



Dr. Rosemarie Allen  
Metropolitan State University of Denver

*All' Doesn't Always Mean 'All': The Role of Race in Early Childhood Special Education*

# Implicit Bias

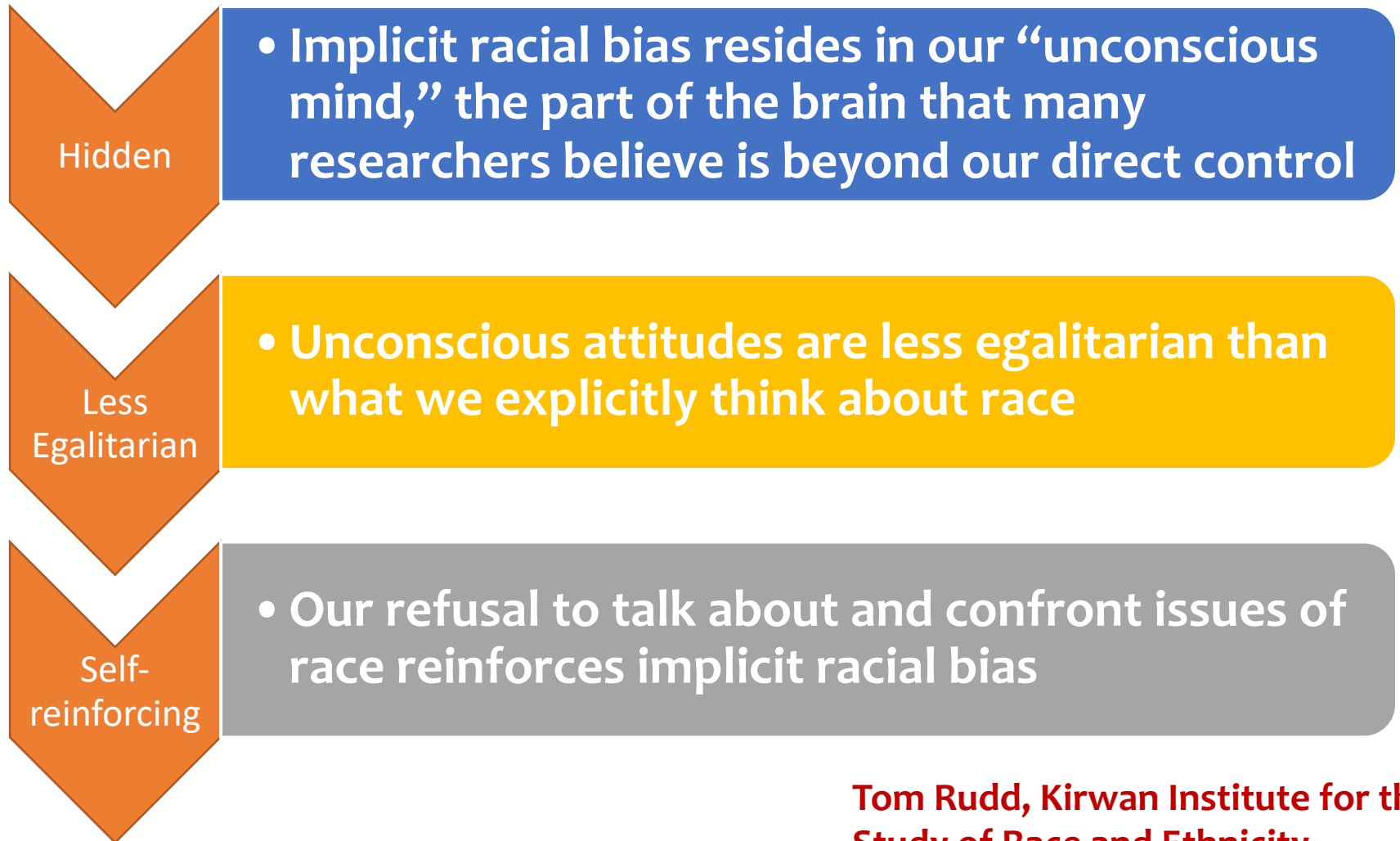
- Even though we believe we see and treat people as equals, hidden biases may still influence our perceptions and actions.

# IMPLICIT BIAS

- Implicit bias is the mental process resulting in feelings and attitudes about people based race, age and appearance.
- It is an unconscious process and we are not consciously aware of the negative racial biases **that develop over the course of our lifetime.**
- Implicit bias supports stereotypes.



# Implicit Bias



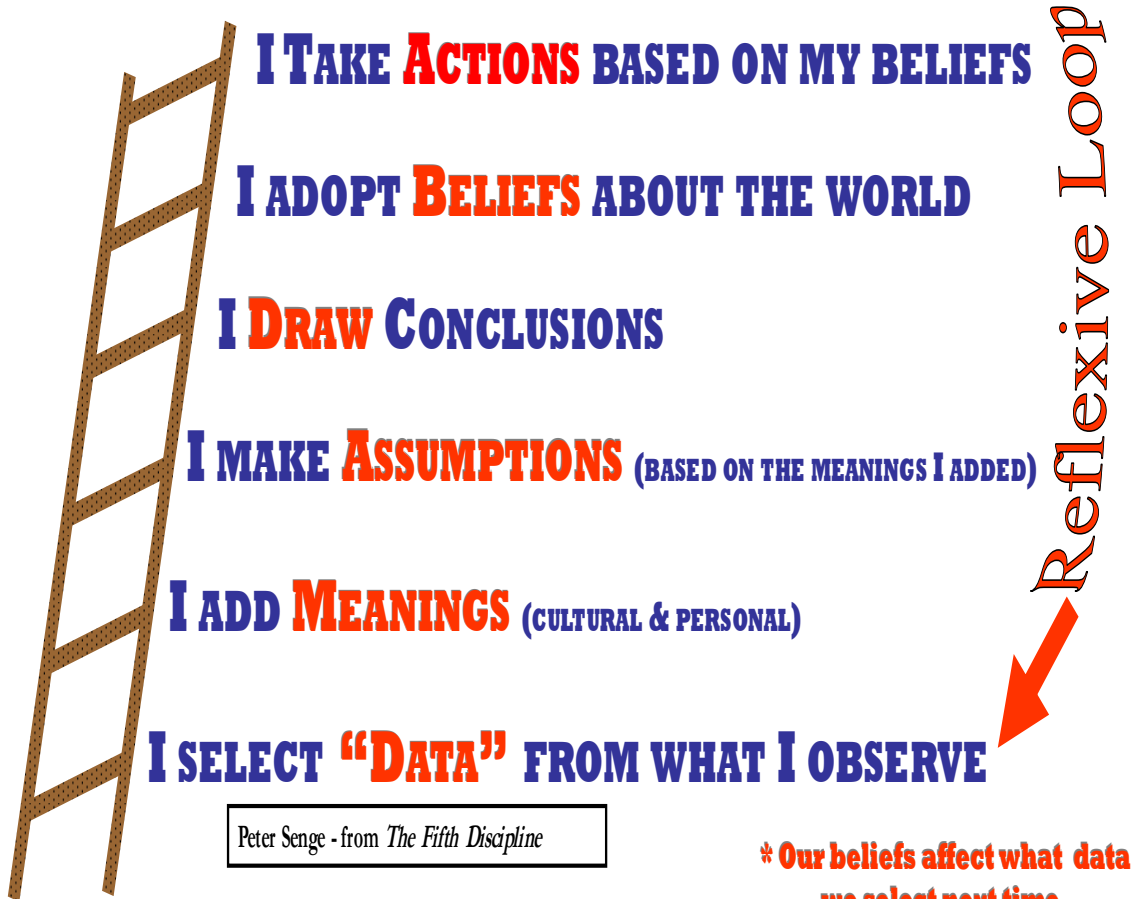
**Tom Rudd, Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity**

# KIRWAN INSTITUTE RESEARCH

It is important to understanding the **causes** of implicit racial bias and **intentionally** work to bring it to the conscious level in order to mitigate the negative consequences.



