

Supportive Environments through Social Emotional Learning: Considering the social and emotional health of our students, colleagues, families, and ourselves.

Description:

It is the firm belief of the NYCDOE that an environment cannot be supportive if it is not culturally responsive. Culturally responsive environments “affirm racial and cultural identities; develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; and empower areas of social change”. To advance equity, now, and to be culturally responsive, we must ensure that we are creating supportive environments for our students, families and staff during this critical time in our nation.

We should be aware of signs of trauma or distress not only for our youth, but also for ourselves and our colleagues. Emotional responses may manifest in different ways, including anger, irritability, grief, and hopelessness.

To tackle these challenges, the Instructional Leadership Framework and the Supportive Environment Framework establishes priorities, rooted in research-based practices that are interconnected: no single priority can be achieved without creating a supportive environment and setting rigorous expectations for every student.

Below you will find resources that are anchored in social-emotional learning; safety and restorative approaches; collaborative and trusting relationships (knowing every student well); equity and student voice (using shared and inclusive curriculum); strengthening our core instruction; and mental wellness.

Alignment: Supportive Environment Framework, Instructional Leadership Framework

Essential Questions for Below Resources, not exhaustive (feel free to ask questions you deem essential):

- After reading and hearing about the stories, what stands out for you?
- What are some common themes?
- What did you learn that you didn’t know before?
- Did anything challenge what you know or thought you knew?
- What is the difference between interpersonal racism (individual acts of bias, meanness or exclusion) and institutional racism (policies and practices that are supported by power and authority and that benefit some and disadvantage others) in these resources?
- What is your earliest experience dealing with race and/or racism?
- How did you feel while this was happening or watching?
- What was your response and what was the response of others around you?
- What impact did it have on you? What did you learn from the experience?
- Did the encounter change you in some way, and if so, how?

Title/Resource	Description	Link
Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports/Restorative Practices	For support using a virtual classroom on community building and reflecting and addressing racism.	Virtual Classroom Community Building Circle (CBC)
The Tyler Merritt Project	Three-minute video. Powerful monologue on racism. Can be subtitled in various languages. Estos videos pueden subtitularse en varios idiomas.	Before You Call the Cops
NY Times: Books to Read to Children	The conversation about race needs to start early and keep happening.	These Books Can Help You Explain Racism and Protest to Your Kids

Title/Resource	Description	Link
20-minute NPR episode	Even babies notice differences like skin color, eye shape and hair texture. Here's how to handle conversations about race, racism, diversity and inclusion, even with very young children: breaking down, not shutting down, conversations about race, racism, diversity and inclusion, even with very young children.	Talking Race With Young Children
Embrace Race	Research from Harvard University suggests that children as young as three years old, when exposed to racism and prejudice, tend to embrace and accept it, even though they might not understand the feelings. By age 5, white children are strongly biased towards whiteness. To counter this bias, experts recommend acknowledging and naming race and racism with children as early and as often as possible. Children's books are one of the most effective and practical tools for initiating these critical conversations; and they can also be used to model what it means to resist and dismantle oppression.	31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance
The Educator's Playbook	Questions educators should be asking. Teachers should not pretend protests about institutional racism and police brutality don't exist. Students, especially older students, will remember this moment and how they felt.	The two questions educators should be asking
Talking About Race and Privilege	To accommodate the diversity of school and teacher schedules, this lesson can be presented over multiple class periods or sessions. Teachers and others who will be facilitating this lesson are encouraged to make meaningful connections to other topics being covered in their classes or school curricula (i.e., literature that discusses discrimination or civics/history lessons) as well as relevant current events both in their local communities and throughout the United States.	Lesson Plan for Middle and High School Students
Addressing Race and Trauma in the Classroom: a Resource for Educators	This resource from the National Child Traumatic Stress Network (NCTSN) is designed to help educators understand the interplay of race and trauma in the classroom. The guide reviews historical trauma and racial trauma, explains the impact of trauma on different age groups, and offers supplemental resources.	NCTSN: Addressing Race & Trauma in the Classroom
Storyline Online	Daddy Wes whispers to his two young listeners one morning the story of the 'drum', the pulse that has moved through the African people and through time and place. Accompanied with the Teacher Activity Guide .	To Be A Drum, read by James Earl Jones
Talking About Race. The National Museum of African American History and Culture	Talking about race, although hard, is necessary. These tools and guidance are designed to empower your journey and inspire conversation. Many of the tools for educators are PK-12. And there are great resources for individual work, no matter your role.	Talking about race
Frontline: A Class Divided	The day after Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed, Jane Elliott, a teacher in a small, all-white Iowa town, divided her third-grade class into blue-eyed and brown-eyed groups and gave them a daring lesson in discrimination. This is the story of that lesson, its lasting impact on the children, and its enduring power 30 years later.	Teacher's Guide on A Class Divided Video Watch video: A Class Divided

