. That's the role that society places on our children, and that's when we really need to counteract.

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Now it's important to see in the particular case of your granddaughter or grandson, I don't remember what you say, to talk to your children, why do they have that ... what experience? What have they experienced? Have they experienced discrimination? What is it overall day-to-day? I mean children develop attitudes based on what they have experienced. Unfortunately, for many of our children this experience actually leads them to have kind of negative attitudes to other races and other people.

Noelle Haile: Okay. One more question and we'll go to the next presenter. As an educator, how do you suggest we encourage interracial interactions and friendships when parents do not encourage and/or make it clear they do not want their children interacting with children of different races?

Charo Basterra: Yeah, that's again is a very important question. I'm glad to let you know that purpose of this presentation is going to be precisely about that. I don't want to go ahead and talk about some strategies that you can use. But I think that it's very important to have ... particularly to get to know your teachers, to get to know what kind of message are they giving. Remember even if it's hard ... even if the school, there's kind of perhaps not necessarily very positive, you are a very, very important person in your children's lives. You can do a lot, particularly when they're young, to be able to expose them in a positive way to differences, and in many cases to teach them how to address discrimination if they're the target of it. I hope that responded the question, and there will be more about this in the presentation. Thank you so much.

Noelle Haile: Thank you, Charo. It's now my pleasure to turn it on to Karmen.

Karmen Rouland: Yes. Hello, again, everyone. Thank you, Noelle. During my portion of the webinar, I'll discuss the relationship between racial identity and academic identity and achievement and really talk about how racial identity is negotiated in the school environment and what that looks like in terms of experiences with teachers and peers. Not only is it important for you to develop a positive sense of self for schooling purposes, kind of what Charo was talking about, but also having a racial and cultural awareness of others will help us all be better citizens in society. We want to go to the next level here and discuss this.

As we know, culture is defined as a system of beliefs, values, and practices that are shared by a group of people, and over time much research has been done to show how culture, race, and education are related and connected. It's important for educators to have an understanding of how race and culture manifest in education and how race shapes, how students see their world. Racial awareness and an awareness of the ways in which structural and institutional racism and discriminations affects the outcomes and experiences of students of color is key to helping them navigate the educational space successfully. Considering these factors and instructions, it is a part of what's called the cultural culturally relevant pedagogy, if you will.

I'm going to read this quote from Erik Erikson who developed a theory of psychosocial development where identity development occurs in adolescents. He says, "In the social jungle of human existence, there is no feeling of being alive without a sense of identity." Identity development occurs during adolescent development and is the categorization of the self as an occupant of a role and an incorporation of the meanings and expectations associated with that role. Essentially identity is the answer to the question "Who am I?"

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As we think about racial identities, who are we as members of our racial group, how do we identify with our racial groups. We are essentially describing a sense of group or collective identity based on one perception that he or she shares a common racial heritage with a particular racial group. Racial identity has been associated with mental health, psychological well-being, motivation, and academic beliefs of African-American students. We know from previous research that the cultural, ethnic, and racial background of students plays an integral role in their beliefs, practices, and expectations for education.

Some researchers have found that multicultural learning and teaching helps foster positive classroom behavior and an increase in academic achievement for students of color. Also how students identify with the school environment or what's known as academic identity can be threatened or this identification with the school environment can be facilitated due to negative experiences with teachers, peers, and again that institutional structural racism and discrimination that is sometimes prevalent in our school buildings.

Here's a quote from Arthur Ashe who is a world renowned tennis champion and the first African-American male player to win the US Open at Wimbledon. He says, "My potential is more than can be expressed within the bounds of my race or ethnic identity." If we take a moment and think about that word "bounds of my race or ethnic identity," we see that sometimes for people of color, our race can be seen as negative or have certain stereotypes associated with it, which places limitations on us and on people of color and bias due to our race or ethnic identity.

In some ways, students of color may internalize negative messages about their racial groups which can affect motivation and performance in schools. This concept is known as stereotype stress where one feels like they're at risk of confirming a negative stereotype of their own racial groups. But as you can imagine, racial identity is complex in that it can serve as promotive or protective factors in positive youth development and academic outcomes.

Promotive factors refer to predictors of positive outcomes across varying levels of risk, such as discrimination and stereotyping, and protective factors where race is seen as a protective factor, it moderates the relationship between risk and developmental and academic outcomes. In some cases racial identity has also been deemed as an asset in helping students of color negotiate exposure to risk associated with racial injustice.

Now I have a discussion question here, and I'm going to read that question, and we really want you to respond in the chat box. How has this topic come up for you in practice, in your schools, in your classrooms? Do you see students, your students of color, negotiating these issues in your settings?

