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Alliance Building Scenario #1

You are a parent task force representing a number of students and families who has been asked to review how religious and cultural holidays are acknowledged in school. What concerns do you have? What recommendations do you have for the school? In other words, what specific programming efforts can be made to be inclusive of all?

- Concerns
 - It is impossible to honor all holidays so how do we balance it?
 - How do we celebrate holidays in school without offending or watering them down?
- Recommendation
 - Asking good question
 - Provide opportunity everyone's feedback
 - Being open to sharing different traditions and customs throughout the year (not just once a year on multicultural night)
 - Training teachers and staff in anti-bias education so they are comfortable facilitating conversations around differences

Alliance Building Scenario #2

Women's History Month is March of each year. How could you develop and promote Women's History Month programs to all students in school? If you are not a woman, how can you promote the month's programs to your children and your school community of friends? What programs might your child's classroom promote as part of the month's programming?

- Why do we have a need for these "special" months?
- Are we including intersectional women (ie race, gender, ability)?
- Historical inequalities intersectionally?
- Who's telling the history?
- Opportunity for inclusivity and interdisciplinary teaching
- Is the presentation of what's learned represented by diverse presenters? In diverse presentation modes...

Alliance Building Scenario #3

"Hands up! Don't Shoot!" "I can't Breathe" – two chants many children have heard but may not understand. Heated debate has arisen in society, in the media, and even among some students over the situation involving Michael

Brown and Eric Gardner. “I hate all police!” “I hate white people!” “Black people are always causing trouble!” “Why would they do that?” How can we make this a teachable moment for our children? What topics for discussion at home can you think of for elementary, middle school, and/or high school aged children? What ways could you build children’s understanding of being an ally?

- Talking about the why behind racial bias
- Talking about fairness in how we treat people of all backgrounds
- Discussing what feelings drive certain behaviors
- For older children, ask them what questions it raises for them
- Talk about importance of not labelling
- Ask child what they are thinking about
- Validate their feelings. These are good questions to have. It’s human nature to make groups. Don’t shut them down.
- Challenge their idea of the group they are asking about. “What about your friend...?”
- Relate the situation that is immediate and personal
- Ideas for building advocacy in a child:
 - Teach them to ask questions and for help
- Self-educate and increase awareness of social, economic, historical factors at play
- Important NOT to generalize
 - Separate action of individual from “all” people similar to him/her
- Think about/notice/dissect messages from peer groups, media, family, etc.
- Conversation can be tied to personal experience → it will be different based on differing histories and lived experiences
- Balance honesty and reframing with feelings and personal history → all keeping in mind developmental context of child
- Explain the situation to the child
- Tell the kids the chants are stereotypes
- Personalizing the issue
- Recognizing/stopping the buildup
- Teaching them appropriate actions to take
- Teach them the right actions at a young age
- Recognition of privilege and worldview
- Broad “both and” steps to address, e.g. micro-aggression
- Self-reflection and education
- Teachable moment for kids
 - Historical information; chants don’t come out of nothing/ a void...
 - You can say no; refuse to participate
 - Expand what it means to be kind

- Building our kids' self-esteem; sense of self so they can be advocates for themselves and others
- Ask your child to think about why the kids are chanting
- Pre-education before crisis erupts (w/ books about up-standers)
- Distinguish between poor/ "bad" actions and "bad people"
- Take it to the institution- principal/ teacher/parent advisory group/etc. ...don't go to it alone; it isn't something to be embarrassed by
- Empathy for affected people, families and communities
- Sharing historical perspective surrounding events to all children
- Combat negative stereotypes of all involved
- Try to teach kids what facts vs. opinions exist
- Engage kids in the discussion vs. staying silent (what do you know about this? What thoughts do you have?)
- Encourage expression of feelings
- Transforming anger into positive action
- What topics for discussion @ home
 - Historical
 - Choosing your words
 - Media as to their influence and source
 - Challenging the "absolute" statements
- Ways to build understand of an ally
 - Communication of social movements
 - Teaching history of systems of oppression. Build historical perspective
 - Using historical knowledge to empower youth
 - Build communication skills, to be assertive
 - Elementary school: sometimes people aren't treated fairly what are the rules- who violates the rules
 - Middle school: what are facts of a situation vs. interpretation?
 - High school: Police: what are stressors/ risks? Is everyone good at their job? Differences in perception/ bias. This American Life: cops see it differently
 - Depends on the age: acknowledging difficulty in standing up
 - Explaining idea of service, giving back
 - How to explain stages/spectrum of alliance
 - What to do when you don't know what to do
- Discuss with children how they would feel/respond in this particular scenario with a police officer
- Use an example that relates with the kids (age appropriate)
- Discuss bias opinions/ actions
- Encourage critical thinking and understand there's not an easy solution
- Taking part in the community and perhaps action

Alliance Building Scenario #4

In the past several years at school, the playground has been experiencing an increase in the number of incidents of boys and girls using homophobic slurs. Examples include, “faggot, sissy, no-homo, and tomboy.” What concerns are raised by these acts? How does this affect all students? How might we teach children to respond to these issues?

