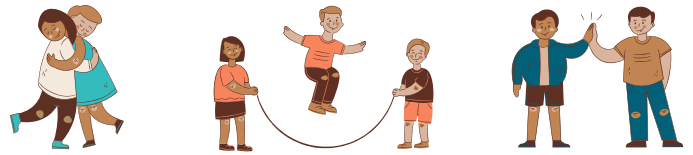


# IMPLICIT BIAS & INTERSECTIONALITY TIP SHEET

**What is implicit bias?** A bias or prejudice that is present but not consciously held or recognized.

**What is intersectionality?** A lens for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other. It is the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage based on such a premise.

Explicit conversations with 5-7 year olds about interracial friendships can dramatically improve their racial attitudes in as little as a single week.



## Recommendations for Creators:

- 1 Create authentic, multi-dimensional characters by incorporating culturally relevant information into their background and storylines.
- 2 Show characters from underrepresented groups excelling in careers and academic fields in which they are often underrepresented.
- 3 Disrupt stereotypes that attribute wealth and poverty to certain racial and ethnic groups by creating new characters that flip the script.

**WHY?** Popular media continues to sell false dreams and forge class divides, obscuring the potent truth that an American economy rooted in systemic racism is continuing to fail us all.

**RESEARCH:** In an analysis of top watched teen TV stories, POC characters were more likely to achieve the American Dream while White characters were shown struggling in a rigged class system. In reality, the opposite is true.

- 4 Reflect intersectional identities, but take care that one character isn't the primary source of all of the diversity.



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**6 Acknowledge and name different identities in scenes. It lays the foundation for a young mind to make sense of what they see.**



**RESEARCH:** In a recent study, kids ages 9-12 were asked to reflect on the shows they watch and identify the roles they think characters of various gender and racial/ethnic groups are most likely to play. The only group that received an “I don’t know” as one of the top four responses for how they would be cast is Hispanic kids, indicating a severe underrepresentation of Hispanic/Latinx characters on screen. Hispanic kids are also the least likely to be cast as the smart character. When it came to casting their own race, ethnicity and gender, the same tropes appeared. For instance, just 16% of Black kids cast Black boys as the hero, and 8% of Black kids cast Black girls as the hero.

**7 Develop scripts that have direct and explicit conversations about identities (race, culture, income level, gender expression, etc.)**

**WHY?** Direct and explicit conversations in children’s content supports their development.

**RESEARCH:** It’s never too early to talk about identities. Kids start noticing differences as early as 3 months.



**8 Have characters identify discrimination and talk about it openly.**

**9 Let children see adults talking about their own biases and fighting to overcome them.**

**10 If there is an intended pro-social message in your content, make sure to state it clearly and explicitly rather than leaving it to children to connect the dots.**

## Reflection Questions?



Sometimes stereotypes are used for humor to demonstrate that they are inappropriate. In such cases, consider: Do they intentionally function as a bridge from the status quo to a more evolved perspective?



Are background extras and minor characters representative of the culture that is being portrayed in all its complexity?

**[For more insights & reflection questions check out these other tools from the Center for Scholars & Storytellers.](#)**

## Research Sources:

Alba, Levy, Meyers, 2021; Apfelbaum, Pauker, Ambady, Sommers, & Norton, 2008; Bronson & Berryman 2009; Green, et al, 2021; Kelly, 2005; Katz & Kofkin, 1997; Kinzler, 2016; Race and Class in Teen TV Report 2021; Alade, 2021.