Noelle Haile:

Hi, everyone. Could you please type in your responses in the chat box. We will take a couple of minutes for this. Again, any comments or any responses, please type it in the chat box. We'll take one more minute and we'll be back.

I have a few comments from Lisa. The first one is from Lisa. Students who are Americanized, their name ... who Americanize their name, Marta becomes Martha, Juan becomes John. Charo commented students resist learning when they perceive rejection of their cultural identities by teachers. Mary Jones responded. I have noticed that with our African-American males. It is not

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always cool to be smart. Shirley responded white teachers are afraid to discipline or deal with black children, especially boys. Final comments by Virginia. Yes, I've seen these following examples. I just finished facilitating a workshop called "Academically and Socially Supporting African-American Males" where there were numerous examples of teachers who saw black males shutting down on academic excellence. I'm turning this back to you, Karmen.

Karmen Rouland:

Thank you and thank you all for your comments. You're right and some of what you're describing there is a kind of academic socialization of what kids think or what students believe is the right thing to do such as in the case of the students "Americanizing" their names and then also with students of color, especially our black boys who there's a lot of research around how being good in school or excelling in academics is somehow seen as acting white.

What students tend to do in a way to preserve being cool or to preserve their racial identity, they do what's called a dis identify with school, and we really have to think about how we work with our students and with our young males to ensure that they have all they need to be positive and firm in their sense of self as an African-American, as a male, as an African-American male, and so we really do appreciate your comments there.

I'm going to move forward, but please keep putting your comments in the chat box, so we can get to them ... get to those comments. Along with some of the examples you shared, here are some quotes from youth from some previous work that we've done. Here's one quote I'm going to start with the purple and go around. I have to represent I feel proud to have a culture that's different and proud to be a Latina. We're not all categorized as one type of person. There's people from everywhere doing different things who have different types of cultures. Being Latina for me it's also being a strong woman. That's from a young woman named Natalie.

In the red, when some teachers see an African-American male student, they automatically think he is going to be bad and that he has to be resilient to those societal stereotypes. It's a stereotype that all black people are like thugs and dope dealers and stuff like that, and they are going to be late to class and all, but I have good grades and I have a clean record at school, and a lot of my friends do also. I want to do better for myself and people are depending on me to.

Growing up in Los Angeles I was lucky to be surrounded by Spanish and a lot of Hispanic people, and I'm sure it was better for me and my family than in other parts of America, but I still witnessed a lot of racism. For example, when my mom and I were out together when I was younger, people regarded her as my nanny at best or a kidnapper at worse.

Lastly, so after years of slowly opening myself up to having pride about my race and culture, hearing two boys call me a chink in the middle of a pizza place was a snap back to reality. On the one hand, it was so over-the-top, it was almost comical. I mean it's not even the right racial slur since I'm not Chinese.

We thought we'd share these quotes with you just to get to hear from you directly around how they negotiate these issues of race and identity, especially as it relates to schools and just being a youth, being a kid. It's a lot to go through in that adolescent development period. We wanted to have those quotes there for you.

Okay. Here's another discussion question. I'm going to turn it back to Noelle.

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- Noelle Haile: Hi, everyone. Again, please type in your comments in the chat box. We will take about a minute for this one.
- Karmen Rouland: This question says what can families, educators, and communities do to facilitate positive racial identity development of students. If you want to use those examples from the quote from the previous slide, you can to kind of help come up with some strategies and then we'll discuss.
- Noelle Haile: I'm going to give one more minute to make sure that we have time to type in your responses. We have our first one, affinity groups and positive opportunities to participate in groups focused on diverse representation of success, from Leslie. We have another one, a partner with colleges to recruit and prepare professionals who are racially diverse to serve as positive section, models to children. A few more. We'll just do one or two, and then we'll pass it on.
- I have one of an Asian parent. I have been waiting to find ways to reach Asian students to develop healthy racial identifiers. I was completely whitewashed until very recently and I want the younger generation Asians to own their racial identity, and this from Shino. Last comment from Assad, reinforcing the message to my young black son that he is doing everything right and it doesn't make him less black for it, showing him that excelling in school is what you're supposed to do. We have a lot of comments in the chat box. The presenter will be responding and communicating with you on this. Just to keep on time, we're going to move on to the next to move the presentation along. Karmen?
- Karmen Rouland: Yes. Along with what you all shared in terms of working with the students and speaking to students, in terms of strategies for combating bias, giving students a space to discuss race and culture recognizing that we all have our own biases. That's not the issue, but it's really taking the time out to confront them and it's what you do with those biases and how you act. Challenging the assumptions that we make about others based on what they look like and based on stereotypes and our own beliefs from our own experiences in life. Those are all things we'll do. I'm going to continue. I'm chatting with you all in the chat box and answering your questions, but now I'm going to pass it back to Noelle.
- Noelle Haile: Thank you, Karmen. Just like the first one, we have a few minutes, a couple of minutes. If you have any questions for Karmen, we'll take about two or three questions. Please type them in the Q&A box. I'm going to give this just another few minutes and then Karmen will be engaging with everyone on the line. More of a comment: we have encouraged children of all races to see adults of the same and of different races and cultures as positive, supportive to people in their lives. This is from Karen. Thank you, everyone. Continue to engage online. You can ask questions. I have one more and then we will go on to the next presenter. I have one question from Mary Jones for Karmen. Where can we find research-based strategies for teachers in the classroom?
- Karmen Rouland: Yes, there are many resources that we have on MAEC's website, and I can send a link out to everyone and then also if you stay online for the rest of this presentations, our partners from the Anti-Defamation League will be providing some strategies and resources for you as well. When we send out the slides, you have a resource, a list of resources.
- Noelle Haile: Okay. It's now my pleasure to pass the presentation on to Jinnie.