# THE LADDER OF INFERENCE



Peter Senge - from *The Fifth Discipline*

\* Our beliefs affect what data we select next time.

# Ladder of Inference

Makes the process of thinking visible.

A process by which we determine meaning about what is occurring around us.

This process takes milliseconds to complete and we are often unaware that it is happening.

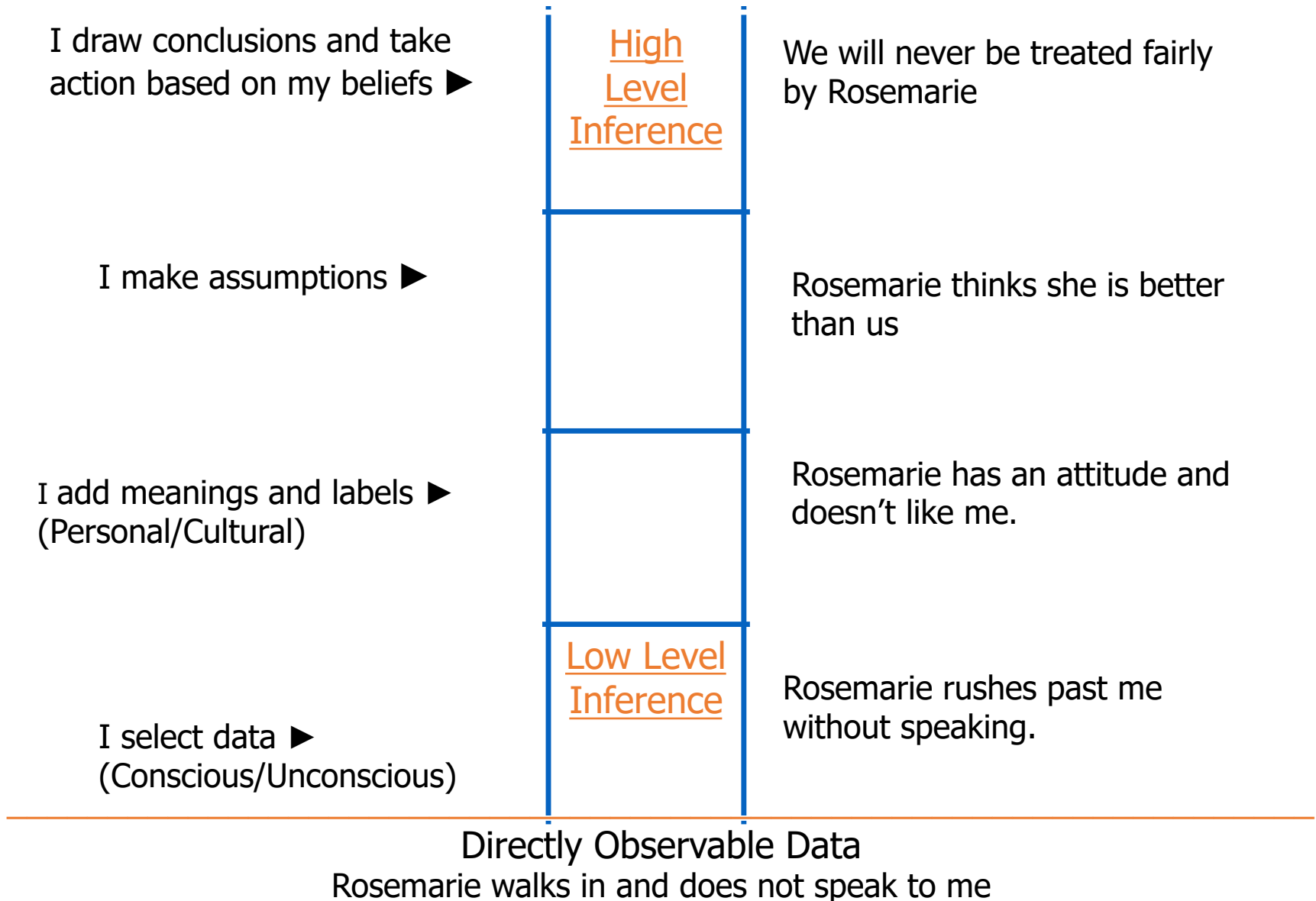
High Level Inference

Low Level Inference

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Directly observable data

# Ladder of Inference





# Ladder of Inference

I draw conclusions and take action based on my beliefs ►

High Level Inference

I am not going to go through all of this just for one child.

I make assumptions ►

They coddle him too much. What are they going to do when he's in public?

I add meanings and labels ►  
(Personal/Cultural)

He just needs to learn to cope.

I select data ►  
(Conscious/Unconscious)

