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## COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 2, MANHATTAN

3 WASHINGTON SQUARE VILLAGE

NEW YORK, NY 10012-1899

[www.cb2manhattan.org](http://www.cb2manhattan.org)

P: [REDACTED] F: [REDACTED] E: [REDACTED]

Greenwich Village ♦ Little Italy ♦ SoHo ♦ NoHo ♦ Hudson Square ♦ Chinatown ♦ Gansevoort Market

### SCHOOLS & EDUCATION COMMITTEE

May 2020

The Schools and Education Committee of Community Board 2 met on Wednesday, June 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m. via Zoom webinar.

We discussed two topics: 1) Talking to Kids about Racism and 2) Ways to Reduce Systemic Racism in our Public Schools including funding [Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education](#), Implicit Bias Training, Defunding NYPD in our schools, Diverse Teaching Staff, Reading and Writing Curriculum.

**CB 2 Board Members Present:** Jeannine Kiely (Chair), Patricia Laraia (Vice-Chair), Akeela Azcuy, Keen Berger, Amy Brenna, Rich Caccappolo, Mar Fitzgerald and Matt Metzger

**Public Members Present:** Barbara Glassman and Michael Markowitz

**Other CB 2 Members Present:** Carter Booth, Bob Gormley, David Gruber, Betty Kubovy-Weiss, Donna Raftery and Dr. Shirley Smith.

**Guests:** Josephine Ishmon, CB 4 and Kelly Shannon, Principal, PS 41.

**Speakers:** Akeela Azcuy, PhD, Clinical Psychologist. Marisol Rosales, Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, NYC DOE. Shanna Douglas, MS 896 Lower Manhattan Community. Wanda Luz Vazquez, Senior Director for Race and Equity, NYC DOE.

**Attendance:** 76 attendees.

### MINUTES

**CB2 Equity Working Group.** We started our meeting with an announcement from Carter Booth that Patricia Laraia and Mar Fitzgerald will be leading CB 2's new Equity Working Group.

**Talking to Your Kids About Racism.** We had an amazing lineup of speakers, including our own Akeela Azcuy, a clinical psychologist, who addressed how to talk to our children about racism; Marisol Rosales, the Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, NYC DOE, who shared her personal experience and commitment to disrupting systemic racism and inequitable practices in our schools; Shanna Douglas the Principal at Lower Manhattan Community School who shared how LMC has addressed Restorative Justice and led discussions about racism and Wendy Luz Vazquez, the Senior Director for Race and Equity who provided her expertise during Q&A.

Akeela defined race, racism, implicit bias, colorblindness and microaggression. She shared how children become aware of race and racism at a very young age. It is critical that adults understand their own implicit bias, which requires honest conversations and self-education. And children learn by seeing their parents take anti-racist action. She recommends that parents:

- Engage in explicit age appropriate dialog to interrupt connections.
- Regularly schedule playdates and connections with families that look different
- Use young children's concept of fairness as entry point into conversations about racism

- Read books with your child and ask about your child's feelings and thoughts about race
- Read books and have discussions with other adults regarding racism
- Understand effects of colorblindness
- Be an example / anti-racist advocate

Shanna Douglas shared how her team at LMC has put in place restorative justice practices at LMC over the last five years and how they addressed racism with students over the last two weeks. This is an example of the work that every school should be doing to address systemic racism and since last night's meeting, one school has already requested her presentation materials and plans to connect with her. We hope that LMC's model can be shared more broadly within District 2.

After the formal presentations, CB 2 shared a list of resources compiled by our speakers and our committee and the following recommendations for how parents can take action:

- Talk to Your Children
- Educate Yourself: Read, push yourself to have difficult conversations
- Push for Change at Your Child's School
  - Support school-wide anti-racist initiatives
    - Principal and Teaching Staff
    - School to Students
    - School to Parent Community
  - Support ongoing training for school leaders
  - Join or initiate a diversity committee that advises on:
    - Social Justice policies
    - Formation of affinity groups
    - Curriculum
  - Support hiring of a more diverse teaching staff
- Support Borough and District-wide Diversity Councils to Share Resources and Push for Change

**Video, Resources, Time Stamps and Slides.** You can watch the video on Facebook [here](#). For resources and time stamps, visit [bit.ly/CB2AntiRacistResources](https://bit.ly/CB2AntiRacistResources). We have attached the presentation slides to this report.

**Business Session.** The CB 2 Schools & Education Committee met in business session and discussed our *Resolution In Support of Action Steps to Reduce Systematic Racism in our Public Schools*.

