**Discussing Race, Racism, and Important Current Events with Students and Staff**

**Link to the guide:** <https://www.pbis.org/resource/discussing-race-racism-and-important-current-events-with-students-a-guide-with-lesson-plans-and-resources>

**Learning Objectives**

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

1. Describe the importance of discussing race, racism, and important current events
2. Leverage existing systems and use practical strategies for increasing confidence in staff to engage in discussions
3. Adapt lesson planning materials for use in your organizations

**Ground Rules (samples)**

* Speak what is true to you
* Make no assumptions
* Get comfortable with discomfort
* Strive to remain curious during disagreements instead of defensive
* It’s ok not to know, but it’s not ok not to take steps to learn
* Recognize your own positionality and intersecting identities when listening and responding
* Hold yourself and other participants accountable for maintaining these rules

**Breakout Discussion #1**

* *When did you first become aware of race?*
	+ *How old were you?*
	+ *What happened?*

**Breakout Discussion #2**

* *Why do you think most educators avoid discussing race and racism in the classroom?*
* *What are some of the individual and systemic barriers and challenges?*

**Resources for Building Knowledge**

* Center on PBIS equity page: <https://pbis.org/topics/equity>
* Great Lakes Equity Center: <https://greatlakesequity.org/resources>
* Learning for Justice: <https://learningforjustice.org>
* Racial Equity Tools: <https://www.racialequitytools.org/>

**Breakout Discussion #3**

* *Think back to a situation when you were unfairly stereotyped.*
	+ *What was the situation?*
	+ *How did you feel?*
	+ *How hard was it to think of one, and what does that mean?*

**Skills for Conversations: Examples**

* One Mic
* Active Listening
* “Ouch” and “Oops”
* Pass
* I Statements

**Breakout Discussion #4**

* What harmful comments might you expect to arise?
	+ “I don’t understand Black Lives Matter. I think that it should be All Lives Matter. Why is that racist?”
* What might be your first reaction?
* What could be a planned response?

**Resources for Conversations**

* Speak Up at School: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2019-04/TT-Speak-Up-Guide_0.pdf>
* Let’s Talk Guide: <https://www.learningforjustice.org/sites/default/files/2021-01/TT-Let-s-Talk-Publication-January-2020.pdf>

**Build Knowledge and Experience Activity**

**Resource:** <https://www.pbis.org/resource/discussing-race-racism-and-important-current-events-with-students-a-guide-with-lesson-plans-and-resources>

**Areas for Learning:**

* History of systemic racism
* Understanding bias
* Identity development
* Intersectionality
* Exploring privilege​
* Cultural awareness​
* Social justice

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| --- |
| **Area for Learning Selected for Review** |
|  |
| **Things You Liked (2)** | **Things You Learned (2)** | **Questions You Have (1)** |
| 1. | 1. |  |
| 2. | 2. |

**Discussing Race & Racism: Reflection Guide**

**Resource:** <https://www.pbis.org/resource/discussing-race-racism-and-important-current-events-with-students-a-guide-with-lesson-plans-and-resources>

**Areas for Learning:** Engaging in Difficult Conversations

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Reflection Questions** |  |
|  |  |  |
| **Things You Learned from the Activity?** | **Additional Areas of Planning for the Activity with Students?** | **Potential Responses to Tip Prompts** |
| 1. | 1.  | 1.Ex. Consider practiced response for when students (or other adults) share statements that deny racism or other comments that need to be addressed publicly (e.g., to maintain a safe and respectful learning environment).  |
| 2. | 2.  | 2.Ex. Consider statements that help move the conversation forward while acknowledging that you don’t have all the answers but want to hear student voices.  |