



**Five
Rivers®**

Turning children's lives around

"Do you
see me?"

**Exploring everyday racism
faced by young people in care**



About the 'Do you see me' project



Do you See Me?

Read this!

This guide was developed based on the needs expressed by young people in our care who are members of our Five Rivers' National Youth Participation Group. Sadly, many of

the young people we spoke to had experienced racism about the colour of their skin over their lifetime.

As part of our Participation Projects for 2023-2024, we ran workshops and Listening Groups facilitated by black and biracial staff members.

The young people's response, which was innovative and mature, was to create this booklet to be shared in schools and teacher training colleges with staff, carers, and young people. It is so helpful to step through the concepts and concerns set out so clearly.

What a wonderful project being published and shared here.

Pam McConnell

Founder and CEO Five Rivers

Background

In October 2023, sixteen young people who are fostered across the UK met for a workshop led by Sheree Von-Claire and Olivia Doherty from Five Rivers Child Care, and Ric Flo, the care-experienced rapper and artist.

The workshop gave young people the chance to share their experiences with one another in a safe space, where they could talk openly about living with racism. This included not only targeted attacks by bullies and openly racist people who intended to cause hurt, but also the unthinking behaviour of well-meaning people who did not understand the impact of their words and actions.



Olivia and Sheree have written this guide. They were supported in putting it together by Yvonne Coppard from the Royal Literary Fund. The photography has been created by our young people and Ric Flo.

Please note the names of the young people have been changed.

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Our aim

Using the everyday lived experiences of our young people, this guide illustrates a variety of examples of racism – intentional, unintentional, and structural. Many people don't realise that racism is still a problem or notice that their actions, lack of understanding, or lack of intervention create part of the problem. As a result, racism continues to exist and to thrive. This guide explains some of the psychological impacts that experiences of racism could have and offers the reader some ideas of how to help.

We have used the young people's own words, along with notes from research to provide background that illustrates the impact of everyday racism. Steps then outline how to support young people and contribute towards changing the narrative. Anyone working with children in care should recognise that they are in a unique and important position to make sure that young people in our care are protected from discrimination and prejudice. These young people need to be supported and empowered to voice their concerns. Additionally, people working with children in care commit to being allies in striving to create a society where every young person has equal opportunities to build their own identity and reach their full potential.

This is not a definitive guide; it invites readers to think about their own perceptions and behaviours, urging them to scratch beneath the surface, confront any unconscious bias, read more broadly around the topic, and embark on a lifelong journey toward cultural awareness and humility.

A note about terminology used in this book

There are many words used to describe the diverse range of people in the world. We often categorise people based on physical characteristics, and often we use the colour of their skin to categorise. You will hear terms like 'People of Colour', 'Minority Ethnicities', 'Ethnic Minorities', 'Black and Brown People', 'Biracial', 'Mixed Heritage', and many more terms used in different parts of the world and in different situations. Some or all of these will suit some people, while others won't identify with these descriptions.

Skin colour exists on a spectrum ranging from dark to light and there are a wide range of variations. Therefore, it is impossible to categorise or label people based on the colour of their skin.

We need to be sure that when we are referring to people, we describe them in a way that suits them. It is important to ask the person or group of people what term they find most fitting and use that preferred terminology.

What is certain is that people who have darker skin experience discrimination based on the colour of their skin, when you compare their experiences to those who have lighter skin. This book was developed alongside a wide range of young people, with a beautiful variation in their skin tones and colours, so throughout this book we will simply use the term **young people** to describe them.



Here is what young people told us about direct discrimination

What is direct discrimination?

Direct discrimination refers to the unfair treatment of an individual based on a characteristic such as race, gender, age, or disability. Discrimination can be direct or indirect, and its impacts are far-reaching.

"Everyone saw what happened when I got beaten up, but it was me who got suspended because the teachers said I looked angry when they saw me in school. Of course I was angry. I'd been beaten bad by someone loads bigger and the staff didn't do anything. I don't know what they saw when they looked at me." Ali

"A girl in my class was writing stuff threatening me on the black board. I told my carer, she told the school. But they didn't do anything. My carer wrote to the school but had no response and then they had to call. I feel sad and scared. Please make sure there is no bullying." Anna

"I live in Manchester. There are lots of people of colour, but it doesn't stop the racism. At my school they set up a WhatsApp group for me calling it 'Naeem's Family Tree'. The profile pic was of a monkey. People need to accept people for who they are, not how they look." Naeem

"In secondary I told the teachers of a racist incident. They didn't take it seriously. When my foster carer got involved, I got in trouble." Iman

"I had a hard time at school. The teachers are racist, and my friends are racist. They ask what your parents look like." Ali

These are experiences of **direct racism**. The effects on young people can be significant and far-reaching, building up to psychological and emotional harm, including:

- Low self-esteem and confidence
- Difficulties with establishing identity
- Internalised racism – a distorted sense of self
- Emotional distress and fear
- Social isolation
- Depression, anxiety, PTSD

What can we do to help?

- Be clear with young people that these experiences are racist and NOT acceptable. Support them to identify and challenge racist behaviour. You can find some useful resources at the back of this book to help you find ways to talk sensitively and in an age-appropriate way to all children and young people.
- Talk widely with all children about discrimination and racism and how they can be good allies for young people who must face it.
- When you see racism, challenge it. Call out the casual or hidden racism that can lurk in banter, jokes, conversation, and actions – even if it's not intentional. Explain why it's racism, and why it hurts.

The pressure is on me to educate them

"When I was in primary school, I used to get into trouble for correcting young people when they accidentally said racist things. Teachers talked to me differently when I would speak up and ask why. I would get into trouble.

