



Growing Up “Different”

Foster Care and Adoption and Its Impact on Learning, Identity, and Self-Image in Multiracial Families



Topics Addressed

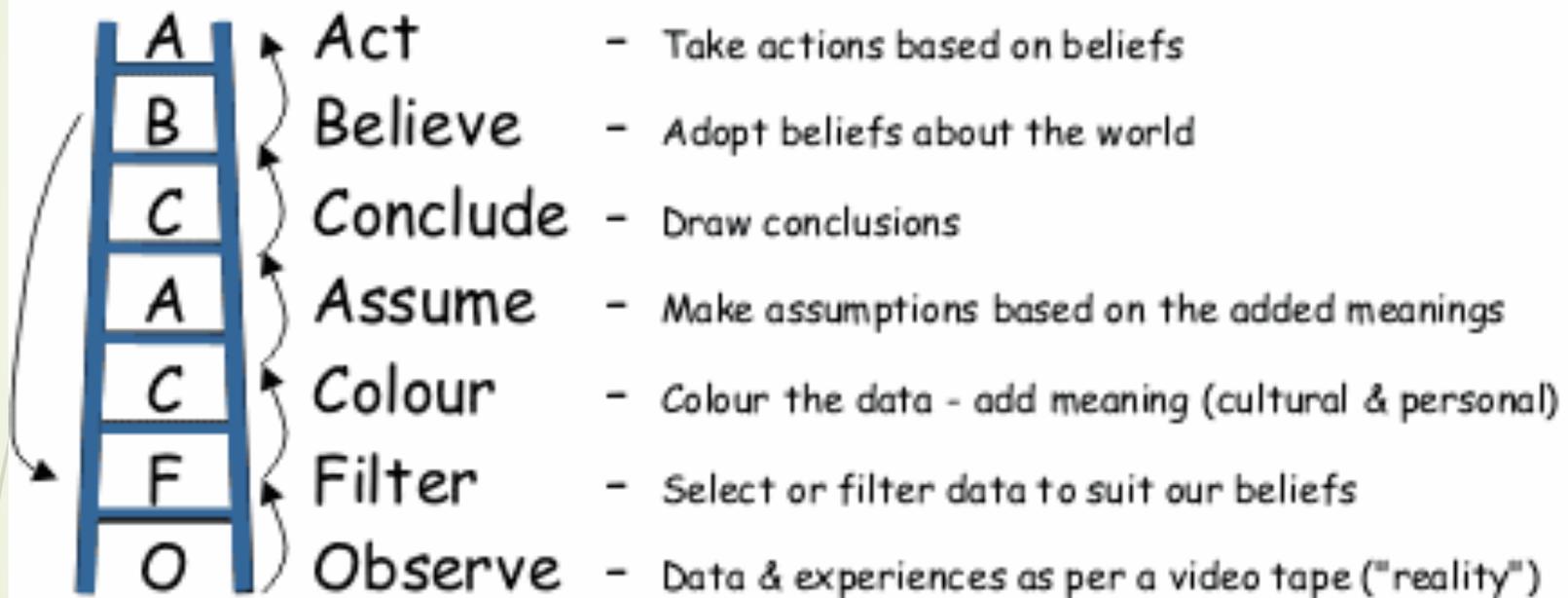
- White privilege and systemic racism
- Implicit biases in the school and community
- Experience of children, youth, and young adults
- Strategies for assessing and preparing families for raising a multiracial family



White Privilege

- **1.** a. A right, advantage, or immunity granted to or enjoyed by white persons beyond the common advantage of all others; an exemption in many particular cases from certain burdens or liabilities.
- **2.** A privileged position; the possession of an advantage white persons enjoy over non-white persons.
- To sum up, (1) white privilege should be defined carefully because it is contested; (2) that contestation is itself racialized, (3) which is what we should expect, since (4) socially invisible structures of oppression are more effective and enduring than socially visible ones.

