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A Retrospective Investigation of Racial-Ethnic Socialization

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Departmental Honors Thesis  
The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga  
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A RETROSPECTIVE INVESTIGATION OF RACIAL-ETHNIC SOCIALIZATION

By

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

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## ABSTRACT

Racial and ethnic socialization is the way in which parents teach their children about race and ethnicity and it occurs in all families in varying forms. Unlike many white families, those of racial minorities tend to take an approach that makes their children aware of their race and its social implications. The present research project investigated the racial-ethnic socialization methods of Americans from varying racial and ethnic backgrounds to identify similarities and differences. This research analyzed the surveys of 52 parents and 32 nonparents in order to examine generational similarities and differences of race talk. Parents of color were more likely to embrace color conscious methods of race talk than White parents who were more likely to embrace color blind methods. Additionally, race talk did change from one generation to the next. Overall, the sample from this study indicated a high level of comfort with racial discourse which may be an important factor. All in all, race and parent status seemed to have significant effects. Findings from this study can be used to further investigate the content and context of race talk between parent and child.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the United States, the concept of race and its implications have long been a taboo topic. Race has played a historical role in the significant differences between the treatment of Black Americans and White Americans in particular. The legacy of American chattel slavery and the Jim Crow era illustrate the how vastly different the experiences of Black Americans and White Americans in this country have been. The current impact of mass incarceration and police brutality continue to highlight the evident contrast between the experiences of different Americans.

Although this topic is actively avoided in public and professional spheres, talk about race often occurs within households among families. The occurrence of this race talk is known as racial-ethnic socialization or ethnic-racial socialization. Specifically, the mechanism through which parents transmit information, values, and perspectives about ethnicity and race to their children is termed as racial and ethnic socialization (Hughes, Rodriguez, Smith, Johnson, Stevenson, & Spicer, 2006). Racial-ethnic socialization teaches children the role race plays in their personal lives and in wider society (D. Hughes & Chen, 1997; D. Hughes et al., 2006). Ideas and beliefs about race can be communicated either explicitly through direct conversation or implicitly through modeling behavior. Racial socialization occurs in all families in various forms and to differing degrees; however, explicit methods of racial-ethnic socialization have shown to be more relevant to racial and ethnic minorities due to the nature in which social stratification and negative group stereotypes complicate their child rearing (Hughes, 2003) in comparison to white families.

### **The Importance of Understanding Racial-Ethnic Socialization**

Globalization has rapidly and drastically altered the cultural landscape of the United States. The 2010 U.S. Census predicted that half of the United States school population will comprise children from minority races and ethnicities by the year 2020 (Vespa, Armstrong, & Medina, 2018). Effectively, white children will no longer be the racial majority in the educational system. Instead, American schools will consist of various racial minorities which would ironically include white students. This could possibly mean that the concept of race and its implications could become more relevant for many white families. There is a chance racial discourse in white families may evolve to reflect the changing racial makeup of this country.

There is a significant need to be able to understand how the discussions of race parents have with their children impact their racial attitudes in a society that must learn how to thrive with a population continuing to grow in racial and ethnic diversity. Although no one group of people is a monolithic, America may benefit from having a comprehensive understanding of the differences and similarities between how different groups of people understand and talk about race. Even further, current and future generations of Americans need to know how to maneuver through multicultural contexts if they hope to be productive members of a global society. These changes will not automatically result in more cultural acceptance and racial or ethnic harmony. These changes must be accompanied with proactive racial-ethnic socialization that promotes the acceptance of racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Considering that the United States is a racialized society, teaching children a comprehensive understanding of the historical and contemporary implications of race, along with how to challenge racial-ethnic prejudice may accommodate the growing multicultural environment of this country. To guide this initiative, it would be helpful to first understand where different racial and ethnic groups currently stand on this issue.

## **Methods of Racial-Ethnic Socialization**

There are various methods of racial-ethnic socialization that parents use to relay information about race and its influence in society. These methods differ based on what is accomplished through the message. The literature on racial-ethnic socialization has narrowed the types of messages transmitted into the following terms: egalitarianism, cultural socialization, preparation for bias, and promotion of mistrust (Hughes, 2003). Egalitarianism involves the focus on shared commonalities rather than racial or ethnic differences. Egalitarianism can either be presented as colorblind and color mute or color conscious depending on the framing and context. Colorblind is the term used to describe messages that refrain from mentioning race in a way that emphasizes differences and can even leave the explicit mention of race out altogether. Colorblind or color mute messages downplay the implications of race and focus on other qualities of personhood. On the other hand, color-conscious messages explicitly acknowledge race and its implications, resulting in greater recognition of the importance of race. Cultural socialization involves teaching children about their racial and ethnic heritage and traditions and promoting pride in that heritage. Preparation for bias involves teaching children about racism and discrimination and preparing them to cope with it. Promotion of mistrust promotes wariness of other racial or ethnic groups and distrust in interracial interactions (Hughes, 2003).

## **Differences in Racial-Ethnic Socialization Between White Families and Families of Color**

For many Americans, the concept of race and its impacts are a taboo topic of discussion today. ). A 2007 study in the *Journal of Marriage and Family* found that out of 17,000 families of all races with kindergartners, 45% said they'd never, or almost never, discussed race issues with their children (Brown, Tanner-Smith, Lesane-Brown, & Ezell, 2007). A study completed by Sesame Workshop in 2019 reported that overall, most American parents do not talk to their

children about race. The results of this survey revealed that only 28 percent of parents in America say that they “sometimes” talk to their children about their race and ethnicity, and a mere 10 percent of parents do it “often.” (Kotler, Haider, & Levine, 2019). The same survey reported that over 60 percent of parents rarely or never discuss race or ethnicity with their children. As a matter of fact, many White Americans in particular actively avoid conversations of America’s history with race. Studies have shown that White parents discuss race with their children at later ages than Black parents do and reactively rather than proactively (Zucker & Patterson, 2018). More specifically, parents of color have been shown to be more inclined to initiate race talk with their children, whereas white parents do so with less frequency (Zucker & Patterson, 2018). Moreover, White parents have been shown to engage in race talk and explicit racial-ethnic socialization at slightly older ages than compared to the ages parents of color engage in race talk with their children. The issue with this is that from an early age, children become aware of race and can comprehend the negative and positive meanings associated with different races. As early as 3 months, a baby’s brain can notice race-based differences. Children are “developmentally prone to in-group favoritism”. It requires little to no effort for children to develop in-group preferences once a difference has been recognized among groups (Bigler & Liben, 2006). The ability to recognize these differences must be addressed at a young age and the instinctual in-group preferences must be challenged. By ages 2 to 4, children can internalize racial bias. Upon entering elementary school, children already have a basic understanding of that different racial groups exist and can even show racial bias (Zucker & Patterson, 2018). When children reach the age of 12, many become set in their beliefs. This brief frame of time only allows parents a decade to impart knowledge about race and foster attitudes of racial diversity and acceptance (Aboud, 2008), (Hirschfeld, 2008). By the time many parents talk to their

children about race, they have already formed much of their racial attitudes. One study that focused on racial socialization in White families pointed out that it may not be that White families participate in racial socialization less often, but that they do so in ways that researchers have not yet been able to identify (Bartoli, Michael, Bentley-Edwards, Stevenson, Shor & McClain, 2016). Parents teach their children about race whether they explicitly engage in race talk or not.

In many cases when White parents do discuss race with their children, they rely heavily on colorblind egalitarianism messages by using phrases such as “All lives matter equally” that discount the continued impact of institutionalized racism in society. Their avoidance of talk about race and explicit conversations about the current ways Black people are oppressed actually promotes racial bias in their children (Zucker & Patterson, 2018). On the other hand, many Black parents explicitly discuss racial discrimination with the goal of preparing their children for negative experiences in life as a racial minority (Hughes, 2003). This same trend is also present for other racial groups apart from white families.

As stated previously, different families use various racial-ethnic socialization approaches including color-blind or color muteness, color-conscious, and egalitarianism (Hagerman, 2014). These emphasize that race is not important and that everyone is the same. Notably, White parents use these first three methods most frequently. Parents of color more often use cultural socialization, promotion of mistrust, adaptation (preparation for bias, avoidant coping), and promotion of diversity (Hughes, 2003). These styles focus on either combatting experiences of racial discrimination or building ethnic-racial and cultural pride. Overall, parents of color tend to use more color-conscious framing in their racial-ethnic socialization messages with their children. Color-conscious messages lead to a greater recognition of racism, contemporary race

relations, and institutionalized racism. The body of literature on racial socialization has come to the consensus that when children of color are taught to be aware of race, embrace their cultural backgrounds, and recognize and respond to racism, it supports positive racial identity development. In addition, learning an accurate racial history of the United States helps people of color see themselves, their families, and their accomplishments more clearly within a context that has limited their access to resources and opportunities. In contrast, the opposite is true for White children. Instead, racial socialization for White people may result in them being made to question their self-perception as good and deserving of their accomplishments upon having to fully comprehend the history of race in America (Bartoli et. al).

The present study was designed to examine whether there are generational differences in racial socialization. One main goal was to observe how race talk either evolves or remains stagnant through generations. Although prior studies have examined parents' conversations about race with their children, or children's reports of their conversations with their parents, they have not included both in the same study for comparison. To my knowledge, there has not been a study published that has examined the relationship between the racial-ethnic socialization people experienced with their parents and the racial-ethnic socialization these same people relay to their children. The aim of this study was to address the following questions: What exactly are parents telling their children about race and what methods are used? How do these conversations differ between families of color and white families? Are these conversations changing from one generation to the next or are they remaining the same? Using a mixed-methods approach combining qualitative and quantitative questions, persons of color and white participants were asked to recall their conversations about race with their parents. Participants who were parents with children of their own then were asked to describe their conversations about race with their

children. I expected the results of the data to align with what is already been established in the body of literature and racial and ethnic socialization. I had anticipated that the majority of responses would be egalitarian in nature, and most of them colorblind. However, I did expect more color-blind responses from White participants. I believed the results would indicate a fair amount of responses from people of color that fit the themes of promotion of mistrust and preparation for bias. I expected parents of color to report a high frequency of race talk compared to their white counterparts. I also anticipated that there would not be much variation in the race talk that parent participants experienced with their parents and then with their children.

## METHODOLOGY

### Participants

The original full sample consisted of 289 participants; 156 were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk, 123 were student volunteers from psychology courses at The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, and 10 were recruited from social media platforms. Amazon MTurk participants were compensated with \$2.00 upon their successful completion of the survey. UT Chattanooga students were granted an allotted amount of extra course credit at the discretion of their instructors. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 70 years old.

**Table 1**

*Sample Demographics*

	People of Color				White				
	Nonparents (n=15)		Parents (n=27)		Nonparents (n=17)		Parents (n=25)		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
<b>Age Range:</b>									
18-28	15	100	0	0	16	94.1	0	0	
29-39	0	0	9	33.3	1	5.9	9	36	
40-50	0	0	9	33.3	0	0	9	36	
51-61	0	0	3	11.1	0	0	3	12	
62-72	0	0	5	18.5	0	0	4	16	
<b>Gender</b>									
Female	14	93.3	16	59.3	16	94.1	14	56	
Male	0	0	11	40.7	0	0	11	44	
Unidentified	1	7.1	0	0	1	5.9	0	0	
<b>Race</b>									
White	0	0	0	0	17	100	25	100	
Black	6	40	23	85.2	0	0	0	0	
Multi Race	3	20	4	14.8	0	0	0	0	
LatinX	3	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	
AIAN	1	6.7	0	0	0	0	0	0	
NHPI	2	13.3	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Note: AIAN is the abbreviation for American Indian or Alaska Native. NHPI is the abbreviation for Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.



For the present study focusing on the open-ended responses to questions about conversations, I condensed the sample by first selecting participants who identified as a person of color. Then, I matched those participants with white participants of similar age and gender. The final sample consisted of 84 participants, 42 of whom were people of color and 42 whom were white. For the purpose of this study, the term *people of color (POC)* will include Black or African Americans, Mixed race individuals, Hispanic, LatinX, or Spanish origin individuals, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander individuals. More specifically, the 42 people of color consisted of 29 Black or African American individuals, 7 Mixed race individuals, 3 Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish origin individuals, 2 Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander individuals, and 1 American Indian or Alaska Native. Participants of the final sample ranged in age from 19 to 70 years old. The participants consisted of 60 females, 22 males, and 2 unspecified individuals. From this sample, 52 participants were parents who had at least one child and 30 participants were not parents and had no children. Of the 52 parents in the final sample, 27 were people of color and 25 were white. The average age of the children of parents of color was 15.9 years old ( $SD= 12.30$ ). In comparison, the average age of the children of White parents was 18.3 years old ( $SD= 14.76$ ). Of the 32 participants who had no children, 15 were people of color and 17 were white. Refer to table 1 for a breakdown of the participant demographics.

## **Materials**

In order to deeply examine what conversations on race between parents and children encompass, a survey was designed to include both qualitative and quantitative data. Given the goals of the study, the qualitative item served as a means to identify themes from unconfined responses. On the other hand, the quantitative items served as a way to pinpoint previously

established themes. The survey was created using Qualtrics. It consisted of approximately 74 to 80 questions depending on the demographics of each participant (see Appendix A). Survey variations were dependent upon the following factors: parent status, race, and immigration status. Across these variations, all participants were asked the same 5 short answer questions concerning their conversations of race with their parental figures. The survey consisted of 70 to 80 questions dependent upon the demographic criteria participants met.