We agreed to support a letter in support of extending free broadband for families that qualify.

We discussed the DOE's Return to School 2020 Survey that asks questions about Health, Phased Return to School and Transportation. Health Issues will be driven by CDC and DOH, etc., not necessarily the DOE, but regardless of what is decided, all initiatives to improve the health and safety of our students and teachers will require more, not less funding. We shared concern that the Phased Return to School questions pit academics vs. arts vs. fitness, suggesting that some of these subjects are expendable.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeannine Kiely  
Chair, Schools & Education Committee  
Community Board 2, Manhattan

## Resolution In Support of Action Steps to Reduce Systematic Racism in our Public Schools

### Whereas:

1. CB2 acknowledges the generational and institutional racism that our Black and brown brothers, sisters and non-binaries have suffered on our streets, in our schools and in our workplaces for far too long;
2. For this reason CB2 has formed the CB2 Equity Working Group, as a commitment to making racial equity a primary focus;
3. New York State has the most racially segregated public schools in the nation based on a report by the UCLA Civil Rights Project and heavily impacting these state rankings is New York City, home to the largest and one of the most segregated public school systems in the nation;
4. In February 2020, Edward Fergus, Ph.D. presented a District 2 Disproportionality Study, an [analysis of District 2 data](#), which concluded that Black, Latinx and male students disproportionately receive more IEPs and suspensions and are under-enrolled in gifted program;
5. Within District 2, schools like Lower Manhattan Community School, which enrolls many CB2 students in its middle school, have long-standing Restorative Justice and diversity programs in place, but there is no formal mechanism within District 2, Manhattan or the DOE for sharing resources or best practices;
6. Children as young as three show awareness of race and begin to categorize people by race and children of color who are on the receiving end of racial prejudice develop racial awareness even earlier due to their experiences;
7. Because young children see skin color and form judgements based on race and live in a world with racially biased associations, such as books and movies where princesses are mostly white or attend schools where teachers and students are mostly from a single racial group, educators must explicitly understand and address racism, implicit bias, colorblindness and microaggression and proactively develop a school environment and curricula that is anti-racist;
8. CB2's elementary schools primarily enroll students from a single racial group: PS 3 is 63% White; PS 41 is 69% White; and PS 130 is 87% Asian;
9. *White Privilege* was popularized by Peggy McIntosh in her 1988 paper "White Privilege and Male Privilege" in which she likened white privilege to "an invisible weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks" and also outlined 46 different examples of *white privilege*;
10. In majority white communities like CB 2 and majority white schools attended by many CB 2 area students, it is critical that white parents and community members understand their implicit biases and white privilege and serve as anti-racist advocates, by taking concrete action to undo systemic racism;
11. In an economically treacherous moment unseen since The Great Depression, we cannot allow for the police budget to remain sacrosanct while the city's and state's finances produce cuts to public education; and,
12. The backdrop of the coronavirus pandemic and remote learning has illuminated and exacerbated the vast inequities in our educational system and the need for investment in public education.

### Therefore, be it Resolved that Community Board 2:

1. Urges District 2 leadership to share broadly the results of the District 2 Disproportionality Study with school and parent leaders within District 2 and Manhattan and that these results materially inform the public discussions and policy recommendations of Community Education Council District 2 and the educational decisions of District 2 leadership;

2. Insists that the Department of Education -- centrally, in the borough of Manhattan, District 2 and every public elementary and middle school in Manhattan Community Board 2 -- commit to disrupting system racism and inequitable practices in our schools, including supporting:
  - a. School-wide anti-racist initiatives that involve principals and teaching staff, school and students and school and the parent community;
  - b. Mandatory school-wide diversity initiatives that advise on social justice policies, formation of affinity groups and the implementation of culturally relevant sustaining curricula;
  - c. Decolonizing all curriculum;
  - d. Ongoing, not one-time, training for school leaders;
  - e. Hiring of a more diverse teaching staff;
  - f. Borough and District-wide Diversity Councils to share resources and best practices and push for change; and,
  - g. Promotions to leadership position within schools, Districts, Boroughs and the DOE based on a clear and defined track record of anti-racist educational initiatives;
3. Urges the DOE to create a centralized reporting mechanism for measuring, tracking and publicly reporting initiatives to disrupt systemic racism, including:
  - a. Publicly reporting data on suspensions and IEP classification by race and gender; and,
  - b. Addressing goals and progress of diversity initiatives in each school's Quality Review and Comprehensive Education Plan, including, but not limited to restorative justice programs, formation of affinity group, implementation of culturally relevant sustaining curricula and hiring of a diverse teaching staff;
4. Insists that the DOE implement bold strategies to reduce the digital divide including:
  - a. Ensuring that every student has a remote learning device -- and laptops with keyboards for middle and high school students;
  - b. Providing access to high speed broadband, prioritizing low income communities and students living in transitional housing; and,
  - c. Funding from DOE central, not individual school budgets, which only would result in greater instructional cuts at schools that serve the most vulnerable students;
5. Implores our elected officials to outline a path towards budget justice that does not leave the police budget untouched at a time when all other essential services -- including education -- may be cut, so that we urge you to:
  - a. Reduce the NYPD budget by at least \$1 billion this year and reallocate a significant portion of this funding toward education; and,
  - b. Aggressively seek additional funding for our public schools and limit in-school budget cuts.