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Jinnie Spiegler: Hello, everyone. My name is Jinnie Spiegler, and I work in the Education Department at the Anti-Defamation League, and I will be discussing classroom applications and specific resources we've created at different age levels for classroom applications. The first thing we're going to do is answer a question. What thoughts and feelings arise when you think about bringing this topic, the topic of race and racism, into your classroom or program? It could be a word, it could be a phrase, it could be a sentence, but what thoughts and feelings arise for you? You can put your answers in the chat box. I'll just make sure it goes to all attendees. Very excited and comfortable.

Noelle Haile: One more comment, the importance of also providing learning opportunities for parents and families.

Jinnie Spiegler: Okay. Resistance by white parents, empowerment and passion, pride, guilt and anger, a lot of different feelings, depends on the age of my students; fear, excited complicated. We just can keep those coming. While I just share that, definitely it's important to acknowledge the teaching about race and racism will elicit lots of feelings. Someone else said there's a feeling of resistance from others and sadness for the fear that people are feeling, a positive experience for the students but concerns about parent reactions. Fear of saying the wrong thing, fear of parental backlash yet excitement to discuss this topic as we need to.

There's so many different feelings. There's sometimes anxiety, excitement, discomfort, fear, worry, thinking about others. I think it's just important to say that just because we have these feelings, it doesn't mean we shouldn't teach about this topic in the classroom, and I know for myself when I was teaching, the things that scared me the most and worried me the most were usually the things that have the most payoff and were the most valuable. I think what's important is that we want to prepare teachers and educators and parents.

We want to prepare themselves both content wise, and we're going to be providing some resources for you on that. Also know that you don't have all the answers and none of us do, so we're learning together and that's an important message. You also want to prepare yourself emotionally because this work can be messy, it can be complicated, the conversations can be uncomfortable, they don't always end smoothly, so you want to remind yourself of that, and also the students with whom you're working.

We're going to move on. But some of the other speakers have talked about this. In our work, we've always believed that talking about identity bias, discrimination, race, racism, and other issues of bias should be part of what happens in schools and classrooms. In particular over the last several years, there have been a variety of very public incidents and situations.

A couple years ago the church shooting by Dylann Roof of the African-American church in Charleston, the Black Lives Matter, and the issue of criminal justice disparities has been a big public conversation, all of the election rhetoric that we heard during the campaign and we're still hearing, and of course most recently a few months ago Charlottesville. There's an increasing public awareness discussion about how important this topic is. Of course, young people want to and should be part of that conversation.

I just wanted to show you. I'm not going to read them all, but over the past few years, many of

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the most important and prominent education organizations like the NEA, the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the Social Studies Teachers Council and the Teachers of English, as well as the most prominent education research organization have all made statements and have passed resolutions about this topic. I just wanted to read one from the NEA. There's perhaps nothing harder than a conversation on race.

This is the brown one in the corner, but do it because how we feel about race, how we react to racism informs how we feel about and react to all other forms of bias and prejudice. It's not important that we as adults know all the answers. That was something that I was saying before that we're going to learn together. Of course, you want to prepare yourself as much as possible, but it is a journey that you're taking together with young people.

At the Anti-Defamation League, we have mastery skills that helps to guide all of our instruction, both in training that we do with educators, students, and parents, and in all of our classroom curriculum materials. They're kind of umbrella skills, and they look different obviously at different age levels, and also depending on who our audience is. I thought they might be helpful and they kind of build on themselves.