### *Open-ended questions*

In total, the survey included 11 short answer questions. All participants were asked the same 5 short answer questions regarding their childhood discussions of race with their parental figures. If participants identified as parents, they were asked an additional 6 short answer questions about their conversations with their children.

The short answer questions asked of all participants included:

- How old were you when your parent(s) first discussed race/ethnicity with you?
- Please describe that first conversation with your parent(s) about race/ethnicity.  
What did they say and what did you say?
- What prompted your first discussion of race/ethnicity with your parent(s)?
- Who started the conversation? Was it you or your parent(s)?
- What can you remember in general about race/ethnicity conversations with your parents throughout your childhood?
- How would you summarize what you talked about in these race /ethnicity conversations with your parent(s) during your childhood?

### *Closed-ended questions*

The closed- ended questions consisted of 5-Point Likert scale questions that measured level of agreement and level of comfort regarding statements about race and racial discourse. A number of the questions measured the frequency of specific experiences that related to racism. The portion of the closed-ended questions that are the primary focus of this thesis are included in the table below:

**Table 2**

#### *Closed Ended Questions*

Question #	Question
5.2	In general, my parents were comfortable talking to me about race.
5.3	Which of the following phrases/topics did your parents use when talking about race with you as a child? Please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5 of how frequently you heard it. (See Appendix for 19 statements)
5.4	What age did you first become aware of your race?
5.8	How often did you learn about race or racial issues from the following sources?
5.9	My views of race and ethnicity are the same as those of my parent(s).
5.10	My parents prepared me well to deal with issues or questions of race/ethnicity that I currently experience.
6.2*	What is the birth order of the child you chose to answer the following questions about?
6.3*	How old is the child you have chosen to answer the following questions about?
7.2*	In general, I was comfortable talking about race with my child.
7.3*	Which of the following phrases/topics did you use when talking about race with your child? Please rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5 on how frequently you used it
7.5*	I prepared my child well to deal with issues or questions of race/ethnicity that they currently experience.
14.2	I am comfortable interacting with people of other races or ethnicities.
14.3	I am comfortable having conversations and discussions on the topic of race.

NOTE: Asterisk (\*) indicates questions only asked of parents

### ***Codes for Open-Ended Questions***

A research team developed a set of four codes to describe the various types of responses. These codes are listed in Appendix C, along with the questions each set of codes applied to.

### **Procedure**

The survey launched in February 2020 and closed in April 2020. It was distributed through the SONA UT Chattanooga Research Participation System, Amazon Mechanical Turk, and Facebook. Participants from Amazon Mechanical Turk had to have been United States residents and have children. Participants took an average of 20-25 minutes to complete the survey.

Once data collection concluded, I reviewed the open-ended responses along with multiple research assistants to identify themes. Upon reviewing the responses, codes were then made to align with observed trends. Research assistants narrowed down the response categories for the first open-ended question. Next, I identified recurring themes and response types in the rest of the open-ended questions. Then, a new research assistant partnered with me to narrow down the meaning of the themes. We identified themes from the responses based on how often they occurred and how detailed or vague they were. Codes for each question are provided in Appendix C. We then coded 20% of the responses independently in an attempt to establish interrater reliability, but we were unable to attain adequate agreement due to differences in our interpretation of the responses. Therefore, we coded each response simultaneously through discussion. Refer to Appendix C for a full list of the codes and their corresponding questions.

## RESULTS

### Participants' Childhood Conversations With Their Parents

#### *Context of First Conversation About Race*

##### **Age at first conversation about race.**

I first asked, "How old were you when your parent(s) first discussed race/ethnicity with you?" Participants replied with specific ages or year in school when possible. In other cases, participants estimated whether it was before starting school, during elementary school, middle school, high school, or after high school. Most POC (55 %) and White participants (47.5 %) who answered this question indicated that they were between the ages of 5 and 10 years old when their parent(s) first discussed race or ethnicity with them. This is what I predicted and the results supported my prediction.

**Table 3**

#### *Age at First Conversation About Race Results*

Code	People of Color		White	
	%	Quote	%	Quote
1. It was never discussed/talked about	17.5	My parents never really had this conversation with me	9.5	Race was never distinguished
2. I don't remember if it was ever discussed	0		0	
4. Young or very young (use if they say "young" and don't specify an age)	2.5	Very young	0	

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5. Before they started school (use if they don't further specify a school age)	5	I would say before I started school, from a very young age.	4.76	Before I started school
6. Before elementary school (also use if they say: preschool or younger; 4 years old or younger)	7.5	Before going to elementary school we had a decision about different cultural and how they are treated in America	11.9	Before I started school. I remember when I was probably about 3 or 4 my neighborhood friends were black.
7. Elementary school (also use if they say: kindergarten through 5th grade; 5-10 years old)	55	When I was in the 4th grade.	47.5	I must of been around 6-7, there were no African Americans in our school and I saw one in our little village downtown so I came home and told them I'd seen something.
8. Middle School (also use if they say: 6th through 8th grade; 11-13 years old)	7.5	When I was around 12 years old	19	I was in middle school in 2008 and President Barack Obama was running.
9. High school or teenage (also use if they say 9th through 12 grade; 14-18 years old)	10	When I was 15 yrs. old.	4.76	I was probably in high school.
10. Post high school or older than 18 years old	2.5	They time was when I was much older and on my way to live on my own for college. I was also moving into another state and mother wanted to discuss some possible scenarios to be prepared for and also what was expected of me, being a person of color.	2.38	I think maybe after college when my older sister started to work in a larger inner city area with minorities, we may have spoke of race.
11. Other (use if response does not fit into any other code)	0		2.38	Around the age of 7 my mother took me shopping downtown. We wanted a

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drink of water and we went and got in line at the water fountains. I noticed one fountain didn't have a line so I went to drink out of it. My mother said I shouldn't do that, but then she just said go ahead it's fine. later I realized that I had drank out the colored water fountain and was proud of my mother saying go ahead it's fine.

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**What prompted the first conversation about race?** For the question, “What prompted your first discussion of race/ethnicity with your parent (s)?, there was some similarity with the amount of participants (10% POC and 11.90% of White participants) who had not had an explicit conversation or whose responses were uncodable due to vagueness that made it difficult to interpret. No White participants indicated that they did not recall what prompted their discussion, whereas 10% of POC indicated this. It is possible this is due to race conversations being a more commonplace occurrence among people of color than White people, making the memory of what prompted the conversation more memorable. A greater ratio of White participants (30%) indicated that what prompted their discussion of race was an experience of noticing evident differences between themselves and the people in their environment. Only 15% of POC indicated this as what prompted their discussion. It is clear that children are adept to recognizing racial and even ethnic differences in the people in their proximity. The following table, Table 4, lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 4***Results of What Prompted the First Conversation About Race with Parent*

		People of Color		White	
Code	%	Quote	%	Quote	
1. Uncodable /no conversation / N/A	10	There was never a first conversation about race	11.90	My parents have never discussed race/ethnicity with me.	
2. Unsure/I don't know/I don't remember	10	I don't remember	0		
3. Involved seeing people of different races or noticing differences (or lack of differences) between themselves and their peers/people in their environment. May include being in an racially diverse environment or a racially monolithic environment.	15	I was curious about differences between the races.	30.95	I realized that some people look different than I did. I did not understand why they looked so different, in color and facial features.	
4. Involves curiosity in some degree. They may mention being curious about their own origin, history, uniqueness, or differences. They may mention being curious about the differences between themselves and other people.	7.50	I wanted to do the family tree website so I needed to know about my grandparents so that's how it got started.	2.38	Curiosity	
5. Involves the mention of a fight, assault, or experience of physical bullying. This may also include mental bullying or name calling. It is implied that these are all racially motivated due to the topic of the survey.	10	In elementary school there were people who were not too keen of Hispanics and had called us wetbacks	7.14	I got into a fight with a child at my school.	



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6. Involves a personal experience of racial discrimination or racism that is unspecified. This may also include an expectation of racism or racial discrimination.	12.50	My experience on my first day at elementary school I met with of white kids who had some notions about black Americans. I didn't like the way they reacted towards me so on getting home I told my parent about it.	0	
7. Involved learning about race in school. This may include the topic of slavery or racial discrimination. May have also involved learning something racist in school.	2.50	I was in the first grade and we were singing the song mammys little babies love shorting bread. It was a new song we were learning in class. (I went to a private school with very little African American children) I came home singing the song proudly , that was until my mom stopped and asked me to repeat my self. When I repeated myself my mom's face dropped she instantly told me to stop . when I asked why she didn't like the song the look of hurt in her face as she explained what a mammy was.	2.38	I was taking a history class where it was being discussed
8. Involves the mention of starting school or transferring schools.	5	Me growing up and going through puberty, starting a next phase of life (start of middle school)	0	
9. Involves the mention of politics (e.g. political campaign or assassination), differences in religious beliefs, or differences in cultural beliefs.	2.50	There were several political assassinations at the time	4.76	Comparing my view of a white God to a peer's view that Jesus Christ or God could be another ethnicity.

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<p>10. Involves having a family member of a different race or ethnicity. Involves making a friend of a different race or ethnicity or a romantic interest in someone of a different race or ethnicity.</p>	7.50	<p>I was angry because a girl I asked to go to homecoming, and said yes, later had to tell me that she couldn't go with me because her parents would not let her go with a black boy. We were both extremely upset. I only spoke to my mother about it. I knew my Dad would take the hard line with me having grown up in Waycross GA in the 1920s and 30s.</p>	19	<p>I started to like African American men.</p>
<p>11. Involved the witnessing of racial discrimination or hearing about local experiences of racial discrimination. This may also include hearing racist remarks by others. Involved not knowing how to answer racial/ethnic demographic questions about oneself</p>	2.50	<p>Someone fight with my parents in my childhood this time I hear this</p>	4.76	<p>A distant family member made a racist remark about my best friend</p>
	5	<p>I didn't know what to put on the race and ethnicity part of the TCAP test.</p>	0	
<p>13. Involved watching the news, watching television, or reading books. Mention some form of media.</p>	2.50	<p>Things that my mother had heard in the news, or from various sources.</p>	4.76	<p>The TV news</p>
<p>15. Holidays (MLK Day, Thanksgiving, etc.)</p>	0		4.76	<p>It was around the holidays, thanksgiving I believe and my mom was a preschool teacher and she was cutting out pictures of Indians and telling me the story of the pilgrims and what white people came over from a different place on a boat to help the Indians.</p>

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16. Involves the discouragement of racism (including racist jokes).	0		2.38	A joke I attempted to make about a black friend of our family.
17. Seeking education/ Wanting to be proactive with teaching or learning about race and racism.	2.50	They will develop much better attitudes and get on a track where they really can do what we all want, which is to get along with people and embrace those differences rather than be scared of them, because not talking about race teaches kids one thing: It teaches them that race is taboo.	4.76	There are members of my family who are racist and use bad language towards people of other races/ ethnicities. I think my mom was trying to get ahead of that being ingrained into our development.
18. Assumptions made about their race or ethnicity. They may or may not have known how to respond. Or involved someone asking questions similar to "Where are you really from?"	7.50	The kids at my school told me I was mixed and I was unsure of what that meant so I went home and asked them what race I was.	0	

**Who Initiated the Conversation?** For the question, “Who started the conversation? Was it you or your parent(s)?”, 50% of POC and 48% of Whites answered that as a child, they initiated the first conversation. Another 36% of POC and 40% of White participants said it was their parent(s), and 9.5% of POC and 7.1% of Whites indicated that there was no conversation held. Across race, children were more likely to initiate the conversation than parents. The following table, Table 5, lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 5***Results of Who Initiated First Conversation*

Code	People of Color (n=42)		White (n=42)	
	n	%	n	%
No conversation / uncodable	4	9.50	3	7.14
Child (me)	21	50	20	47.61
Parent(s)	15	35.71	17	40.47
Both child and parent(s)	1	2.38	0	0
I don't know	1	2.38	2	4.76

*Content of First Race Conversation With Parent(s)*

For the open-ended question, “Please describe that first conversation with your parent(s) about race/ethnicity. What did they say and what did you say?”, In general, White participants provided egalitarian responses that would be considered colorblind or color mute 21.43% of the time, while POC responded with this response type 7.50% of the time. On the other hand, 10% of responses from participants of color answered with egalitarian responses that would be considered color-conscious, compared to 11.90% of responses from White participants. Code number 17 and 18 would be considered colorblind, whereas code number 19 would be considered somewhat color conscious only to the extent that these messages acknowledged race. Many responses still did not expand further than simply acknowledging race. POC reported responses (30%) that can be considered preparation for bias. In contrast, White participants did

not report any responses in the same manner. As a matter of fact, White participants responded with answers that acknowledged their place of privilege occurred 2.38% of the time. Codes 8 and 9 could be considered preparation for bias. Only 2.5% of responses from POC could possibly be considered promotion of mistrust. Code 20 would be considered promotion of mistrust. The following table, Table 6, lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 6**

*Description of First Conversation with Parent(s)*

Code	People of Color		White	
	%	Quote	%	Quote
1. Uncodable / no conversation / N/A	12.5	There was never a conversation. I was "fairly" intelligent at a young age so I "discovered" things on my own and I dealt with "confrontations" - race-based - by learning about why it all existed and still exist.	7.14	My parents have never discussed race/ethnicity with me.
2. I don't remember / I don't know / unsure	10	I don't remember	4.76	I do not remember specifically.
3. There was not an in depth conversation. There were comments/statements made once or periodically.	5	My parents never really discussed race with me. They always said to treat everyone nicely and not to judge based on wealth	7.14	They only described themselves as "colorblind"; there wasn't really a conversation

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		or skin color or anything and to always be kind.	
4. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color. There may or may not have been explanation or meaning attached to the identification/labeling.	12.5	My mom informed me that I was black after I told her about the incidence.	2.38 All they told me as that I was white
5. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond labeling/identifying to involve either an attached meaning, explanation of some sort, etc. This code can also apply if the parent(s) goes beyond labeling the race of someone other than the child's (e.g. peer, relative, strangers, etc.)	12.5	I don't remember but I know we talked about the diversity of a blended race. Even though society labels most African American's "Black" many of us are a blend of white, black, and native American as well as many others so that's was my case. I was taught about my blend of all three heritages.	0
7. Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the advantages they may experience.	0		2.38 I am unique and part of the majority
8. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond to specifically mention the disadvantages or struggles associated with their race.	22.5	I had a white best friend who told me she wasn't allowed to be my friend because I was black. My mom explained to me that some people will grow up not to like the color of my skin and that I shouldn't let it affect who I am.	0
9. Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the disadvantages they may	7.5	They basically told me about the inequalities I would face.	0

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experience.

