Online Tools for Extension Professionals to Help Families Talk about Race and Racism: A Resource List and Evaluation Method

This article provides a list of 11 online resources systematically evaluated for relevance and credibility. Extension faculty and staff can use these resources to educate themselves and the public on how to discuss the topics of race, racism, and anti-racist. The criteria utilized to evaluate the quality of these online resources are provided and can be used by Extension professionals to evaluate the quality of online materials on any topic.

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The authors of this article are four members of a recently formed working group at the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension whose goal is to provide resources to educate parents about race and racism, as well as support meaningful conversations between parents and children about social justice and equity. This working group was created in response to participants of parenting education programs requesting information from Extension faculty and staff about how to talk to their children about racism during the summer of 2020. This informal group came together to create resources that would prepare Extension faculty and staff to answer these requests. The group

determined that we would adopt an anti-racist focus, which we define as actively working to dismantle racist ideas, beliefs, behaviors, policies, and social structures (Kendi, 2019).

We prepared a series of Extension publications and fact sheets on topics including how to talk to children about race and racism, how to use children's books to promote anti-racism, resources for parents to begin their own anti-racist journey, and anti-racist terminology. Contained in this article is a list of online resources systematically evaluated for relevance and credibility which were collected as part of this work. We hope

that Extension faculty and staff will use these resources to educate themselves and the public about race, racism, and anti-racism. These resources may be best suited for Family and Consumer Sciences (FCS) programming, but the evaluation methodology can be used across all Extension program areas. Becoming knowledgeable in these topics will allow Extension professionals to provide resources to those who are interested, feel prepared to answer questions from the people they serve, and navigate complex social justice conversations.

While Extension professionals have always focused on reaching under-served and diverse populations, additional efforts are needed to bring inclusivity and openness about controversial topics to the forefront of programming. This goes beyond incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion into outreach and marketing materials. It is necessary to weave anti-racist information and education throughout all program delivery. Allowing open conversation about sensitive topics such as race provides an opportunity to mindfully educate in the communities we serve.

Racism exists at several levels: individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural (National Museum of African American History and Culture, 2020). Extension is well-positioned to make an impact on all of these levels. Through policy, systems, and environment work, we can have a positive impact on institutional and structural racism. We can also affect interactions between individuals by educating them about anti-racism, the deliberate effort needed to overcome the unconscious biases we all have, and by helping parents begin conversations about race with their children.

It is important that parents and caregivers talk openly with children of all ages about race, racism, and anti-racist work. These conversations and exposure to different races should begin as early as six months (Anderson & Dougé, 2020). Between two and three years of age, children begin to categorize behaviors, both their own and those of others, based on race (Hirschfeld, 2008); essentially creating patterns of expected behavior for individuals of different races. Some research findings suggest when children are as young as four or five they are likely to favor their own racial group and assign positive attributes to their group (Lee et al., 2017; Aboud & Amato, 2001; Cristol & Gimbert, 2008; Katz & Kofkin, 1997).

OBJECTIVE

In this paper, we provide a list of online resources that can be used by Extension professionals and the parents they serve to learn more about race, racism, and anti-racist work. All of the resources meet three criteria for relevance and five criteria for credibility. The list is divided into three categories: 1. Resources to help parents and other caregivers talk to their children about race and racism, 2. Resources to help parents and other caregivers find children's books, and 3. Resources to help adults and adolescents better understand race, racism, and anti-racist work. This list can be used by Extension professionals to educate themselves and the parents and other caregivers they serve.

RESULTS

Table 2 includes nine online resources that met the three criteria for relevance and the five criteria for credibility. Our working group identified 17 multi-page online resources. Four online resources were eliminated because they did not meet the relevance criteria, two were eliminated because they did not meet the accuracy criteria, and one was eliminated because it did not meet the authority criteria.

METHODOLOGY

To compile the list of online resources, we first created a list of all multi-page websites collected while preparing Extension publications and fact sheets as a working group. We included only multi-page sites and excluded individual pages (e.g., blog posts and articles) because multi-page sites are more likely to be permanent and frequently updated. Next, we evaluated three separate inclusion criteria to establish the relevance of each website as shown in Table 1.We then evaluated the credibility of each resource using the five components of credibility identified by Metzger (2007) in her review of the literature: accuracy, authority, objectivity, currency, and coverage. We operationalized these five components using the inclusion criteria shown below.