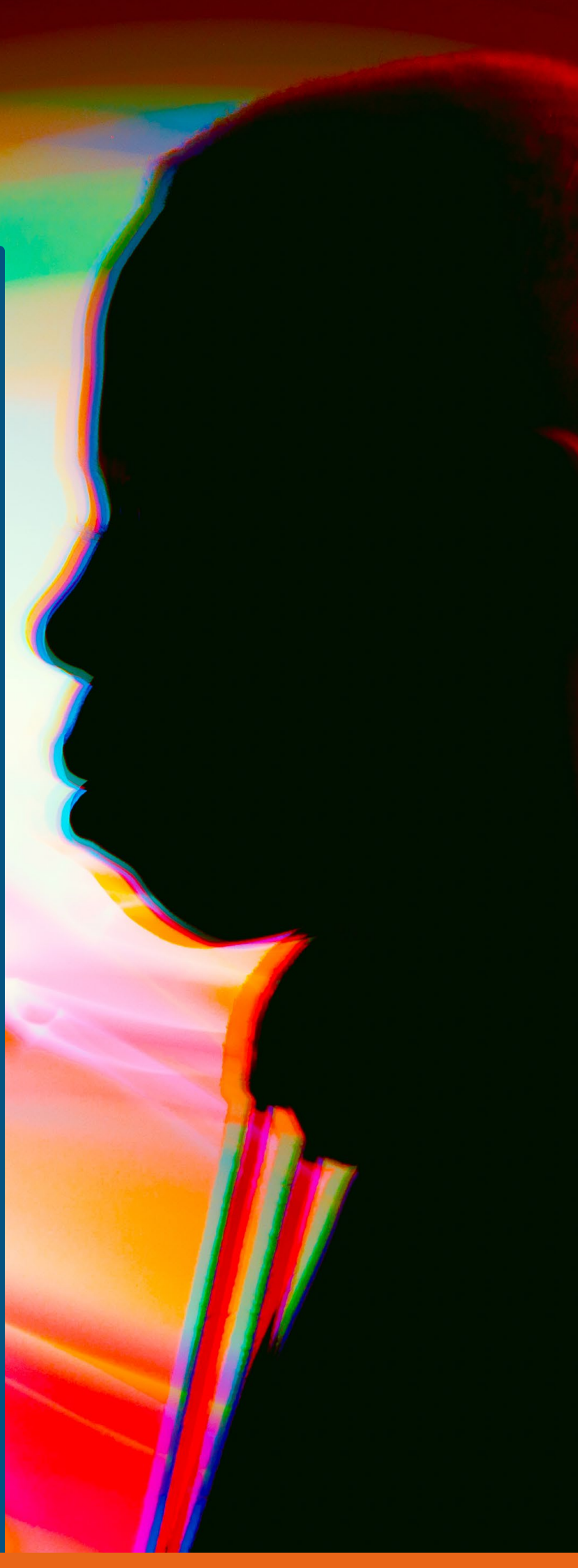
You needed to speak to the school. I would be the first person to step up to protect the one other black person. Why did no one else see this and step in to help?" Iman

Iman is talking about what we call **minority stress** which refers to the unique stressors and challenges members of marginalised groups constantly deal with. It leads to feelings of being 'othered', made to feel different, or isolated; frequently having to explain or educate people about your identity or protect others; a persistent fear of being misunderstood or misjudged.

"I live in Devon. There are only three people of colour in my school. I keep getting mistaken for the other young female of colour in the school. I used to have to make a big effort to dress differently and keep my hair different so they wouldn't mix us up. I didn't look anything like her. It was on me to remember the difference - to remember to dress and look different. Why is it on me to make it easier for them? It should really be your teacher's job, I have enough going on." Patricia

Mistaking one person for another based solely on their race can perpetuate and reinforce racial stereotypes and disregard someone's individual identity. It is dehumanising, culturally insensitive, and a **microaggression**.

Microaggression refers to subtle, often unintentional, forms of discrimination and prejudice that are directed at marginalised people. These can be verbal, nonverbal, or environmental actions that convey derogatory messages to the individual. The question, "Can I touch your hair?" is a common example. Microaggressions perpetuate stereotypes.





"I sometimes wonder what
my life would be like if I
would have been born white."

Here is what young people told us about internalised racism

What is internalised racism?

Internalised racism is the acceptance of a belief, or a negative stereotype about a someone's own racial or ethnic group e.g., being black is not as good or acceptable as being white. Accepting this discrimination leads to self-hatred and internalised ideas and feelings of being less than someone else.

"When I reported racist incidents at school, they made out that it was my fault - that I started the situation. It made me feel that I wasn't really wanted." Naeem

"I've been beaten up before and no one did anything - I got in trouble. The last time I worried it would stop me being able to stay in this country if I went to the police. I just needed to get on with it."

Having a visible difference and being a foster child, you must hide two things. This is hard. People are racist, you just must get on with it." Ali

"I've been called the N word twice. I've got to get on with it. I sometimes wonder what my life would be like if I would have been born white." David

