

It's really just such a pleasure to have this opportunity today. And one of the things I'm looking forward to is really sharing the space with my colleague Brandi Hudson.

Brandy is actually another member of the ylc family and qpi family. She is a strategic I wanted to make sure I say her title correctly, but she's a strategic initiatives advisor.

She really has amazing insight and experience in Working with birth parent foster parent relationships.

She has a very solid background in working in child welfare, and she's going to bring all of her experiences with her today and both of us have one thing in common.

They were both parents and we are both raising children of color and we share some of our experiences we plan to share some of them as we move throughout our session today.

So welcome everyone.

So we like to just start out by sharing what our Workshop description is all about.

And so what we really want to focus on today is how caregivers have this amazing opportunity to nurture and preserve and support and even develop in some instances a child strong sense of racial identity is so important to developing who you are.

It's the lens through which you end up seeing the world.

We're going to also talk about Some developmental research that looks at messages and actions that we can all take as caregivers that really promotes that sense of equality and justice as Core Family Values will address a few specific

guidelines to create the kind of environment in your family.

We're children really learn to Value diversity and resist prejudice and discrimination.

That is our goal.

And so that's where we're going to start our Our first thing we want to do is look at some of the research.

All right have to get my slide working.

There we go.

We're going to look at some of the research.

There's a lot of it out there.

There's been research on how to support healthy racial identity with kids since as long as I can remember as a kid of a social worker. It's one of the things we talked about so much in our household that was so familiar with growing up.

And so what I want to do is share with you just a few This is of This research and I want you to consider this as the backdrop of how we develop strong and healthy kids in terms of their identity about who we are one of the things that becomes very apparent when you're talking with people of all different ethnicities cultures and races is that we get exposed to Identity at different stages of Life.

Some of us earlier than others depending on our environment that we live in.

Our family and how enculturated we are cultural identity and ethnic identity are really created through those healthy connections that we have with others who have similar traditions and values.

So if you think about your own self and the development of that part of your identity think about what are the things that shape that for you did you hear it in music.

Did you experience in the food you ate?

Did you hear it in the stories that?

Dave's passed down from Generations.

Especially many indigenous cultures have a lot of Storytelling that's a value tradition in those cultures.

And so so those stories get passed on from generation to generation. So that's the beginning of our cultural identity.

It's really not in a book we read is not in a movie that we watch but it's typically in how we experience life through our own families and through our own.

Unity the next point is that social acceptance and connection with primary caregivers and peers leads to feelings of individual power and Social Power and kids and this whole point talks about the fact that you know through our experiences in education and growing up in a family then that Community the family nurtures us and then that community and neighborhood nurtures us and then the larger society so Have to think about what are the messages that we receive about who we are from within our family.

What was the message about our community now, I'll tell you how to test this out in some communities depending on where you live.

If you say the name of your neighborhood or the name of your community instantly, you might get a reaction from people

because they have an association with that.

Community and that neighborhood and a lot of the times it might be a culturally a racially influenced Association.

So in most most broader cities and you know and even counties depending on the makeup demographic makeup of the population if you identify an area and you say it people will say oh you're from that community and so what we'll ask you to think about is what does that?

Oh, what does it mean?

You know, does it say like, oh, wow what, you know, you have impressions of a very, you know, nice Community Safe Community educated Community or do you have this vision of a community where there might be violence or fear or negative kinds of things. Do you have that sense that kids grow and flourish in that community.

So our community identity influences us because when you're growing up, you're always telling people where And from and so that Community identity influences how others see you and that in turn influences how you see yourself.

Also interesting piece of research is around racial color our skin color that we carry and there's so much research about how we perceive skin color and how kids are you know influenced early?

I don't know how many people are familiar.

Earlier with some of the experiences of Jane Elliott brown eyes blue eyes, and that research that was done in a classroom where kids were assigned a certain role because they had

either brown eyes or blue eyes and depending on what color your eyes were that day you experienced some form of discrimination.

You didn't have power you didn't have as many opportunities.

And so it really create was to use it as a classroom experiment and turned a classroom to a lab.

So that was an early one on skin color you then maybe have seen examples that they do with kids at different developmental stages about identity based on skin color the dolls, you know, the black dolls versus the white dolls in which dog would have child choose and why why they're more attracted to a certain type but research on skin color has really demonstrated that throughout our history darker skinned people have been perceived as less beautiful less intelligent less worthy.

And so that gets internalized and they're even all kinds of nicknames that people are given based on their skin color.

We know if we even look back to slavery the you know lighter-skinned.