Low Level Inference

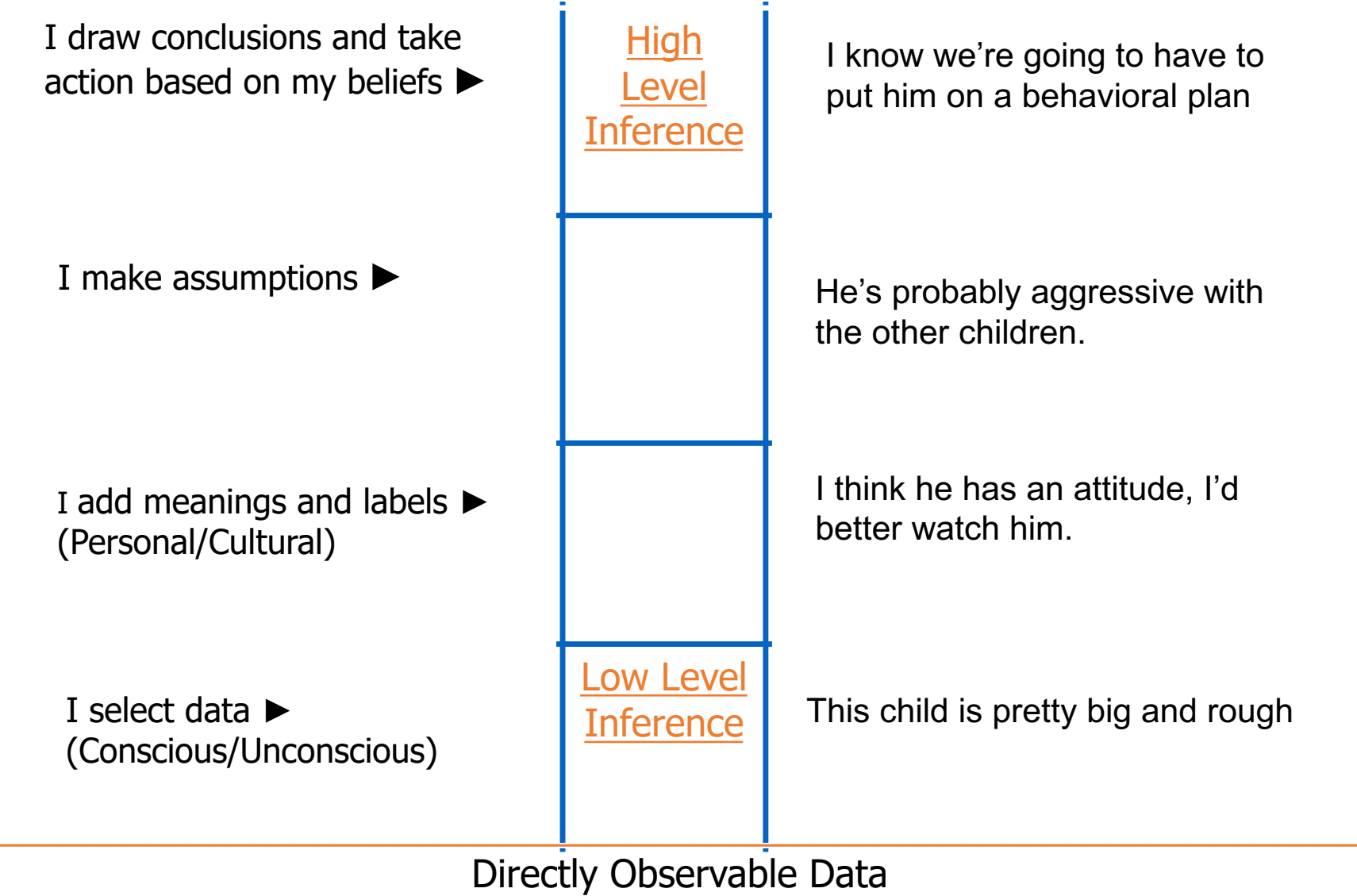
They say he has sensory processing issues.

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Directly Observable Data

Student screams every time the toilet is flushed or the hand dryer is used.

# Ladder of Inference





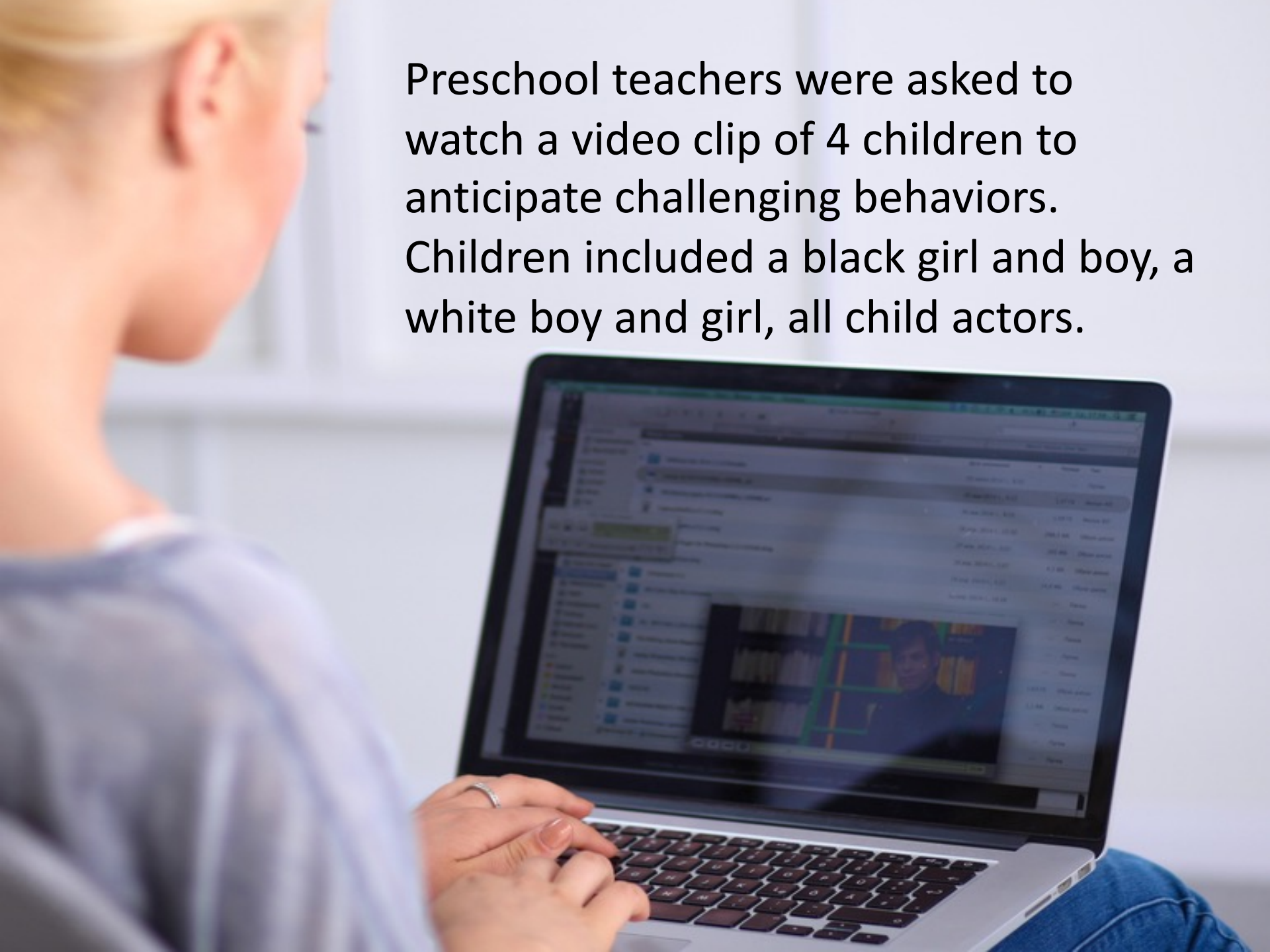
# Adults and implicit bias in the classroom

# Implicit Bias in Preschool Teachers



Walter Gilliam, et al  
(2016) found that  
Preschool teachers judge  
those children's behaviors  
differently based on race.

Preschool teachers were asked to watch a video clip of 4 children to anticipate challenging behaviors. Children included a black girl and boy, a white boy and girl, all child actors.