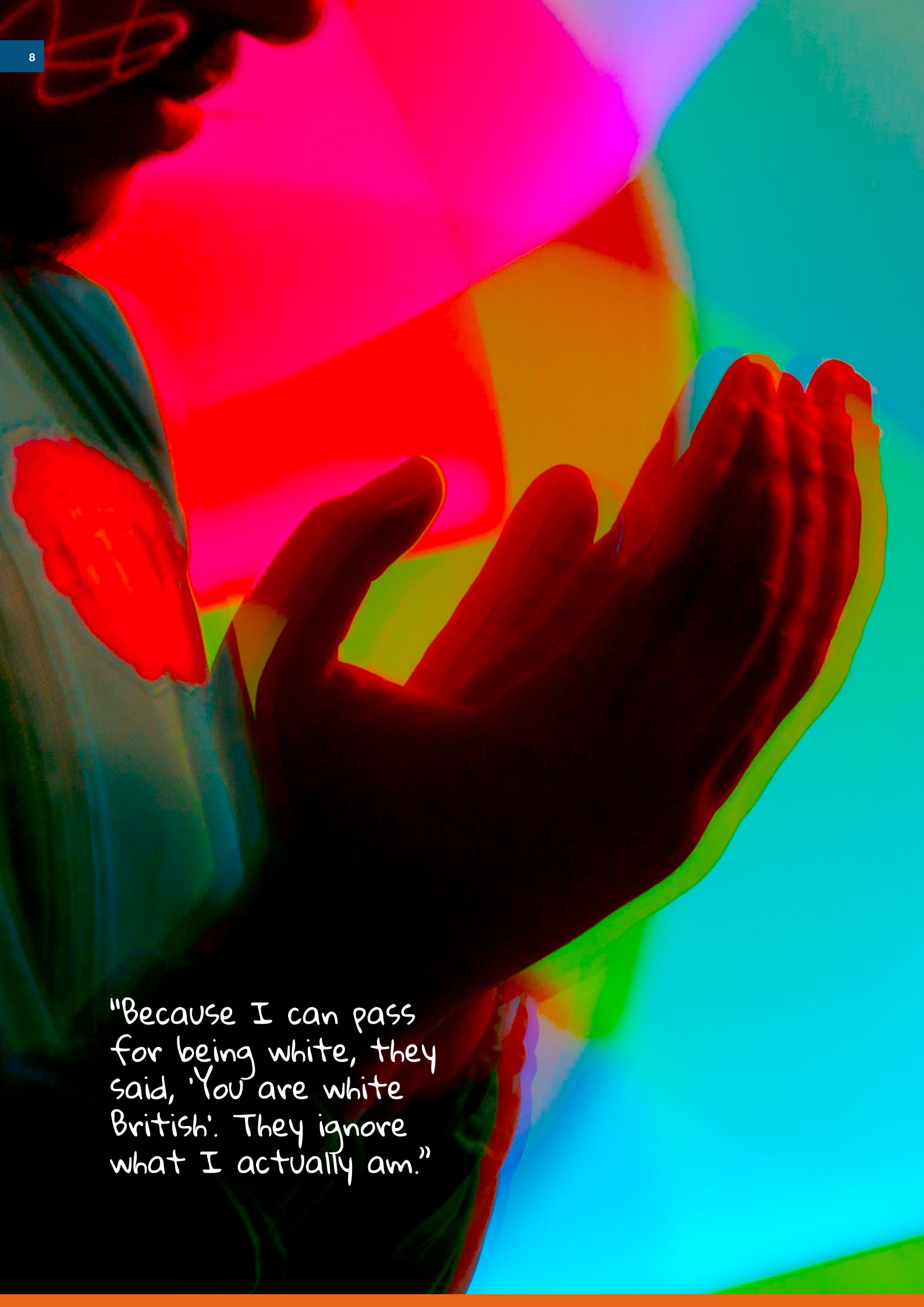
Ali, Naeem, and David are telling us that they feel that they need to "just get on with" racism and discrimination. They feel like there is no point in telling a teacher or adults about their experiences of racism because it might get them into more trouble. The burden of responsibility is on the victim to deal with the situation. This creates **minority stress**.

These are examples of young people **internalising racism**. It could lead them to have an internal narrative of, "this is what's expected and perhaps all I deserve; I just need to cope".

Young people can often feel worn down by the experience of forgiving people's ignorance, lack of awareness, or lack of effort to become more aware of the daily challenges they're facing. Ali is speaking about something called **intersectional discrimination**. This is where people experience unique overlapping forms of oppression – for example, being both black and care experienced.

What can you do to help?

- Don't be afraid to talk to young people about their experiences of racism. Make sure you report racism to the correct people. Help young people to recognise what they're subjected to as being something external. Racism is a problem that has been created by society; it is not something that is about them.
- Think about the various aspects of people's identity that could attract discrimination and how one thing intersects and impacts on another. Think too about how this creates a specific and unique experience for the individual. View the person, not through the first more dominant feature, but more widely. For example, yes, Ali is black; but he is also Muslim, an asylum seeker, and care experienced.

A close-up photograph of a person's arm and hand. A large, irregular, white burn scar is visible on the upper arm. The person is holding their hand up, palm facing forward. The background is a vibrant, abstract collage of colors including red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. The lighting is bright, highlighting the texture of the skin and the colors of the background.

"Because I can pass for being white, they said, 'You are white British'. They ignore what I actually am."

Here is what young people told us about colour evasion (formerly known as colour blindness)

What is racial colour evasion?

Racial colour evasion refers to the act of avoiding or disregarding discussions or an acknowledgement of racism and its impact on individuals and society. This often happens when people try to minimise the existence of racial inequality and discrimination.

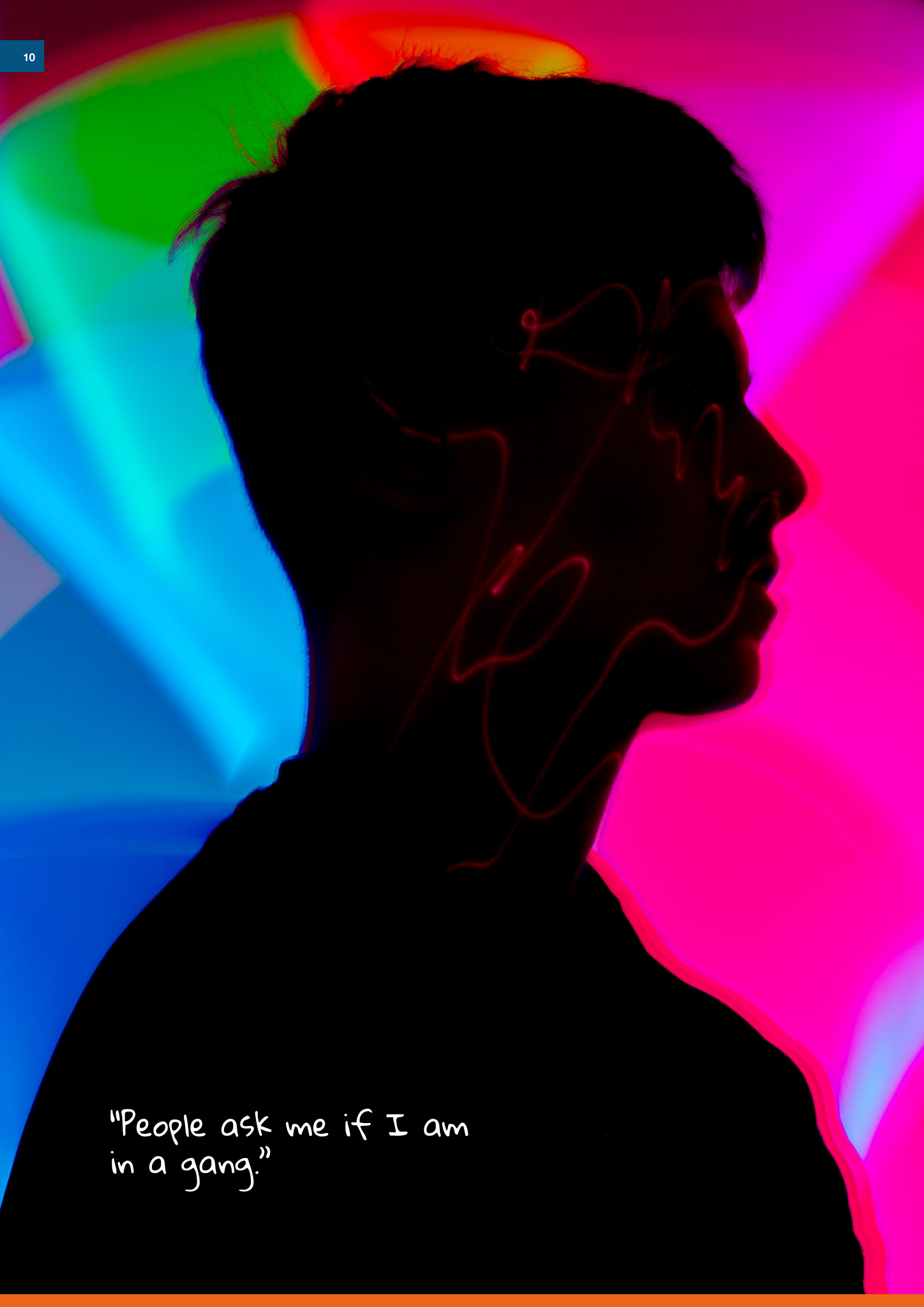
(The term racial colour evasion is sometimes used instead of the term racial colour blindness. Disability rights campaigners are campaigning for a change in the use of this language and terminology because they feel it confuses two subjects – and downplays the real lived experience of those people who have visual impairments, including colour blindness, and those who experience racism. There is a move to use the term racial colour evasion to acknowledge this difference).