Table 1.	
Relevance Criteria	**Inclusion Criteria**
Relevance	1. Website created for the public or a general audience. If the audience is not stated, then the site is written in plain language and does not include scientific jargon. 2. Website promotes anti-racism. Anti-racism is defined as the active dismantling of racist ideas, beliefs, and policies. 3. Website is free and is accessible by people in every U.S. state, Washington, D.C. and the territories. *Website was only included if all criteria were met.*
Credibility Criteria	**Inclusion Criteria**
Accuracy	1. Website includes citations AND the sources cited are peer-reviewed articles, scholarly books, or U.S. governmental offices. 2. Website or individual articles on the website or sections of the website are written by, reference, or include quotes from experts. Experts are defined as individuals with advanced degrees in a relevant field or another relevant credential (e.g., employment at a university or in a U.S. governmental office). *Website was included if either criterion was met.*
Authority	1. Website was created by a U.S. government office, professional association, or university AND contact information for the office, association or university is provided. 2. The authors of individual articles on the website or sections of the website are identified AND are experts. Experts are defined as individuals with advanced degrees in a relevant field or another relevant credential (e.g., employment at a university, relevant professional association, or in a U.S. government office). *Website was included if either criterion was met.*
Objectivity	1. The intention or goal of the website is stated clearly 2. Language on the website appears to be free from bias. 3. No obvious conflicts of interest or commercial interests are identified. *Website was included only if all criteria were met.*
Currency	1. Website was published or updated after 2010. 2. Links on the website work (i.e., they are not dead links). *Website was included only if both criteria were met.*
Coverage	1. No obvious gaps in what is covered based on the stated intention or goal of the site. *Website was included if this criterion was met.*

Table 2: Online resources for learning about race, racism, and anti-racist work and talking to children about these topics

Name	URL	Description from the Website	Author or Creator	Intended Audience
Resources to Help Parents and Other Caregivers Talk to their Children About Race and Racism				
Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow (Module 13)	https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/race-today-what-kids-know-as-they-grow/	The Learning Modules website provides two online modules that will help parents and other caregivers: 1.) "learn how children form racial identities and understandings."	The University of Washington, Institute for Learning and Brain Science	Parents and other caregivers of young children
"Racing" Toward Equality: Why Talking to Your Kids About Race is Good for Everyone	https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/racing-towards-equality-why-talking-to-your-kids-about-race-is-good-for-everyone	"learn how to talk to children about race and why these conversations are important."	The University of Washington, Institute for Learning and Brain Science	Parents and other caregivers of young children
RESilience, Uplifting Youth Through Healthy Communication About Race	https://www.apa.org/res	"The RESilience Initiative [provides] resources to parents and others to assist them in promoting strength, health, and well-being among youth of color. Positive racial identities serve as protective factors and bolster resilience."	American Psychological Association	Parents and other caregivers of children from 3-18 years old, especially of youth of color. Currently, the materials primarily address the African American Community, but there are plans to expand to include materials for other racial/ethnic groups.
Talking to Young Children About Race and Racism	https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism	"Tips and resources to help [parents and caregivers] have a meaningful conversation with young children about race, racism, and being anti-racist."	PBS KIDS	Parents and other caregivers of young children

Table 2: Online resources for learning about race, racism, and anti-racist work and talking to children about these topics

Name	URL	Description from the Website	Author or Creator	Intended Audience
Resources to Help Parents and Other Caregivers Find Children's Books				
Books with Characters of Color	https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/books-with-characters-of-color	a list of books that "promote diversity and inclusion and teach readers about different cultures. And on top of that, they offer tons of positive roles [sic] models, especially for kids of color."	Common Sense Media, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide technology and entertainment recommendations to parents, caregivers, and educators. Also conducts advocacy work around protecting consumer privacy and increased internet access and holding "tech companies accountable to ensure a healthy internet for all."	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children of all ages
Books About Racism and Social Justice	https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/books-about-racism-and-social-justice	a list of books that "tell stories of people's experiences of racism and of those who put their bodies on the line for the cause of equality under the law and social justice."		Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children of all ages
Diverse Book Finder	https://diversebookfinder.org/	"The Diverse BookFinder is a comprehensive collection of children's picture books featuring Black and Indigenous people and People of Color (BIPOC). [They have] cataloged and analyzed trade picture books fitting this criteria [sic], published since 2002, to surface and create: a unique circulating collection, a search tool, and a source of critical data."	Faculty and students from Bates College and a children's book author	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children in grades K-3
Where to Find Diverse Books	https://diversebooks.org/resources-old/where-to-find-diverse-books/	"A list of websites that offer recommendations for diverse titles. [The] list is not exhaustive."	We Need Diverse Books, a non-profit whose mission is to help children find and access books with diverse characters founded and run by a team that includes children's book authors, educators, and librarians.	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children of all ages

