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Learning ECE Early Childhood Education

Part 1

RACISM IN EARLY CHILDHOOD SETTINGS

Interactions with Young Children and their Families

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Our Presenter

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Objectives

- EXAMINE** Examine how and when young children learn about racism and identify ways to create a positive sense of self and a respectful understanding of others.
- DISCUSS** Discuss the impact of racism on young children to develop the approaches to help children and their families succeed in early learning programs.
- IDENTIFY** Identify an emerging action plan for responding to racism in early learning work environments to attract, develop, inspire, and retain a diverse group of early childhood educators in the programs.

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Consider this:



Racial disparities in infant mortality and low birth weight

Implicit bias and racial stereotypes can contribute to teachers' perceptions of black children as more "trouble-prone," leading to harsher disciplinary actions. (Gilliam et al., 2016)

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Consider this:



Half of the 250 children expelled from preschool each day are Black boys.

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Consider this:

51% of students in K-12 are children of color, and 80% of teachers are white.



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Are we on the same page?

Race is a social construct.	Race is a powerful illusion.	
Race and IQ are not connected.	Different IQ scores reflect systemic inequities.	

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Aspirations of a just society



- Equity and Inclusion
- Quality Education
- Affordability and Accessibility
- Family Engagement
- Inclusive Curriculum

What does it look like in early childhood settings?

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Aspirations of a just society



- Social and Emotional Well-being
- Safe and Nurturing Environment
- Professional Development
- Advocacy for Children
- Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship

What does it look like in early childhood settings?

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What is racism?

How does it show up in early childhood settings?

Color blindness		Unequal access to resources
Curriculum bias: lack of diverse representation in books, toys, etc.		Implicit bias that shows up in all interactions
Teacher expectations of children and families		Culturally insensitive practices, comments, microaggressions

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Is early childhood **too** early to talk about racial differences?




What might be some **pros and cons** of introducing the topic in early childhood?

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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism**?

Infants (0-8 Months)

- Develop awareness of self as different from others



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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism**?

1-2 year olds

- Notice differences in skin tone
- Curious about physical characteristics
- Use cultural cues to interact
- Respond to verbal and non-verbal feelings of their adults



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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism**?

2-3 year olds

- Show discomfort around unfamiliar people
- Are not cognitively mature to add value to differences but behaviors during play reflect an understanding of differences
- Match ethnic dolls to children's race



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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism**?

3-4 year olds

- Conform to home cultural rules
- Identify and match people based on race
- Absorb stereotypes
- Show preferences based on skin tones




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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism?**

4-5 year olds

- Beginnings of internalized superiority
- Develop gender and race constancy
- Friends are picked from similar racial identities
- Use race-based insults and name-calling



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Do young children in early childhood settings **understand racism?**

By 8 year olds

- Attitudes and behaviors are internalized



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Contemporary Practices that **Perpetuate Racism** in Early Childhood Settings

Color blindness

I don't see color.

- Downplays Racial Disparities.
- Overlooks the unique historical and systemic injustices.
- Discourages organizations and institutions from implementing policies and practices that promote diversity and address the unique needs of underrepresented groups.
- Silencing marginalized voices

I only see people.



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Celebrating differences Contemporary Practices that **Perpetuate Racism** in Early Childhood Settings



Intentions **Actions** **Outcomes**

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Impact of racism on young children and their families

Children **develop in relation** to their environment.



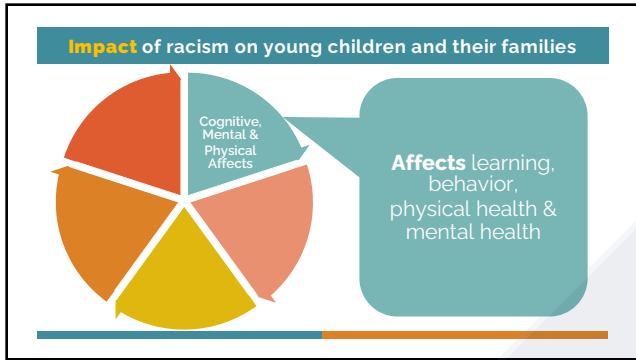
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Impact of racism on young children and their families