Decision Ladder





Educational Inequalities

- ▶ 2005: 48% of 4th grade black students attended high-poverty schools, compared with 5% of 4th grade white students.
- ▶ The percentage of 16- to 24-year-olds who were high school dropouts was higher among black students (10%) than among whites (6%) and Asians/Pacific Islanders (3%).
- ▶ 2005 National Assessment of Educational Progress reading assessment, higher percentages of Asian/Pacific Islander and white students in grades 4th, 8th, and 12th scored at or above proficient than black students at the same grade level.
- ▶ In 2006, 18.5% of blacks aged 25 years and older earned a bachelor's degree or higher, compared with 31% of whites.



Racial Disproportionality in Child Welfare

Racial Disproportionality and Disparity in Child Welfare

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- <https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/issue-briefs/racial-disproportionality/>
- Disproportionate and disparate needs of children and families of color, particularly due to higher rates of poverty
- Racial bias and discrimination exhibited by individuals (e.g., caseworkers, mandated and other reporters)
- Child welfare system factors (e.g., lack of resources for families of color, caseworker characteristics)
- Geographic context, such as the region, State, or neighborhood



Agency Strategies

- ▶ Pay attention to agency cultural competence assessment, training, and technical assistance
- ▶ Develop a way to measure racial equity in agency programs and outcomes
- ▶ Identify and track agency goals by racial and ethnic groups
- ▶ Examine racially sensitive monitoring structures to identify practices that will better serve the needs of children and families
- ▶ Texas Center for Elimination of Disproportionality and Disparities: http://www.hhsc.state.tx.us/hhsc_projects/cedd/
- ▶ Ramsey County (MN) Anti-Racism Initiative: <https://www.ramseycounty.us/government/departments/health-and-wellness/community-human-services/anti-racism-initiative>
- ▶ Indiana Disproportionality Committee: <http://indianadisproportionalitycommittee.weebly.com/>



Additional Resources

- ▶ **National Center for Diligent Recruitment at AdoptUSKids:** Assists States, Tribes, and Territories in developing and implementing comprehensive, multifaceted diligent recruitment programs (<http://www.nrcdr.org/>)
- ▶ **Alliance for Racial Equity in Child Welfare at the Center for the Study of Social Policy:** Brings together a multitude of organizations, agencies, universities, and others to support of improved outcomes for children and families of color involved with the nation's child welfare system (www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/alliance-for-race-equity)
- ▶ **National Conference of State Legislatures:** Provides information, including legislative initiatives, reports, and statistics, regarding State efforts to address racial disproportionality and disparity (<http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/disproportionality-and-disparity-in-child-welfare.aspx>)



Implicit Biases

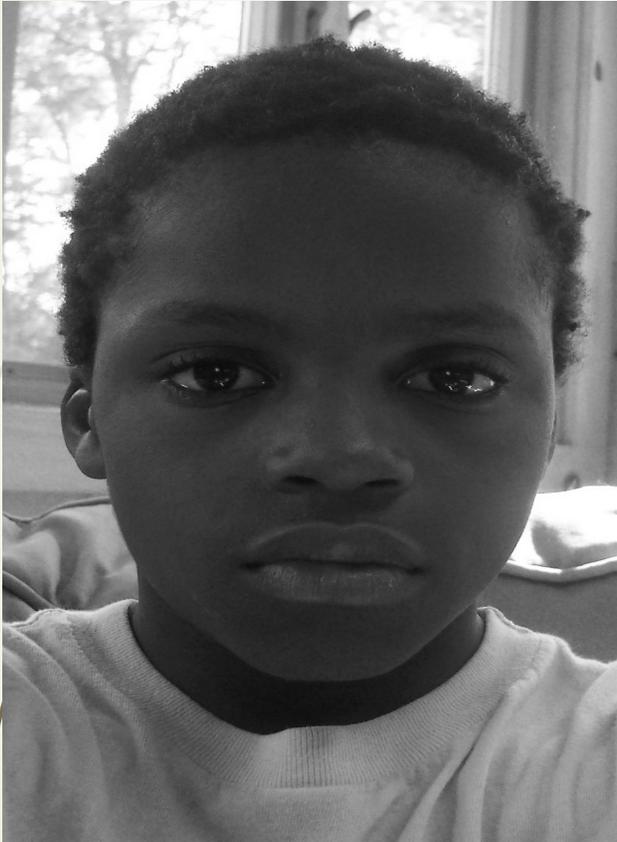
- ▶ **Pervasive.** Everyone possesses them.
- ▶ Implicit and explicit biases are **related but distinct mental constructs**. The implicit associations we hold **do not necessarily align with our declared beliefs** or even reflect stances we would explicitly endorse.
- ▶ They **favor our own ingroup**,
- ▶ Implicit biases are **malleable**.
- ▶ Kirwan Institute, OSU
<http://kirwaninstitute.osu.edu/research/understanding-implicit-bias/>
- ▶ Perception Institute
<https://perception.org/research/implicit-bias/>
- ▶ Harvard Self-Assessment
<https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html>