10. Involves the encouragement of racial or ethnic pride. May mention embracing one's race, skin color, or ethnicity.

7.5 They told me that I was beautiful and different and should be proud of my ethnicity and I was proud of it, I've always enjoyed being different.

2.38 We are Italian American and my family is very proud of this. My father talked often of our background.

11. Mentions that there are people who are different or the child is different. Does not involve any specific mention of race or skin color. This may also include comments that mention uniqueness or differences but no mention race or skin color specifically.

0

7.14 I probably asked why a person was a different color than us and my parents said because everyone is different love.

13. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors. Does not go further to offer an explanation of some sort.

0

4.76 We were going to eat somewhere and we entered an area with a lot of African Americans. I asked about why they were a different color. My mother explained that they had different skin color than us.

14. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors AND goes beyond to offer an explanation of some sort or an attached meaning to one or more of the races/skin colors. This includes the mistreatment of certain races, the privileges of other races, how people of different races may be treated differently, etc.

5

9.52 I told them I'd seen someone who was very dark like they'd been "burned up" he was black. They were first shocked, then sat me down and explained how they were brought from Africa where the sun made them darker. They/he was a person, just like I was. How they had a mom and dad and were people just like I was and we were.

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<p>15. The current (at time of discussion) state of race relations is mentioned. This may include racial discrimination, witnessing racism or mistreatment on the basis of race, etc. This may also include an identification or explanation of something that is racist.</p>	5	<p>My parents warn me at a early age to be aware of races that was a different color than I was, because I will not be treat the same as some other races because of skin color, and I wanted to know why and they told me some of their real life stories ,on how they had to walk to school why other races ride buses to school.</p>	<p>2.38 We were watching TV News and they were showing the Birmingham riots. It was pretty nasty and both my mother and father said this is wrong!. This has to stop.</p>
<p>16. The history of race relations is mentioned. This may include any mention of slavery, historical moments, etc.</p>	2.5	<p>My mother would talk about racism in the south, and how terrible it is as well as how everyone is different but equal.</p>	<p>7.14 All they said was to that white people used to own slaves</p>
<p>17. Involves statements that promote colorblindness. This may include comments about not seeing skin color.</p>	0		<p>7.14 It had to do with cousins who were bi-racial but we were not told of this for a long time. I remember asking my mother if they were part white-part black and she said they were. My mother taught us that color should not matter and to accept others as they are. My mother used to invite some of the kids from our grade school over for lunch who were Black.</p>
<p>18. This may also include comments about treating everyone the same or that everyone is equal BUT still no mention of race or skin color is involved. This may also include statements like "stand up for yourself. Stand up for what is right".</p>	7.5	<p>They told me that all people are created and they should be treated with respect and love. This was in answer to my question about where did the races come from?</p>	<p>14.29 I believe it went something like - God created us all differently. He loves us all. I do remember asking my parents, when I was a bit older, what they would do if I married a black person and they said they would be happy if I was happy but worried that life would be harder for me. My parents</p>

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<p>19. Involved statements encouraging the child to treat everyone the same regardless of race or skin color. This includes statements such as: treat everyone the same, everyone is equal, everyone is the same on the inside, don't judge people (all despite differences in race of skin color).</p>	<p>10 I was playing with three kids from across the way from my family's apartment. My dad is black, my mom is white, I'm mixed, and those kids were black. I was much lighter than them. After I had come in from playing with them, I walked up to my mom and asked, "Why are they darker than me?" My parents sat me down and gave me a toy to fidget with. They said, "Their skin is brown and darker than yours because both of their parents are black." My mom said, "Your dad is brown, too, but he fell in love in with me, a white woman." My dad said, "One day you'll understand, but for now just know that a person's skin color is determined by the amount of melanin in his/her skin. Also, all people are beautiful, no matter their skin color. We should be friends with everyone, brown, white, etc. Do you understand?" I said, "Yes, be friends with everyone." That was it.</p>	<p>always had a little bit of racism that has uncovered itself over the years.</p> <p>11.90 I remember asking them why it seemed like some people didn't like other people based on the color of their skin. It seemed silly because everyone is the same just different colors. My parents essentially agreed with this notion. My mom said older generations were taught to hate them based on their color and slavery and did not really say more than that. My father talked about how it's based on race and competition.</p>
<p>20. Involves the discouragement of interactions or relationships/friendships</p>	<p>2.5 The discussion revolved around my beginning to date girls seriously and my choices of whom I</p>	<p>9.52 I brought home a friend from school with me, a new student to our class who lived across the road from</p>

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with people of a different race

would like to date. In a mostly white school my options weren't as limited as one might have thought. The issue was that lots of parents were not ready for their daughters to be dating a black boy. The Catholic school I attended completely sided with the parents in every scenario that was brought to their attention. My mom told me to be more discreet, but my Dad pretty much told me to stay away from the white girls unless I wanted to get kicked out of school. Of course, I said that wasn't fair and I was given the traditional cliché, "life isn't fair".

my house. She was black. My mother looked shocked when we walked in the door. She asked my friend to call her mother to pick her up as we had plans that afternoon, which we did not. My friend called her mother who arrived in a few minutes and took her home. My mother did not have to say too much as her demeanor said it all. I asked why my friend had to leave, I liked her. My mother said "she's not our kind". I didn't understand. I said "she's a little girl. She's my kind". My mother wouldn't say much more than that to me. The next day when I came home she told me she had surprise for me, she had bought me a baby doll, a life size black baby doll. She seemed very pleased with herself. I looked at the doll and told her she wasn't my kind. I got it even then

21. Involves the discouragement of racism (including use of racial slurs).

0

14.29 My mom wanted my sister and I to understand that there were different races and ethnicities in our community. She wanted us to be aware of these differences but to treat everyone as equals. She also made sure we understood not to use specific racial slurs (ie. the n-word) and that we wouldn't allow others to say them either. I don't really remember what my sister and I said but it was

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			probably to the effect of we understood what she meant.
22. Involves racist comments (either overt or covert)	0		9.52 My dad is racist and would put Blacks, Chinese, and Japanese down. He would tell me that they are lazy as can be and won't amount to much; trying to paint a bad image in my head.
23. Other (does not fit any other codes)	5	I talked to my mother after someone said that I looked like a monkey. She wasn't one of those moms that would tell me that I was beautiful or something, but she wanted to make sure that I was strong enough that words didn't hurt me because someone else's opinion of me didn't matter.	11.90 My father told me a story about one of his co-workers. The co-worker made a point of saying he wasn't prejudiced towards (blacks). Then one day he was assaulted by a black person and from that point on he became prejudiced towards blacks.

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***Overall Childhood Discussions of Race with Parent(s)***

For the question, “What can you remember in general about race/ethnicity conversations with your parents throughout your childhood? How would you summarize what you talked about in these race /ethnicity conversations with your parent(s) during your childhood?”, in general White participants reported both colorblind and color conscious egalitarian themes, and even cultural socialization (2.38%). POC reported both colorblind and color conscious egalitarian themes. In addition, themes of preparation for bias and promotion of mistrust were reported. The following table, Table 7, lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 7***Results of Overall Discussions of Race with Parent(s)*

		People of Color		White	
Code	%	Quote	%	Quote	
1. Uncodable / no conversation / N/A	12.50	There were never any conversations	16.70	I do not recall any conversations about race, as I did not tend to notice the differences that much.	
2. I don't remember / I don't know / unsure	9.50	I don't really remember much it wasn't a concern for me.	0		
3. There was not an in depth conversation. There were comments/statements made once or periodically.	4.76	We didn't talk about it in depth at all	4.76	It was never seen as a big deal, I always understood that people had different cultures and it always felt very positive when my parents and I talked about it. It was never in depth.	
5. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond labeling/identifying to involve either an attached meaning, explanation of some sort, etc. This code can also apply if the parent(s) goes beyond labeling the race of someone other than the child's (e.g. peer, relative, strangers, etc.)	4.76	I remember that although I had a mixed heritage. If you had some African American heritage, society pretty much considered you black. That's what was communicated to us back then.	0		
6. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond to specifically mention the advantages or privileges associated with their race.	0		2.38	That I have an advantage and I am part of the majority	

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8. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond to specifically mention the disadvantages or struggles associated with their race.	19	That everyone is equal, but I will experience someone not liking me because of my race.	0
9. Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the disadvantages they may experience.	7.14	Mostly how we would have to try harder.	0
10. Involves the encouragement of racial or ethnic pride. May mention embracing one's race, skin color, or ethnicity.	0	2.38 I remember my father being super proud of our Italian heritage, and always rooting for Italian American athletes and politicians. We often talked about Italians and how 'great' or 'better' they were.	
11. Mentions that there are people who are different or the child is different. Does not involve any specific mention of race or skin color. This may also include comments that mention uniqueness or differences but no mention race or skin color specifically.	0	2.38 We never really talk about others, but if/when we did the concluding thoughts would be that each person is different and has their own way of handling things.	
12. Involves the encouragement of interracial interactions/relationships.	0	2.38 My mother always encouraged me to have friendships with the black kids at my school. My friend, Randal, came over one day and we were shooting baskets in the	

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13. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors. Does not go further to offer an explanation of some sort.	0	4.76	back yard. My mother came home and she told me later that she really liked Randal and encouraged me to play with him more. We talked about how they had different color of skin then us.
14. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors AND goes beyond to offer an explanation of some sort or an attached meaning to one or more of the races/skin colors. This includes the mistreatment of certain races, the privileges of other races, how people of different races may be treated differently, etc.	2.38	Basically inequality	4.76 My parents worked in the social service sector so it came up frequently, as well as living in a racially diverse area. We talked about equity and access and how people of color were not treated the same.
15. The current (at time of discussion) state of race relations is mentioned. This may include racial discrimination, witnessing racism or mistreatment on the basis of race, etc. This may also include an identification or explanation of something that is racist.	9.50	Just about things going on in the world regarding race	0
16. The history of race relations is mentioned. This may include any mention of slavery, historical moments, etc.	4.76	Mostly how our race are being oppressed in the past, and how we should revenge by becoming something better in the future	4.76 That how slaves were migrated mostly from Africa and some other parts of the world. They mixed with other races which are part of the present America.

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<p>17. Involves statements that promote colorblindness. This may include comments about not seeing skin color.</p>	<p>2.38 My parents hardly talk much about race as I grew up. If every race came up was to remind us we are all made equal and should love everyone, they didn't want us to pay attention to race.</p>	<p>16.70 I remember my mom being very open about race. She instilled in me to not even notice skin color. It has no bearing on that person and whether I should get along with them or not. People are people. If people ever said anything racist or even told a racist joke in front of her she didn't like and she didn't have a problem telling whoever, that it was inappropriate. I don't really remember my dad ever saying much about it at all.</p>
<p>18. This may also include comments about treating everyone the same or that everyone is equal BUT still no mention of race or skin color is involved. This may also include statements like "stand up for yourself. Stand up for what is right".</p>	<p>4.76 We didn't really dwell on the subject but if we ever see videos online or see people get harassed my parents just say don't be like that and to always be kind. if people harass us to just walk away and don't say anything degrading back.</p>	<p>4.76 We would have conversations about how everyone should be seen as equal and everyone is special.</p>
<p>19. Involved statements encouraging the child to treat everyone the same regardless of race or skin color. This includes statements such as: treat everyone the same, everyone is equal, everyone is the same on the inside, don't judge people (all despite differences in race of skin color).</p>	<p>9.50 We basically talked about how to get along with people of other races. My parents always said that all people should be treated with respect and fairly.</p>	<p>11.90 Before this school incident, my parents treated all people the same, no matter the color. They had a lot of different racial groups as friends. They taught me to respect those who deserved respect regardless of race.</p>

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20. Involves the discouragement of interactions or relationships/friendships with people of a different race	7.14	They taught us to always be weary of white people. My dad was the only black man working at his company and he would notice how differently white people would be treated. There were also a lot of black movies on while I was growing up like Mississippi Burning and I remember my dad not being able to watch them because they brought back such bad memories.	7.14	There weren't too many conversations about race. There was a general sense in our town that a certain area of town was dangerous to drive through at night.
21. Involves the discouragement of racism (including use of racial slurs).	0		9.50	It was very infrequent. We talked more about not using racial slurs.
22. Involves racist comments (either overt or covert)	0		11.90	My parents relied heavily on stereotypes when describing other races. They said there's no reason not to like other stereotypes, and then wholly endorsed the stereotypes about them to imply that we are superior.
23. Other (does not fit any other codes)	4.76	There was a race problem in my father's company, during appraisal time good grade was denied for my father since he is a black.	0	

**Frequency of Phrases Related to Racial Discourse.** After they had provided their open-ended descriptions of conversations, participants were asked to indicate how frequently their parents had mentioned 19 different topics or themes during their conversations about race. For



each of the 19 checklist items, I conducted a 2 (race) by 2 (parent status) ANOVA. Table 8 shows the means and standard deviations for each checklist item, and Table 9 shows the significant ANOVA results.