Table 2: Online resources for learning about race, racism, and anti-racist work and talking to children about these topics

Name	URL	Description from the Website	Author or Creator	Intended Audience
Resources to Help Adults and Adolescents Better Understand Race, Racism, and Anti-racist Work				
Project Implicit	https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html	This website consists of Implicit Association Tests that provide "the opportunity to assess conscious and unconscious preferences for over 90 different topics… and [contribute to] psychological research on thoughts and feelings."	Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases."	All teens and adults
Racial Equity Tools	https://www.racialequitytools.org/	This website offers "tools, research, tips, curricula, and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working for racial justice at every level – in systems, organizations, communities, and the culture at large."	Racial Equity Tools was created when three websites merged: racialequitytools.org/, evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org, racialequitylearning.org.	All teens and adults
Resources to Better Understand Race, Racism, and Policing	https://news.ucr.edu/articles/2020/06/09/resources-better-understand-race-racism-and-policing	"In the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody, we asked faculty and staff members at the University of California, Riverside, who study race, racism, policing, and incarceration to offer their recommendations for resources to learn more about these issues in the U.S. The following list of media — which will be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect new submissions — so far features the input of 10 members of the UCR community."	10 members of the University of California, Riverside community, including faculty, graduate students, and researchers.	All teens and adults

IMPLICATIONS FOR EXTENSION

Nationally, Family and Consumer Science Extension programs cover an array of topics such as child development, trauma-informed care, parenting, developing coping skills, and healthy relationships. However, in our experience Extension programming often does not address race and racism. As racial injustice is discussed more frequently in the media and the communities Extension serves, this topic is particularly relevant. It is important that Extension programming recognizes the experiences that parents and children have around race and racism in order to make more meaningful impacts.

Our hope is that the table of resources provided in this article will help Extension professionals discuss race and racism throughout their communities. The online resources listed in Table 2 can be used by Extension professionals for their own edification or shared with community members. Additionally, the relevance criteria and the five credibility criteria, outlined in Table 1 can be used to evaluate the quality of any online resource. These criteria can be used by both Extension professionals and shared with the public to identify credible sources for information on any topic.

CALL TO ACTION

It is an obligation as Extension professionals to be aware of, and respond to, the needs and concerns of the communities we serve (National Institute of Food and Agriculture). Our response should go beyond thoughtful program design and recruitment to include the dissemination of unbiased research and resources about anti-racism. We should strive to create learning environments that allow our participants to feel protected and support them in bravely sharing their experiences. Creating a community of safety and inclusivity is dependent on open and truthful communication about matters that profoundly impact individuals such as discrimination, race, and bias.

You may click here to access the references, tables, and graphs for this article.

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Relevance Criteria	**Inclusion Criteria**
Relevance	1. Website created for the public or a general audience. If the audience is not stated, then the site is written in plain language and does not include scientific jargon. 2. Website promotes anti-racism. Anti-racism is defined as the active dismantling of racist ideas, beliefs, and policies. 3. Website is free and is accessible by people in every U.S. state, Washington, D.C. and the territories. *Website was only included if all criteria were met.*
Credibility Criteria	**Inclusion Criteria**
Accuracy	1. Website includes citations AND the sources cited are peer-reviewed articles, scholarly books, or U.S. governmental offices. 2. Website or individual articles on the website or sections of the website are written by, reference, or include quotes from experts. Experts are defined as individuals with advanced degrees in a relevant field or another relevant credential (e.g., employment at a university or in a U.S. governmental office). *Website was included if either criterion was met.*
Authority	1. Website was created by a U.S. government office, professional association, or university AND contact information for the office, association or university is provided. 2. The authors of individual articles on the website or sections of the website are identified AND are experts. Experts are defined as individuals with advanced degrees in a relevant field or another relevant credential (e.g., employment at a university, relevant professional association, or in a U.S. government office). *Website was included if either criterion was met.*
Objectivity	1. The intention or goal of the website is stated clearly 2. Language on the website appears to be free from bias. 3. No obvious conflicts of interest or commercial interests are identified. *Website was included only if all criteria were met.*
Currency	1. Website was published or updated after 2010. 2. Links on the website work (i.e., they are not dead links). *Website was included only if both criteria were met.*
Coverage	1. No obvious gaps in what is covered based on the stated intention or goal of the site. *Website was included if this criterion was met.*

Table 2: Online resources for learning about race, racism, and anti-racist work and talking to children about these topics