Right lighter skinned black people would be used as house slaves because they were considered to be more appropriate to be inside versus darker-skinned were outside.

So this this whole notion of skin color really remains a worry for many people, you know, I talk to people all the time that talk about, you know, they wish they were kids that say, I wish I were lighter sometimes kids placed.

In a home where parents are of A different race, they may say things like they wish they were your color.

They perceive that life would be more fair and more just more enjoyable that they may get more love based on based

on on skin color.

So that's one thing you want to keep in mind as well.

Now.

I have a not a serious little story about that the whole skin color thing, you know some kids, they're trying to figure out what the skin color means and when I started out as I started out in practice as a clinical therapist, and I would have families that will come in and for family therapy and I remember several families that had young white children and what I found that kids do is that they're interested to see if it comes off so skin color comes off, so kids will show us that they're curious but I find that what we do is we put the lid on and we say, Say oh no don't touch her or you can't ask that question, but little kids would come up to me during a session and I feel them start to rub my skin and then maybe look at their hands to see if it came off because they didn't know what I was made of and so I remember those experiences and the parents like just turning different colors of embarrassment and humiliation and me and I was feeling like wow what an insightful kid.

That Curiosity I'm glad they noticed that part of who I am.

Now, let's talk about what it means my own brother thought he was made of chocolate and my mom was giving him a bath and she was scrubbing and rubbing and rubbing and he started crying and she said what's Tony Tony was wrong and she said he said you're going to rub all the chocolate off of me and that became one of our family stories.

So when we're talking about these things, Things it doesn't all have to be this serious kind of tragic conversation, but hopefully we have those those light moments as well as we explore some of these topics.

Now we want to look at how caregivers react, you know to differences in children and also the social messages that kids get, you know around who they are their skin color, but in addition to that their race their ethnicity, what are those messages one of the pieces?

Of research that I was really interested in.

You know, if you look up identity development racial identity development. You're going to see a lot of research from Louisiana.

There's a lot that's done around racial differences.

But one of the things we talked about often is the the role that particularly black parents have had to to parent their kids with a very protective kind of psychological parenting.

So there is there are periods in a child's growing up where black parents know that it's important to emphasize race and to give messages around why a child might be experiencing some form of prejudice or discrimination.

Otherwise you go around thinking that there's something really wrong with you because when you go out further into the world as you're growing up and you start to encounter feeling different from your peers or your classmates, You start getting all these messages.

You're wondering.

What is it?

And you need parents who are able to Zone in and to say oh,
I know what that is.

That's Prejudice that's discrimination that's racism.

Right and that's not just true for black families, but that's
true for other families of color as well.

It's just that most of the research around this in the United
States was done really looking at Black.

Families, but there are times when you consciously as a parent
have to have those conversations and ever and I want you
to hear the plural on that.

So it's not just about having one big conversation, but it's
about having them on an ongoing basis and the final Point
around the research wanted to make is that caregivers is
so important to be aware of your own implicit bias that we
carry so Own areas of discomfort lack of knowledge lack of
exposure lack of experience because if our role is to parent
children with Excellence the whole child in every aspect
of their identity then part of it is looking inside and recognizing
where those biases are and just like everyone else making
the decision of working through those growing developing.

With with a supportive Network so that some of the research
I don't want to bore you with a ton of it, but just to set
the backdrop for this conversation about where some of it
is from.

All right, we're going to go to three three main points that
we want to make specifically geared to foster parents.

So foster parents often ask, you know, what is my role in

identity development?

How can I help shape it and I'm going to basically interview

Brandi about this one.

She's a parent she has experience in this area and she has professional expertise.

So Brandy will further explain these three points and what they really mean.

So there's a role for foster parents to play in all of this race and Injustice, there is a role for us to play.

And the first thing we want to emphasize is it's so important for foster parents to live congruently.

So Brandy when we talk about that congruence from a parent, would you share from your perspective what that is all about?

Sure Carol, so I think it's really about walking your values and having your kind of actions align with your words.

And so I think it can be easy to have conversations with your children to say things like oh, you know differences beautiful and everyone, you know is equally lovely but then if you are treating people differently, if you don't have the same respect for different groups of people, if your children witness you be condescending to a certain group of people and not others, then they'll start to get subliminal messages about the value of different people and start to make connections around what you Believe and it's not in alignment with what you say.

And so I think that as parents we have to constantly be conscious of what we say how we show up the way that we respect other

so that our children can see us really walking values of equality. Thank you.

Thank you Brandy when you were talking.