There were significant main effects of race for six items. POC reported their parents mentioning the following items more frequently than parents of White participants.

- 4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race
- 8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage
- 10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin
- 11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States
- 17. You should be proud of your race
- 19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race

There were significant main effects of parent status for three items. Regardless of race, parents reported that their own parents more often mentioned item 9, “People of all colors get along just fine in the United States”. Nonparents regardless of race reported that their parents more frequently mentioned item 7, “Make friends with people of all colors”, and item 18, “You have more advantages than other people because of your race.”

Finally, there was a significant interaction of race by parent status for one item. Parents of color reported hearing their parents say “Racism is not as bad today as it used to be” more often than nonparents of color. White parents were far *less* likely than White nonparents to hear, “Racism is not as bad today as it used to be” from their parents.

**Table 8**Means (and *standard deviations*) for Conversation Checklist Items by Race and Parent Status

Parent Status		POC		White	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Skin color doesn't matter	M	3.00	3.07	3.14	4.12
	<i>SD</i>	<i>1.39</i>	<i>1.39</i>	<i>1.58</i>	<i>0.78</i>
2. It's what is on the inside that counts		3.96	3.79	3.64	4.18
		<i>1.04</i>	<i>1.05</i>	<i>1.36</i>	<i>0.88</i>
3. Everyone is the same		3.27	3.14	3.45	3.47
		<i>1.49</i>	<i>1.10</i>	<i>1.57</i>	<i>1.47</i>
4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race		3.46	3.00	1.32	1.35
		<i>1.50</i>	<i>1.57</i>	<i>0.89</i>	<i>0.86</i>
5. You are better than other people of different races		1.77	1.50	1.55	1.35
		<i>1.18</i>	<i>0.86</i>	<i>1.06</i>	<i>0.86</i>
6. Be careful of people of other races		2.50	1.57	1.82	1.76
		<i>1.42</i>	<i>0.76</i>	<i>1.22</i>	<i>1.20</i>
7. Make friends with people of all colors		3.46	4.14	2.86	3.76
		<i>1.33</i>	<i>1.23</i>	<i>1.58</i>	<i>1.15</i>
8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage		3.27	3.29	2.14	2.06
		<i>1.34</i>	<i>1.64</i>	<i>1.13</i>	<i>1.44</i>

9. People of all colors get along just fine in the United States	2.54 <i>1.27</i>	1.64 <i>0.75</i>	2.59 <i>1.44</i>	2.29 <i>1.21</i>
10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin	3.81 <i>1.33</i>	3.14 <i>1.56</i>	1.77 <i>1.07</i>	1.47 <i>0.80</i>
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States	3.04 <i>1.54</i>	2.71 <i>1.49</i>	2.00 <i>1.41</i>	2.18 <i>1.33</i>
12. Racism is not as bad today as it used to be	2.27 <i>1.38</i>	1.93 <i>1.07</i>	1.59 <i>0.96</i>	3.06 <i>1.14</i>
13. Do not date people who are not the same color as you	1.69 <i>1.16</i>	1.43 <i>0.94</i>	1.73 <i>1.39</i>	2.24 <i>1.48</i>
14. Be open to dating people of all colors	2.62 <i>1.33</i>	3.00 <i>1.57</i>	2.00 <i>1.45</i>	2.53 <i>1.38</i>
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the _____ race because it will change you for the worse	1.62 <i>1.10</i>	1.29 <i>0.61</i>	1.50 <i>0.96</i>	1.47 <i>1.07</i>
16. Not everyone from the _____ race is bad	3.08 <i>1.35</i>	2.86 <i>1.46</i>	2.18 <i>1.37</i>	3.12 <i>1.31</i>
17. You should be proud of your race	3.96 <i>1.11</i>	4.36 <i>1.15</i>	2.14 <i>1.52</i>	2.53 <i>1.38</i>
18. You have more	1.58	2.29	1.86	2.35

advantages than other people because of your race	1.10	1.38	1.17	1.06
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	2.85	3.36	1.32	1.65
	1.52	1.55	0.78	0.93

**Table 9**

*Statistically Significant Differences in Participant Ratings of Their Parents' Use of Conversation Checklist Items by Race and Parent Status*

Statements	Effect	df	F	p
4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race	Race	1, 75	42.96	0.000
6. Be careful of people of other races	Parent	1, 75	6.36	0.014
8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage	Race	1, 75	13.98	0.001
9. People of all colors get along just fine in the United States	Parent	1, 75	4.35	0.04
10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin	Race	1, 75	43.81	0.000
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States	Race	1, 75	5.36	0.023
12. Racism is not as bad today as it used to be	Race X Parent	1, 75	11.89	0.001
	Parent	1, 75	4.62	0.035
17. You should be proud of your race	Race	1, 75	36.79	0.000
	Parent	1, 75	4.94	0.029
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	Race	1, 75	31.86	0.000

### *Perceptions of Comfort with Racial Discourse*

For the closed-ended question that asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: “In general, my parents were comfortable talking to me about race.”, there were no significant main effects for race or parent status in the 2(race) by 2 (parent status) ANOVA. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least agreement and 5 being the most, the overall mean was 3.92 ( $SD = 1.00$ ). Participants tended to answer this question with a neutral response of “neither agree nor disagree” or “agree”. I had expected POC to say that their parents were more comfortable discussing race than White participants’ parents were. I had also expected nonparents (who were younger) would be more comfortable than parents. The results did not align with what I had anticipated with this sample because everyone’s parents were reportedly very comfortable discussing race.

Participants were also asked to rate their own comfort with the following statement: “I am comfortable having conversations and discussions on the topic of race.” On a scale of 1 to 5 the overall mean indicated a high level of comfort ( $M = 4.13$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ). and there were no significant differences by race or parent status. Participants tended to answer this question mostly using a score of 4 to 5 to indicate “agree”. I had expected POC to indicate much higher agreement than White participants and nonparents to have a higher measure of agreement than parents, but all participants indicated a high level of comfortable with discussing race. The results did not align with what I had anticipated with this sample because past research has demonstrated that White families discuss race less than families of color. Due to this, I had expected White participants would indicate a low level of comfort with discussing race.

## Learning About Race From Other Sources

For the closed-ended question, “How often did you learn about race or racial issues from the following sources?”, participants were asked to indicate the frequency of which they learned about race or racial issues from relatives (parents(s), family, or guardians), peers or friends, religious institutions, educational institutions (e.g., school), media in the form of newspapers, television, or internet, and media in the form of films, books, and music. Participants were asked to rate the frequency on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1= never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always. A series of 2 (race) by 2 (parent status) ANOVAs were conducted. Overall, parents reported learning less from media sources, educational institutions, and peers than nonparents reported. There were no significant race effects for any of the sources from which parents and nonparents learned about race. However, there were trends for a race difference for religious institutions ( $p = 0.062$ ); POC had a higher mean (even higher if they were parents) in comparison to White participants.

**Table 10**

*T-test Comparing Nonparents and Parents Racial Socialization Sources*

Sources	Non Parent				Parent			
	POC		White		POC		White	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
Relatives	3.27	1.39	2.56	0.81	3.26	1.26	3.32	1.31
Peers	3.67	1.05	3.63	0.5	3.11	1.01	2.87	0.80
Religious Institutions	2.07	1.22	1.69	0.95	2.59	1.34	1.96	1.10
Educational Institutions	3.33	1.23	3.50	0.97	3.22	0.93	2.72	0.98
Newspapers, Television, or Internet	3.87	1.25	3.94	0.85	3.41	0.80	3.12	1.01
Films, Books, and Music	3.87	1.25	3.75	0.93	3.56	0.90	3.20	0.96

### **Age of Awareness of Race**

For the closed ended question, “What age did you first become aware of your race?”, I conducted a 2 (race) by 2 (parent status) ANOVA. There were no significant main effects for race or parent status. The overall mean on the scale of 1 to 5 was 4.15 ( $M = 4.15$ ,  $SD = 0.87$ ) which indicated that the majority of participants first became aware of their race between the ages of 5 and 10 years old. This is what I had expected because past research has shown that children become aware of race at younger ages than many expect and the results met these expectations.

### **Child vs. Parent Views on Race**

For the closed ended question that asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: “My views of race and ethnicity are the same as those of my parent(s)”, there were no significant main effects for race or parent status. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least agreement and 5 being the most, the overall mean was 3.53 ( $SD = 1.22$ ). I had anticipated that the level of agreement across race and parent status would be neutral or low. The results, however, indicate otherwise with a seemingly neutral to moderate level of agreement.

### **Feelings of Preparedness on Racial Issues**

For the closed ended question that asked participants to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: “My parents prepared me well to deal with issues or questions of race/ethnicity”, the overall mean was 3.31 ( $SD = 1.28$ ) on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least agreement and 5 being the most. In a 2 (race) by 2 (parent status) ANOVA there were no significant main effects for race or parent status. I had anticipated the level of agreement to be higher for POC and lower for White participants. In addition, I was expecting to observe a higher

level of agreement for nonparents and lower for parents because I had believed that the younger ages of nonparents would result in higher feelings of preparedness on racial issues due to the culturally increasing acceptance of discussing race. The results of the data from this sample did not support my predictions.

**Parents’ Conversations With Their Child**

Participants who identified themselves as parents were asked six more questions about conversations on race or ethnicity, they have had with one of their children. These questions were similar to those asked of all participants about conversations with their own parents.

*Context of parents’ first conversations about race with their child*

Current age of child and age at first conversation about race. The first question asked “How old is the child you have chosen to answer the following questions about?”. In response, 29.57% of POC and 40% of whites answered that their child was 19 years or older at the time they completed the survey, 18.5% of POC and 24% of whites answered between the ages of 14 and 18, 7.4% of POC and 4% of whites responded between the ages of 11 and 13, 25.9% of the children of POC and 28% of whites were between the ages of 5 and 10, 14.8% of POC answered age 4 or younger compared to 8% for whites, and 3.7% of the answers for POC were uncodable.

**Table 11**

*Age Range of Child at Time of Survey*

Age Range	People of Color (n=27)		White (n=25)	
	n	%	n	%
Uncodable	1	3.7	0	0
4 years old or younger	4	14.8	2	8



5-10 years old	7	25.9	7	28
11-13 years old	2	7.4	0	0
14-18 years old	5	18.5	6	24
19 years or older	8	29.7	10	40

When asked, “How old was your child when you first discussed race with them?”, 7.4% of parents of color and 8% of White parents answered that they had this discussion with their child before they started school (unspecified age). Another 7.4% of parents of color but 32% of White parents answered that their child was 4 years old or younger. Another 51.85% of parents of color and 48% of White parents responded that their child was between the ages of 5 and 10. Another 3.7% of parents of color and 4% of White parents answered that their child was between the ages of 11 and 13 years old when they first had this discussion with their child. Finally, another 29.6% of parents of color and 8% of White parents answered that they had yet to have this discussion with their child or had never had it with them at all. At the time participants took the study, the average age of the children of parents of color was 15.9 years-old. In comparison, the average age of the children of White parents was 18.3 years-old.

**Table 12**

*Age Range of Child at Time of Initial Race Conversation*

Age Range	People of Color (n=27)		White (n=25)	
	n	%	n	%
It was never discussed/talked about	8	29.63	2	8
I don't remember if it was ever discussed	0	0	0	0
I don't know	0	0	0	0
Young or very young (unspecified age)	0	0	0	0

Before they started school (unspecified school age)	2	7.41	2	8
Before elementary school or preschool age (4 years old or younger)	2	7.41	8	32
Elementary school (including kindergarten or 5-10 years old)	14	51.85	12	48
Middle School (11-13 years old)	1	3.71	1	4
High school or teenage 14-18 years old	0	0	0	0
Post high school (19 years or older)	0	0	0	0

**What Prompted Parents’ Discussion With Their Child.** When asked, “What prompted your discussion of race with your child?”, 40.7% of POC responded with answers that were uncodable due to a few incoherent responses and overly vague responses. The other responses that made up this percentage were due to the parent not having yet discussed race with their child, in which the young age of their child was cited as a reason for this. In comparison, 16% of White parents responded with answers that were uncodable due to a few incoherent responses and overly vague responses. Table 13 details the various factors that prompted the discussion with their child along with examples.