Additional Reading

- ▶ Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack, Peggy McIntosh
<http://www.antiracistalliance.com/Unpacking.html>
- ▶ Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack Activity
<https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=unpacking+the+invisible+knapsack&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>
- ▶ White Privilege Shapes the US, Robert Jensen
<http://www.appstate.edu/~hallcl/READING%20ASSIGNMENTS/3534%20jensen-white%20privilege.pdf>

Fifth Grade Social Studies



- ▶ My name is Frederick Douglass. Why do we have slaves? I can understand a few reasons, and they are that the Master does not have to do anything, and the Master gets to whip them. You should try putting their shoes on for a day. How do you think slaves feel?



I think that slavery should be abolished. Slaves do not feel like doing your work. They feel like doing what they want to do. Do you like being whipped? Have you ever seen someone get whipped? It really hurts, so please abolish slavery. If you do not, I will do it myself. I hate just thinking about slavery. I hate hearing about slavery. As you can see, I have told you that I hate slavery so much that it should be abolished. Join me, or before you know it, you may be the next slave!



Reflections...

- ▶ “I pass myself in a mirror at times and am surprised at what I see. I look and a Korean face gazes back at me. She is beautiful, I know that much, but I wonder if this face is me. My slanted face looks into a sea of white faces; they are the faces of my family and my friends. They are the faces of the community where I was raised, of the people who supported me but none of them look like me. Sometimes I feel like I don’t look like me.”

Liz, 22



Do you know what it is like?

Do you know how it feels?

No...

You never been without a place...

You never been without yourself...

You might claim you know what it's like

But you'll never know what it's like

Until you have lost yourself...

Have you ever been without yourself?

Have you ever been in the dark?

Without a place...

Without yourself...

You'll never know what it's like to be me...

You won't ever know what it's like

To be without yourself

Lost in the dark...



Adult Responsibilities

- Have friends, adults as well as children, that reflect your child's heritage.
- Realize that in matters of race and culture you will learn the most about parenting your child from other cultural guides.
- Attend integrated schools.
- Live in an integrated community.
- Use services in your child's cultural community.
- Learn how to take good care of your child's skin and hair, dietary preferences.



Imperatives...

- Have books, periodicals, toys, games, artwork that reflect your child's heritage.
- Participate in cultural activities in your community.
- Be clear with yourself and your child as to her/his racial identity.
- Be active in social change.
- Be intolerant of racism.



Imperatives...

- Ask for help, and keep learning!
- Accept and understand that not all of her/his activities will--or ought to--include you.
- Always know whose side you're on.
- Learn how to choose your battles. You can't do everything.
- Embrace and celebrate diversity across the board.



Resources

- North American Council on Adoptable Children
<http://www.nacac.org>
- New York State Citizens' Coalition for Children
<http://www.nysccc.org>
- Pact <http://www.pactadopt.org>
- Child Welfare Info Gateway
http://www.childwelfare.gov/adoption/types/families/trans_related.cfm
- Others?



Videos

- “Struggle for Identity”
- “First Person Plural”
- “Outside Looking In”
- “Adopted”
- “Visible Differences”
- “A Place Between”



Books

- Black Baby, White Hands, Jaiya John
- In Their Own Voices, Simon & Roorda
- Inside Transracial Adoption, Steinberg and Hall
- Outsiders Within, Trenka, Oparah & Shin
- Why Are All The Black Kids Sitting Together In the Cafeteria?, Beverly Tatum
- The Harris Narratives, Susan Harris O'Connor
- Black Anthology: Adult Adoptees Claim Their Space, Susan Harris O'Connor and Diane Rene Christian
- Whistling Vivaldi, Claude Steele



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