I was just thinking about some of those experiences where parents have an opportunity to model that I was thinking about, you know experiences that foster parents told me that happened in a grocery store.

All the time are well, you know like you were saying, you know, they're out and about in the community or they're at church or you know, wherever we get an opportunity to practice that and then there's this there is an expectation that and you let into it at the end around, you know, just just looking at yourself and where you're coming from but one of the things we chatted about was really broadening your circle.

And so Brady, would you share what that might look like for foster parents?

Sure.

So I think it's particularly important for foster parents who are parenting children of color, but who are not, you know people of color themselves to really be intentional about having friends and you talk Church like thinking about the spaces that you occupy with these children.

Do they see people that look like them do they see you interacting and having positive relationships with people who come from they're saying background and culture and can they believe that you value not just them because their child in your home but their entire identity and culture and that you're

cultivating relationships that they then can have extended relationships with people who they can relate to differently and I think With this one is interesting because I think we all have a diverse group of you know people whether they're racially diverse or diverse and thought and I often hear, you know, my friends talk about their parents or maybe a friend who has some sketchy beliefs right in some way or the other and it's important.

If you do have people who are part of your life who don't value equality and diversity of the way that you do that you call that.

Out, you know with children.

And so if your child hear someone who you care about or someone who you've exposed them to say things that don't align with kind of our first point that you have that conversation with that child and that adult to say that you know, I understand your belief system is different, but you aren't allowed to speak like that in front of my children and you know to have a conversation with your child and to say I understand that, you know, Uncle so-and-so or friend so-and-so said this I don't agree.

We with this and this is why it's problematic.

And this is the conversation that I had with them and to really show up for your child in a way that champions for them that they are, you know important and that they deserve to be treated with respect and to only hear and experience messages that are affirming for them.

Thank you Brandy.

Thank you so much.

So those specific examples to me really kind of give us a little bit of a blueprint about how to really start cultivating that sir.

And you know one thing that I find to is that it makes life a little bit more interesting to like as a parent you get a lot back from it to is not just you're doing it for your kids, but it just enriches your own life to have a broad circle of friends in this last point.

We want to make this gets at that point about that consistency and how you have to be really devoted to Preparing children for how to deal with racism discrimination.

My nation and Justice so greatly would you give some examples about how do we do that as parents?

Sure.

I think that it really is kind of some of the things that we talked about before just thinking before you speak really listening to what other people are saying, you know in front of your children and around your children listening to your children when they come home and they may have experienced microaggressions at school like so your child of color may come home and say You know today so and so said my hair, you know was kinky or so and so, you know said that I don't take baths because I look dirty because my skin is burning, you know, so when those things happen and you really have to be willing to have those uncomfortable conversations and

sometimes for parents, it can be very uncomfortable and you can want to protect your child by changing the subject or you know trying to wish it away.

But the reality is Children of color are going to continue to confront these experiences and realities and the best thing that you can do as a parent is to be open to having conversations to be consistent and to educate yourself.

I think that particularly for non people of color who are caring for children of color.

There is a lot of work that you have to do to educate yourself around their culture around the realities of things like microaggression. So like what are what are the things that you should be listening for when your children tell you stories?

What are some of the messages that you To be prepared to kind of give your child and response and how do you kind of cultivate the armor that you need as a parent to be able to go to battle for your child and it's a lot of work and it takes to me I think a lot of willingness on your part to lean on people who have more expertise which is why that circle is really important because if you're not a person of color, who do you know that if a person of color this apparent of color?

They can help to coach you around how to parent a child of color. And so I think that it really does take dedication and persistence and a willingness to be open and educated.

Mmm-hmm.

Thank you.

Thank you Brady when you were sharing you use the term and I just wanted to give a definition and because I think that's a good learning opportunity is you know microaggression and if we had the chat I bet we will have that question for someone to say let's Define that for us so I quickly looked up a little definition of it and a microaggression is a statement action or incident regarded as an instance of indirect subtle or unintentional discrimination against members of a marginalized group like a racial or ethnic minority.

So just keep that in mind microaggressions.

They can be an action.

It can be a statement.

It can be done in silence.

As you know young people would say you just feel dissed when it happens to you and other people are like what happened what happened and I'm like you didn't see that you didn't you know, and so it makes you feel like oh my gosh, I you know, maybe I'm overreacting but maybe not and Cara just so I will give some examples because my children so I am I'm a person of color you talked about skin color when you look at may not be obvious.