**Table 13**

*Results of What Prompted the First Conversation About Race with Child*

		People of Color		White	
Code	%	Quote	%	Quote	
1. Uncodable /no conversation / N/A	40.74	I'm waiting until she becomes a little bit older before I discuss such a topic she can somewhat understand and apply.	16	N/A	
2. Unsure/I don't know/I don't remember	0		0		

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<p>3. Involved seeing people of different races or noticing differences (or lack of differences) between themselves and their peers/people in their environment. May include being in an racially diverse environment or a racially monolithic environment.</p>	11.11	<p>My daughter asked about the hair differences and hair color.</p>	28	<p>My boy was curious as to why we have discrepancies in color</p>
<p>4. Involves curiosity in some degree. They may mention being curious about their own origin, history, uniqueness, or differences. They may mention being curious about the differences between themselves and other people.</p>	0		4	<p>My daughter asked me about her color, and I explained it to her.</p>
<p>5. Involves the mention of a fight, assault, or experience of physical bullying. This may also include mental bullying or name calling. It is implied that these are all racially motivated due to the topic of the survey.</p>	11.11	<p>The child was being picked on at school. The school they were attending was mostly white</p>	0	
<p>7. Involved learning about race in school. This may include the topic of slavery or racial discrimination. May have also involved learning something racist in school.</p>	0		4	<p>I don't specifically remember, but something she was being taught in school</p>
<p>8. Involves the mention of starting school or transferring schools.</p>	0		12	<p>Him starting school, and going to be making new friends, and experiencing a</p>

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9. Involves the mention of politics (e.g. political campaign or assassination), differences in religious beliefs, or differences in cultural beliefs.	3.71	Donald Trump prompt me to do so. Trump emboldened many racist and I wanted my son to know this and also know that racism isn't something new because of Trump. I showed him books and videos on racism in hopes that I could prepare him for the "inevitable."	0	different social situation than he had been used to.
10. Involves having a family member of a different race or ethnicity. Involves making a friend of a different race or ethnicity or a romantic interest in someone of a different race or ethnicity.	3.71	He asked why his skin looked more like his mother's and not mine. He was curious because he could see his facial resemblance to mine but skin color was closer to resemble his mother, who is white.	12	My daughters friend was Chinese and she asked why Patricia looked different than her.
13. Involved watching the news, watching television, or reading books. Mention some form of media.	11.11	We were seeing a movie which has to do Racism and she saw the way the black American were been discriminated. I had to bring up the conversation myself so she won't become Racist.	0	
17. Seeking education/ Wanting to be proactive with teaching or learning about race and racism.	26	Just preparing them for possible encounters in school and the world.	16	We have always wanted to instill in him from a very early age that no one is any better or worse because of their skin color. We also wanted him to be aware of the racism that still exists so that as he grows up he can actively be a part of the solution and not the problem.

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18. Assumptions made about their race or ethnicity. They may or may not have known how to respond. Or involved someone asking questions similar to "Where are you really from?"	0	4	My son was going to pre k and a child made a comment about his skin color
19. Other (does not fit any other codes)	0	4	I was doing a lot of volunteering with my kid's school and was surprised to learn how large the free and reduced lunch population was.

**Who Initiated the First Race Conversation.** For the question asked of parent participants, “Who started the conversation? Was it you or your child who brought up the topic of race?” 25.9% of POC and 7.4% of White participants reported that they had not had a discussion on race with their child with some answers included that their child was not old enough to discuss the topic. A possible reason for this may be due to the fact that the children of the parents of color were younger than the children of white parents. Another 22.2% of POC and 48.1% of White parents reported that their child initiated the conversation of race whereas 48.1% of White parents reported their child initiated the conversation of race. Another 48.1% of POC and 33.3% of White parents reported that it was them who initiated the conversation about race with their child. Finally, 3.7% of both POC and White parents reported that it was both them and their child that simultaneously began the conversation about race. The notable differences in the results support the literature on race talk that indicates that parents of color are far more proactive in their racial socialization practices in comparison to White parents. Table 14 reports the results of this question.

**Table 14***Results of Who Initiated First Conversation*

Code	People of Color (n=27)		White (n=25)	
	n	%	n	%
No conversation / uncodable	7	25.9	2	7.4
Child	6	22.2	13	48.1
Parent(s)/me	13	48.1	9	33.3
Both child and parent(s)	1	3.7	1	3.7

*Content of Parents' First Race Conversation With Their Child*

When asked, "Please describe that first conversation with your child about race. What did you say and what did they say?", 29.63% of parents of color and 8% of White parents answered that they had yet to have this discussion with them or had never had it with them at all. There was not any reasoning given behind many these responses aside from them believing their child was too young to fully grasp the content of a race talk. Table 15 lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 15***Description of First Conversation with Child*

Code	People of Color		White	
	%	Quote	%	Quote

Uncodable / no conversation / N/A	29.63	My child just turned 5 so he doesn't understand the concept of race at all.	8	I did not have one yet.
Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the advantages they may experience.	0		4	We talked about different types of people in his school, and the fact that many don't have the same advantages as we do, so you have to keep that in mind.
Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond to specifically mention the disadvantages or struggles associated with their race.	22.22	When my son made the observation that his mother and father had different skin colors, we decided to tell him that some day he may have to deal with some issues with his peers because his father is black. He was confused and we had to explain what racism was and how it can affect people.	0	
Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the disadvantages they may experience.	7.41	I've told them their are some people who won't care what you know or how kind you are, but they will immediately judge you without knowing any of that just because of the color of your skin. It doesn't matter what color you are, you are just as worthy as anyone else. I also taught him not to think more highly of himself than anyone else and not to look down on others. I told them not to worry about that because everyone is not going to like you anyways. It only matters how you feel about yourself and keep pursuing your goals and dreams regardless and	0	

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		don't let anyone make you feel less than.		
Involves the encouragement of racial or ethnic pride. May mention embracing one's race, skin color, or ethnicity.	11.11	The first conversation I had with my daughter was that she is black and beautiful.	0	
Mentions that there are people who are different or the child is different. Does not involve any specific mention of race or skin color. This may also include comments that mention uniqueness or differences but no mention race or skin color specifically.	11.11	We were discussing hair and the difference between the texture of her hair and her friend's hair.	24	She asked why some kids skin color were darker than hers in pre school. I said it's like some people have blue eyes like you and some have brown eyes like your friend Jennifer. No big thing.
Involves the encouragement of interracial interactions/relationships.	0		4	We live in a bigger school district(before we began homeschooling) and we attend a large church and therefore we did discuss that she would encounter those of a different skin color and that she was to embrace it.
It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors. Does not go further to offer an explanation of some sort.	0		24	We were at Walmart, and my daughter noticed an African American girl, and said that she was real dark. I explained how her ancestors, were from another part of the world, and they moved here. She was excited, and said "she looks nice, I want to play with her Dad!"
It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors AND goes beyond to offer an explanation of some sort or	3.70	I spoke matter-of-factly and used proper terms. I also talked about not using bad names and terms. I didn't explicitly say those	4	Very casually we just started talking about how God makes us all different colors and they are all beautiful. We stressed that no one

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<p>an attached meaning to one or more of the races/skin colors. This includes the mistreatment of certain races, the privileges of other races, how people of different races may be treated differently, etc.</p>	<p>terms, but I did tell her that there are certain terms never to use regarding a person's color or culture. She was in Pre-K, and there were only 2 black kids in the class. She became friends with both of them. She asked me, "Why is their skin like that?" I said, "They have extra melanin in their skin that increase the brown tones they have in their skin." She said, "Oh." That was it. I answered any subsequent when she would have them, but she just said, "I'm going to friends with everybody no matter their color."</p>	<p>should ever be treated differently because of their skin color. We also told him that, sadly, sometimes people are treated badly because of how they look.</p>	
<p>The history of race relations is mentioned. This may include any mention of slavery, historical moments, etc.</p>	<p>0</p>	<p>4 Very casually we just started talking about how God makes us all different colors and they are all beautiful. We stressed that no one should ever be treated differently because of their skin color. We also told him that, sadly, sometimes people are treated badly because of how they look.</p>	
<p>Involves statements that promote colorblindness. This may include comments about not seeing skin color.</p>	<p>11.11</p>	<p>I just told them that all people are the same and should be treated the same</p>	<p>32</p>
<p>This may also include comments about treating everyone the same or that everyone is equal BUT still no mention of race or skin color is involved. This may also include statements like "stand up for yourself. Stand up for what is right".</p>	<p>3.70</p>	<p>I told my child, everyone is not the same. There are all different kinds of people with differences about them. We are not made to look the same. We all have our own minds and things we like the best. Everyone is</p>	<p>4 He made several friends in the first week, and he pointed out to me that one of them "has brown skin". I was a bit caught off-guard but he was just stating a fact, so I had a conversation about him about how unique people are in many different ways but</p>

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		special in their own way. We have to love everyone and treat everybody the same. That's what God wants us to do.		in the end it's not something that really matters and is not a need to point out.
Involved statements encouraging the child to treat everyone the same regardless of race or skin color. This includes statements such as: treat everyone the same, everyone is equal, everyone is the same on the inside, don't judge people (all despite differences in race of skin color).	11.11	I first had a talk about race with my daughter after I realized she didn't want to play with dolls that had the same skin colour as her. When I asked her why she said the color was dirty and ugly. So like my parents did I talked to her about God creating us different but we are the same, then I talked to her about the beauty if each race plus read storybooks to her on different races	24	I told him the same thing my mom told me. when you are meeting someone or talking to someone the color of their skin doesn't matter. You need to see people, for who they are not what they look like. If you don't you will miss out on some great people in your life. and to not be scared to stand up for somebody if they are being picked on, treated misfairly, or bullied because of their skin color or any other reason. Stand up for what's right and what you believe in.
Involves the discouragement of interactions or relationships/friendships with people of a different race	3.70	A little white boy threatened her and I told her she don't let anybody from the opposite color say threatful things to her. It is called being racist.	0	
Involves the discouragement of racism (including use of racial slurs).	7.41	The conversation was about how - with the "introduction of Donald Trump - racism and racist people have become bolder in their actions and words. I also told him that no matter what, be proud of who you are and what you are, and never let anyone tear that down. I also told him that my parents never had this type of discussion with me so that is why I felt it was	4	I just talked to them about how some people think skin color matters and that's stupid but sometime little kids may say something just because they are not used to seeing someone with different skin and they don't know its not polite to say something, but if anyone ever said anything mean about their skin they needed to tell me.

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		important to discuss it with him.		
Other (does not fit any other codes)	0		8	She said a young girl in her class had told her she wasn't Mexican enough because she wasn't dark enough and her hair was too light.

***Overall Discussions of Race with Child***

For the question, “What can you remember in general about race conversations with your child throughout their childhood? How would you summarize what you talked about in these race conversations with your child?”, 25.9% of POC and 28% of White parents reported that they had not had a discussion on race with their child with some answers included that their child was not old enough to discuss the topic. Themes of preparation for bias, minimally color conscious egalitarian messages, and cultural socialization were reported for POC. For White participants, colorblind egalitarian messages were the majority of responses reported. However, minimally color conscious messages were reported as well. Table 16, lists the codes applied to this question along with examples of responses that fit each code used.

**Table 16**

*Results of Overall Discussions of Race with Child*

Code	%	People of Color		White	
		Quote	%	Quote	%
1. Uncodable / no conversation / N/A	25.93	There have been no race conversations as of yet.	28	He was and still is pretty oblivious and naive. He accepts what we tell him and definitely hasn't experienced racism yet.	
3. There was not an in depth conversation. There were comments/statements	3.71	Sometimes I talk about the race topic they hearing	16	I don't honestly remember many talks about race, it's not an issue in our lives. My	

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made once or periodically.	very interesting I happy to about this	son has friends of all races and backgrounds, and he like me doesn't stand for any racist talk or behavior in his life or in front of him. There is no reason for it.
4. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color. There may or may not have been explanation or meaning attached to the identification/labeling.	7.41 The main topic of these types of conversations were regarding her "whiteness" and/or "blackness." Students at school have asked her periodically throughout the years if she is white or black. She said she's mixed. They said she's white and can't be mixed. She's shown them pictures of her dad and of her and her dad together. They think that just because she isn't as dark as some other mixed students they've seen that she can't be mixed and has to be white. I just tell her she's beautiful just as she is, she knows her truth, and she knows she's confident in her own identity.	0
5. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond labeling/identifying to involve either an attached meaning, explanation of some sort, etc. This code can also apply if the parent(s) goes beyond labeling the race of someone other than the child's (e.g. peer, relative, strangers, etc.)	3.71 I try to show him that there are plenty of African American men that can do amazing things. We just participated in a class taught by a African American astronaut. I make sure that he knows that that man looks like him and I just show positivity as much as I can. I feel he is too young to grasp the level of hatred aimed at African American people because	0

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7. Does not involve mention of race or skin color BUT does mention the advantages they may experience.	0	I'm a adult and can't understand it. I also have a sesame street book that talks about differences in people.	8 It was generally reminding him that he has many advantages that other kids do not.
8. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color AND goes beyond to specifically mention the disadvantages or struggles associated with their race.	11.11	I told my child these days a good education is so important because of technology and we being a black race. My son response is that he is well aware of that and he will get a good education. I explained to him that nothing is going to be hand to him on a silver platter. He has to be as good or better than other race.	0
10. Involves the encouragement of racial or ethnic pride. May mention embracing one's race, skin color, or ethnicity.	7.41	The main topic of these types of conversations were regarding her "whiteness" and/or "blackness." Students at school have asked her periodically throughout the years if she is white or black. She said she's mixed. They said she's white and can't be mixed. She's shown them pictures of her dad and of her and her dad together. They think that just because she isn't as dark as some other mixed students they've seen that she can't be mixed and has to be white. I just tell her she's	0

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		beautiful just as she is, she knows her truth, and she knows she's confident in her own identity.	
11. Mentions that there are people who are different or the child is different. Does not involve any specific mention of race or skin color. This may also include comments that mention uniqueness or differences but no mention race or skin color specifically.	11.11	Not much as he is only 4. But just the basics that everyone is different and that's okay.	4 How natural it was for him and not for me. He grew in mixed race community, I was in an all white community so the talk for him was natural and just part of life. For me it a shock to learn there was another race out there besides my own.
13. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors. Does not go further to offer an explanation of some sort.	0		4 I just generally state that people of different races are no different than us. They have different colored skin. Some people are cruel and don't view it that way, but our insides are all the same.
14. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors AND goes beyond to offer an explanation of some sort or an attached meaning to one or more of the races/skin colors. This includes the mistreatment of certain races, the privileges of other races, how people of different races may be treated differently, etc.	0		4 I once asked her and her friends how many black children attend their school. (I already knew the low number). They told mr and I asked why the number was so low. They said because the black kids had to be bused in. I asked if they thought that was fair and they all said yes. I told them that I thought it was NOT fair. I said instead of ten different school buses going all over the county. Why don't they take all of the award winning, most highly paid, most highly tenured teachers from their school and bus them down to the black kids neighborhood. so,

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15. The current (at time of discussion) state of race relations is mentioned. This may include racial discrimination, witnessing racism or mistreatment on the basis of race, etc. This may also include an identification or explanation of something that is racist.