The first is identity; that students understand the various dimensions of identity, and the other speakers have talked about how important this is. Then we explore the language of bias. We want students and teachers and parents to understand some of the basic terms and concepts, and we also have that language that is age-appropriate. There may be different definitions depending on the age level. We want students to increase their understanding of the impact on culture and how that impacts communication.

Then we get into students really understanding and recognizing bias and discrimination in themselves and others and within society and our institutions, and then we want to give them the skills to be able to actually challenge and confront bias and discrimination in themselves to others and society. Finally action planning is really about giving students the capacity to create environments that are fair, equitable, and respectful by getting involved and doing something about what they see.

The next two slides are going to include 10 classroom considerations, things to think about when you're approaching the topics of race and racism. It will vary by age level and there are a lot more that we could add, but these are the ones that we've prioritized. The first thing you want to make sure is that you've promoted a safe and respectful learning environment. Sometimes students don't participate in these kinds of discussions about race and racism because ... or other controversial topics because they worry they'll be teased.

They may be embarrassed by their lack of knowledge or they're so passionate about it that they worry about the strong feelings that will arise. Many educators at the beginning of the year make group agreements or ground rules for their classroom and that's great, and we want to encourage people to remind their students of these ground rules when they're entering these kind of conversations.

You want to make sure that the ground rules have, first, acknowledgment that we all make mistakes. Mistakes is how we learn and that's okay. We don't have all the answers. You want to make sure there's active listening and you're sharing air time, and we of course want everyone

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to be open to new ideas and really listening to people and also the acknowledgement that conflicts may occur. If conflicts do occur, we don't want to brush them under the rug. We want to really address them. We encourage adults to model how to talk about these topics by being honest exposing yourself.

Something that I think Karmen said is that because we are all products of a biased society, students may not be aware that everyone has biases and everyone holds stereotypes. They're embarrassed and they're holding it in, and it's important to acknowledge that. It should be explained to them explicitly. You can share an example from your own life. At the same time, we want to assume goodwill and convey to students that they should do the same.

Then you also want to consider the racial composition of your classroom. You may have a class that's predominantly white. You may have a class that is mixed-race, or mostly students of color that's important to consider, and possible triggers for your students. Sometimes, and it varies so much, but some students may feel relieved or happy to discuss a topic like race and racism, if it's relevant to their lives, while others may feel awkward, upset, embarrassed, or angry.

You don't want to assume that kids are going to feel one particular way. Of course, you never want to single out, especially if you only have a few students of color, but no matter what, you don't ever want to single out an African-American student, a Native American student, if you're talking about those issues to speak as a representative for their group.

Sharing personal stories, is their own ... that's up to them if they want to do that, but also they're not speaking as a representative for their group and you definitely don't want to put that on them. If there is a racial diversity in your class or there's very little, you want to find other ways to bring those voices in through articles, stories, video, social media, children's literature, other kinds of books, classroom exchanges. We're lucky because we live in an age where there are so many options given technology to expose children to other people and other perspectives.

I mentioned this before you want to accept discomfort and uncertainty, a safe learning environment doesn't necessarily mean that you or your students will be comfortable with every discussion. There's a difference between safety and comfort, and you want to be prepared that these conversations are going to be messy and complicated. They may not and as you expect that they will, and you can remind yourself of this and also share that with the students.

It's also helpful to remember that the deepest learning that most people have, the kind that is lasting and long term usually comes when things are uncomfortable or sticky. I mean think about a conflict you had with someone, and it was real, and then you came to the other side. You actually worked through it. The relationship is better. You learn something in the process. Usually there isn't deep learning without some of that discomfort and stickiness.

We want to also use accurate terminology. On our website, we have a glossary of terms, and we're very intentional about our language. It's important to use accurate terminology that's age-appropriate. We have different definitions for younger children and for older children. We don't want to oversimplify it. We want to be accurate, but we need to understand that little

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ones can understand things only in certain ways.

Words like inequity or social justice or implicit bias or micro-aggressions, those are things that older students can grapple with. For younger students, we might use terms like fairness, similarities and differences, prejudice. We can introduce stereotyping at elementary level. Students can understand it, but we have to introduce it and really explain it.

Also it's important while we want to simplify language, especially for younger children we don't want to sugarcoat anything. White supremacy, if that's what's happening, we want to say that, not to three-year-olds, to older students. If we're seeing hate speech and we're seeing discrimination, it's helpful to use the right terminology.

I want to also address the concept of colorblind. This is a concept sometimes you hear adults use because they think sometimes adults feel like if we don't know this color or race, then we're not being biased. It's really important with children and ourselves to not reinforce that and to not shush them when they notice skin complexion or race. It is a natural thing to notice. We need to be comfortable with that. What happens ... the problem is when bias and discrimination and stereotyping are introduced to that.