"My carers are white and older. I don't want to have to explain my colour to them and why I look different. Because I can pass for being white, they said, 'You are white British'. They ignore what I actually am. My carers aren't racist, and I get worried about hurting their feelings, but I also want them to understand my identity and where my parents come from." Kai

Kai is giving us a great example of what is known as **colour evasion**. He is also showing us the unnecessary stress that is unintentionally placed upon him because he feels worried that he might hurt his carers' feelings. It's a common misconception that the solution lies in a society that attempts to erase colour. This concept, although usually practised with good intentions, not only assumes that race-based differences are unimportant and ignores the presence of systemic racism, but it helps to sustain racism by rejecting the experiences that our young people try to tell us about. To 'not see' colour means to not see people as individuals.

What can you do to help?

- Colour evasion needs to be challenged. You can do this gently and kindly. Explain that if you ignore someone's colour, you are not seeing them as an individual.
- Encourage them to replace the concept of colour blindness/evasion with **colour awareness**. Colour evasion ignores the existence of racial or ethnic differences, and this can perpetuate inequality. Colour awareness celebrates and encourages curiosity and education.



"People ask me if I am
in a gang."

Here is what young people told us about stereotyping

What is stereotyping?

Stereotyping is where we make assumptions, generalisations, or judgements about individuals. It's not looking at the individual but grouping people together. All too often, the stereotype is negative and steered by the media in newspapers, films, or even by politicians as a means of gaining particular votes.

Racial stereotyping is where someone assigns or gives a certain characteristic or trait to individuals based on their race or the colour of their skin. This perpetuates generalisation and reinforces harmful biases. Examples of racial stereotypes include: all Asian people are good at maths; all young black men are part of a gang. Stereotypes oversimplify the diverse abilities and talents of individuals and can lead to unfair expectations and discrimination.

"People ask me if I am in a gang." Kai

"I'm British Indian and I am also Sikh. The dinner ladies at my school won't let me eat the food I want because they think I'm Muslim. I keep telling them I'm Sikh, but they still make me eat Halal food. Everyone thinks because I'm Asian I must be Muslim." Rani

"People at my school ask why I dress in the style of a white girl. I live in Devon and in the shops, they only cater for a cultural style that's associated with white girls. I couldn't even find clothes that would represent my culture if I wanted. When I go into shops, I can't find stuff that reflects the black part of my identity or find make-up to suit my skin tone, and I struggle to find the right hair products." Patricia

"People want to be your friends because you look different. They don't want to know about who you are. They can treat you like a project which makes them look cool." Kai

These are examples of stereotyping. Racial stereotyping is one of the biggest issues we have for young people of colour, particularly boys.

With Rani's example, many people make the mistake of assuming that all Asian people are Muslim. There is a lack of understanding about the diversity within the Asian communities. Asia is a vast continent with a tapestry of cultures, religions, traditions, languages, and ethnicities. Assuming all Asian people are Muslim is incorrect and disrespectful.