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8 We have talked about race a lot from elementary until now. With all my children. Especially with my oldest, as she is now dating a boy from Africa and she had to deal with racism of their biracial relationship and what he deal with. We talk openly and freely about the negative effects of racism in our country and on people's lives. She is taking a college history course, although she is in high school, and her final paper was about the pervasiveness of racism in this country since the civil war and how it has shaped our country and people. I am so proud of her and all my kids for not giving in to racism and having friends from many different races and countries. Our conversations were good for me to get out my feelings and prejudices and for my daughter to help teach me to be better.

16. The history of race relations is mentioned. This may include any mention of slavery, historical moments, etc.

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12 Over the years there have been several conversations about race. When he was younger, we spoke of racism in terms that he would understand, and in a way that he would know it's not okay. There was a lot of learning about U.S. history such as

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			slavery, the civic rights era, and how even though things have greatly improved since then, there is still such a long way to go. As he grew the conversations became more mature and we would talk about things we see happening in the news, such as unfair treatment or shootings of black people by police.
17. Involves statements that promote colorblindness. This may include comments about not seeing skin color.	14.81	Just don't let anyone put you down and you can do anything and go anywhere that you want	16
18. This may also include comments about treating everyone the same or that everyone is equal BUT still no mention of race or skin color is involved. This may also include statements like "stand up for yourself. Stand up for what is right".	14.81	I tell her that we are all equal because we're all human. Some people may choose to believe that they are superior but we're all one race.	12
19. Involved statements encouraging the child to treat everyone the same regardless of race or skin color. This includes statements such as: treat everyone the same,	22.22	That we are all created equal by God. That some people don't believe that and it's narrow minded thoughts and passed down generational racism and negative trained thoughts.	0

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everyone is equal, everyone is the same on the inside, don't judge people (all despite differences in race of skin color).		Everyone will have an opinion and they are not all right. I taught them to do what's right and treat people kindly no matter what. However, stand up for what's right and protect yourself. Pick and choose your battles wisely.	
20. Involves the discouragement of interactions or relationships/friendships with people of a different race	3.71	When my son was seventeen I found out he was seeing a white girl and I explain to him that they could possibly be difficulties dating this girl because of her race	0
21. Involves the discouragement of racism (including use of racial slurs).	3.71	There will always be people out there that will hate others for nothing other than skin color. We reinforced in our child to make sure he surrounds himself with people of character and strong moral fiber and his dealings with racism will be few and far between.	0

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**Frequency of Parents' Use of Phrases Related to Racial Discourse.** Parents were asked to indicate how frequently they had mentioned 19 different topics or themes during their conversations with their children about race. For each of the 19 conversation checklist items, I conducted independent sample T tests comparing the means for POC and White participants. Table 17 shows the means and standard deviations for each checklist item and table 18 shows the T-test results.

There were significant main effects of race for eight items. White parents reported mentioning that “Skin color doesn’t matter” more frequently than parents of color.

Parents of color reported mentioning the following items more frequently than White parents:

- 4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race
- 6. Be careful of people of other races
- 8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage
- 10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin
- 13. Do not hang out with anyone from the \_\_\_\_\_ race because it will change you for the worse
- 17. You should be proud of your race.
- 19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race

**Table 17**

*Means and Standard Deviations of Parents’ Use Conversation Checklist Statements*

Statement		People of Color	White
1. Skin color doesn't matter	M	3.33	4.28
	<i>SD</i>	<i>1.54</i>	<i>0.98</i>
2. It's what is on the inside that counts		4.00	4.24
		<i>1.27</i>	<i>1.27</i>
3. Everyone is the same		3.62	4.12
		<i>1.24</i>	<i>1.20</i>
4. You will have to work twice as hard		2.37	1.44

as anyone else because of your race	1.52	1.16
5. You are better than other people of different races	1.67	1.24
	1.18	0.52
6. Be careful of people of other races	2.19	1.08
	1.21	0.28
7. Make friends with people of all colors	3.44	4.08
	1.50	1.26
8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage	3.44	2.13
	1.34	1.23
9. People of all colors get along just fine in the United States	2.22	2.84
	1.12	1.41
10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin	3.48	1.88
	1.28	1.05
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States	3.00	3.16
	1.57	1.38
12. Racism is not as bad today as it used to be	2.07	1.76
	1.21	0.97
13. Do not date people who are not the same color as you	1.63	1.08
	1.25	0.28
14. Be open to dating people of all	2.85	2.96

colors	1.46	1.70
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the _____ race because it will change you for the worse	1.37	1.12
	0.97	0.60
16. Not everyone from the _____ race is bad	2.89	2.36
	1.78	1.63
17. You should be proud of your race	3.63	1.92
	1.47	1.25
18. You have more advantages than other people because of your race	1.54	1.92
	0.95	1.26
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	2.00	1.20
	1.36	0.71

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**Table 18**

*T-test results comparing Parents of Color and White Parents for Conversation Checklist Items by Race*

Statement	t	df	p
1. Skin color doesn't matter	-2.615	50	0.012*

2. It's what is on the inside that counts	-0.681	50	0.499
3. Everyone is the same	-1.478	49	0.146
4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race	2.465	50	0.017*
5. You are better than other people of different races	1.666	50	0.102
6. Be careful of people of other races	4.352	49	0.000*
7. Make friends with people of all colors	-1.648	50	0.106
8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage	3.651	49	0.001*
9. People of all colors get along just fine in the United States	-1.759	50	0.085
10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin	4.898	50	0.000*
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the US	-0.390	50	0.698
12. Racism is not as bad today as it used to be	1.029	50	0.308
13. Do not date people who are not the same color as you	2.157	50	0.036*
14. Be open to dating people of all colors	-0.247	50	0.806
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the _____ race because it will change you for the worse	1.111	50	0.272
16. Not everyone from the _____ race is bad	1.113	50	0.271
17. You should be proud of your	4.453	49	0.000*

race

18. You have more advantages than other people because of your race	-1.228	49	0.225
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	2.631	50	0.011*

---

Note: P-values marked with an asterisk indicate statistical significance.

Finally, I conducted a series of Repeated Measures ANOVAs comparing parents of color and white parents on the answers to the 19 checklist items for both conversations with their parents and conversations with their child. Table 19 shows the means and SEs for the items on which there were significant differences for conversation partner (parent vs child) or significant interactions between race and conversation partner.

There were significant differences between conversations with parents versus child for six of the items. Regardless of race, participants used the following phrases more in conversations with their child than they heard them from their parents:

1. Skin color doesn't matter
3. Everyone is the same
14. Be open to dating people of all colors

In contrast, participants of all races reported using these three phrases less often with their children than they had heard them from their parents:

6. Be careful of people of other races
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the \_\_\_\_\_ race because it will change you for the worse
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race

There were also significant race by conversational partner interactions for three items. Only people of color used the statement, “You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race “, less with their children than their parents used it. Only white participants used the following items more with their own children than their parents had used them:

7. Make friends with people of all colors

11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States

**Table 19**

*Participants Ratings of Their Parents’ Use Versus Their Own Use of Conversation Checklist Statements*

Statement	Heard from Parent		Said to Child	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SE</i>
1. Skin color doesn't matter	3.12	0.21	3.81	0.18
2. It's what is on the inside that counts	3.80	0.18	4.10	0.18
3. Everyone is the same	3.40	0.21	3.87	0.17
4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race	2.40	0.18	1.91	0.90
5. You are better than other people of different races	1.67	0.15	1.45	0.13
6. Be careful of people of other races	2.19	0.19	1.63	0.13
7. Make friends with people of all colors	3.23	0.21	3.77	0.19
8. It is important to remember your cultural heritage	2.72	0.19	2.79	0.19
9. People of all colors get along	2.52	0.19	2.53	0.18

just fine in the United States

10. There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin	2.77	0.16	2.69	0.16
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States	2.68	0.22	3.06	0.21
12. Racism is not as bad today as it used to be	2.01	0.17	1.92	0.15
13. Do not date people who are not the same color as you	1.68	0.18	1.35	0.13
14. Be open to dating people of all colors	2.38	0.20	2.91	0.22
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the _____ race because it will change you for the worse	1.52	0.14	1.25	0.11
16. Not everyone from the _____ race is bad	2.60	0.19	2.62	0.24
17. You should be proud of your race	3.07	0.19	2.78	0.19
18. You have more advantages than other people because of your race	1.79	0.17	1.73	0.16
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	2.05	0.17	1.60	0.15

**Table 20**

*Repeated Measures ANOVA Results: Significant Main Effects of Conversational Partner (Parent v. Child) and Interactions with Race in Usage of Conversation Checklist Statements*

Statement	Effect	df	F	p
1. Skin color doesn't matter	Partner	1, 50	9.99	0.003



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3. Everyone is the same	Partner	1, 49	6.73	0.012
4. You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race	Partner	1, 50	6.87	0.012
	Race X Partner	1, 50	8.02	0.007
6. Be careful of people of other races	Partner	1, 49	7.49	0.009
7. Make friends with people of all colors	Race	1, 50	7.81	0.007
	Race X Partner	1, 50	5.81	0.020
11. It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States	Race X Partner	1, 49	5.09	0.029
14. Be open to dating people of all colors	Partner	1, 50	5.93	0.019
15. Do not hang out with anyone from the ____ race because it will change you for the worse	Partner	1, 50	4.53	0.038
19. Other people have more advantages than you because of their race	Partner	1, 50	6.43	0.014
	Partner	1, 50	6.43	0.014

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Note: Partner refers to whether participants were talking to their parents or their child.

### ***Parents' Comfort Discussing Race***

For the closed ended question that asked parent participants to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: “In general, I was comfortable talking about race with my child.”, there were no significant main effects for race. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least agreement and 5 being the most, the total mean was 4.22 and the standard deviation was 0.879. I had anticipated that POC would indicate a higher level of agreement (“agree” or “strongly agree”) and White participants would indicate a neutral or lower level of agreement

(“neither agree nor disagree” or “disagree”). The results of the data from this sample were not in line what I had anticipated.

I then compared the parents’ ratings of their comfort in talking to their child about race to their ratings of their own parents’ comfort in talking about race with them in a repeated measures ANOVA. Parents rated themselves as significantly more comfortable discussing race with their children ( $M=4.22$ ,  $SE=.15$ ) than their parents had been discussing race with them ( $M=3.87$ ,  $SE=.12$ ),  $F(1,49) = 4.535$ ,  $p=.038$ . I had expected parents, specifically White parents, to rate themselves as less comfortable discussing race with their children due to the past research that indicates White parents engage in race talk with much less frequency than parents of color.

For the closed ended question that asked parent participants to indicate their level of agreement with the following statement: “I am comfortable having conversations and discussions on the topic of race.”, there were no significant main effects for race. On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being the least agreement and 5 being the most, the total mean was 4.10 ( $SD = 0.774$ ). I was expecting a higher level of agreement among POC and a neutral or lower level of agreement for White parents. The results did not support my expectations.

### ***Preparation for dealing with racial issues***

Parents were asked how well they felt they had prepared their child for...

In a repeated measures ANOVA, I compared parents’ answers about how well they had prepared their children to deal with racial issues to their answers about how well their parents had prepared them. Participants of all races rated themselves as better preparing their children ( $M=4.12$ ,  $SE=.120$ ) than their parents prepared them ( $M= 3.40$ ,  $SE=.195$ ). The difference was significant,  $F(1,52) = 13.858$ ,  $p = .000$ .

## DISCUSSION

The objective of the present study was to examine the process of racial socialization by looking at how parents and children have conversations on race with one another. One major goal was to take an in-depth look at what kind of statements and questions make up conversations on race during childhood between parent and child. This included also looking at who prompts these discussions, what are the motivating factors that move a child or parent to initiate these discussions, and what sources other than parents do children learn about race from. It was also important to consider the age of the child when the first conversation on race took place. An overarching aim of this project was to achieve a holistic comprehension of racial socialization and how it may be related to aspects of interracial contact and racial attitudes. Along with this, another goal of this study was to determine if racial socialization evolves generationally or remains stagnant throughout generations. To do this, the project emphasized comparing conversations parent participants had with their parents to the conversations they had with their children.