Many people believe falsely that the way to eliminate racism is to not talk about it and not notice racial differences, but that actually is counterintuitive to children. It also sends ... acting like you don't see race also gives the impression that those parts of people's identities aren't important and they're ignored, and also the discrimination they face because of it is also ignored. It's also important to acknowledge that white is a racial identity.

We're going to move on. Connecting the present to the past; we know that many young people say they don't like history. They're not interested. They don't want to talk about the past, but actually if you start with the present and you go back, it provides a really good motivation to understand the current issues' historical context. Racism in the United States has a long history; from slavery to Jim Crow to segregation, the Civil Rights movement, and the current issues that we're facing right now.

Discussing current events and then going backwards; for example, if we're talking about Charlottesville, that raises discussions about Confederate monuments because that was at least what they were saying on the surface was what they were protesting, you can then go back in history and discover why those monuments were erected, what's significant about the time period when they were put up, those all are great opportunities for investigation and then you're building in history but you're still staying current.

Critically analyzing the media is very important, especially in this day and age, and there's a lot to say about that. That could be a whole webinar, but we want to encourage students to really be critical viewers of media. We want them to be exposed to a wide variety of sources, and we really want them to ask critical questions like how do I know what I know, what is the perspective of the person writing or speaking, etc.

Discussing structural racism and white privilege, we consider an advanced skill. Teachers who are going to be addressing that should feel ... have done their own reflection and possess the

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background and skills to really discuss it with students, but it is important to teach that the institutions in our society and the system's disadvantaged some and privileged others. That's an important part of the puzzle.

Fostering empathy is also critically important. We want students to really understand other people's perspective and move into learning more about that. Finally, we want to inspire hope, allyship, and activism. It can be depressing and upsetting. We don't want to fill kids' heads with hopelessness and powerlessness. We want to be able to provide opportunities for them to really do something.

I'm going to move through the rest quickly because I know my time is getting short. We have four entry points that we think about introducing these topics: children's literature, current events, we have anti-bias curriculum at different age levels, and teachable moments. Just quickly I differentiated a little bit the topics that can be addressed at the different age levels. Charo's presentation really was helpful in terms of what developmental levels kids are at.

In preschool, we want to provide a cultural responsive classroom. We can do a lot with identity and sense of self, and then look at similarities and differences. Then when we move into elementary, we expose students to different people identity and culture. We talk about unfair and bias. We can begin to introduce stereotypes, dealing with differences, and begin to look at inequality, past and present. We have our anti-bias curriculum there. Teaching explicit lessons are a good idea, too.

When we move into middle school, we can be more sophisticated in terms of the language and the concept, so we can talk about identity and groups, provide a historical context, begin to talk about media, injustice, scapegoating, and racism, and you can see some lessons there that we have from our current events classroom where we take current issues and talk about the concepts underneath them.

Then in high school, definitely a much more sophisticated and nuanced understanding. We talk about diverse people and perspectives. We can talk about micro-aggressions, slurs, we can look at online bias and hate, talk about systemic racism and privilege, and then really look at activism as ways to counter the discrimination and injustice.

These are just some of the resources and you're all going to be getting links at the end with ways you can find this. We have particular resources for parents and family members. We have a landing page, which you see on the left, and different resources to help navigate those conversations at home, and we also have a children's literature bibliography. These are some of the other resources that we have. We have way more than this, but we're going to provide links to these, so you can see we have specific strategy sessions on tips and strategies on race and racism, engaging in activism, talking to young children, how do you challenge biased language, so all of those links will be available.

Finally, I just wanted to end with this tweet by an educator that I know. This was a few days after Charlottesville. And it struck me is important the message is just that we need to do something to address this topic, and it may not be perfect and it may be scary, but it's important to do something. Our kids are looking to us to have those conversations.

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Now I'm going to pass it along to Noelle.