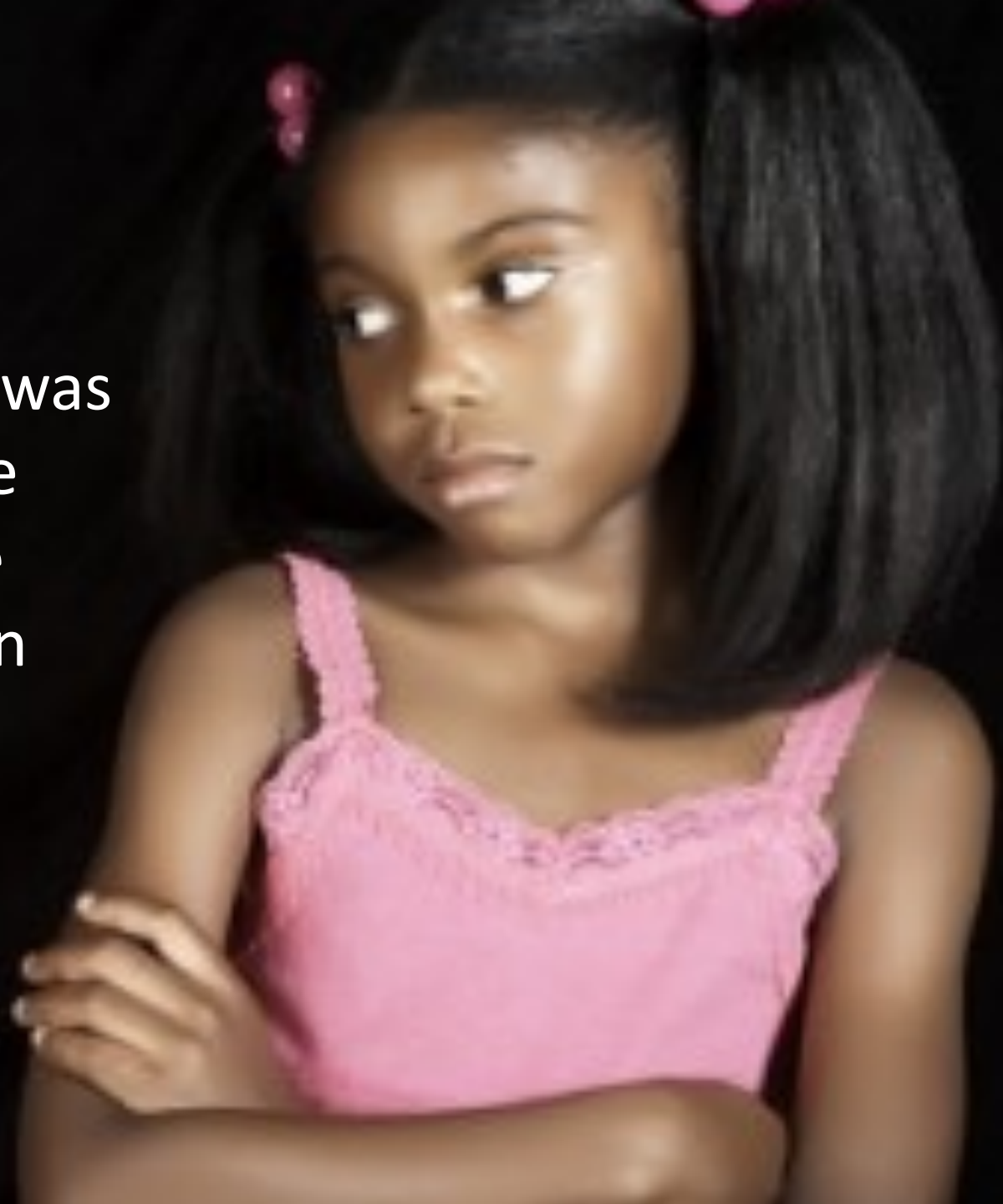


We are interested in learning about how teachers detect challenging behavior in the classroom. Sometimes this involves seeing behavior before it becomes problematic. The video segments you are about to view are of preschoolers engaging in various activities. Some clips may or may not contain challenging behaviors. Your job is to press the enter key on the external keypad every time you see a behavior that could become a potential challenge.

The Black boy was  
watched more than  
any other child.  
Forty Two percent of  
teachers reported  
that he required  
more attention than  
the other children.



The Black girl was  
watched more  
often than the  
White children







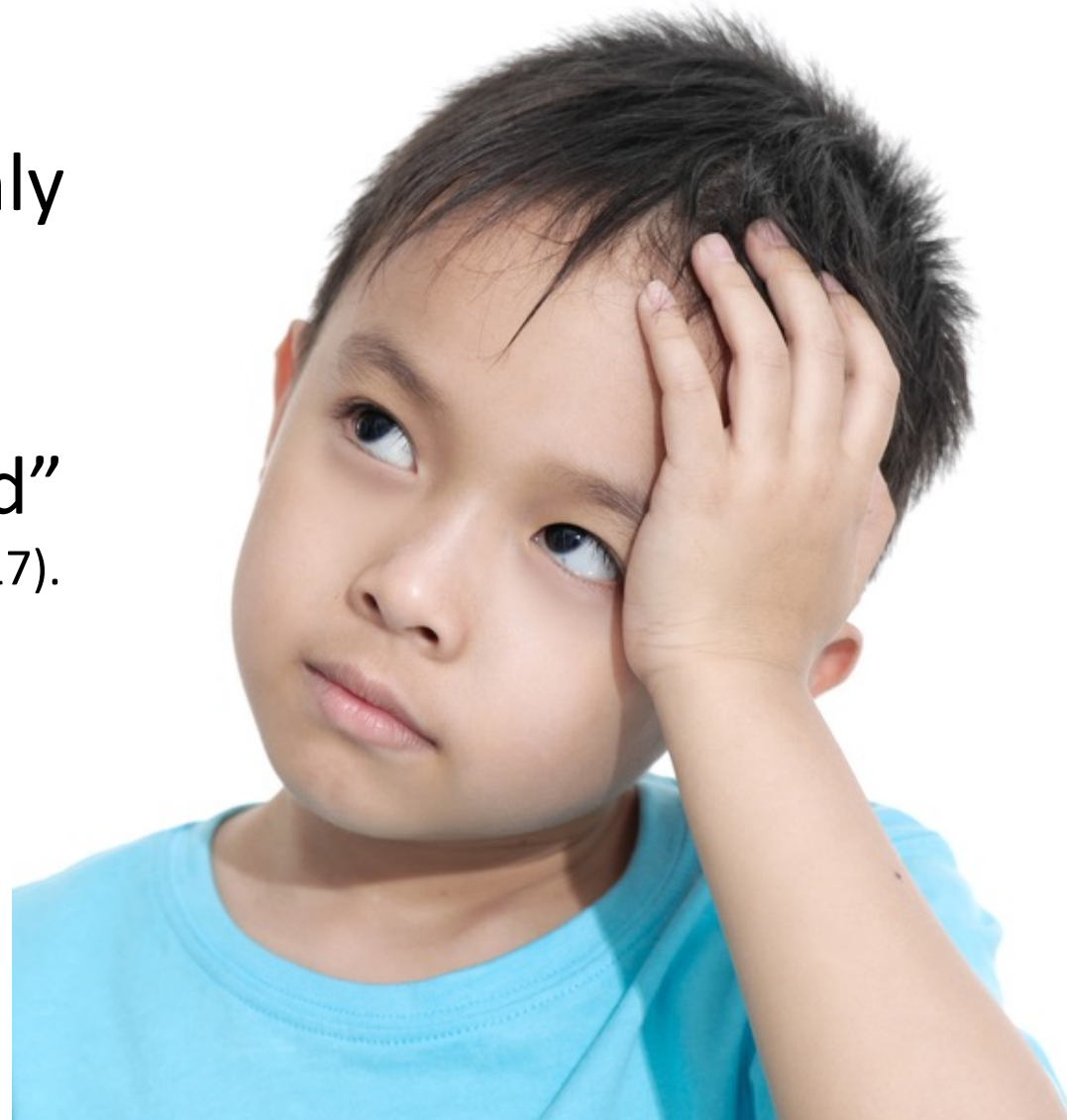
White  
children  
were  
watched  
less than  
Black  
children



Young children are being suspended and expelled from preschool at alarming rates.