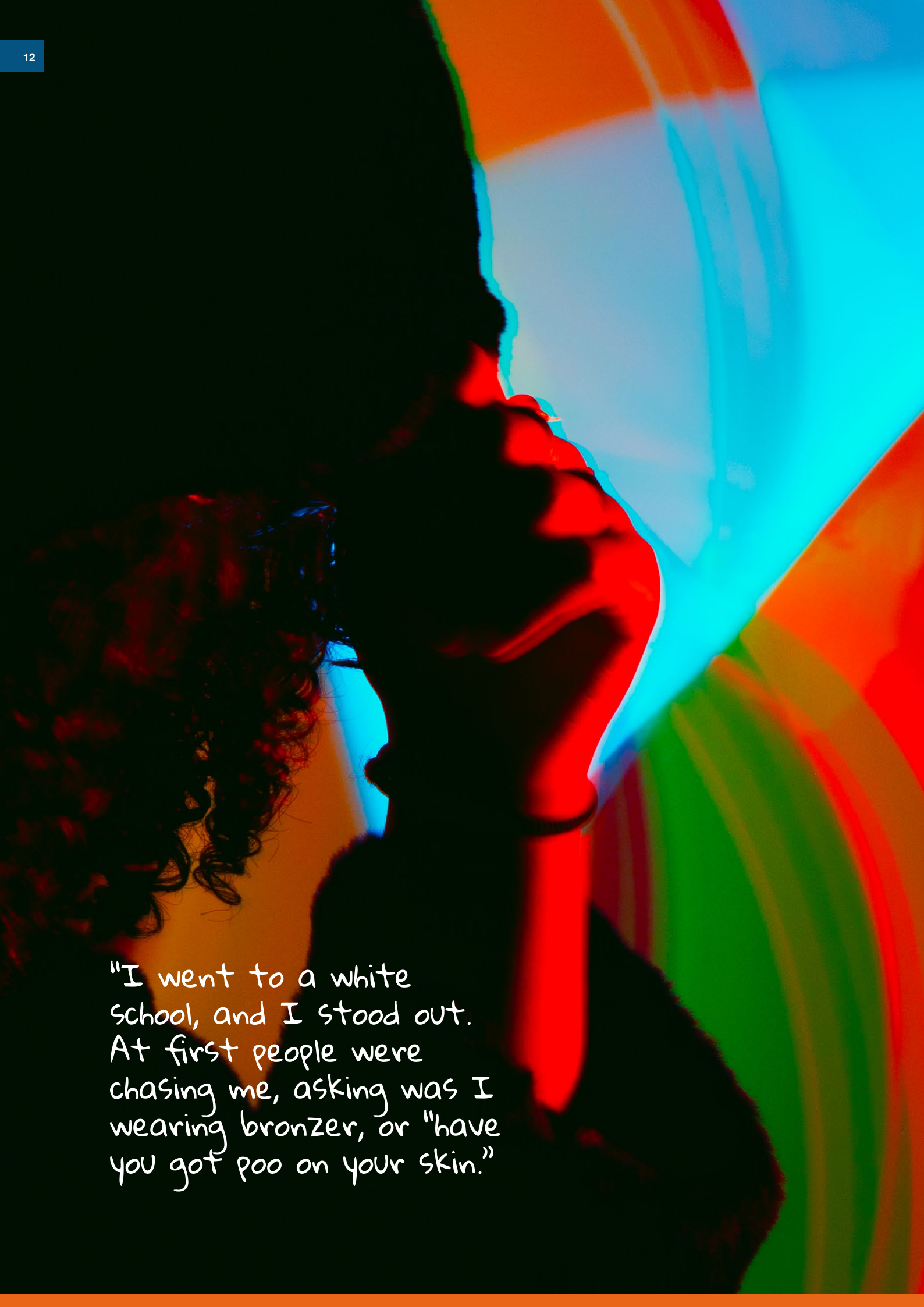
Patricia is unable to find clothes to represent her culture. When mainstream fashion fails to offer diverse clothing options it sends a message that certain cultural ethnicities and styles are valued more than others. The limited ranges in shops can mean they are more expensive, creating an unfair economic disadvantage.

Conversely, dressing in culturally significant or traditional clothing might attract negative attention or stereotypes. People can face ridicule or be subjected to assumptions about their background or beliefs.

Not everyone is able to meet and interact with people who don't look like them, or those from different cultures. Therefore, stereotypes such as those seen in media really can have a lot of power and influence. We may automatically make the wrong assumptions about people rather than see them as individuals. Stereotyping is oversimplified and reinforces prejudice. As Kai says, they don't want to know who you are.

What can you do to help?

- Self-examination and recognising what and where stereotypes exist in our own mind is a good starting place.
- Call out instances when you hear a stereotype.
- Challenge your own biases.
- Read as much as you can about the subject.
- Do training to help understand implicit and explicit bias. For Five Rivers staff and carers this is mandatory. Take time to fully understand, learn, and use what you've learned.
- Own up to negative assumptions and stereotyping and when you have got things wrong. Try not to be defensive if someone calls you out – being open to learning from mistakes is where we make the greatest progress.

A close-up, profile view of a person with dark, curly hair. The person's face is partially obscured by deep shadows, with light catching their cheek and the side of their head. They are looking upwards and to the right. The background is a vibrant, out-of-focus rainbow with distinct bands of red, orange, yellow, green, and blue. The overall mood is contemplative and artistic.

"I went to a white school, and I stood out. At first people were chasing me, asking was I wearing bronzer, or "have you got poo on your skin."

Here is what young people told us about feeling isolated

Racial discrimination can have a significant impact on the lives of young people, and this can often lead to feelings of isolation. When people experience discrimination based on the colour of their skin, they can feel excluded, marginalised, and misunderstood. This can then result in **a sense of isolation**, and they can struggle to find a place where they feel accepted and valued. The constant exposure to racism can erode self-esteem and confidence and can cause people to withdraw from social interactions and opportunities. The feeling of isolation becomes intensified when young people are unable to find relatable role models who support and understand their experiences.

"My carers are white. I live in the Northeast. There are no other people of colour. There are no teachers. I'm the only one. No one in primary nor secondary. I feel misunderstood and the odd one out." David

"I went to a white school, and I stood out. At first people were chasing me, asking was I wearing bronzer, or "have you got poo on your skin?" Kai

"In primary school they didn't make me feel that I was part of the school, they didn't want to be my friend. When I tried to join in with activities, they wouldn't let me join in. No one looked like me in the school. The teachers didn't do anything to help. They treated it like it was something small. It was just dismissed. No one understood how it felt. I wish the teacher was more supportive. I would tell her a lot and she wouldn't do anything to help. I felt excluded all the time." Naeem

Placing children with families in areas where they may be one of only a few people (or even the only person) with skin like theirs can seriously impact young people's sense of identity and belonging. It's not always possible to find carers that are a perfect match, but if you are working with a young person of colour, it is crucial to find and create appropriate support networks and role models for the children in these situations.

What can you do to help?

- Locate a community, either locally or online, which reflects the young person's identity. Consider joining networks such as the Five Rivers young diversity people's listening groups.
- Be mindful. Many other factors go toward building someone's identity: religion, music, political beliefs, country, or original heritage. Don't just look at skin colour alone.
- Keep talking to young people and help them to articulate their experiences – good and bad. Make sure that care planning includes an ongoing celebration of their identity and staff acknowledge minority stress as a risk factor.



"People often make comments about my facial features, like my lips or my nose and about my body shape - like it's OK to comment on these things."

Here is what young people told us about issues with skin, hair, body type and physical features

Young people can face a range of issues related to skin, hair, body type, and physical features. These challenges can arise due to a lack of understanding and familiarity about specific needs and cultural experiences. For instance, the fostering family may not have the knowledge or resources to properly care for and style a child's hair, resulting in young people feeling frustrated and self-conscious. Additionally, the differences in body sizes and physical features between the young person and others if they are in the minority, may lead to a sense of otherness and a struggle to find acceptance.