- Noelle Haile: Thank you so much, Jinnie. You have a lot of things you say...Just if people...If you have any questions, please type them up in your Q&A dialog box. I will be reading it out to Jinnie and we'll take a few minutes to respond to questions.
- Jinnie Spiegler: Any questions about anything I shared so far?
- Noelle Haile: Yeah. There's is one question.
- Jinnie Spiegler: Yeah. So does the ADL...oh, go ahead.
- Noelle Haile: You go ahead.
- Jinnie Spiegler: Does the ADL provide professional learning sessions for educators? We absolutely do. We have 27 regional offices all over the country, and we have education staff and facilitators in all of those regions who can do training for educators, parents, and young people. You can check our website to get more information, or you can email Jason or I.
- Noelle Haile: We'll just give folks a few minutes to type in their questions and take one more minute. There's another question from Shino for you. For teachers to be able to practice what you shared, they need to understand what racism is. Yet so many teachers do not fully understand systemic racism. How do we train teachers?
- Jinnie Spiegler: That is absolutely true. Our training is general anti-bias education and we get into different forms of bias, which includes racism and sexism and ableism and all of that. There are specialized trainings on racism that it's very helpful if people go through their own process, especially around racism, but I agree. I think that in order for teachers to have those conversations, it's helpful for them to have had gone through their own experience themselves.
- I do have to say though, I worked with a group of teachers years ago and they were a little dubious about bringing these conversations to students. Then what happened is they had they taught some lessons and they saw the way the students were talking about it and the comfort with which they were talking about it and I think it made them believers and it made them feel more encouraged. It's kind of a cyclical thing where if you just try to do something, of course, you need to feel comfortable yourself. It can have a positive effect on you and your approach to doing it.
- Noelle Haile: Okay. All right, Jinnie is going to move this batch forward.
- Jinnie Spiegler: All right, we're going to go over to the next presenter, and that will be Jason.
- Jason Sirois: Hello, everyone. My name is Jason. I work with Jinnie at the Anti-Defamation League in our Education Department. I'm the Director of our School Climate Improvement Program, which is called No Place for Hate. What I love about this webinar is that we've gone from Charo and Karmen talking about the theory and the research, Jinnie started getting into some of the research and resources that ADL provides, and what I really want to talk about is engaging all of

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the stakeholders in a school and use No Place for Hate as just one example of how you can do that.

Some things before I jump in, things to keep in mind. When I'm working with schools and my colleagues are working with schools across the country, we have about ... I think last year we recognized 1,631 schools across the country as No Place for Hate. We see that often there are two kinds of schools: there are the schools that do not have a lot of diversity among the staff and students; and then we get a lot of calls from schools where the staff is not diverse, but their student population is changing, and they don't know how to deal with that. We think that No Place for Hate is a great way to have those conversations and to engage everyone in the school.

I'm going to focus on three things. one is using the recommendations from the National School Climate Center. They did research in 2013, and it's a great connection to the No Place for Hate framework. I'm going to start there and then I'm going to show you how ADL puts these recommendations into practice through No Place for Hate and then there are two things that I always like to address in terms of pushback that educators get when they're talking about these issues.

Let's start ... let's dive in and look at the research from the National School Climate Center. They made six recommendations based on their research around school climate and here are five of them, and I want to start with engaging all stakeholders. They made it very clear, and if you go online and look at their school climate research bringing everyone to the table to be active participants and what we like to call agents of change is crucial in addressing these issues.

What we find often before No Place for Hate comes to a school, before ADL comes into a school is that it was being ... these efforts were being led by one or two staff members and they were probably assigned this work from their principal and said "We have to address this," and individual educators can't do this by themselves and the research shows that.

Then you have focusing on long-term planning I always say that changing school climate, making positive school climate improvement is not a sprint; it is a marathon. Leslie had made a comment earlier in the webinar saying about walking the walk, and about systems and that's what's so important. It's not just about having the conversation and talking about it, but it's also about looking at the systems within schools to really change those systems so that an inclusive school climate is supported with the help of, again, all of the stakeholders. I'm going to keep saying that over and over. This is not just the work of educators this has to involve everybody that is involved in the school.

Then you move on to creating school networks. I think of this internally and externally. Internally it's about connecting with all of the stakeholders, family members, students, staff, administration, but more importantly, it's about creating a network outside of the school. We have many districts who participate, so all of the schools in the district have shared goals around creating positive school climate, and we see that has provided a wonderful opportunity for the coordinators of the program to connect and share best practices, and also to share frustrations and ways to deal with those. Creating the school networks is a big part of creating

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a positive school climate.

Then the last two, creating and sharing tools. It's really important that the work that's being done is done in a transparent way where all of the stakeholders are aware of what's going on and what the goals are. The last one is about engaging students at all stages. ADL was invited to participate in National School Climate Center's first annual summit that they called Connecting Communities of Courage this past October, and it was in partnership with Facebook.

One of the participants there shared with us this rubric of youth involvement, and he really put it in with ... he started with participation where youth are involved in the doing of the activity but not in planning or development or reflecting on it. It goes all the way, this rubric goes all the way to what engagement is where its youth are the primary drivers of the work from conceptualization to implementation and reflection. The important part is he says youth own and understand the work deeply. The adult role in there is to provide the support to the youth to make sure that they have everything that they need so that they can take the reins.