But yes, I am a black woman and my children of course are black children and We have lived for several years in predominantly white areas and they've gone to schools that are predominantly white and so my children have experienced a number of micro aggressions. And so I'll give you a couple of examples just so the caregivers can kind of understand what these things

may look like in practice and so my daughter, you know will say, oh, you know, I was hanging out with you know, my friends and they wanted me to twerk for them.

And you know, it's like they want you to perform.

It's almost like a Minstrel show like, oh be black for Me be performative in your culture and that is a microaggression.

You know, my son comes home and he's like, oh mommy, you know, my friend told me that I should play football because I can take hits and you know, he's the quarterback and he's white and so even like that idea that the black body can tolerate more pain and you know can kind of be a defense mechanism for white body.

So these things are subtle and you know, not necessarily.

Overt racism but they are micro aggressions and they are built in the kind of stem from this idea that you know black people are different and different in these very specific ways. Thank you.

Thank you Brandi.

I think those examples are really helpful.

And so we would encourage you to be thinking about what are examples of microaggressions that you have witnessed.

What are examples of microaggressions that your children have spoken?

Okin about what have your friends kind of you know divulge to you.

What are those micro aggressions and how in tuned are you to them when they happen especially if you're not a member

of the targeted group, how aware are you of those things?

So that's just something to keep in mind.

We're going to shift gears to looking at what are you know through the through the lens of Child Development.

We want to look at what our how how can we Mode a sense of equality and justice as core values using ages and stages and we just group them together in a very broad category, but we want to walk through when we consider a child's age and where they are developmentally what are appropriate interactions conversations, you know actions that you could take to really promote that sense of equality and justice and make those core Family Values.

He's so we're going to start with the youngest ones and Brandi's going to cover this part.

It's sure so I think we hear from parents and caregivers often like at what age, you know, is it appropriate to start having conversations with children about race and equality and kind of to promote anti-racism and the answer is from day one, you know, and so it really is important to start work even with very small children and so with children who we can Her like really young pharaoh to fix your role as a parent and caregiver is really to kind of lay her positive groundwork to constantly be combating hate and intolerance and inequity and call it out and really make sure that you're modeling compassion and tolerance and promoting those qualities within your children.

And this isn't just for children of color, but even white

parents of white children like your job really is to do These things as well because the reality is, you know, our future will never change until we all you know can really walk and anti-racist values.

And so even for white children, it's very important for them to be taught from a very young age that you know, there is a quality and difference is beautiful and that everyone deserves respect and compassion.

And Cara, can you advance the slides for me?

Because for some reason my thing is not working and you know, this slide is interesting.

So as early as age two children began to take note of differences and other people and so you probably often hear people say things like children don't see color.

The reality is children absolutely do see color and it's a beautiful thing what children don't see is any difference.

You know that Gets at like the value of humanity between those colors.

So a two-year-old can see.

Oh my skin looks like this and your skin looks like that but they don't make any judgments about what that means.

And so they see color but they are not built to decide that one is better than the other they are socialized that way and so it's our job as parents to make sure that they are not socialized that way and to kind of combat that socialization and the way that we do that is by I'm being honest with children really encouraging them to see differences among people and

to appreciate and to value and to celebrate those differences and some of the ways that we can do that is by having a diverse Circle, but also by making sure that we're exposing our children to media that is diverse and well represents people of color.

And so when we're picking books and movies and experiences kind of stepping out of Of what may be your own culture to really highlight those of other cultures and to expose your child to diverse groups of people and really embracing your child's curiosity.

You don't want to encourage your children from asking questions about race and difference because that's how they learn and ultimately you don't want them to think that there's something wrong with being different and when you shut children down and you get uncomfortable, they start to get messages that oh, well, maybe it's not Okay to be different or maybe I should be ashamed of looking like this and so it's really important to be careful.

And I have a story that I thought of when you know, this lie was kind of coming together because I remember I was at a work event and we were at a conference center in a very white area.

It was concen and a colleague of mine who is like a darker skinned black man.

We were on the elevator together and a little white girl.

Her family got on the elevator with us and she looked at my colleague in amazement and was like, oh my gosh, and she was like, are you okay?

Were you burned like why is your skin?

So black this is what she says to him and I was kind of like, oh, well, I wonder how this is going to go and everybody was just wonderful and he didn't miss a beat and he said oh sweetie.

Actually God made me like this because I'm kissed by the Sun and isn't it beautiful and she was like, it is beautiful and I want to be kissed by the sun to and then she turns to her.

It's can I get kissed by the Sun and what could have been like a really mortifying experience just became you know almost you know this.

I don't know interaction.