"At school getting changed in PE, we are told to hurry up and get a move on. Hair takes time. They're telling me to hurry up when things like hair or skin treatment take longer." Patricia

"I waited for 2 hours and then got a poor haircut." David

"I just use the same hair and skin products as the rest of my family." Mikenna

"People often make comments about my facial features, like my lips or my nose and about my body shape - like it's OK to comment on these things." Tolu

Individuals often face discrimination based on their hair. Natural hairstyles like afros, braids, or dreadlocks may be seen as unprofessional or unkempt. This can lead to unfair treatment or even exclusion in certain environments such as schools or workplaces.

As Patricia says clearly, "hair takes time". When adults overlook this and don't engage in conversation with or listen to Patricia, it reflects another aspect of microaggression. It is important to recognise that hair often holds deep significance in someone's identity and cultural background.

Young people can face unique skin concerns that require specialised knowledge and products. For example, they may be more prone to hyperpigmentation, an uneven skin tone, types of acne, or ingrown hairs. It's important to ensure that the unique needs of every young person's hair and skin are met.

Tolu told us about negative stereotypes and comments regarding body shape or features, such as lips, nose, or body size. These stereotypes may lead to body shaming or comments that reinforce harmful racial stereotypes.

What can you do to help?

- Recognise that hair is a significant aspect of people's identity and may have cultural significance. A young person should be supported to wear their hair as a feature of pride.
- You can find useful links about skin and haircare at the back of this guide.
- Encourage young people to be proud of their skin. Educate yourself about the needs and challenges of skin. Support young people to understand common skin concerns associated with particular skin types, such as hyperpigmentation, uneven skin tone, etc.
- Make sure all young people use sun protection. Black people's skin can burn, and they are also at risk of skin cancer.
- Challenge and confront stereotypes. If you don't quite know the correct response, do some research online.

Where next?

It is so important to highlight the experiences of young people in the UK. An environment needs to be fostered that nurtures their talents, passions, and ambitions, enabling them to thrive without the weight of societal expectations.

To change the picture, more allies are needed who are willing to confront racism, challenge the status quo, and actively safeguard the experiences of people of colour. A society can be cultivated where every individual feels valued, respected, and safe.

This guide is not only a resource for people working with children in care but it is also a call to action for society. It is a reminder of our collective obligation to dismantle the structural barriers and biases that hinder young people's progress and well-being. Through such efforts, a more equitable and inclusive society can be created that celebrates and uplifts the experiences, voices, and talents of people of colour.



If racism is real, true and present in Society, then racism experienced by a Black Child or Young Person in Care is also real, true and present. How do we know this? The Voices of these Sixteen Young People tell us, and there will be many more waiting for

someone to See them and provide a safe space for them to speak up about the same or similar experiences.

This guide will help you to See them. This guide will help you to help them. This guide will help you to make a lasting difference to improve the care, outcomes and life chances of not only the Black Children and Young People in your Care, but of every Child and Young Person that come into your Care.

Judith AM Denton

CEO & Founder of The Transformed You and The Black Care Experience

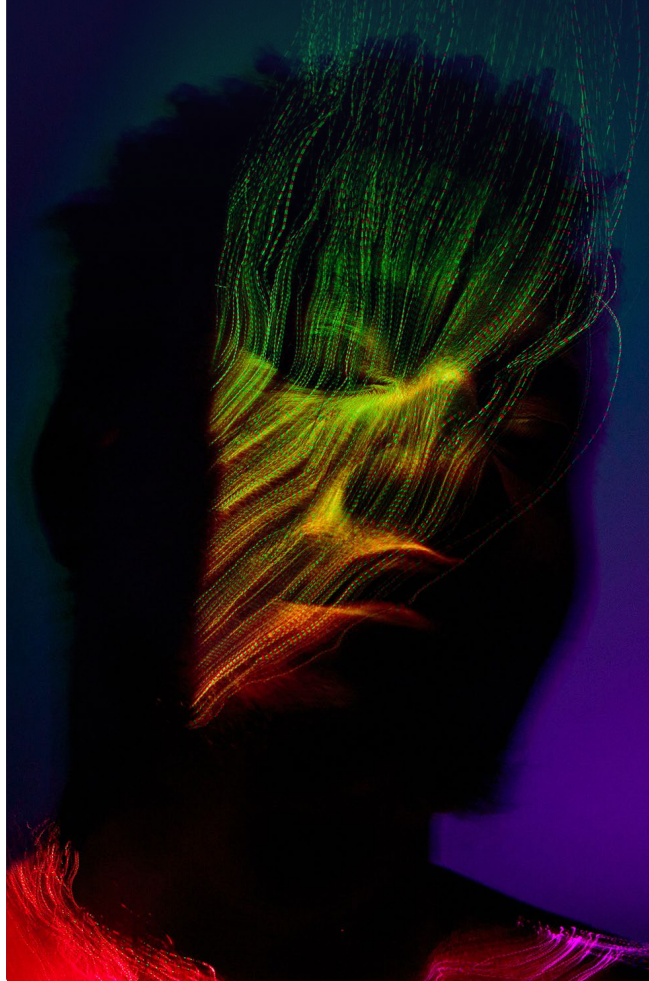
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It was a pleasure creating these photos with such vibrant young people. I hope our creativity and experiences are a seed of much needed change.

”

Ric Flo

Rap Artist and Care Leaver



Sheree's story



I'm the youngest of four direct siblings, and was born and raised in London – North, then South-East, surrounded by lots of second-generation children just like me. My son and daughter are adults in their mid and late 20's, and I also have a seven-year-old granddaughter. Exposure to racism's various guises comes both personally,

as a black British Jamaican, and vicariously, through my (bi-racial) children; for whom the white British 50% of their DNA often appears discounted by peoples' tendency to pigeonhole them based on their appearance.

I'm quite a sociable person, and I'm blessed with having truly great friendships – many since the 80's and 90's. There are eight of us in my main friendship group and I love the richness in our diversity. On the surface, I guess it looks as though we represent three main groups (black, white, and Asian): however, we're from eight very different places with different backgrounds, and different faiths. What we do all have in common though is the experience of what it's like to be othered for a variety of reasons – whether that's skin tone, accent, my friend who's larger than average, or my other friend who has a speech impediment. We've all at one time or another been made to feel "less than". I think the understanding and mutual respect which has come from that is a huge part of what's maintained our friendship into what's now a fourth decade.