“Across all types of settings, the average school day sees roughly 250 instances of a preschooler being suspended or expelled”

(Center for American Progress, 2017).




The United States Department of Ed. OCR data (2016) shows:  
Patterns of racial and gender disproportionality:

- Boys represent 54% of the preschool population but 78% of those suspended.
- African American preschoolers are 3.6 times more likely to be suspended than their White peers.



In Illinois, 40% of child care providers reported suspending infants and toddlers. Those are babies that are still in diapers!



A young African American girl with dark skin and her hair styled in many small braids, some with pink hair ties. She is lying on her stomach in a lush green grassy field, resting her chin on her clasped hands. She has a gentle, thoughtful expression, looking slightly to the side. The background is a soft-focus green field.

## The New OCR (2016)

African American girls are 20% of preschool female population but 54% of girls suspended from preschool  
(United States Department of Education, 2016)



# Implicit Bias



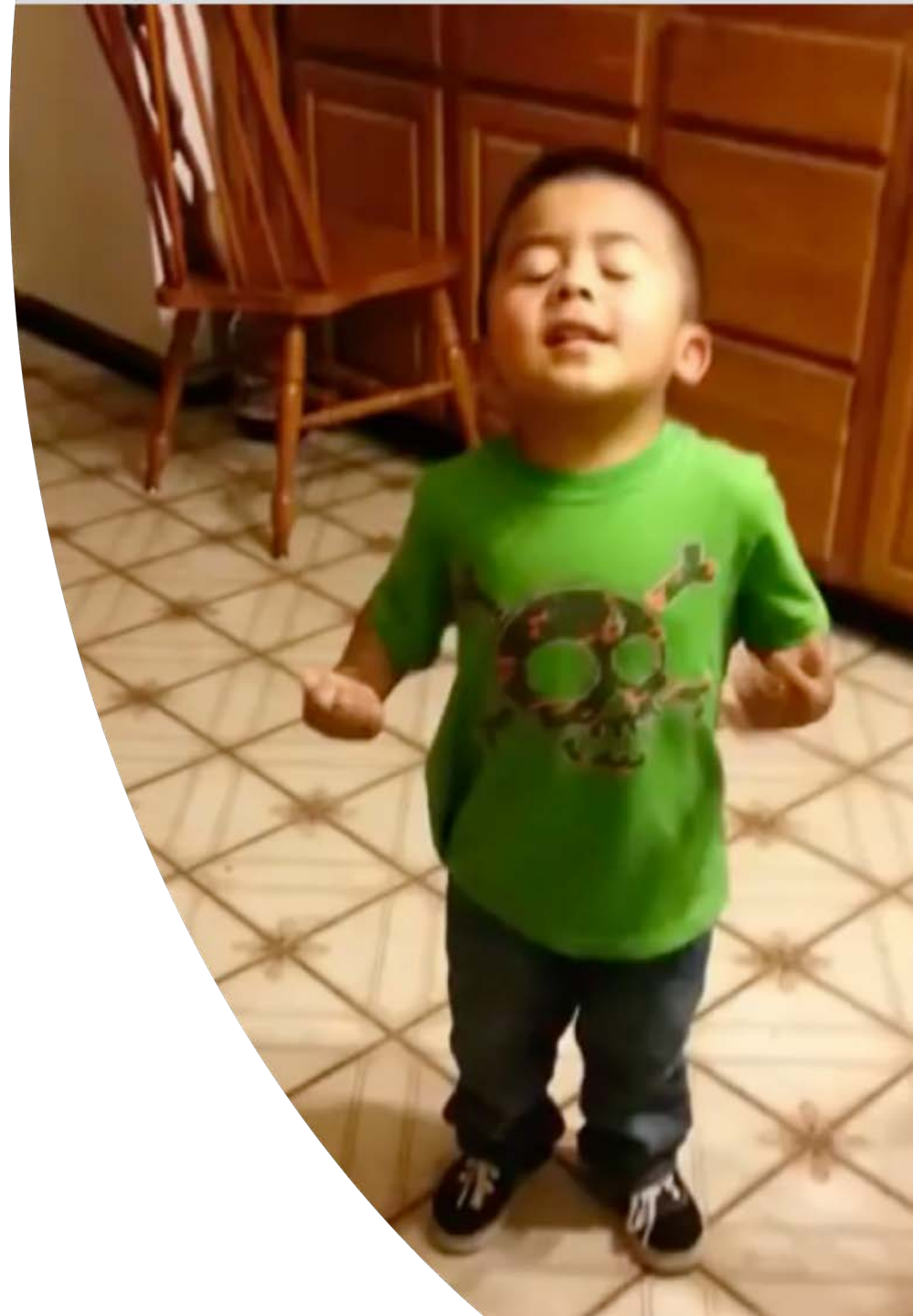
Lead to  
disproportionality in  
disciplinary practices





How do we honor Mateo in our classroom without breaking his spirit?

How Do We Ensure the Success for Mateo?



**AWARE**  
**Is**  
**Halfway**  
**THERE**





We must talk about the issues!

A young girl with long brown hair is shown from the chest up. She is wearing a pink headband with a bow on the left side. Her hands are pressed against her face, completely covering her eyes and nose. She is wearing a sweater with horizontal stripes in shades of pink, red, yellow, and white. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting an outdoor setting. The overall mood is one of sadness or distress.

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## Why Don't We Want to Talk About Race?

“We have become so politically correct that we don't know what to say and when to say it. We don't know what to say to anyone anymore.”

*Lee Jones, Florida  
State University.*



**Black**

**Negro**

**Colored**

**Afr. Am.**



## Talking about race feels personal

- I'm afraid I'll be blamed.
- I'll be accused of playing the race card.
- People will get defensive.

# Let's Pretend it doesn't exist!

- Racial Etiquette: Not polite to discuss that which makes us uncomfortable (Omi and Winant, 2002).
- Saying “We’re all the same”, or “I don’t see color” fails to acknowledge difference others experience (Harries, 2014).





# Danger of Color-blind ideology



## Color Blind Ideology:

Issues of equity  
are often  
avoided by  
adopting a  
colorblind  
ideology



Racial blindness promotes the fallacy that people are beyond bias and racism, ignores racial disparities, and places blame on the behaviors of communities of color