That was very positive and so afterward, you know when I ask my colleague, like whoo, how did you handle that?

That way what he said to me is I refuse to be the reason that that child thinks that there's something wrong with being black like if I would have acted uncomfortable or offended or anything then that would have been the first of too many messages. Has this she'll receive over her lifetime that there is something wrong with or different about or shameful about being black and I just thought that that was very powerful.

Thank you Brandy.

And so some other things to consider for the preschool years are really broadening choices and making sure that you are not kind of promoting stereotypical things with your child.

Like only boys do that or don't you want pink because you're

a girl or you know, only boys play soccer, you know, not really that gender stereotypical.

What I call I'm just making sure that you're not, you know promoting that and that you're really allowing your children to kind of make choices based on what they like particularly even with the dolls.

So you had mentioned dolls earlier in that Doll Experiment like purchasing dolls for your children and books were your children where not everyone's looks like them right?

So if you have a white child, they don't have to have a white doll. And so just things like that and fostering pride in your I talking about your family heritage and helping them have a positive self-concept concept.

But for this one if you are a caregiver and your child is from a different racial ethnic Heritage than yourself.

This is where you can really partner with their birth parent and their extended birth family to learn more about their culture and their Heritage and to really help partner, you know with their family to create that sense of Pride and leading by example, so we talked about this a couple Couple times already but really making sure that your circle of friends is inclusive and that children can see themselves represented in your life more broadly.

Alright, thanks Brandy.

So Brandi took us through those preschool years.

And so what we're going to do is move forward and look at early childhood and what are some of the things that really

apply to Early Childhood.

So we're looking at really ages 6 through 8, so kids are in Elementary school during that time and this is when we have usually one of the first opportunities to have a real conversation around hate and what that's all about.

Now.

This doesn't just have to be remember centered around race.

So when we talk about diversity and inclusion and how to build that equality today, we're not just talking about race race has one component, but we also want to make sure we keep in and language we want to keep in mind culture.

We want to keep in mind gender differences, you know, all of the identities that we each carry with us is part of this conversation. So when we talk about hate that hate could be against someone who is different because they, you know, prefer to engage in in a relationship with someone who you know is of the same or different gender.

It could be about language and you know and different groups feeling pressured to use the same language and to not be able to speak a language that is part of their own cultural identity. And so kids at this age are a tomb to really what's fair. And what's not fair.

So they have a strong basis for discussing Injustice because remember at this age were teaching kids, you know.

How to be fair how to play by the rules this is when organized Sports starts, you know participating in extracurricular kinds of activities.

When as a child you learn how to play by the rules.

You don't have to be part of a team.

And so this is a very natural time to start talking about, you know, just what it means for someone to be excluded because of any part of their identity.

The other thing is that kids can be Guide for this part, you know letting kids be the guy they can articulate their feelings. So you don't have to always lead the conversation but it's just creating space for the conversation.

Sometimes kids will, you know come home and they start, you know sharing something that's on their mind and we might be inclined as a parent to minimize it but that's really the time to kind of shine a light on it and to really acknowledge what your kid is seeing.

And so it's like the kids that were coming into my clinical office and they were paying attention and noticing but their parents were discouraging that kind of exploration.

But you know, we can let kids be our guide let kids kind of lead the way on this one thing to keep in mind is try not to overdo it, you know, you don't have to become a researcher in race culture and ethnicity.

You don't have to go and read a hundred books on it.

You don't have to lie me every Shelf.

Books on the topic, but you just want to have it be part of your everyday life.

So that means keeping it simple the conversation simple being brief, but always be honest.

If you feel like it doesn't come out the way you intended it to kids are learning at that age how to learn how to say what you mean so you can always go back and say, you know, I want to explain that again.

There's a lesson in that for children when they see you.

You're so committed to it is so important to you that you're going to take the time to come back and do have a do-over.

So I always told my kids.

Hey, you could have a do-over.

If you set it the wrong way go for it do it again.

And let's see if we can you know get to that place to say what you what you're really feeling.

Also at this age to other thing is I wanted to mention this is a great time for exploration.

So getting out in the community, you know, taking some trips going to the museum in your local community really paying attention to history of of cultures right that are around you all different cultures, right?

So on here we talk about Black and digitas Latino, you know.

No, just whatever that culture is in almost every Community there's opportunities to really just experience culture.

One of the most fun ways that I found is through food just having something that's different from what you're used to all the time trying out different things.

There's something that I thought about with this one.

There was a foster family a home.

That I went to and it this just happened to be a white Foster

family and the kids they were parenting wear all black children
and one of the things that I do when I'm with my phone rings
to do it is to go and help with hair care.