Me and my friends have often discussed the importance of black history month; especially because, for some of us, there wasn't much positivity in not being white while we were growing up. Black history month is a focussed time of spreading awareness and highlighting the achievements and journeys of those who don't fit the majority profile. Often those journeys have been a struggle to fit in and gain acceptance. A struggle that people haven't had the opportunity, or the confidence, to voice. Black history month shouldn't remain confined to just October. People like me are black for the other 11 months of the year too.

When I was 12, my Mum decided to move us to Welling in Kent. Somewhere "better" than London. I chose to not go to the culturally mixed grammar school because I was good at sport and wanted to do more than just learn, so Mum compromised, and she agreed I could attend the secondary modern school in Bexleyheath, because it had a grammar stream. After living in Peckham then Lewisham, that school was a huge culture shock. Apart from me, my sister Karenne, and four or five others, every other child of the 1,600 children in the school was white.

I wasn't predicted to achieve. Even though assessment results placed me in the highest academic form of the grammar stream, people initially doubted my intellect – they'd slow their speech talking to me and queried whether I spoke or understood English. Then there were the comments and questions like, "What country are you from?", "You shouldn't be in the sun, you're dark enough!" "Can I touch your hair?" A teacher even told me once that I, of all people, should be excellent at throwing a javelin. Wow! Did she see me then as someone coming straight from the jungle holding a spear? Attending that school was my first introduction into how visible difference can significantly shape a person's view of you.

I worked hard. I got top grades in class, I was on lots of school teams, and I was a competition runner and shot putter. Those things gained me acceptance, and I was happy enough. I was popular. But excelling academically and in sport also taught me the meaning of the phrase "black tax". When I look back on those days now, I feel quite sad with the recognition that, to teachers and children alike, my acceptance was conditional and had a limit. It only came because in many areas I was gifted with the ability to perform twice as well. Yet, to many, because of how I looked, I was still only considered to be half as good.

Fast forward to my university days, and I wrote my dissertation on "Cultural Competency in Social Work: The Presence of its Absence." Sadly, this area continues to require growth and promotion across social care and education. This is important so black, brown, and Asian children are supported to age out of care secure in their identities and confident to find themselves positive positions in what can sometimes be a hostile society. I hope this handbook has helped.



"When I was in primary school, I used to get into trouble for correcting young people when they accidentally said racist things."

Six ways to build multicultural competence

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/flourish-and-thrive/202105/6-ways-build-multicultural-competence-and-combat-racism>

1 Begin where you are today.

Wherever you are, let yourself know it's OK to begin learning from here. It's better to begin from wherever you are today than not to begin at all.

2 Realise that acquiring multicultural competence involves learning new skills.

The three main skills (Mio, Barker-Hackett & Tumambling, 2021; Kite 2015) include:

- Becoming aware of your own cultural values and biases.
- Learning to value other people.
- Learning and using culturally relevant interpersonal skills.

3 Build your diversity and multicultural understandings.

Learning new skills and examining your old beliefs is a developmental process. Here are a few strategies:

- Engage a growth mindset (Dweck, 2016). Let yourself be open to learning about viewpoints different from your own.
- Seek out information from a variety of sources.
- Ask questions.
- Have conversations about topics such as: stereotypes, bias, inclusion, systemic racism, anti-racism.
- Keep learning, growing, and challenging your old ideas and beliefs.

4 Do the work.

Doing the work involves reading, learning, and even more. Doing the work involves the process of self-awareness and self-examination – looking at and owning up to our biases and working toward increasing our awareness of our own privilege (Kendi, 2019). This is not a one-time activity; rather, it requires a persistent process of self-awareness and self-development.

5 Join with others to discuss and take action to promote diversity, inclusion, anti-racism, and related issues.

Join or form a discussion group. Take a class. Dialogue with people from different ethnic, racial, or religious groups. Become involved in a task force to create positive change.

6 Talk to your children about race and inclusion.

According to experts, we adults share our attitudes about race with kids whether intentionally, unintentionally, or accidentally (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020; Hughes, 2003).

A person with dark, curly hair is shown in profile, facing right. They are wearing a large, ornate necklace made of many small, light-colored beads. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored rainbow arc that curves across the frame. The lighting is warm and dramatic, with strong highlights and shadows.

"When I go into shops, I can't find stuff that reflects the black part of my identity or find make-up to suit my skin tone, and I struggle to find the right hair products."

Glossary of terms

Adapted from source: <https://www.edi.nih.gov/blog/communities/understanding-racial-terms-and-differences>. Please see original glossary for full referencing.

“As society progresses towards inclusivity and equality, it is important to use language that acknowledges diversity without reinforcing outdated notions of race”.

Gamiel Yafai – Diversity Marketplace

A

Ally:

1. Someone who makes the commitment and effort to recognise their privilege (based on gender, class, race, sexual identity, etc.) and work in solidarity with marginalised groups in the struggle for justice. Allies understand that it is in their interest to end all forms of oppression, even those from which they may benefit in concrete ways.
2. Allies commit to reducing their complicity or collusion in oppression of those groups and invest in strengthening their knowledge and awareness of oppression.

Anti-Black:

Resistant or antagonistic to black people or their values or objectives.

Anti-Racist:

Someone who supports policies and actions that express the idea that racial groups are equals and eliminate racial inequity.

B

Bigot:

A person who is utterly intolerant of any differing creed, belief, or opinion.

“Black Lives Matter”:

A movement addressing the systemic violence against black people serving as an affirmation of black peoples’ humanity, their contributions to society, and their resilience in the face of oppression.

C

Colonialisation:

When one nation subjugates another, conquering its population and exploiting it, often while forcing its language and cultural values upon its people.

Colour Blindness:

To be colour blind is when people say they don’t see colour; however, this invalidates a person’s individuality and dismisses their unique journey and challenges as a person of colour. Link: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/gb/blog/culturally-speaking/201112/colorblind-ideology-is-form-racism>

Cultural Appropriation:

Theft of cultural elements for one’s own use, commodification, or profit - including symbols, art, language, customs, etc - often without understanding, acknowledgment, or respect for its value in the original culture. Results from the assumption of a dominant (i.e. white) culture’s right to take other cultural elements.