### **Implications**

Overall, I had predicted that White participants would reveal more colorblind mechanisms of racial socialization through their race talk. I had also anticipated for participants of color to report participation in more color conscious mechanisms of racial socialization through their race talk. This included expecting people of color to have their initial race conversation at much younger ages than white participants. This did not prove to be the case for this sample as the results indicated that the overwhelming majority of both people of color and white people had their first initial conversation of race between the ages of 5 and 10 years old. As anticipated, children were more likely to initiate the race conversation across racial groups. In

the present study, much of the results seemed to be in agreement with the established body of literature on racial socialization.

In regards to the data collected on parents' conversations about race with their own parents, I observed a number of significant differences between how race conversations are being held from one generation to the next. There were even differences across both parent and race status to illustrate the complexity of race talk. It appeared that the scope of resources from which nonparents (typically much younger) learn about race or racial issues is much wider than the scope of parents. It is possible that this could be due to technological advancements and a more open social climate that allows for the topic of race to be more embedded in different aspects of society than what the parents have been exposed to; hence, why nonparents were more likely to learn about race in school, from peers, and media than parents. There were a number of interesting trends noticeable when comparing how parents and nonparents answered the conversation checklist question. More specifically, many of the preparation for bias items were reported in high frequency for both parents of color and nonparents of color. It is also striking that parents of color reported hearing their parents make the claim that racism is not as bad as it once was more than nonparents of color heard this statement. Even more intriguing is that White parents heard this statement at a much lower frequency than white nonparents. This could possibly mean that people are either not finding the need to state this any longer because they do not see racism as a current issue, or they do see racism as a current issue that has not progressed for generations. In relation to the parents' discussion on race with their child, the results of this present study made it clear that much of the information that has been transmitted on race to parents is what continues to be passed down to nonparents.

## **Limitations**

One shortcoming of the present study was the difficulty of interpreting a number of the open-ended responses. Furthermore, many of the responses were not as elaborate and as coherent as I had hoped for them to be. This especially proved difficult when initially trying to establish interrater reliability. In addition, I began to question if I had asked the right questions or framed them in a manner that resulted in numerous vague answers. It is possible that some of the questions were too polarizing and forced participants to answer “neither agree nor disagree” often.

Another limitation of this study was lower average age of the children of parents of color. This resulted in a higher percentage of responses that explained that they had yet to have a conversation with their child on race. This may have possibly skewed some of the data in favor of White parents. It is also possible that particularly white participants may have been susceptible to social desirability and may not have answered the questions completely honestly. On the other hand, it is important to note that people who are already more comfortable with discussion on this topic were more inclined to take this survey. For that reason, the sample may not be a true indication of a larger population.

## **Future Directions**

In this study, I wanted to explore the similarities and differences of how racial socialization occurs between Americans who have lived in the United States for generations and Americans who were once immigrants to the country. I was especially interested in these similarities and differences between African Americans and Black immigrants from other countries. Due to the differing ways race is viewed across the world, I wanted to see if this factor would have an effect on racial socialization practices of people who have lived elsewhere in the

world where race may be understood differently than in the United States. Going forward, I would like to pick up where I left off and expand the current study. With that being said, would like to examine race talk as children age by asking parents the different kinds of messages they shared with their children at different points in their childhood and adolescence. I would also like to examine any possible correlations between the racial attitudes questionnaire from the current study and the questions pertaining to race talk. Additionally, I would like to explore what characteristics or factors lead parents to discuss race using the different socialization methods. Also, it would be interesting to examine the role gender differences of both the parent and child play in the topics discussed during race talk that parents have with their children. It would also be intriguing to investigate how race talk differs between racial groups instead of all people of color in a similar fashion to this current study. Also, another aspect of this current study that may yield interesting results is examining what kind of racial socialization messages children learn from their peers. It would be interesting to take a look at how children and adolescents decide what messages to then accept or reject. Who is more susceptible to different kinds of socialization messages and how malleable are the racial attitudes for these people?

The most recent wave of Black Lives Matter protests following the death of George Floyd at the knees of a police officer and Ahmaud Arbery's death at gunpoint by white men have sparked an evaluation of race relations in the United States. Coupled with the fact that the United States has essentially been operating at a very limited capacity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I would suggest that many families have engaged in race talk about current events. It would be interesting to see what people are discussing at home and in their social circles. I would like to explore how the past several months changed or solidified people's view of Black Lives Matter, racial oppression, race relations, the police, or race in general

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APPENDIX A  
IRB APPROVAL LETTER

## Institutional Review Board

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TO: Adeola Ijyode **IRB # 19-118**  
Dr. Amye Warren, Dr. Chris Silver, Dr. Alexandra  
Zelin

FROM: Lindsay Pardue, Director of Research Integrity  
Dr. Amy Doolittle, IRB Committee Chair

DATE: 9/17/2019

SUBJECT: IRB #19-118: A Retrospective Investigation of Racial-Ethnic  
Socialization

Thank you for submitting your application for exemption to The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Institutional Review Board. Your proposal was evaluated in light of the federal regulations that govern the protection of human subjects.

Specifically, 45 CFR 46.104(d) identifies studies that are exempt from IRB oversight. The UTC IRB Chairperson or his/her designee has determined that your proposed project falls within the category described in the following subsection of this policy:

**46.104(d)(2)(i):** Research only includes educational tests, surveys, interviews, public observation and recorded information cannot readily identify the subject (directly or indirectly/linked)

Even though your project is exempt from further IRB review, the research must be conducted according to the proposal submitted to the UTC IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB

before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an Application for Changes, Annual Review, or Project Termination/Completion form to the UTC IRB. Please be aware that changes to the research protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exempt review and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the UTC IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the UTC IRB as soon as possible. Once notified, we will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event.

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval.

For additional information, please consult our web page <http://www.utc.edu/irb> or email [instrb@utc.edu](mailto:instrb@utc.edu).

Best wishes for a successful research project.

APPENDIX B  
QUESTIONNAIRE

## Instructions

Please answer each question below to the best of your ability. On the multiple-choice questions, please indicate the statement that you agree with most.

## Demographic Questions

1. Which of the following best defines your race or ethnicity? Select all that apply:
  - a. American Indian or Alaska Native
  - b. Asian
  - c. Black or African American
  - d. Hispanic, Latino/a, or Spanish origin
  - e. Middle Eastern or North African
  - f. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - g. White
  - h. Bi-racial, Multi-racial, Mixed-race (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_
  - i. Prefer to self-describe \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
  
3. Do you have any children? Yes No
  
4. If yes, how many children?
  
5. If yes, what are your children's ages?

### **First Conversation About Race With Your Parent**

The following questions are open-ended. We ask that you think back to conversations you had with your parent(s) about race. Answer as honestly as possible to the best of your ability to remember. If you cannot remember the answer to a question or the question does not apply, please do *not* skip the question but describe why you are unable to answer it.

- 1) How old were you when your parent(s) first discussed race/ethnicity with you? Please be as specific as possible. If you don't remember a precise age, please estimate it as closely as possible (e.g., "Before I started school", "When I was in elementary school", "Before I was 10 years old" etc...)
- 2) Please describe that first conversation with your parent(s) about race/ethnicity. What did they say and what did you say?
- 3) What prompted your first discussion of race/ethnicity with your parent(s)?
- 4) Who started the conversation? Was it you or your parent?

### **Later Conversations About Race With Your Parents**

- 1) What can you remember in *general* about race/ethnicity conversations with your parents throughout your childhood?
- 2) How would you summarize what you talked about in these race /ethnicity conversations with your parent(s) during your childhood?
- 3) In general, my parents were comfortable talking to me about race.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5  
**(Strongly disagree) (disagree) (neutral) (agree) (strongly agree)**

4) Checklist – Which of the following phrases/topics did your parents use when talking about race with you as a child? Please rate every statement on a scale of 1 to 5 of how frequently you heard it.

1            2            3            4            5

**(Never) (Rarely) (Occasionally) (Frequently) (Very frequently)**

- Skin color doesn't matter
- It's what is on the inside that counts
- Everyone is the same
- You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race
- You are better than other people of different races
- Be careful of people of other races
- Make friends with people of all colors
- It is important to remember your cultural heritage
- People of all colors get along just fine in the United States
- There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin
- It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States
- Racism is not as bad today as it used to be
- Do not date people who are not the same color as you
- Be open to dating people of all colors
- Do not hang out with anyone from the \_\_\_\_\_ race because it will change you for the worse
- Not everyone from the \_\_\_\_\_ race is bad
- You should be proud of your race

\_\_\_ You have more advantages than other people because of your race

\_\_\_ Other people have more advantages than you because of their race

5) What age did you first become aware of your race? Please be as specific as possible. If you don't remember a precise age, please estimate it as closely as possible (e.g., "Before I started school", "When I was in elementary school", "Before I was 10 years old" etc...)

6) What, if anything, specifically happened to make you become aware of race? For each option, please rate its frequency on a scale of 1 to 5.

1            2            3            4            5

**(Never) (Rarely) (Occasionally) (Frequently) (Very frequently)**

\_\_\_ Witnessing racial discrimination

\_\_\_ Experiencing racial discrimination

\_\_\_ Being told by a peer what color you are

\_\_\_ Being told by a family member what color you are

\_\_\_ Comparing yourself to characters in books or television

\_\_\_ Comparing yourself to the people around you

\_\_\_ Other

7) My race/ethnicity is an important part of my identity.

1            2            3            4            5



**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

8) How frequently does your race/ethnicity seem to impact your life or everyday interactions?

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**(Never) (Very Rarely) (Sometimes) (Frequently) (Daily)**

9) How frequently did you learn about race or racial issues from the following sources?

Please rate every option on a scale of 1 to 5 of how frequently each source taught you about race.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**(Never) (Rarely) (Occasionally) (Frequently) (Very frequently)**

\_\_\_ Parent(s), family or guardians

\_\_\_ Peers or friends

\_\_\_ Religious institutions

\_\_\_ School or some other educational institution

\_\_\_ Media, newspapers, Internet, or TV

\_\_\_ Media (films, books, music, etc.)

\_\_\_ None of the above

10) My views of race/ethnicity are the same as those of my parents.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

11) My parents prepared me well to deal with issues or questions of race/ethnicity that I currently experience.

1                    2                    3                    4                    5

**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

### **First Conversations About Race With Your Child**

The following questions are open-ended. We ask that you think back to conversations you had with your child about race. Answer as honestly as possible to the best of your ability to remember. If you cannot remember the answer to a question or the question does not apply, please do *not* skip the question but describe why you are unable to answer it.

**Please choose only one child to answer the following questions about.**

- 1) How old is the child you have chosen to answer the following questions about?
  
- 2) What is the birth order of the child you chose to answer the following questions about?
  - a) Only child
  - b) Oldest child (first child)
  - c) Later born child (younger of multiple children)

- 3) How old was your child when you first discussed race with them? Please be as specific as possible. If you don't remember a precise age, please estimate it as closely as possible (e.g., "Before they started school", "When they were in elementary school", "Before they were 10 years old" etc...)
- 4) Please describe that first conversation with your child about race. What did you say and what did they say?
- 5) What prompted your discussion of race with your child?
- 6) Who started the conversation? Was it you or your child who brought up the topic of race?

### **Later Conversations About Race With Your Child**

- 1) What can you remember in *general* about race conversations with your child throughout their childhood?
- 2) How would you summarize what you talked about in these race conversations with your child?
- 3) In general, I was comfortable talking about race with my child.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5

**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

12) Checklist – Which of the following phrases/topics did you use when talking about race with your child? Please rate every statement on a scale of 1 to 5 of how frequently you used it.

1            2            3            4            5

**(Never) (Rarely) (Occasionally) (Frequently) (Very frequently)**

- Skin color doesn't matter
- It's what is on the inside that counts
- Everyone is the same
- You will have to work twice as hard as anyone else because of your race
- You are better than other people of different races
- Be careful of people of other races
- Make friends with people of all colors
- It is important to remember your cultural heritage
- People of all colors get along just fine in the United States
- There are some people who will not like you because of the color of your skin
- It is important to remember the history of racial discrimination in the United States
- Racism is not as bad today as it used to be
- Do not date people who are not the same color as you
- Be open to dating people of all colors
- Do not hang out with anyone from that race because it will change you for the worse
- Not everyone from that race is bad
- You should be proud of your race
- You have more advantages than other people because of your race

\_\_\_ Other people have more advantages than you because of their race

13) My views of race/ethnicity are the same as those of my child.

1            2            3            4            5

**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

14) I prepared my child well to deal with issues or questions of race/ethnicity that they currently experience.

1            2            3            4            5

**(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)**

### **Racial Attitudes / Quick Discrimination Index (Social Attitude Survey)**

Please rate the following statements on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Please remember that there are no right or wrong answers.

#### **QDI Subscale 1 Cognitive Racial Attitudes (9 items assess cognitive attitudes towards racial diversity)**

1            2            3            4            5

**(strongly disagree) (disagree) (not sure) (agree) (strongly agree)**

1) I really think affirmative-action programs on college campuses constitute reverse discrimination.