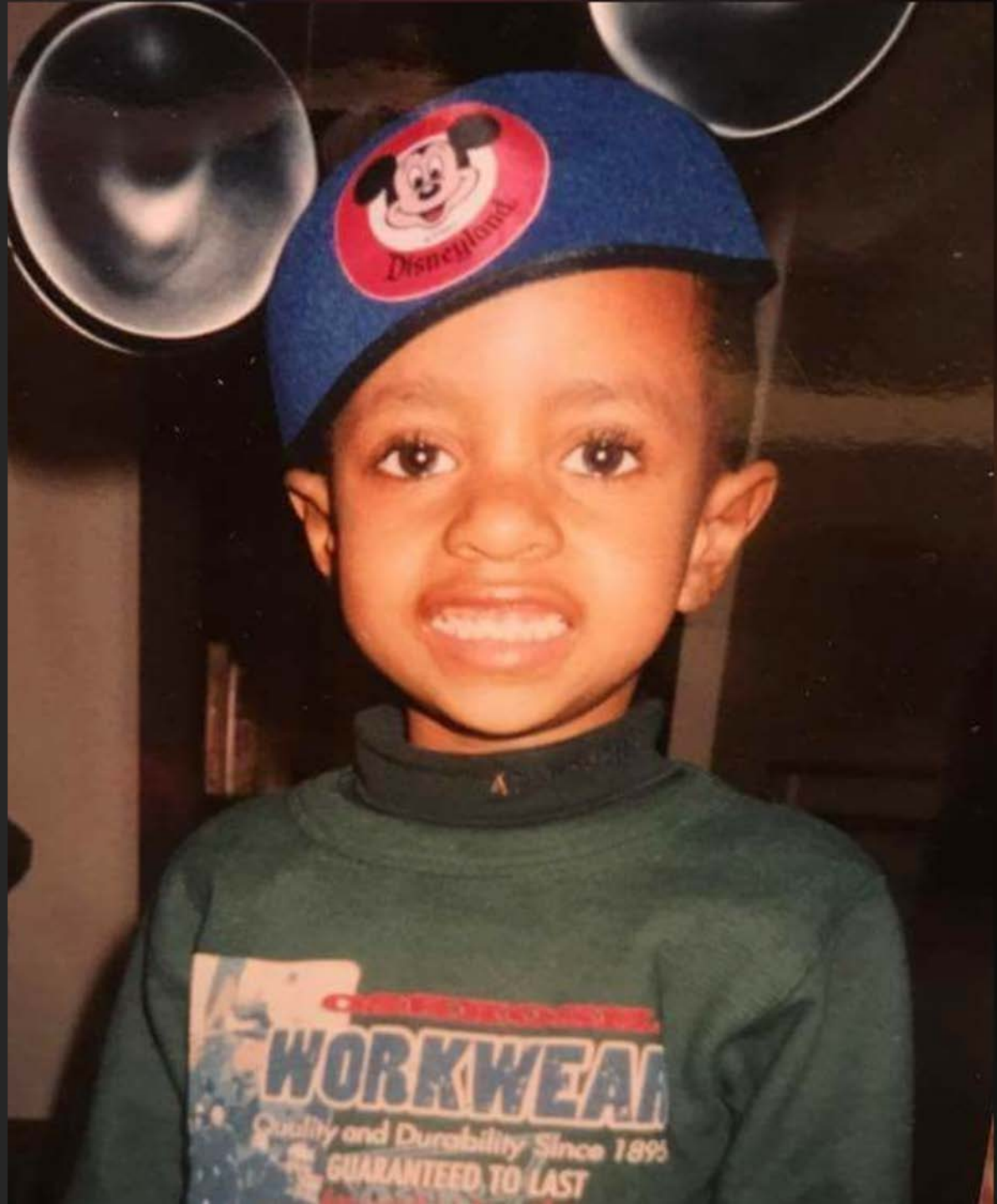


It's not **ONLY** about race  
but it is **ALWAYS** about  
race...

- On every single indicator of child well-being, Black and Brown children are at **the bottom** (Forum on Child and Family Statistics, 2016).

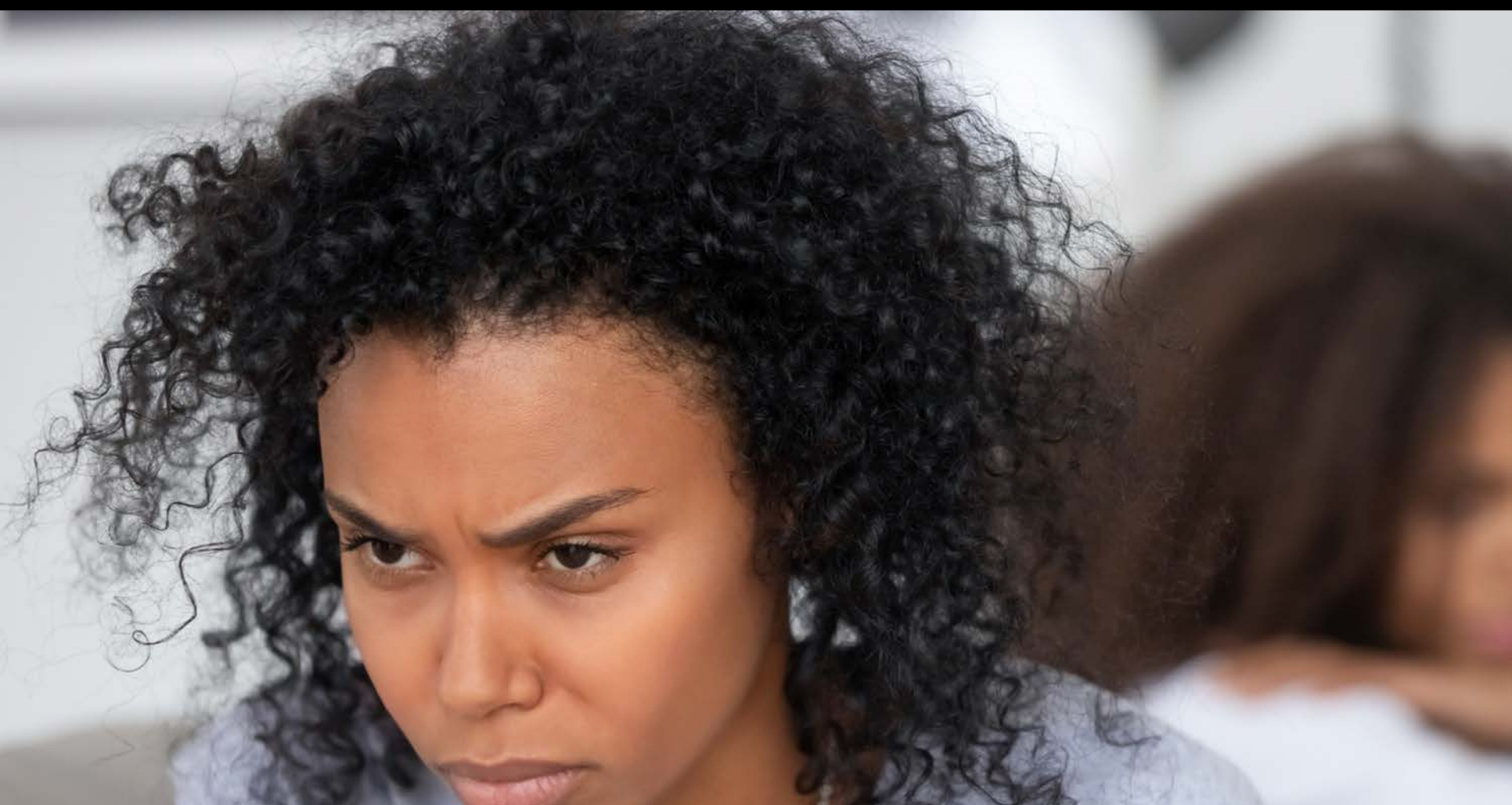
# Three 'Bs' and a 'D'

The intersection of race  
and ability



And then  
he grew  
up...





Action, result, and  
manifestation of implicit  
bias...