So I don't mind doing kids hair and I find hair to be a very
beautiful bonding experience.

And what I like to do is help parents learn how to do it
because that's a way for them to bond.

So I want to model it and then you do it and I went to one
family's home and the kids were all like hush-hush like telling
me like, you know, they want to go back to eating like foods
that they are familiar with and you know, Oh my gosh.

Can you believe they have spaghetti on a Sunday?

We could we would never have spaghetti on a Sunday.

You supposed to have a Sunday dinner?

And so I said have you talked to him about this?

Like maybe they don't know so they said no you tell him you
tell him.

So anyway, we started this great conversation and the parents
were like teach us, you know, let's explore.

We don't know let's explore together.

So it all turned into an experience where the kids took over
Sunday dinner.

And they were able to kind of share part of their culture
and then they started trying things in different community.

So like instead of going to a traditional restaurant.

They were used to going to they started going to a very diverse
kind of restaurants.

So they pick one night for to go to a Spanish restaurant
another night.

They do Mexican then they do Ethiopian.

So this it became a really fun way to express appreciation.

For differences and then the last one on for this age group
is to really help kids maintain and develop a sense of strong
racial identity and pride, you know, just to feel proud of
who you are.

In fact, even though I'm old I can remember first grade and
first grade is where I became proud of my culture now, I
want you all to think about what age were you when you became
proud? Of your culture and what you got from your ancestors
and your legacy, right?

All of us have culture all of us have a legacy all of us
have that but I remember so strongly in first grade becoming
proud now it was in the 60s.

So there was a lot of civil rights things that were going
on. But the one thing I remember that marked the beginning
for me of racial.

The well, two things one happened inside my family and one
happened outside my family.

What happened is that my family is my brother.

What put me on his shoulder and this is you know, when you
pump your kids up and people would say here she comes Miss
America well in my family they put you on your shoulder and
they would say here she comes the queen of Africa here.

She comes the queen of Africa and so you kind of be marched

around Around the house and you just feel so proud.

So that was one and then the second thing was the song came out Say It Loud.

I'm Black and I'm Proud when that song came out and it started being played on the radio.

It was a revolution and I remember my first grade class.

We would March around the playground saying that and just affirming it for who we are because it's the first time we heard that we should be proud.

All right.

We're moving on ages 9 through preteen.

Brandy is going to take us through this and Carol.

I think I'll share for me with the racial Pride pieces interesting because I'm the fairest of all of my siblings which is not hard to believe.

I'm sure but I remember growing up wanting to be darker right?

Like I just I I was like man, I just wish I could get a tan.

I just wish I could be a little bit darker.

I just always thought it was beautiful, you know to be Back in to show up in a room as black and I said be ambiguous or have anyone kind of question and I think for me when it became like oh no, I'm black and maybe I just need to wear a t-shirt or something is when I was getting messages.

So I grew up in foster care and I started getting messages from Professionals in child welfare that I should pass for white, you know, and that I would be adopted if I were a white child and that, you know, if I Were open to going to

a white family.

I would have a better life and like that had the opposite effect on me and I became very militant.

And so I think the more people try to erase my identity the more steeped in it.

I became because I just refused to allow them, you know to kind of take that away from me and I used to get teased a lot when I was young because like I remember, you know, I grew up in the 80s and 90s like as a child and I would have liked my Medallion like my Africa Medallion I was Cross Colours.

I have box braids.

Like I was doing everything I possibly could it make sure everybody and they Mama knew I was blackity black black black' very much always wanted to kind of show up in spaces and was never interested in passing or you know having my identity taken for me.

So that's just funny when you were talking about your product.

I'm just picturing that whole thing.

So it's obviously your children.

This is like, you know, so pay attention that kind of expression.

Everybody's talking about just saying hey, this is who I am and I'm going to express it.

That's something that as parents.

We want to embrace that, you know, embrace it so that that child feels secure and strong and that there's is not a problem in claiming who you really are makes Randy no problem.

Thanks Carol.

So children aged 9 to preteen which happens to be part of my child group right now.

So I am doing many of the things that are on this slide of right now with my 9 year old and my just turned 14 year old but during this kind of age range.

It's really important to be listening again to your child because they're likely to start picking up on biased views from people that they know and often times people that they love and Trust This can be a very confusing time for your child because they are going to start hearing some in congruence in you know things from people that are in their life and they will likely have questions about that and be hurt by it. And so it's really important to be prepared to have conversations with your child and kind of address those disparities as they arise not just with your child.

