

# Resources on Race and Racism for Children

## Books for Parents:

Hate Hurts: How Children Learn and Unlearn Prejudice, Caryl Stern La-Rosa, Ellen Bettmann

Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Children in a Racially Unjust America, Jennifer Harvey

Waking Up White, Debby Irving

Caste: The Origins of Our Discontents

Wilkerson

Lies My Teacher Told Me, James Loewen's,

White Fragility: DiAngelo

Raising Black Boys Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu

Raising Black Girls Dr. Jawanza Kunjufu

## Books for Children:

### Babies and Toddlers

Peekaboo Morning, Rachel Isadore

Busy Toes, Baby Faces, Margaret Miller

Shades of People, Rotner, Kelly

Words Are Not For Hurting, Agassi

Colors of Us, Karen Katz

### Preschoolers:

All The Colors We Are, Katie Kissinger

Whoever You Are, Mem Fox

Colors of Us, Karen Katz

White Socks Only, Coleman

Happy to Be Nappy, bell hooks

A Rainbow of Friends, P.K. Hallinan

Chocolate Me, Taye Diggs

It's Okay to Be Different Todd Parr

I Love My Hair! Natasha Tarpley

Black is Brown is Tan, Adoff

All the Colors of The Earth, Hamanaka

Were Different, Were the Same. Kates

The Skin You Live In, Tyler

Bright Eyes, Brown Skin, Hudson

We Are All Alike, We are All Different,

Cheltenham Elementary Kindergartners

### Early Elementary

A Kids Book about Racism, Memory

Same, Same but Different, Kostecki-Shaw

We Can Get Along, Payne

Let's Talk About Race, Julius Lester

Smokey Night, Eve Bunting

The Case for Loving, Alko

Less Than Half, More Than Whole, Lacapa

Martin's Big Words, Rappaport

A Different Kind of Pond, Bao Phi

The Name Jar, Yangsook Choi (allies)

Teammates, Peter Golenbock (allies)

### Older Elementary and Middle School:

Freedom Summer, Wiles

Sister Anne's Hands, Lorbieki

Not Without Laughter, Langston Hughes

Rositta, Rositta, Sit by Me, Linda Walvoord

Betsey Brown, Ntozake Shange

Goin' Someplace Special, Patricia McKissack

Sit-In: How Four Friends Stood Up by Sitting Down, Pinkney

Rosa Parks: My Story, Rosa Parks, James Haskins

Who Belongs Here? An American Story, Margy Burns Knight

America Street: A Multicultural Anthology of Stories, Mazer

Under Our Skin: Kids Talk About Race, Debbie Birdseye

Witness by Karen Hesse

The Lions of Little Rock, Kristin Levine

Same Difference: Young Writers on Race ,SF Writerscorp

Black Lives Matter, Harris

### Fiction for Older Youth and Adults:

Brown Girl Dreaming, Woodson

Fire in the Rock, Martin

The Return of Gabriel, Armistead

Day of the Pelican, Paterson

The Hate You Give, Thomas

Small, Great Things, Piccolt

### Video

Five Things You Should Know About Race:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8eTWZ80z9EE>. (6 min)

Unequal Opportunity Race, African American Policy Forum

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX\\_Vzl-r8NY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vX_Vzl-r8NY) (5 min)

Eyes on the Stars- Robert McNair

<https://storycorps.org/animation/eyes-on-the-stars/> (3 min)

Racism is Real, Brave New Films

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTcSVQJ2h8g> (3 min)

Is Racism Over Yet?

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h\\_hx30zOi9I](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_hx30zOi9I) (6 min)

Black Parents Explain how to Deal with the Police

<http://www.okayafrica.com/in-brief/video-black-parents-explainhandle-police-kids-break-heart/>

### Websites

[www.teachingtolerance.org](http://www.teachingtolerance.org)

[www.raceforward.org](http://www.raceforward.org)

<http://www.raceconscious.org/>

Denise Konen, [www.parenting.netgains.net](http://www.parenting.netgains.net), 952-836-4917

More Resources

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/10YGTTt0I5O4S0u1ZBvi3Tg4dfSfJLkP6uUaKnHaLewc/edit>

# Nurture Shock – Why White Parents Don't Talk About Race

“For decades, we assumed that children will only see race when society points it out to them. However, child development researchers have increasingly begun to question that presumption. They argue that children see racial differences as much as they see the difference between pink and blue – but we tell kids that “pink” means for girls and “blue” is for boys. “White” and “black” are mysteries we leave them to figure out on their own,” argue authors Po Bronson and Ashley Merryman.

Many modern parents hold the belief that “if you raise a child with a fair amount of exposure to people of other races and cultures, the environment becomes the message.” But Dr. Phyllis Katz’s research concludes that children do not exhibit the kind of color-blindness many adults expect. Therefore, Dr. Katz points out, “During this period of our children’s lives when we imagine it’s most important to not talk about race is the very developmental period when children’s minds are forming their first conclusion about race.” Waiting until your child is older to start to talk about race might mean, Bronson and Merryman argue, the developmental window has already closed.

According to Nurture Shock, kids are developmentally prone to in-group favoritism with preferences in everything from food to toys to people and they categorize by using the attribute which is most clearly visible. Dr. Rebecca Bigler contends that “once a child identifies someone as most closely resembling himself, the child likes that person the most.” Apparently, the child assumes that not only does the person who looks like her like everything she likes but the person acts the way she acts as well. “The spontaneous tendency to assume your group shares characteristics – such as niceness, or smart – is called essentialism. Kids never think groups are random.”

The reality is just “throwing kids of different races into a school together isn’t the right way, because they can self-segregate within the school.” Dr. James Moody’s research discovered the “more diverse the school, the more the kids self-segregate by race and ethnicity within the school, and thus the likelihood that any two kids of different races have a friendship goes down.” According to Nurture Shock, only 8% of white high-schoolers in America have a best friend of another race.

Parents need to do more than just say “Everybody’s equal.” This is too vague. Bronson and Merryman believe just as you’d remind your daughters that Mommies and Daddies can both be doctors you also need to tell your children that doctors can be any skin color. It’s not enough for them to see President Barack Obama. Nurture Shock maintains that you must explicitly point out Obama’s brown skin to your young children, reinforcing “the message that anyone can rise to become a leader and anyone – regardless of skin color – can be a friend, be loved, and be admired.”

I remember when my oldest daughter was in kindergarten. I used to check out books on the different historical figures the teacher discussed in class, as a means of supplementing the curriculum. When Martin Luther King Day arrived and we sat down to read a children’s picture book about him, I realized the teacher had talked about the holiday without mentioning racism. I will never forget how Annabelle cried when I explained that black people have faced terrible discrimination over the years. When she begged me not to continue reading, I ignored her pleas, realizing the only way Martin Luther King’s dream would live on in her was if I continued the conversation.

- Victoria Winterhalter’s blog

Note from Denise Konen:

*I am sharing this blog post because it summarizes some important information in a succinct way. I do not agree with the last two sentences of the author, ie: ignoring a child’s pleas when they are upset or having difficulty absorbing information. Children build empathy when we listen to their needs. From my perspective, this would have been a good time to comfort her child and respond to her feelings with understanding and then come back to the topic after she has had some reassurance and time to calm herself.*