Of course that looks different in elementary school than in high school and middle school, but there are ways to engage students through engagement, not just participation. Now I think it's very interesting when you're talking about engaging all the stakeholders and the importance of that. When we're talking about race and you look at the numbers, here's a study ... a survey that was done, and you see in 2012, even though between 1988 and 2012, there is a little more diversity among educators in the US.

It is still over 80% white, the teaching population. Then when you look at students, you see that in 2012 only a little over 50% of students are white. You have teachers who aren't necessarily visually reflecting the student population. What does that mean is then you look in 2024 that actually white students are going to be in the minority. When you put teachers versus students, again, same thing that I've already said. You see the discrepancy in terms of the racial diversity of teachers versus students.

I use this just to make the case of how important it is to engage students and family members in any conversation about systemic change and school climate improvement. I am always careful to point out that we don't want to involve students of different racial backgrounds for the purposes of tokenizing them and them representing all people in that race, but there is, and I'm sure many of you experience this, people bring different perspectives to the table and schools need to make sure that all perspectives and experiences are represented in the core group of leaders who are leading this change.

Going back to here, the research, what the research said, and I want to show you now specifically how ADL uses this research, use this framework to create No Place for Hate. Then we use some flexibility. We start over on the left side with prepare, and the first thing that we ask the No Place for Hate schools to do is to create their committee, and I'm going to talk more about who needs to be a part of the committee, but they have to have students, they have to have educators, administrators, and family members. That foundational piece is the committee, the ones who are going to lead the process.

Then we encourage schools to do a climate survey. What we often see, and when I work with

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schools, without the climate survey we're relying on the perceptions of educators. Without surveying students and saying what is going on in your school, what are the perceptions around inclusion, we're just guessing. I've had the conversation. I can think of one school that I work with in New York that really thought "Oh, we don't have a lot of diversity. We don't have issues with race. They did a climate survey, and they found that the number one reasons why students were targeted was because of their race, and they were shocked.

Using the climate survey data to then ... well, let me say this, to then understand and plan, we have a resolution of respect that all schools have to sign, and that just gets everyone on the same page of expecting what creating a positive school climate is. Then taking the data from the climate survey and moving on to the next part which is implementation of at least three school-wide activities, and I'll also unpack that a little more in a couple of slides.

Then we want schools to reevaluate at the end of the year using the same climate survey, see if there are any changes, what adjustments do they have to make, and it starts all over again. This is the part that it's a marathon. Every year schools are getting new students. This is not ... school climate improvement and creating positive school climates is not something that just happens and you're done. It's not a destination. It is a constant process. I want to ask a question now before I unpack more about what the committee is and the school-wide activities. The question is, or it's actually a statement. I want to know if you agree or disagree. My school has demonstrated success in engaging family members in creating an inclusive and respectful school environment.

Noelle Haile: Everyone, the poll has opened. It's going to be under your right-hand side panel. Please pick your response and then hit submit at the bottom of your panel. You have a few more seconds. The polls are now closed and Jason you have the results.

Jason Sirois: Great. For those who did answer, we see that it was neither agree or disagree to disagree. A few you did agree that your school successfully engages families. I asked the question. It's one of the biggest challenges that we find schools have when we ask them to engage all stakeholders, and it's really important when we look at the creation of a strong committee that is leading these efforts to include family members because there has to be a conversation about how the school is going to engage them I have some schools that provide childcare so that other family members can come to meetings. They provide food. What are the realities of the family members you're trying to include and how can you address those realities so that you can make it more convenient for participation in these conversations?

The other aspects of forming a strong committee, you see the proportion of students to administrator, staff coordinators, and family members, we think students and research shows that students are the drivers of this kind of change, and I already talked about the rubric of youth involvement, engaging them, rather than just having them participate. No Place for Hate provides that framework through the strong committee.

The administrators play a key role because they're decision makers and the staff coordinators, many of you may be that role where you're implementing these kinds of things. You are the cheerleaders. You are the inspiration. You're supporting the students. You're the go-between between administrators and trying to convince them. Everyone plays a key role in making

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schools more positive ... have positive school climate.

The last piece I told you I wanted to address was the activities, and it's important ... there are five key elements to activities through No Place for Hate. The first is it has to be ... have whole school impact and then it has to involve discussion. Often schools will have a speaker come, maybe they'll talk about race, maybe they'll talk about the Civil Rights movement, and then the students have no opportunity to talk about it and to share their perspective on what they heard.