2) I think that it is (or would be) important for my children to attend schools that are racially mixed.

3) I am against affirmative-action programs in business.

4) It upsets (or angers) me that a full racial minority person has never been president of the United States.

5) In the past few years, too much attention has been directed toward multicultural or minority issues in education.

6) In the past few years, too much attention has been directed toward multicultural or minority issues in business.

7) Overall, I think racial minorities in America complain too much about racial discrimination.

8) I think white people's racism toward racial-minority groups still constitutes a major problem in America.

9) I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should encourage minority and immigrant children to learn and fully adopt traditional American values.

10) I think the school system, from elementary school through college, should promote values representative of diverse cultures.

**QDI Subscale 2 Affective Racial Attitudes (7 items measure personal, affective comfort with interracial interaction)**

1) I feel I could develop an intimate relationship with someone from a different race/ethnicity. \*

a. I feel I could develop an intimate relationship with someone who is black.

b. I feel I could develop an intimate relationship with someone who is white.

c. I feel I could develop an intimate relationship with someone who is Latino/Latina.

2) My friendship network is very racially mixed.

3) I would feel OK about my son or daughter dating someone from a different race.\*

a. I would feel OK about my son or daughter dating someone who is black.

b. I would feel OK about my son or daughter dating someone who is white.

c. I would feel OK about my son or daughter dating someone who is  
Latino/Latina.

4) Most of my close friends are from my own racial group.

5) If I were to adopt a child, I would be happy to adopt a child of any race.\*

a. If I were to adopt a child, I would be happy to adopt a child who is black.

b. If I were to adopt a child, I would be happy to adopt a child who is white.

c. If I were to adopt a child, I would be happy to adopt a child who is  
Latino/Latina.



6) I would enjoy living in a neighborhood consisting of a racially diverse population  
(Asian, blacks, Latinos, whites)

7) I think it is better if people marry within their own race.

### **Demographic Questions**

1) Are you currently in college?

(Yes)

(No)

2) What is the highest degree you have completed?

a. Less than a high school diploma

b. High school degree or equivalent (e.g. GED)

c. Some college, no degree

d. Associate degree (e.g. AA, AS)

e. Bachelor's degree (e.g. BA, BS)

f. Master's degree (e.g. MA, MS, MEd)

g. Professional degree (e.g. MD, DDS, DVM, JD) or Doctorate (e.g. PhD, EdD)

3) How would you describe your gender identity?

a. Male

b. Female

- c. Trans male/trans man
- d. Trans female/trans woman
- e. Genderqueer, gender non-binary, or gender non-conforming
- f. Prefer to self-describe \_\_\_\_\_

4) Which language did you first learn to speak (first or native language)?

5) What language is spoken most in your home?

6) Do you speak more than one language fluently?

7) In what U.S. state or territory do you currently live?

8) Have you always lived in the United States?

- a. Yes
- b. No

9) If you have not always lived in the United States, at what age did you begin living in the U.S.? Your response may be similar to any of the following examples: “At the age of 10”, “Before I started grade school”, or “When I was a baby”

10) If you immigrated to the United States, what is your country of origin?

11) Has your mother always lived in the United States?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable

12) If your mother has not always lived in the United States, at what age did she begin living in the U.S.? Your response may be similar to any of the following examples: “At the age of 25”, “When she was a young child”, or “When she was in high school”

13) If she immigrated to the United States, what is her country of origin?

14) Has your father always lived in the United States?

- a. Yes
- b. No
- c. Not applicable

15) If your father has not always lived in the United States, at what age did he begin living in the U.S.? Your response may be similar to any of the following examples: “At the age of 25”, “When he was a young child”, or “When he was in high school”

16) If he immigrated to the United States, what is his country of origin?

17) When I first came to the United States, I understood how race is viewed here.

1            2            3            4            5

(Strongly disagree) (Disagree) (Neutral) (Agree) (Strongly agree)

## Interracial Contact

### Growing Up

1) Approximately, what percentage of the individuals with whom you had **close personal contact** when you were growing up (until age 18) were of the following races/ethnicities? This would include close friends, family members, and others with whom you choose to spend time with outside of school and whom you knew well.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2) Approximately what percentage of the individuals with whom you had **direct personal contact** when you were growing up (until age 18) were of the following races/ethnicities? This would include people in your school classes, clubs, organizations, sports teams, religious community, etc.?

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_

- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

3) Approximately what percentage of the individuals with whom you had **indirect contact** when you were growing up (until age 18) were of the following races/ethnicities?

This would include people living in your neighborhood, attending your school, etc.) ?

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

4) As you were growing up, what percentage of your **parents' friends** were from each of the following racial or ethnic groups? Your total should add up to be 100%.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Currently

1) Approximately what percentage of the individuals with whom you currently have **close personal contact** are of the following races/ethnicities? This would include close friends, family members, roommates, romantic partners, and others with whom you choose to spend time with outside of work or school and whom you know well.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2) Approximately what percentage of the individuals with whom you currently have **direct personal contact** are of the following races/ethnicities? This would include people in your school classes, working in your office, members of your clubs or organizations, part of your religious community, etc.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

3) Approximately what percentage of the individuals with whom you currently have **indirect contact** are of the following races/ethnicities? This would include people living

in your neighborhood, attending your school, working in your building or for your company, etc.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

### **Interactions and Conversations**

1) On average, what percentage of people you have **conversations** with on a weekly basis are from each of the following racial or ethnic groups? Your total should add up to be 100%.

- a. Black \_\_\_\_\_
- b. White \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Latino/Latina \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Asian \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

2) On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “very uncomfortable” and 5 being “very comfortable”, how comfortable are you with **interacting** with people of other races or ethnicities?

1            2            3            4            5

**(Very uncomfortable) (Uncomfortable) (Neutral) (Comfortable) (Very comfortable)**

3) On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being “very uncomfortable” and 5 being “very comfortable”, how comfortable are you talking about race?

1            2            3            4            5

**(Very uncomfortable) (Uncomfortable) (Neutral) (Comfortable) (Very comfortable)**

### **Feedback**

We thank you for participating in this study. By completing this survey, you will help researchers further understand the conduction of conversations about race and its implications.

Please give your feedback about the survey, including any questions you think should be revised, added, or deleted.

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### **Parent Email Address**

We would like to learn about these conversations about race from your parents' point of view. If one or both of your parents would be willing and able to complete this survey online, please provide an email addresses so that we can invite them to participate. You are not required to share anyone else's email address, but we would greatly appreciate it if you choose to. As we stated in the informed consent, we will use this e-mail only to send an invitation with a link to the survey, we will not report any information about you or your answers to your parents, we will not share these e-mail addresses with anyone outside our research team, and we will destroy these e-mail addresses once the data are collected and analyzed.

APPENDIX C  
QUALITATIVE CODES

*Open-ended Questions and Corresponding Codes*

Question	Codes
<p>4.4 How old were you when your parent(s) first discussed race/ethnicity with you? Please be as specific as possible. If you don't remember a precise age, please estimate it as closely as possible (e.g., "Before I started school", "When I was in elementary school", "Before I was 10 years old" etc...)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. It was never discussed/talked about</li> <li>2. I don't remember if it was ever discussed</li> <li>3. I don't know</li> <li>4. Young or very young (use if they say "young" and don't specify an age)</li> <li>5. Before they started school (use if they don't further specify a school age)</li> <li>6. Before elementary school (also use if they say: preschool or younger; 4 years old or younger)</li> </ol>
<p>6.4 How old was your child when you first discussed race with them? Please be as specific as possible. If you don't remember a precise age, please estimate it as closely as possible (e.g., "Before they started school", "When they were in elementary school", "Before they were 10 years old" etc...)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7. Elementary school (also use if they say: kindergarten through 5th grade; 5-10 years old)</li> <li>8. Middle School (also use if they say: 6th through 8th grade; 11-13 years old)</li> <li>9. High school or teenage (also use if they say 9th through 12 grade; 14-18 years old)</li> <li>10. Post high school or older than 18 years old</li> <li>11. Other (use if response does not fit into any other code)</li> </ol>
<p>4.5 Please describe that first conversation with your parent(s) about race/ethnicity. What did they say and what did you say?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uncodable / no conversation / N/A</li> <li>2. I don't remember / I don't know / unsure</li> <li>3. There was not an in depth conversation. There were comments/statements made once or periodically.</li> <li>4. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color. There may or may not have been explanation or meaning attached to the identification/labeling.</li> </ol>

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5.1 What can you remember in general about race/ethnicity conversations with your parents throughout your childhood? How would you summarize what you talked about in these race /ethnicity conversations with your parent(s) during your childhood?

5. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color **AND** goes beyond labeling/identifying to involve either an attached meaning, explanation of some sort, etc. This code can also apply if the parent(s) goes beyond labeling the race of someone other than the child's (e.g. peer, relative, strangers, etc.)
  6. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color **AND** goes beyond to specifically mention the **advantages** or privileges associated with their race.
  7. Does not involve mention of race or skin color **BUT** does mention the advantages they may experience.
  8. Involved a labeling/identification of child's race or skin color **AND** goes beyond to specifically mention the disadvantages or struggles associated with their race.
  9. Does not involve mention of race or skin color **BUT** does mention the disadvantages they may experience.
  10. Involves the encouragement of racial or ethnic pride. May mention embracing one's race, skin color, or ethnicity.
  11. Mentions that there are people who are different, or the child is different. Does not involve any specific mention of race or skin color. This may also include comments that mention uniqueness or differences but no mention race or skin color specifically.
  12. Involves the encouragement of interracial interactions/relationships.
  13. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors. Does not go further to offer an explanation of some sort.
  14. It is mentioned that there are people of various races or skin colors **AND** goes beyond to offer
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<p>6.5 Please describe that first conversation with your child about race. What did you say and what did they say?</p>	<p>an explanation of some sort or an attached meaning to one or more of the races/skin colors. This includes the mistreatment of certain races, the privileges of other races, how people of different races may be treated differently, etc.</p>
	<p>15. The current state of race relations is mentioned. This may include racial discrimination, witnessing racism or mistreatment on the basis of race, etc. This may also include an identification or explanation of something that is racist.</p> <p>16. The history of race relations is mentioned. This may include any mention of slavery, historical moments, etc. This may include misinformation, miseducation, and statements that are not truly factual.</p> <p>17. Involves statements that promote <b>colorblindness</b>. This may include comments about not seeing skin color.</p> <p>18. This may also include comments about treating everyone the same or that everyone is equal BUT still no mention of race or skin color is involved. This may also include statements like "stand up for yourself. Stand up for what is right".</p> <p>19. Involved statements encouraging the child to treat everyone the same regardless of race or skin color. This includes statements such as: treat everyone the same, everyone is equal, everyone is the same on the inside, don't judge people (all despite differences in race of skin color).</p>
<p>7.1 What can you remember in general about race conversations with your child throughout their childhood? How would you summarize what you talked about in these race conversations with your child?</p>	<p>20. Involves the discouragement of interactions or relationships/friendships with people of a different race. This could also include wariness of other races.</p> <p>21. Involves the discouragement of racism (including use of racial slurs) or racial</p>

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	discrimination. Avoid racist people.
	22. Involves racist comments (either overt or covert)
	23. Other (does not fit any other codes)
4.6 What prompted your first discussion of race/ethnicity with your parent(s)?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Uncodable /no conversation / N/A</li> <li>2. Unsure/I don't know/I don't remember</li> <li>3. Involved seeing people of different races or noticing differences (or lack of differences) between themselves and their peers/people in their environment. May include being in an racially diverse environment or a racially monolithic environment.</li> <li>4. They may mention being curious about their own origin, history, uniqueness, or differences. They may mention being curious about the differences between themselves and other people.</li> <li>5. Involves the mention of a fight, assault, or experience of physical bullying. This may also include mental bullying or name calling. It is implied that these are all racially motivated due to the topic of the survey.</li> <li>6. Involves a personal experience of racial discrimination or racism that is unspecified. This may also include an expectation of racism or racial discrimination.</li> <li>7. Involved learning about race in school. This may include the topic of slavery or racial discrimination. May have also involved learning something racist in school.</li> </ol>
6.6 What prompted your discussion of race/ethnicity with your child?	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8. Involves the mention of starting school or transferring schools.</li> </ol>

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9. Involves the mention of politics (e.g. political campaign or assassination), differences in religious beliefs, or differences in cultural beliefs.
  10. Involves having a family member of a different race or ethnicity. Involves making a friend of a different race or ethnicity or a romantic interest in someone of a different race or ethnicity.
  11. Involved the witnessing of racial discrimination or hearing about local experiences of racial discrimination. This may also include hearing racist remarks by others.
  12. Involved not knowing how to answer racial/ethnic demographic questions about oneself
  13. Involved watching the news, watching television, or reading books. Mention some form of media.
  14. Learned on their own with age
  15. Holidays (MLK Day, Thanksgiving, etc.)
  16. Involves the discouragement of racism (including racist jokes).
  17. Seeking education/ Wanting to be proactive with teaching or learning about race and racism.
  18. Assumptions made about their race or ethnicity. They may or may not have known how to respond. Or involved someone asking questions similar to "Where are you really from?"
  19. Other (does not fit any other codes)

6.3 How old is the child you have chosen to answer the following questions about?

1. Uncodable
2. 4 years old or younger

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3. 5-10 years old

4. 11-13 years old

5. 14-18 years old

6. 19 years or older

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