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Online Support Circles in Response to Social Distancing	Online support Circles begin with a welcome that conveys a sense of hospitality and honoring of those present. The welcome also includes clarifying how the Circle process works and the order of speaking.	Online Support Circles
Facing History and Ourselves: Teaching In The Wake Of Violence	This resource is a guide for teachers to begin conversations with their students about George Floyd’s death and the events that surround it. Such conversations are always difficult for teachers to facilitate, and distance learning presents added challenges to teaching sensitive material	Reflecting on George Floyd’s Death and Police Violence Towards Black Americans
Teaching Tolerance: Don’t Say Nothing. Silence Speaks Volumes. Our Students Are Listening.	This resource outlines the importance and duty of educators to acknowledge and discuss race and racism with youth.	Don't Say Nothing. Silence Speaks Volumes. Our Students Are Listening.
New York Times: A Conversation on Race	This resource includes a series of videos on different racial and ethnic groups describing their experiences with racism, including the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Conversation with my Black Son • A Conversation About Growing Up Black • A Conversation With Black Women on Race • A Conversation with Latinos on Race • A Conversation with Asian-Americans on Race • A Conversation with Native Americans on Race • A Conversation with White People on Race • A Conversation with Police on Race 	A Conversation on Race
Anti-Defamation League: How Should I Talk About Race in my Mostly White Classroom?	This resource provides guidance and considerations for how to engage in reflection and discussion on race and racism with white youth.	How Should I Talk About Race in my Mostly White Classroom?
Education Week Teacher: Teaching Now	As nationwide protests against police brutality continue, teachers in their virtual classrooms are once again searching for ways to help their students process the killings of black people in police custody in the United States.	15 Classroom Resources for Discussing Racism, Policing, and Protest
Edutopia: Teaching Young Children About Bias, Diversity, and Social Justice	This resource contains five strategies for engaging youth in learning and discussion on bias, diversity, and social justice.	Teaching Young Children About Bias, Diversity, and Social Justice.

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Healing through Social Justice, Understanding wellness through liberatory frameworks.	This link from Psychology Today provides articles and steps for cultivating hope during times of distress and provides self-care strategies for adults.	Psychology Today: Healing through Social Justice
Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Traumatic Events: Tips for Families and Teachers	This resource from the National Association of School Psychologists provides a brief review of anger—a common reaction to trauma—and reminds adults of how the reactions of children and youth are influenced by adult responses.	NASP: Managing Strong Emotional Reactions to Trauma
Anti-Defamation League: George Floyd, Racism and Law Enforcement “Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events”	This reading provides suggestions for how educators, parents, families, and caregivers can discuss George Floyd, police violence, racism, and protests with youth. It also includes discussion questions and suggestions for how to take action.	Table Talk: Family Conversations about Current Events
The 1619 Project Curriculum	Inaugurated with a special issue of <i>The New York Times Magazine</i> , challenges us to reframe U.S. history by marking the year when the first enslaved Africans arrived on Virginia soil as our nation's foundational date. Here you will find reading guides, activities, and other resources to bring <i>The 1619 Project</i> into your classroom.	Pulitzer Center: The 1619 Project Curriculum
Racism is Real	A three-part series that explores the many ways black Americans face racial bias. These short films— <i>Racism is Real</i> , <i>Black Protests vs. White Riots</i> , and <i>Prison System by the Numbers</i> —explore the effects of racial bias on the lives of black Americans and the ways in which racism impacts American society as a whole.	American Federation of Teachers: Share My Lesson
Mindfulness Techniques for Students and Staff	Calm Classroom is a simple and accessible way to integrate mindfulness into the classroom or home culture. Mindfulness is the ability to pay attention to our present moment. The daily practice of mindful breathing, stretching, focusing, and relaxation exercises cultivates a greater sense of self-awareness, mental focus, and emotional resilience within educational and personal spaces.	Keep Calm Practice
NY Times: First Encounters with Race and Racism: Teaching Ideas for Classroom Conversations	This is a lesson plan from the <i>New York Times</i> on how to engage youth in conversations about race, including discussion questions, videos on race and implicit bias, and voices from youth about their experiences with racism.	First Encounters with Race and Racism: Teaching Ideas for Classroom Conversations
Helping Children Cope with Media Coverage	Short video with excellent recommendations for parents and teacher alike. Can be subtitled in multiple languages. Estos videos pueden subtitularse en varios idiomas.	Helping Your Child Cope with Media Coverage of

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		Community Racial Trauma: Tips for Parents
Starting to Talk about race with Kids	Books for courageous conversations: If you're nervous about talking about race with your kids, these books about racial diversity will give you an easy place to start destigmatizing difference & celebrating racial diversity.	Anti-Racism for Kids 101: Starting to Talk About Race and Stop Lying to your Kids- Teaching Kids about white Supremacy
StoryTime: Animation Series	Follow two children – one black, one white – as they discuss a police shooting of a Black man in their community, and help identify and counter racial injustice. Can be subtitled in various languages. Estos videos pueden subtitularse en varios idiomas.	Something Happened in Our Town
Teaching Tolerance: Using Photographs to teach Social Justice	Teaching Tolerance's 12 lessons using photography to teach social justice.	Using Photographs to Teach Social Justice.