Vote: To Come

**Manhattan Community Board 2**  
The Village, SoHo, Chinatown  
 NoHo, Hudson Sq., Little Italy


## Education Panel

- How to Talk to Kids About Racism
- Dismantling Systematic Racism in our Schools


**WEDNESDAY  
 JUNE 17, 2020  
 6:30PM** via Zoom

**Please Register in Advance at:**  
<https://bit.ly/SchoolsCB2>


# Talking to Your Kids About **Racism**




**Shanna Douglas**  
Principal  
MS 896 LMCS



**Marisol Rosales**  
Exec. Superintendent, Manhattan  
NYC Department of Education



**Akeela Azcuy, PhD**  
Clinical Psychologist



**CB2 Schools & Education**

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## Meeting Protocol

**Please be Respectful to Whoever is Speaking**

- If you have a different view, ask a question or raise your hand.
- Please do not type derogatory comments in Q&A.

**Attendees will be on Mute until Q&A**

**Use “Q&A” or “Raise Hand” to Ask Questions**

*Due to time constraints, we may not be able to answer all questions.  
 Please abide by Q&A Norms*

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## Q&A Norms

- Use “I” vs. “you” statements
- Be brief and concise
- All questions (on this topic) will be heard and considered, subject to time
- Honor diversity and acknowledge varied experiences, needs and values
- For more interactive discussions: [Norms for Facilitating Courageous Conversations](#)
  - Stay engaged
  - Speak Your Truth
  - Experience Discomfort
  - Expect and accept non-closure
  - Listen for understanding

To submit questions, click “Q&A” on bottom of zoom screen and type in question.

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## Today's Speakers

- Marisol Rosales, Executive Superintendent, Manhattan, NYC DOE
- Akeela Azcuy, PhD, Clinical Psychologist
- Shanna Douglas, Principal, MS 896 Lower Manhattan Community School, NYC DOE
- Wanda Luz Vazquez, Senior Director for Race and Equity, NYC DOE

To submit questions, click “Q&A” on bottom of zoom screen and type in question.

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## Definitions

- Race
- Racism
- Implicit Bias
- Colorblindness
- Microaggression



### Anti-Racist

Taking action to undo systemic racism

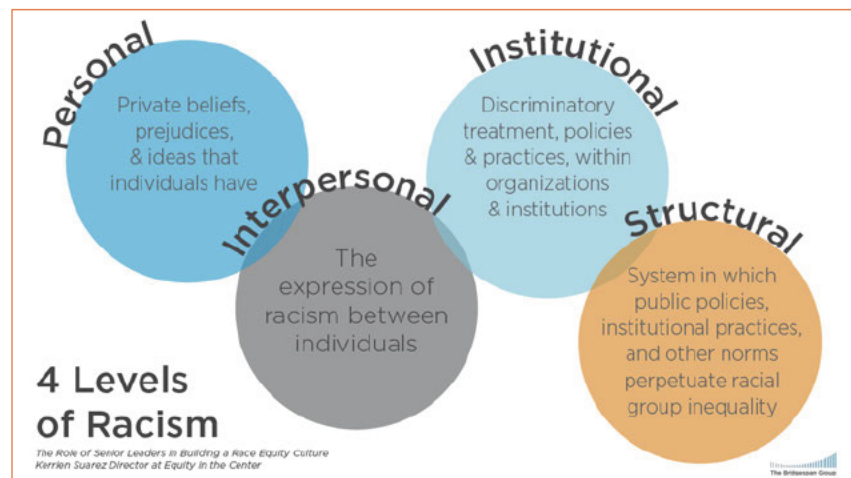
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## Race & Racism

**Race:** Social construct to classify people by skin color and physical features.

**Racism:** System of power and oppression based on race: individual, interpersonal, institutional and structural.



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## Implicit Bias & Colorblindness

**Implicit Bias** Attitudes and stereotypes that impact the how we think, our actions and the decisions we make w/o our awareness or intentional control.