Rosemarie Allen

# Microaggressions

“Brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral, and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial, gender, sexual-orientation, and religious slights and insults to the target person or group” (Sue, 2010, p.5)






# 3 Forms of Microaggressions

Micro-insults

Micro-invalidations

Micro-assaults

A hand-drawn illustration of a layered, oval shape. The central area is a light brown oval containing the word "Microaggression" in a black, typewriter-style font. This central area is surrounded by several concentric, irregular layers of color: a dark teal layer, a light green layer, and a light orange layer. The entire shape has a rough, torn-paper edge. The background is a textured, light green surface.

**Microaggression**

# MICROINSULTS

Conscious or subconscious verbal insults that portray a negative tone connected to marginalized populations





# Fathers' Involvement

Involvement of fathers with activities of their children under age 5.

## FATHERS LIVING WITH CHILDREN

	<b>Hisp.</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>Black</b>
	(Percentages)		
<i>Fed or ate meals with children daily</i>	63.9	73.9	78.2
<i>Bathed, diapered or dressed children daily</i>	45.0	60	70.4
<i>Played with children daily</i>	74.1	82.7	82.2
<i>Read to children daily</i>	21.9	30.2	34.9

# MICROINVALIDATIONS

Dismissive statements of a marginalized person's expressed thoughts or feelings about a discriminatory situation.



Referral to...



Referral to...



# Validating Feelings





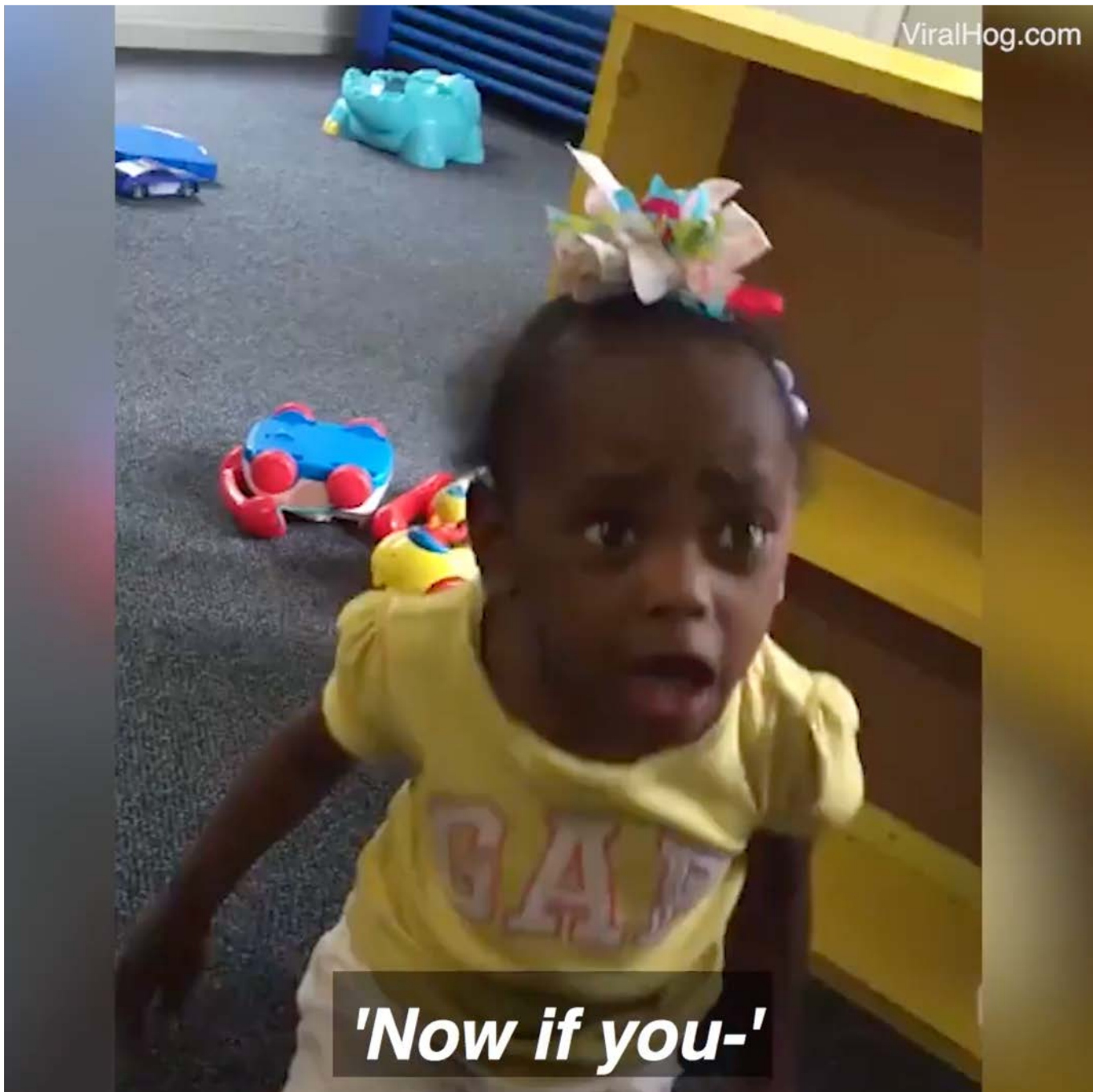
# MICROASSAULTS

Verbal or non-verbal  
attacks meant to hurt  
at an individual level



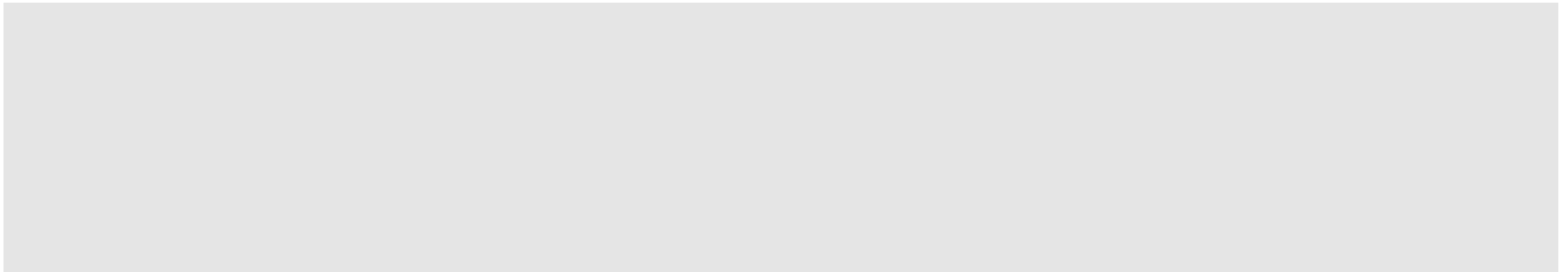
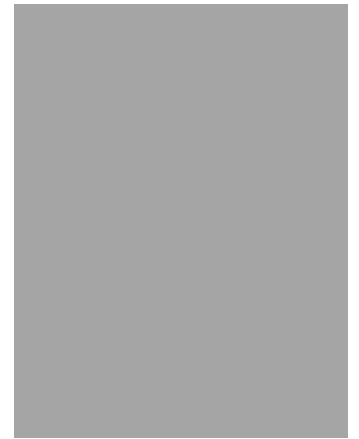
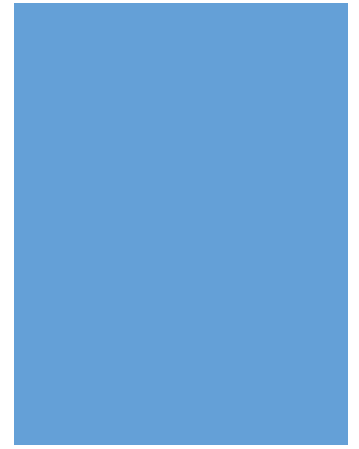


Mis-interpreting children's actions and 'ways of being' as defiant.