But again with the family member or loved one so that everyone is on the same page about what your expectations are high.

As a parent for how people treat respect and respond to your child. It's also important to really develop to work to develop and maintain I'm sorry your child's identity and cultural Pride during this time because they are likely going to be separated from their family.

So, you know as a caregiver of a child in foster care, they may be in a different School in a different Community not have the same access to their culture and their heritage.

Carol said they're not eating, you know, good old greens and macaroni and cheese and you know smothered pork chops

Sunday dinner kind of thing.

They may be eating what I call white people macaroni and cheese from a box or whatever.

And so, you know, they're disconnected from those things that they associate with their culture and their Heritage.

It's like more important than ever for you to do the word kind of reconnecting them to those experiences and opportunities.

And also this third one is where the rubber hits the road.

Right.

It's like you have to prepare children of color to go into the world and to show up safely as a person of color and we know through current events and through historical events that that is not always easy and that they are in danger and that there are things like police brutality and discrimination and being followed in stores and you know, all the things that black children are likely to face is your role as a caregiver to prepare them for those experiences and to kind of keep safe, but at the same time be preparing them to be an advocate and a change agent and you know a fighter for equality and so Kara you said you grew up in the 60s.

And so I'm sure that you know, you are constantly surrounded, you know during that time, you know, there was a third level of civil unrest and civil rights movement and you know in the black community it was like you you're in danger, but if you're going to be in danger then you know fight.

For change right so like and I think we're having a similar experience. Now.

We're you know young black children are learning through the media more than ever that you know, these things are real, but they're also protesting in a way that I've never seen in my lifetime like my nine-year-old and 13 year old and 18 year-old have been out in the streets protesting with signs and you know really doing the work of anti-racism and trying to promote equality.

And so while you're trying to Pair, you know your children to show up in the world and be safe.

You also want to prepare them to be Advocates and you know to really fight for equality and social justice and that is not always easy.

But again, if you need help lean on your people expand your network, ask questions do research and the most important thing you can do is to model behaviors and tolerance and respect so that your children can see That you are again walking those values and continue to acknowledge difference and help children understand that there's nothing wrong with being different and that there are not, you know value judgments between differences.

So it's okay for one person to be this and one person to be that and it doesn't mean anything other than their beautiful in their own unique and diverse ways one is not better than the other one was not more worthy than the other one is not more. Men that me ever and so really just continuing to reinforce those messages with children during this age.

It's really important.

Okay.

Alright that you know just really good really good information.

And I feel like Carol we have very little time.

So I'm going to quickly go through these things lightly.

You know, how challenging topics if you hear something say something if you hear your child make a comment then address it in the moment, you know, if your child says something that is until I can give you an example.

So my I was joking with a friend, but she made a very insensitive comment about Asians.

And even though she was with her friends and it embarrass the hell out of her.

I called her.

I was like Kennedy that is inappropriate.

We can't I say that and how would you feel and yeah, I just had to do that in the moment because like I needed her to understand that there was no room for that conversation.

There was no room for her to make, you know even jokes that were intolerant and just inappropriate also.

Looking for teachable moments.

And so when there are opportunities to kind of bring out some of these discussions and to talk through things that have happened make sure that you really see is those and emphasizing the positive and so just like I called Kennedy out, you know for her insensitive comment.

Also make sure you know to really highlight the things that she's doing like protesting and she's done a lot of research

on her own after watching just Mercy.

She the movie was just phenomenal if you haven't seen Watch just Mercy, but after she knew saw that movie she started doing a lot of research about kind of discrimination and you know, the prison system and sentencing and asking questions about becoming an attorney and you know, so and then I was just like so proud of her like enemy, even if that's not what you end up doing the future.

I'm so happy that you were interested another wanted to learn more about what you might be able to do to kind of address some of these systemic inequalities and to Make a difference in the world.

So making sure that you emphasize the positive with your children's really important.

All right.

All right.

So Brandy just takes us really up to T, which is our last stage that we're looking at.

And you know, how do we shape that sense of equality and justice for for our youth during your teenage years?

So, you know we talked about this as kind of the stage as a Tipping Point when you really zero in on Who you are your identity. So that's the developmental stage that you're at.

And so you're looking at you know, how you're developing a strong sense of identity.

You know that that you that this stage are really heavily invested in peer relationships as well.

But as they trust start transitioning towards adulthood, this is a real opportunity for us to kind of solidify that sense of value for differences that we're talking about.