**Colorblindness** When a person says they don't see color. Linked to greater frequency of committing microaggressions and invalidates trauma experienced by POC.

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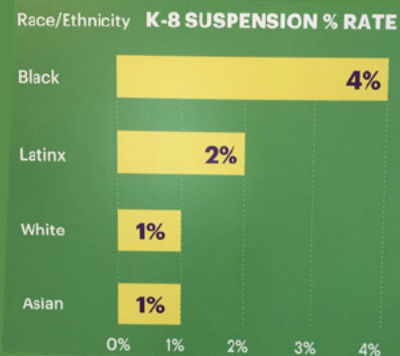
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## Implicit Bias in NYC DOE Schools

What we believe about people in poverty and people of color, including our biases and prejudices, informs how we teach and relate to people in poverty and people of color.

Class disparities in education are the result of inequities, not the result of culture or race

Black and Latinx NYC students in grades K-8 were suspended at twice or four times the rate of White and Asian students in 2019.



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## Microaggression

An act that is an invalidation of a person of color that the perpetrator is mostly unaware of having committed.



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## Talking to Our Children About Racism

### What We Know

- Children become aware of race and racism at a young age
- Understanding one's own implicit bias requires having honest conversations with yourself and self-education
- Children learn by seeing their parents take anti-racist action.

### What Parents Can Do

- Engage in explicit age appropriate dialog to interrupt connections.
- Regularly schedule playdates and connections with families that look different
- Use young children's concept of fairness as entry point into conversations about racism
- Read books with your child and ask about your child's feelings and thoughts about race
- Read books and have discussions with other adults regarding racism
- Understand effects of colorblindness
- Be an example / anti-racist advocate

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## Case Study: LMC

### Mission Statement on Race: (2016)

To **undo** the legacy of racism and oppression in this country, we at LMC...

- ★ **Work** toward racial and social justice
- ★ **Learn** about and practice navigating a diverse world
- ★ **Expect** and **encourage** conversations about race and issues of social justice

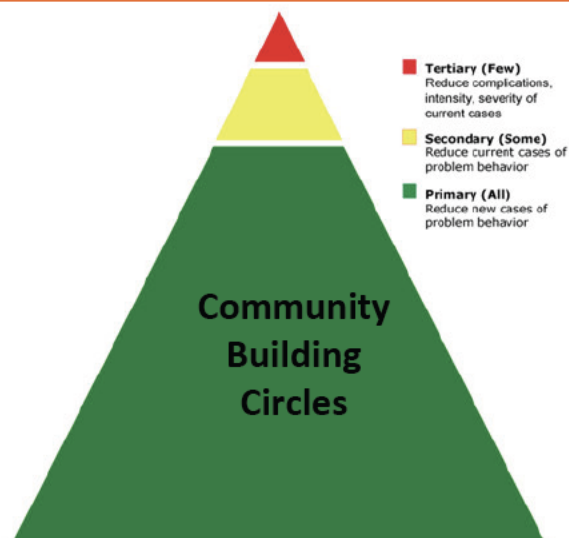
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## Restorative Justice: 2013 -

- Alternative to zero-tolerance policies
- Prevent school push-out and the school-to-prison pipeline
- Address behavioral disruption in a non-punitive way that supports accountability and enables healing
- Strengthen school community and social-emotional learning