- Concerns
 - Culture of exclusion
 - Labels to exclude; discriminate
 - Parent education vs. student education
 - School culture?!
 - The power of words and the power of language
 - Words matter
 - Differences among us and how do those impact the culture
 - Offensive

Alliance Building Scenario #5

A bi/mixed-race child is being told by their peers they are not really black or white so they don't belong, or a child is told they have a weird family because they have two moms, two dads, or parents who are a different race than the child. What concerns are raised by these comments? How does this affect all students? How might we help children understand these situations and teach them to respond to them?

- Concerns
 - Heteronormative assumption set
 - More exposure = greater understanding
 - Normalizing all the language
 - Raising Ryland
- Telling them the truth
- We should be treated equitably
- Where are the children learning it?
- The comments are depressing the kids self and who they are
- Lessons the value of education; no diversity of thought
- Allowing kids to be disrespectful to each other, and not calling them out
- What's the “normal” and what informs these perceptions?
- “Family consists of people who love you and support you!” TEACH THIS!

- Teach teachers/supervisors/community members how to respond
- Educate ourselves
- Acknowledging difference
- Ask children how they self-identify... and respect it
- Encourage via a self-analytic question of the bully or potential ally

Alliance Building Scenario #6

It has recently been reported by D65 that 65% of the students disciplined are African American, even though approximately 27% of District 65's enrollment is African American. What red flags does this statistic raise for you? Why? What can you as a dominant group member, an individual, or as part of a parent or community group to address your concerns about this? How does this affect all students? How might we teach children to respond to these issues?

- Recognize children build on their experiences—they respond to what they see and draw assumptions/conclusions
- Important to teach children to be advocates (even when facing “authority figure”)
 - Model, support, encourage, teach
 - Red flags Impact of child's self-worth
 - Worry about the perception that the white kids have of African American kids
 - Teacher bias
 - Achievement gap
 - Does not establish a safe or inclusive environment
 - Out of proportion, potential bias
 - how to build awareness of this discrepancy
 - gender/racial differences and bias wherein
 - how are we addressing differentiated/ culture aspects of learning
 - how to be high positive reinforcement for C+ behavior
- How can we address?
 - Increase cultural sensitivity
 - Differences in behavior/expression of self across culture
 - Advocate for alternative forms of student discipline (sharing circle/peace circle) that address underlying issues
- Increase Discrimination, reinforces separation and stereotypes. Decrease awareness of cultural differences
- Peace Circle Model
 - Educate kids about conflict/ conflict resolution
 - Use examples from pop culture to start discussions

- Build empathy/ ask questions of why instead of judgements
- Underscore that this issue does affect ALL kids- it should concern ALL parents
- How institution perceives African American kids as discipline problems
- Awareness training/ courageous conversation/ diversity training for ALL members of schools (staff, teachers, administrators...)
 - Goal is to change perception
- What can dominate community do to address concerns
 - Use stats to identify why the inequity then solve
 - Understand that system is bias, educate communicate for change
 - Start a social justice club in schools

Alliance Building Scenario # 7

Your child notices that all or most of the African American children catch a school bus to school and take the school bus home from school. They ask you, “Why do all of the black kids take the bus?” How might this observation affect all children? What topics for discussion at home can you think of for a child who is not African American? What about for African American children? What recommendations do you have for the classroom teacher? For the school? For the district?

- Challenge the idea of group
- Validate that it does affect all children
- Ask the child how they feel about it
- It affects children because kids know their friends have different circumstances
- For non-African American – how would it feel to be bussed
- For African American- how would it feel not to be bussed
- Open questions
- Recommendations
 - Sensitive to family schedules when planning all school events
 - Principal Id or district Id

Alliance Building Scenario # 8

Your child comes home and asks you, “Why do all of the black kids always play basketball so much? Why are all of the Mexican kids so good at soccer? Why do all of the girls like to wear makeup so much?” Or says,

“All of the Asian kids are so smart.” What concerns are raised by these questions/comments? How does this affect all students? How might we help children understand these situations and teach them to respond to them?

- “deer in headlights”
- Blunt observations
- Can always start where the child is and explain generalizations
- Child development vs. “trying to get it right”