

Building an Awareness of Identity and Diversity

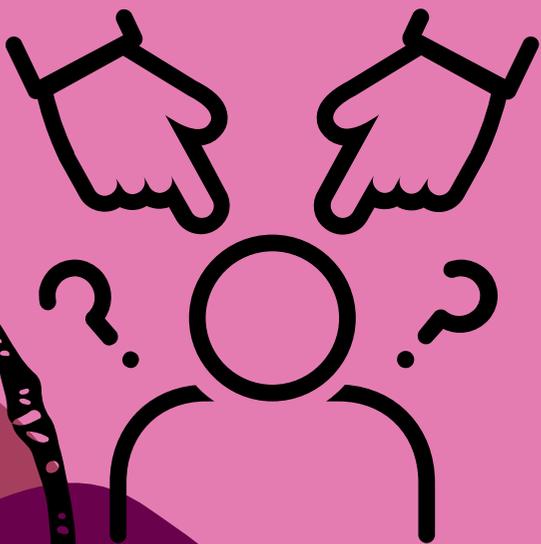
**Actively Antiracist
Barton Lab VU**

Contact: bartonlabvu@gmail.com

A STARTING POINT

Being actively anti-racist starts with acknowledging and celebrating diversity in how people define their identity.

People construct their identity using a variety of categories (ex: race, social class, gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, disability). Identities are the result of intersectionalities between these categories.

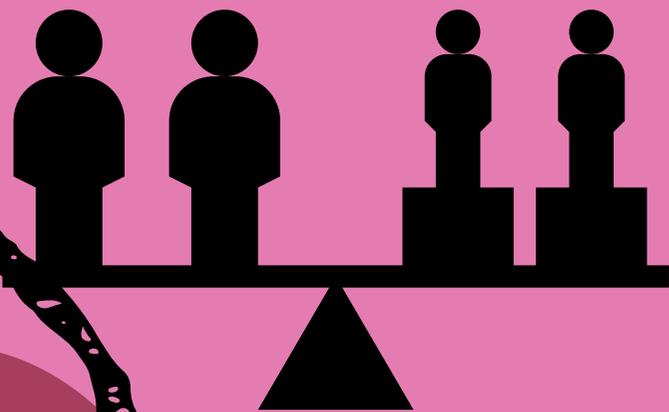
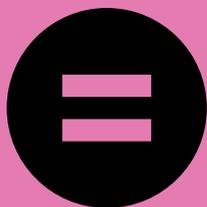


Developing a cohesive identity takes time. As caregivers, you can support this process by being proactive in helping children talk about and recognize the many aspects of their identity.

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A NOTE ON DIVERSITY

"Diverse" does not refer to anyone or anything not White. Rather, diverse refers to being composed of a variety of backgrounds (ex: race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender). Diversity exists both within and between people.



It is also important to remember that diversity is not equivalent to equity. Simply having contexts in which people with various identities are in the same place is not enough. Our goal as a society should be to strive for equity such that we are all afforded the same opportunities, regardless of identity.

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SEIZE OPPORTUNITIES

Use naturally occurring opportunities to talk about sameness and differences between people in everyday life.

AN EXAMPLE:



You are at the grocery store and your child says, "that kid over there is Black." Your first reaction may be to quiet your child and even feel embarrassed.

Instead, have a conversation and break it down for them.

"Yes, that child has darker skin because he has more melanin which is what adds color to our skin. In fact, we all have it, and some people have more than others."



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"COLOR BLINDNESS" IS NOT BEING ANTI-RACIST

"Color Blindness" with regards to race does not allow for needed dialogues about racism and how to push back against injustices.

Failing to acknowledge the color of people's skin is a failure to acknowledge the struggles faced by people of color.



Though not all people strongly identify by their racial category, the intersectionality of all parts of a person's identity will form their experience.

Choosing to not recognize race is also choosing not to recognize a part of a person's identity.



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ACTION STEPS

Being actively anti-racist means being intentional by challenging your own biases and pushing back against systemic injustices.



WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD IN BEING ACTIVELY ANTI-RACIST



- Include books, toys, movies, TV shows, and other forms of media that display diverse characters and settings
 - Talk about the similarities and differences between the child and these sources
- Acknowledge and have conversations about cultures different from your own
 - Think of holidays, celebrations, art, music, etc.
- Welcome conversations about race and identity
- Point out when you or someone else is antiracist and talk about why that is an example of antiracism.



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