Name	URL	Description from the Website	Author or Creator	Intended Audience
Resources to Help Parents and Other Caregivers Talk to their Children About Race and Racism				
1.) Race Today: What Kids Know as They Grow (Module 13) and 2.) "Racing" Toward Equality: Why Talking to Your Kids About Race is Good for Everyone	1.) https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/race-today-what-kids-know-as-they-grow/ and 2.) https://modules.ilabs.uw.edu/module/racing-towards-equality-why-talking-to-your-kids-about-race-is-good-for-everyone/	The Learning Modules website provides two online modules that will help parents and other caregivers: 1.) "learn how children form racial identities and understandings." and 2.) "learn how to talk to children about race and why these conversations are important."	The University of Washington, Institute for Learning and Brain Science	Parents and other caregivers of young children
RESilience, Uplifting Youth Through Healthy Communication About Race	https://www.apa.org/res	"The RESilience Initiative [provides] resources to parents and others to assist them in promoting strength, health, and well-being among youth of color. Positive racial identities serve as protective factors and bolster resilience."	American Psychological Association	Parents and other caregivers of children from 3-18 years old, especially of youth of color. Currently, the materials primarily address the African American Community, but there are plans to expand to include materials for other racial/ethnic groups.
Talking to Young Children About Race and Racism	https://www.pbs.org/parents/talking-about-racism	"Tips and resources to help [parents and caregivers] have a meaningful	PBS KIDS	Parents and other caregivers of young children

conversation with young children about race, racism, and being anti-racist."

Resources to Help Parents and Other Caregivers Find Children's Books				
1.) Books with Characters of Color	1.) https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/books-with-characters-of-color	These websites provide: 1.) a list of books that "promote diversity and inclusion and teach readers about different cultures. And on top of that, they offer tons of positive roles [sic] models, especially for kids of color."	Common Sense Media, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to provide technology and entertainment recommendations to parents, caregivers, and educators. Also conducts advocacy work around protecting consumer privacy and increased internet access and holding "tech companies accountable to ensure a healthy internet for all."	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children of all ages
and	and	and		
2.) Books About Racism and Social Justice	2.) https://www.commonsensemedia.org/lists/books-about-racism-and-social-justice	2.) a list of books that "tell stories of people's experiences of racism and of those who put their bodies on the line for the cause of equality under the law and social justice."		
Diverse Book Finder	https://diversebookfinder.org/	"The Diverse BookFinder is a comprehensive collection of children's picture books featuring Black and Indigenous people and People of Color (BIPOC). [They have] cataloged and analyzed trade picture books fitting this criteria [sic], published since 2002, to surface and create: a unique circulating collection, a search tool, and a source of critical data."	Faculty and students from Bates College and a children's book author	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children in grades K-3
Where to Find Diverse Books	https://diversebooks.org/resources-old/where-to-	"A list of websites that offer recommendations for diverse titles. [The] list is not exhaustive."	We Need Diverse Books, a non-profit whose mission is to help children find and access books with	Parents and other caregivers, librarians, and educators looking for books for children of all ages

find-diverse-books/ | | | diverse characters founded and run by a team that includes children's book authors, educators, and librarians.

Resources to Help Adults and Adolescents Better Understand Race, Racism, and Anti-racist Work				
Project Implicit	https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/takeatest.html	This website consists of Implicit Association Tests that provide "the opportunity to assess conscious and unconscious preferences for over 90 different topics… and [contribute to] psychological research on thoughts and feelings."	"Project Implicit is a non-profit organization and international collaboration between researchers who are interested in implicit social cognition - thoughts and feelings outside of conscious awareness and control. The goal of the organization is to educate the public about hidden biases and to provide a "virtual laboratory" for collecting data on the Internet."	All teens and adults
Racial Equity Tools	https://www.racialequitytools.org/	This website offers "tools, research, tips, curricula, and ideas for people who want to increase their own understanding and to help those working for racial justice at every level – in systems, organizations, communities, and the culture at large."	Racial Equity Tools was created when three websites merged: racialequitytools.org/, evaluationtoolsforracialequity.org, racialequitylearning.org.	All teens and adults

Resources to Better Understand Race, Racism, and Policing	https://news.ucr.edu/articles/2020/06/09/resources-better-understand-race-racism-and-policing	"In the wake of the tragic death of George Floyd in Minneapolis police custody, we asked faculty and staff members at the University of California, Riverside, who study race, racism, policing, and incarceration to offer their recommendations for resources to learn more about these issues in the U.S. The following list of media — which will be updated on an ongoing basis to reflect new submissions — so far features the input of 10 members of the UCR community."	10 members of the University of California, Riverside community, including faculty, graduate students, and researchers.	All teens and adults