That has to be part of activities if you want to see change. Also it has to involve active learning. Then on the bottom, we expect activities to be inclusive of all students, representing everyone that's in the school, and also they have to be ... activities have to address themes of respect and inclusion, which are the themes of No Place for Hate. As you're developing ways to talk about race and other forms of inclusion, you want to make sure that you have these five elements in everything that you're doing.

Two really quick things that I always point out. This is the last piece, which is often we hear from schools, "We can't take on another thing. Our teachers are swamped with all of the requirements and testing." We say "Consider it refocusing what you're already doing." If you are the one responsible for getting people on board, definitely use this refocus. The last piece is change is a process. I found this online and I thought this describes what our experience is with educators doing No Place for Hate.

When you introduce something new, you're going to find resistance. It's going to be chaotic, but you're going to ... especially if you're engaging students, you're going to be inspired by the transformation. Once that happens and you start going up to the integration of new systems, new ideas, and it becomes the new status quo. It's always important to remember that change is a process and it's going to get messy sometimes.

That's it for me. I don't know if we have a minute or two for questions if anyone has any.

- Noelle Haile: Yes, Jason. if anyone has questions, please type your questions in the Q&A box please. Thank you. We'll take a couple of minutes. We have a question from Marsha. How are we defining success in that last question?
- Jason Sirois: In terms of in work ... and what last question? I'm sorry, Marsha. If you can type your clarifying.
- Noelle Haile: While Marsha is typing. I will read another question from Virginia. Are the ADL-trained facilitators on the No Place for Hate process or do they directly work with schools?
- Jason Sirois: We directly work with schools. All of our regions ... most of our regions have staff that are dedicated to helping schools implement No Place for Hate in their school.
- Noelle Haile: We have a second question from Shino. Outreach to family is very difficult. How do we reach out to families from different cultural backgrounds?
- Jason Sirois: Well, this is where the family members you invite to be part of the committee are so important and you want them to represent the diversity in your school population so that they can be the

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bridge between the work that the school is doing and the family members to really want to think about those family members who can ... who feel comfortable reaching out to different families and finding ways to develop relationships.

We find that when families feel supported by the school and sense that there's a genuine desire to engage them that they're more willing to engage actively. One way to do that is to have other family members that understand what the school is trying to do, develop that relationship, especially if they're family members who can speak the same language and share the same culture and possibly even race. That's what we find works the best.

Noelle Haile: You have one more question from Leslie. Can they be ... it's about school level ideas. Can they be replicated with school systems that talk the talk but don't walk the walk?

Jason Sirois: Yeah, I think ... we see a lot of our participating schools that are going through the transition from talking the talk to walking the walk. What we see make that ... help make that transition is when they start looking at their curriculum, which is a lot of what Jinnie was talking about. When they start looking at their school policy and engage the students and family members on creating a policy around what is acceptable behavior and what is not and the expectations of creating a safe school climate.

I think what we see is that the committee has to look at those systems and make recommendations, and the school administration, which is why you want administrators on the committee, they have to be willing to have really examine the classroom material and see how they can ... to make sure that the curriculum is reflecting the experiences of the various students that are part of the school. I hope that answered your question, Leslie.

Noelle Haile: Thank you, Jason. I think Marsha just clarified her question.

Jason Sirois: Okay.

Noelle Haile: How has your school demonstrated success? We were wondering is there a specific measure of success?

Jason Sirois: The measures we're looking at right now with the schools who do a climate survey, the pre and post is really important, and we look for changes there. It's difficult though because there are a lot of variables that can impact a change and experience them the way that students are answering. Some of the specific indicators that we're currently looking at are absenteeism and reported incidents of bias and bullying.

With the reports, it's also challenging because if you do a good job, then maybe reports will go up because everyone in the school will feel more comfortable and they know how to identify these issues. Reporting might go up. It's a really challenging way. ADL is working right now on how to define specific indicators of success, but those are what we're looking at right now, and we ask schools to track.

Noelle Haile: Thank you, Jason. We're almost at time. I'd like to thank all our presenters for today's webinar, and everyone who participated for this robust conversation and interaction during the webinar.

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I just want to make sure I touch on some points. Jinnie had said that we had resources on the slides. All the materials related to this webinar will be posted on the MAEC website on www.maec.org after the webinar is done. If you could please take a few minutes after the webinar to complete a survey for us so that we'll know what you think of it and what we can do to improve future webinars.

Lastly we would like you to save the date for our next webinar, which will be in February and the topics will be on Homelessness in American Schools: Ensuring Access to High-Quality Education for all Students. We hope you'll join us for that webinar as well. Finally, we have the contact information for all our presenters. If you'd like to contact them, there is their social media contact and you can also email presenters directly for more questions. Thank you, everyone. Thank you for participating in today's webinar.