Culture:

A social system of meaning and custom that is developed by a group of people to assure its adaptation and survival. Groups are distinguished by a set of unspoken rules that shape values, beliefs, habits, patterns of thinking, behaviours, and styles of communication, encompassing religion, food, clothing, language, marriage, music, and behaviour.

D

Diaspora:

The definition of a diaspora is the dispersion of people from their homeland, or a community formed by people who have exited or been removed from their ancestral homeland.

Discrimination:

The unequal treatment of members of various groups based on race, gender, social class, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, and other categories.

Diversity:

Diversity includes all the ways in which people differ, and it encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another.

E**Ethnicity:**

Large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background, a social construct used to categorise and characterise seemingly distinct populations.

I**Implicit Bias:**

Also known as unconscious or hidden bias, implicit biases are negative associations that people unknowingly hold. They are expressed automatically, without conscious awareness.

Inclusion:

Involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognised. An inclusive society promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members.

Institutional Racism:

How institutional policies and practices create different outcomes for different racial groups. The institutional policies may never mention any racial group, but their effect is to create advantages for whites and oppression and disadvantage for people from groups classified as marginal.

Intersectionality:

Intersectionality is a way of understanding the different aspects of a person's identity, like gender, race, sexuality, disability, and how these aspects might combine to create unique experiences of discrimination or privilege.

Internalised Racism:

Internalised racism may be defined as the acceptance of stereotypes and discriminatory beliefs that cast one's own racial group as inferior, less capable, and less intelligent than that of the racial majority group. (Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000)¹.

M**Microaggression:**

Everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalised group membership.

Minority Stress:

Minority stress refers to the unique and chronic stressors experienced by individuals who belong to marginalised or stigmatised social groups such as racial and ethnic minorities, the LGBT community, and individuals with disabilities. This type of stress is a result of discrimination prejudice and social inequalities faced by these individuals on a regular basis. Minority stress can have significant negative impacts on mental and physical health as well as overall well-being.

N**Nationality:**

the status of belonging to a particular nation by origin, birth, or naturalisation; people having common origins or traditions and often constituting a nation; existence as a politically autonomous entity; national independence.

O**Oppression:**

Oppression is the systemic and institutional abuse of power by one group at the expense of others and the use of force to maintain this dynamic. An oppressive system is built around the ideology of superiority of some groups and inferiority of others.

P**People (Persons) of Colour (POC):**

A term primarily used in the United States and Canada to describe any person who is not white, it encompasses all non-white groups and emphasises the common experiences of systemic racism.

Power:

Power can be understood as the ability to influence others and impose one's beliefs. All power is relational, and the different relationships either reinforce or disrupt one another. Power is unequally distributed globally, and in society; some individuals or groups wield greater power than others, thereby allowing them greater access and control over resources. Wealth, whiteness, citizenship, patriarchy, heterosexism, and education are a few key social mechanisms through which power operates.

Prejudice:

A pre-judgment or unjustifiable, and usually negative, attitude of one type of individual or group toward another group and its members. Such negative attitudes are typically based on unsupported generalisations (or stereotypes) that deny the right of individual members of certain groups to be recognised and treated as individuals with individual characteristics.

Privilege & Power:

A set of unearned benefits that give us greater levels of privilege and therefore power. If those who have more power share that power with those who have less, we can relieve some of the pressures of the forces that create oppression.

R**Race:**

The term race refers to the concept of dividing people into populations or groups based on various sets of physical characteristics (which usually result from genetic ancestry). Races are assumed to be distinguished by skin colour, facial type, etc.

Racial Justice:

Systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial justice is defined as the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all.

Racist:

Someone who believes that people from other races are not as good as members of their own and therefore treats them unfairly.

Racism:

Different from racial prejudice, hatred, or discrimination. Racism involves one group having the power to carry out systematic discrimination through the institutional policies and practices of the society and by shaping the cultural beliefs and values that support those racist policies and practices.

Reparations:

Something that one does or gives to correct a mistake or wrongdoing. Reparations are usually made by governments to make amends for wars, serious crimes, and abuse.

S**Systemic (Systematic, Structural, Institutional) Racism:**

1. Policies and practices entrenched in established institutions, which result in the exclusion or promotion of designated groups. It differs from overt discrimination in that no individual intent is necessary.
2. Inequalities rooted in the system-wide operation of a society that excludes substantial numbers of members of particular groups from significant participation in major social institutions.

W**White Fragility:**

Discomfort and defensiveness on the part of a white person when confronted by information about racial inequality and injustice.

White Privilege:

The unquestioned and unearned set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices bestowed on people solely because they are white. Generally white people who experience such privilege do so without being conscious of it.

White Supremacy:

Various belief systems central to which are one or more of the following key tenets: 1) whites should have dominance over people of other backgrounds, especially where they may co-exist; 2) whites should live by themselves in a whites-only society; 3) white people have their own “culture” that is superior to other cultures; 4) white people are genetically superior to other people. As a full-fledged ideology, white supremacy is far more encompassing than simple racism or bigotry.

Whiteness:

White culture, norms, and values in all these areas become normative natural. They become the standard against which all other cultures, groups, and individuals are measured and usually found to be inferior.

Find out more

Here are more resources to help you on your journey to being an anti-racist childcare worker and uphold children's rights.

- **Learn to talk about race with your kids**
www.nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race
- **Talk to young people about racism (NSPCC)**
www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/children-race-racism-racial-bullying
- **Racism and mental health**
www.mind.org.uk/information-support/tips-for-everyday-living/racism-and-mental-health
- **Care to Listen podcast series**
<https://open.spotify.com/episode/5cO9Yrl34ce0FvezrGMnE4>
- **Resources on Issuu**
www.issuu.com/fiveriverschildcare/stacks/e02eb6102a2e4d2f849803893af07f67
- **Proud To Be Me is a rap made by our young people speaking about pride in their identity**
www.youtube.com/watch?v=01pOhYSpHsw
- **Read our Five Rivers' Skin & Hair Guide**
https://issuu.com/fiveriverschildcare/docs/fr_haircarebooklet_a4
- **Song performed by care experienced rapper Ric Flo, and Judith Denton, Founder of Black Care Experience**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ePgNRM63bFs>



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