***'Now if you-'***

# Create a Treasure Chest of Responses



Develop ready responses  
that will work in a variety  
of moments

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- That offends me.
- I don't find that funny.
- I'm surprised to hear  
you say that

Speak Up at School, Teaching Tolerance

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Speak up against bias in a simple, straightforward manner and challenge bias by taking a vocal stand against it

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- What do you mean by that?
- Why would you say something like that?
- What point are you trying to make by saying that?
- Did you mean to say something hurtful when you said that?
- Using that word as a put-down offends me.
- Using that word doesn't help others feel safe or accepted here.

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Speak Up at School, Teaching Tolerance





## What is "White Space?"

- Spaces that are overwhelmingly white, such as neighborhoods, schools, universities, workplaces, restaurants, and other public spaces.
- Spaces that are perceived to be off limits to people of color.
- People of color experience acute disrespect, during which they are reminded that they don't belong (Anderson, 2018).





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Is your environment  
a “White Space?”

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- Are historically marginalized people experiencing acute disrespect?
- Overly policed?
- Reminded that they don't belong?





What might this look like?





Daily Messages  
that convey some  
people do not  
belong:



Mispronouncing, making fun of, or shortening people's names that are not traditionally "white" names.

Iruka, Curenton, Durden, & Escayg, 2020



Ignoring ideas by some while embracing the same idea when expressed by others.

Favoring one group of people over other groups.





Treating a person differently because of their hair style



Stereotyping Black girls as too loud, too angry, too sassy, etc.





# How to Be Anti-Racist

A young Black boy with a joyful expression, smiling broadly, wearing a red polo shirt. The background is a solid, muted grey. The text is overlaid on the image.

# The Essence of Antiracism

The ACTION that must follow both emotional and intellectual awareness of racism.


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## What Does Anti-Racist Mean?

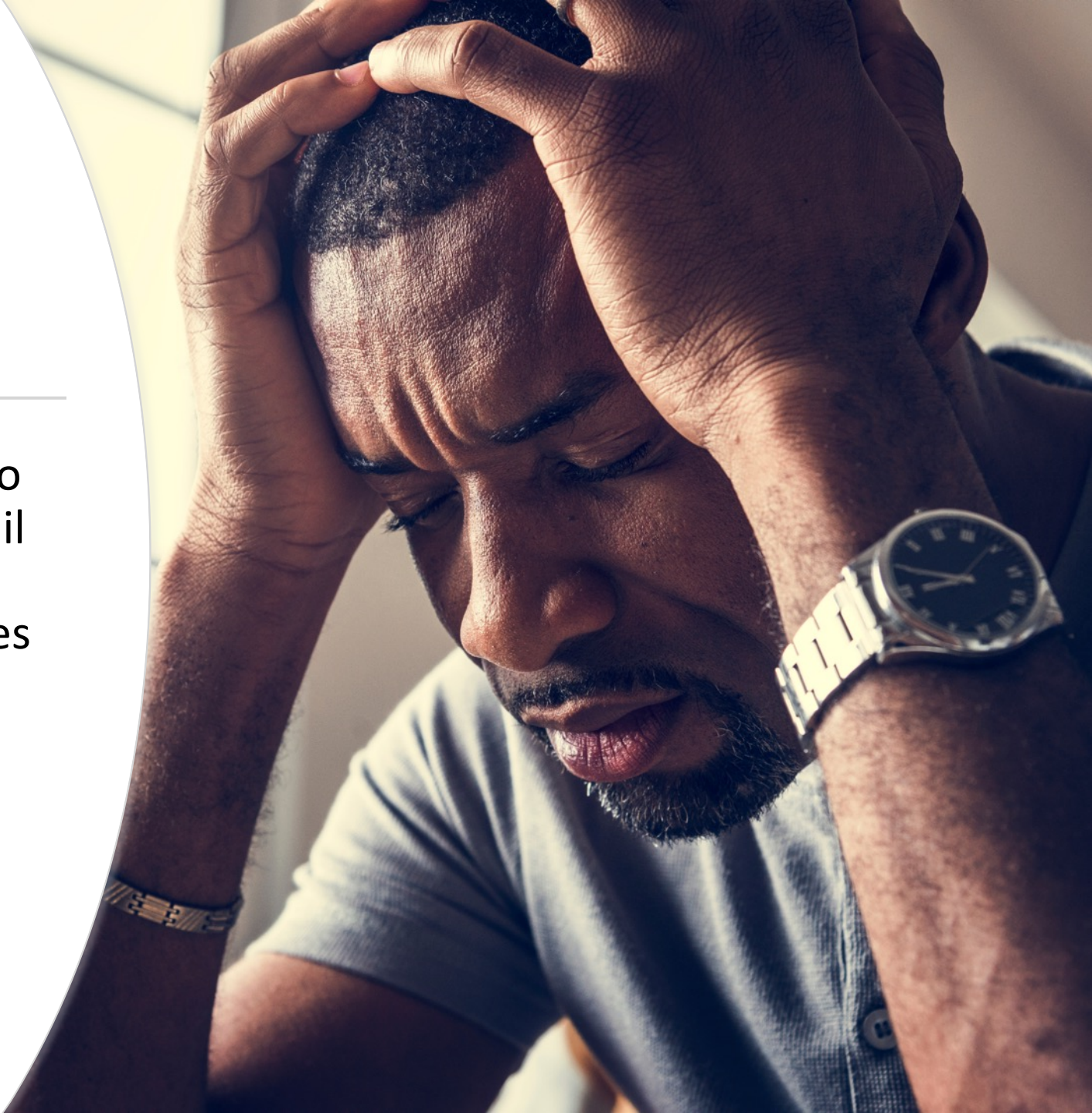
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- Racism is not neutral
- You're either racist or anti-racist
- Allowing racism to exist is a passive racist
- Confronting racial inequities is anti-racist
- There is no such thing as "not racist"



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- “The only way to undo racism is to consistently identify it, and describe it and then dismantle it”
  - Ibram Kendi, 2019



- 
- When we fail to see race, we fail to see racism, and that creates passive racists (Kendi, 2019)

A young boy with a shocked expression, wide eyes, and an open mouth, wearing a white t-shirt, against a solid yellow background. The word "Racist" is overlaid in white text on his chest.

# Racist

Not who you are but what you do, or fail to do.

A close-up, black and white photograph of a person's face, focusing on the nose and mouth. The person has a somber or neutral expression, with their lips slightly parted. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the texture of the skin and the contours of the face against a dark background.

# Racist

One who supports and/or promotes racist behaviors, actions, and policies through direct action or inaction.



# Anti-Racist

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- One who supports and/or promotes anti-racist behaviors, actions, and policies through direct action.