So similar to the preteen There's an opportunity to speak up in this in this particular time which Brandy already covered, but the one thing I want to mention is that you know really using that opportunity to identify as many areas of Injustice as possible because kids may get it in a different way like they may not be moved as much as we like around racial Injustice, but maybe they are about like immigration right?

So some of the things that are happening around immigration.

Raishin, May really be the thing that your child zeroes in on maybe they're really concerned about the differences in water quality in certain communities.

So they may zero in on that, you know, what about the opportunity to be educated regardless of where you're from or who you are they made zero in on the Injustice of that.

So the goal is to find something that is an equality and justice issue.

That your child feels passionate about and join in with them and support them in doing that keep the conversation going keep talking.

So right now there there's almost too much out there to pick from you don't know where to start but it's really all about just keeping talking and there's some examples on here of things you might talk about.

So especially things you know that are at the Forefront that

they're hearing about Be not talking, you know, so like all here same-sex marriage is one that something that's a springboard for a conversation.

They're all kinds of other things you can talk about but bringing it up the difference in religious differences and the right that people have to express their religion in school environments. You know, how do they feel about that?

So it really is about keeping them talking and we find that developmentally kids talk more when we Even better right? So when we listen and try to stay out of the preaching roll kids tend to listen a lot more also stay involved.

It's interesting what we're finding around what we thought so as parents, you know, just kind of raising teens is that teens don't want to hang out with their parents and and really what we see said that's not necessarily true tea See typically enjoy and what to spend time around their families around their parents, but they want their parents to allow them to have some control over what happens during that time so that they can plays music that they enjoy or you can we can watch a movie that they're really focused on we can have those discussions about the messages that we're hearing from them. So it's staying involved staying close, you know.

No, stay really connected so that they feel that sense of support but at the same time, you know that exploration.

So my mom always had this framed picture in our house that said, you know, the two gifts you can give your children one is roots, and the other is wings and so you want to give

that strong sense of rooted connectedness, but we also want to give our kids some freedom to explore And this last slide around 10 years is starts with really looking at opportunities and making sure that they have broader opportunities to you know to join groups that maybe are outside of their comfort zone encourage that support that peer involvement with the kids from a different community.

So if you live in a neighborhood and I know there's this push that everything should be in the neighborhood.

The school should be there.

The store should be Are the church should be there but what happens in those communities when kids go out into the broader Society. So we're encouraging that we broaden that Circle broaden those opportunities Brady discussed police violence earlier. So this of course we had to emphasize it again in 10 years.

We need to make sure that kids know how to come back to you safely and recognizing that even when they do all the right things. He's you know, depending on who they are, you know, how how they you know are perceived then they may be perceived as a threat.

So we want to understand that we want to talk about it.

We want to unpack it and explore it support cultural self-expression.

This is this is like the really fun thing about teens their self-expression. So for this we need, you know, how they choose to to rock their look, you know, some of the Behaviors.

They have the choices how they speak.

My kids always thought it was hilarious.

When I tried to learn the slang and the lingo and all that stuff, you know to kind of try to join them and they say Oh, no, you're too old.

You're too old.

Are you can't hang with us?

You don't know how to say it correctly.

So those can be fun things for families as well.

And then the last one on this slide is really a kind of a call to action for all of us is to encourage activism and Advocacy so Brandi talked about the opportunity to model certain things.

This is it.

I'm telling you if you can take an issue and turn it into an opportunity for family activism.

And advocacy where kids learn that it is perfectly normal.

In fact, it is preferred that you are so passionate about equality and justice and fairness that you Want to be part of a movement, right?

You want to be part of the change and that's empowering for kids to feel like they can make a difference.

But imagine how they feel if they're able to make the difference with you.

So really encourage that activism as well.

And then this is where we end today, but we just wanted to end by saying considering all that.

We've we've had an opportunity to talk about just to kind

of close with three three main points that Didn't really deserve to see themselves as as beautiful as capable and powerful enough to reach their full potential that's for all children regardless and chotu must feel loved valued skill the last one.

Children need caregivers.

I'm who truly Embrace nurture and celebrate their racial cultural and ethnic identity and care.

I think there is a lot of information, you know in this presentation.

There's going to be a follow-up presentation, but if caregivers can really understand that these three things are your role right? So like all of those other things are kind of like the how but this is the what the what is making sure that children know beyond a shadow of a doubt that they are enough so that they are beautiful that they are The center of your universe that they are safe, like I think that this is really, you know, the Crux of the entire presentation.

So if you don't see anything else and you see these three points, I think that's enough because like this is what we want for every single child, right?

Thank you.