**RESTORE HARM DONE TO COMMUNITY!**

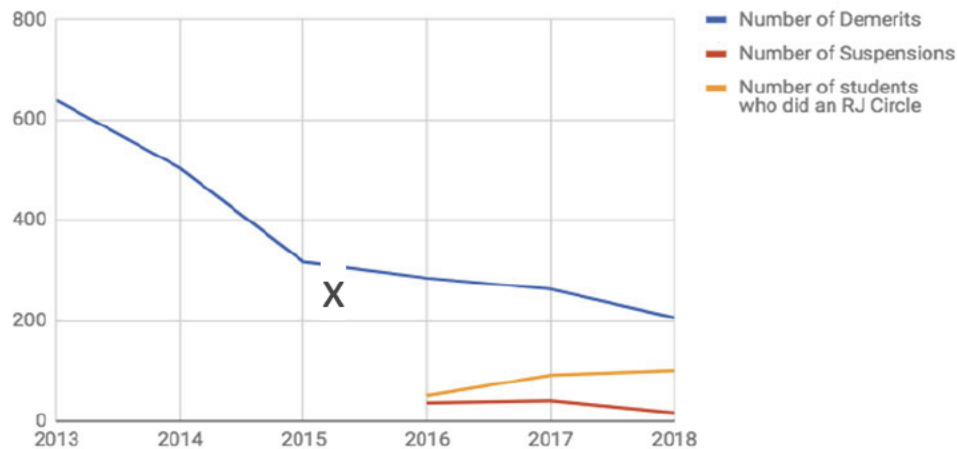


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## LMC: Restorative Justice Data

Number of Demerits, Number of Suspensions and Number of students who did an RJ Circle



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## LMC: Restorative Justice

- **Work with Staff: 2015 (Isolate Race)- current**
  - Looked at Data: *Do Black and Brown students disproportionately receive demerits?*
  - Border Crossers to lead workshops (Isolate Race and Racism)
  - Staff focus on race/racism through workshops, book clubs and **affinity groups**
  - **LMC's Race Vision Statement**
- **Continue to Review Data to Inform Work: Every year**
  - Demerits and suspensions
  - Special Education evaluation requests (Black and Brown)
  - Student surveys
  - State Math/ELA tests (Black and Brown)
  - MOSL (Measures of Student Learning) Assessments (Black and Brown)

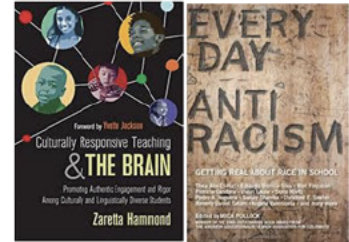
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## LMC: Restorative Justice

### SHIFTS:

- All staff and students can refer an incident to “Fairness Circle”
- Advisory lessons on identity, race and racism
- Affinity Staff Circles
- Instructional Shifts
  - Curriculum Changes (Students must see themselves in curriculum!)
  - School-wide goals (Isolate Black and Brown students) 2018-Current
    - High Expectations/ Leadership Opportunities and Building Relationships
    - Inquiry work (Isolate Black and Brown students)
      - Teacher interactions with Black and Brown students in the classroom
      - Tracking student performance and set specific student achievement goals



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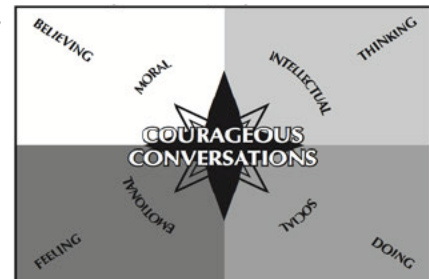
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## LMC: Discussions about Racism

*Initiated in-school dialogues with teachers and students. Shared plan and objectives with parents.*

*Parents could request materials to continue conversations at home.*

- Advisory Group Planned- Affinity Groups participated in lesson
- Home Room Session
  - Set Norms for Courageous Conversations
  - Talked about Trauma
  - Watched News
  - Asked Four Open-ended Questions
- Post Session: Survey & students invited, but not required to join groups
- Student Affinity Groups facilitated by students: conversations lasted over 1 hour!
- 2nd Survey: Students asked for another discussion.



### REFLECTION AND NEXT STEPS

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## Talking About Race Resources

### How to Talk to Your Children About Race and Current Events

- [Guidance for Family Conversations about George Floyd, Racism, and Law Enforcement](#) (Anti-Defamation League)
- [Talking to Kids About Racism, Early and Often](#) (New York Times)
- [Black Lives Matter Still Matters](#) (Teaching Tolerance)
- [Talking about Race for Parents & Caregivers](#) (National Museum of African American History & Culture)
- [Coming Together, Standing Up to Racism](#) (Sesame Street)

### Children's Books About Race

- [31 Children's books](#) to support conversations on race, racism and resistance (EmbraceRace)
- [Children's books by age](#) (American Psychological Association)

### District 2 Disproportionality

- [February 2020 Presentation](#). District 2 data shows that Black, Latinx and male students disproportionately receive more IEPs and suspensions and are under-enrolled in gifted programs. (Edward Fergus, Ph.D.)