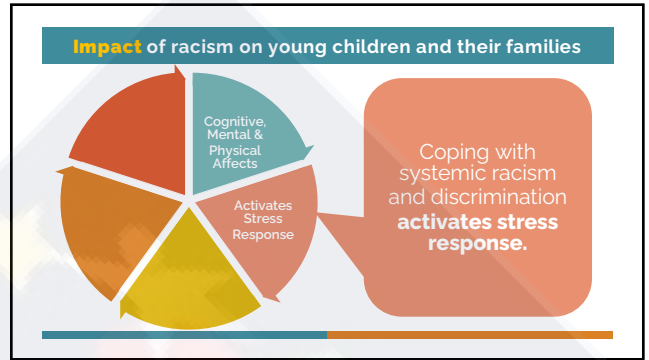
Common **adult illness is rooted** in early childhood experiences.



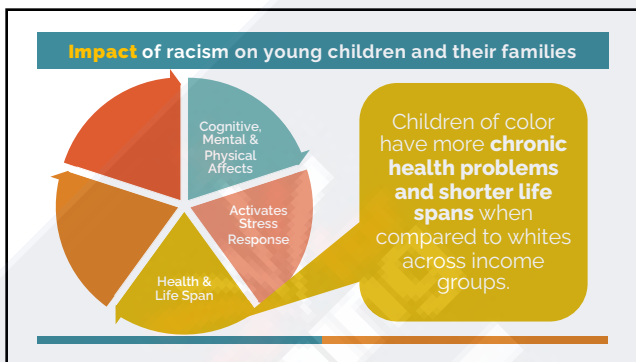
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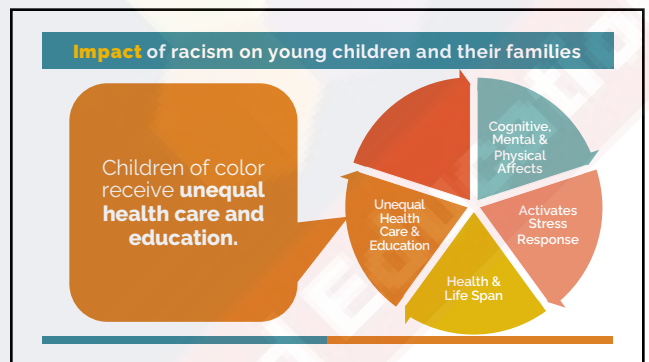
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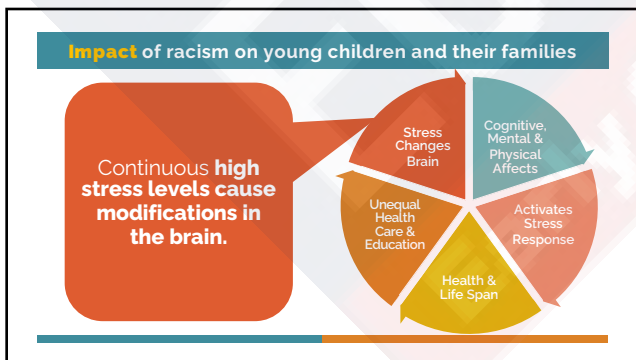
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Addressing Racism in Early Childhood		The Story Format
Start with self-reflection	Silence is not an option	Avoiding race conversations is a privilege
Silence from adults can be seen as "shame" and unimportant.	What do children pick up when adults are silent?	This choice about what to tell our kids and when – is a privilege.

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Addressing Racism in Early Childhood

Advocate for System-Level Changes



- Reverse racism is not a thing.
- Acknowledge the placement of power in a relationship.
- Highlight your values in your mission statements.
- Conduct equity audits.

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Post Webinar Self-reflection



- Have I ever noticed bias, discrimination, or racism in my interactions with children or families?
- How might my own biases affect my teaching or relationships with children and families?
- Am I aware of my own cultural background and how it influences my perspectives?

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Resources

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EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION



The Impact of Raciolinguistic Bias in Early Childhood Classrooms: A Panel Discussion

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