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## Talking About Race Resources

### Anti-Racism Resources

- [For Parents, Educators and Allies](#) (Smithsonian, National Museum of African American History and Culture)
- [Engaging My Child: Parent Tip Tool](#): Good materials for families of color (American Psychological Association)
- [EmbraceRace](#): Webinars, articles and action lists. Examples: "How do I make sure I'm not raising the next Amy Cooper", "I [STILL] can't breathe: Supporting kids of color amid racialized violence."
- [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#) (Pretty Good Design)
- [Anti-Racist Toolkit](#), updated June, 15, 2020

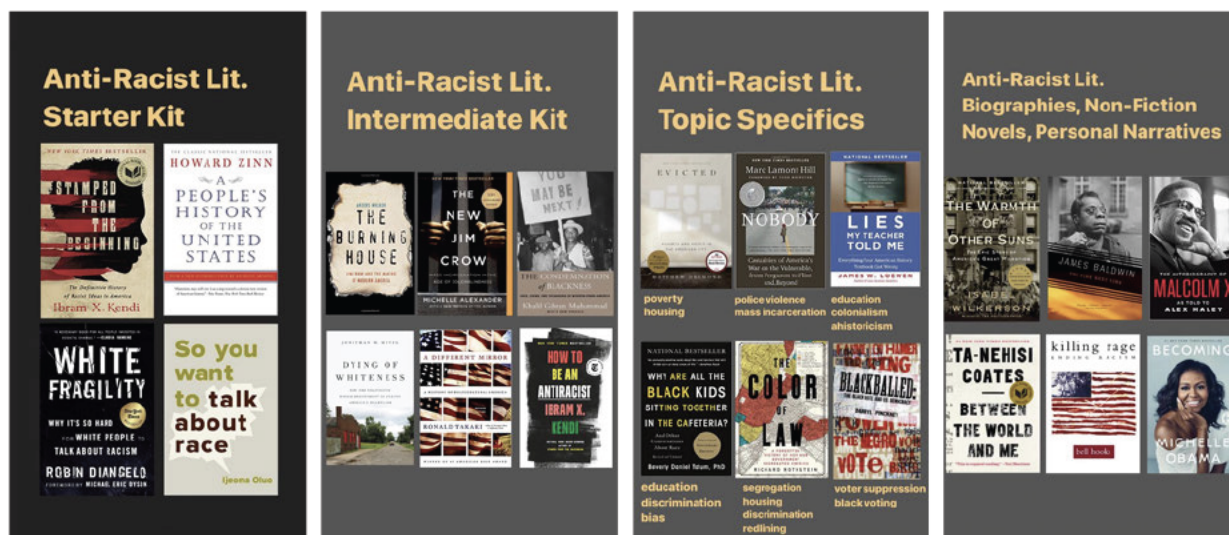
### Mental Health Resources

- [Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Trauma](#) (National Association of School Psychologists)
- [Radical Self Care in the Face of Mounting Racial Stress](#) (American Psychological Association)
- [Free Mental Health Support: NYC Well](#) For staff, students and parents.  
Call: 1-888-NYC-WELL (1-888-692-9355), Text: WELL to 65173, [Live Chat](#)

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## Anti-Racist Reading for Adults



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## Take Action

- Talk to Your Children
- Educate Yourself: Read, push yourself to have difficult conversations
- Push for Change at Your Child's School
  - Support school-wide anti-racist initiatives
    - Principal and Teaching Staff
    - School to Students
    - School to Parent Community
  - Support ongoing training for school leaders
  - Join or initiate a diversity committee that advises on:
    - Social Justice policies
    - Formation of affinity groups
    - Curriculum
  - Support hiring of a more diverse teaching staff
- Support Borough and District-wide Diversity Councils to Share Resources and Push for Change

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## Appendix: Definitions

<b>Race</b>	Social construct to classify people by skin color and physical features.
<b>Racism</b>	A system of power and oppression based on race: individual, interpersonal, institutional and structural.
<b>Implicit Bias</b>	Attitudes and stereotypes that impact the how we think, our actions and the decisions we make w/o our awareness or intentional control.
<b>Colorblindness</b>	When a person says they don't see color. Linked to greater frequency of committing microaggressions and invalidates trauma experienced by POC.
<b>Microaggression</b>	An act that is an invalidation of a person of color that the perpetrator is mostly unaware of having committed.
<b>Anti-Racist</b>	Taking action to undo systemic racism.

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