EMBRACING THE POSSIBLE
RAISING A GENERATION OF CHILDREN WHO ARE
THOUGHTFUL, INFORMED AND BRAVE ABOUT RACE
The events of 2020 called into sharp relief the racial challenges and inequities at the heart of our national experience. The devastating pattern of racialized vulnerability to COVID-19. The violent and gratuitous deaths of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and so many others at the hands of police and civilians alike. The upsurge in hateful words and behaviors targeting Asian Americans. Months of multiracial, multigenerational national protests against the devaluing of Black, Brown, and Native Lives.

In the midst of newly-urgent calls for racial justice in the United States, and rising calls from our community members for information and guidance, EmbraceRace responded: more resources, more webinars, new partnerships, greater outreach, more and more innovative program development. In the aftermath of the assault on the U.S. Capitol, shot through with racial tensions and entitlements, our response will become even more vigorous.

Over the course of 2021 we will capitalize on our new heights of visibility and community engagement to expand the reach of our programs and launch new tools and resources for parents, teachers and other caring adults. Embracing the Possible offers a window into the EmbraceRace community, including details about who we are, what we do, and where we plan to go.

We invite you to deepen your commitment to this shared work. With your support and commitment, we can raise a generation of children who will make our multiracial democracy sing!

In community,

Melissa Giraud & Andrew Grant-Thomas, Founders

“Imagine the power and possibility of building the field of ‘children’s racial learning’ as a recognized and valued pillar of a strong education. What would the world look like if a critical mass of kids of all racial stripes grew up with the racial sensibilities, tools and analyses to remake education in this country, remake politics, rethink our health systems, reconsider who we care about and why?

If we can do that, that’s amazing. That’s profound. That’s transformative.”

— Andrew Grant-Thomas, Co-founder of EmbraceRace

EmbraceRace supports parents, guardians, educators, and other caregivers working to raise children who are thoughtful, informed and brave about race so that U.S. multiracial democracy can thrive.

We identify, organize, and create the tools, resources, discussion spaces, and networks to

- Nurture resilience in children of color
- Nurture inclusive, empathetic children of all stripes
- Raise kids who think critically about racial inequity
- Support a movement of kid and adult racial justice advocates for all children
EmbraceRace was founded in early 2016 by two parents who set out to create the community and gather the resources they needed (needed) to meet the challenges faced by those raising children in a world where race matters.

Melissa Giraud is a first-generation American, multiracial (Black/white) daughter of a mother from Quebec and a father from Dominica. She has brought a racial equity and social justice lens to her work as a radio producer, storyteller, K-12 educator and ed tech strategist.

Andrew Grant-Thomas is a Black man of Jamaican origins, born on the 4th of July. He is a long-time social justice and racial justice researcher and advocate. Andrew and Melissa have two girls, ages 10 and 12.

EmbraceRace is ably supported by a wonderful national advisory group and a dedicated team of consultants and volunteers.

There is a growing body of research and evidence that makes clear that children's racial sensibilities begin to form in infancy, that almost all children develop racial and other biases by kindergarten, and that those biases become fairly entrenched by adolescence. And yet, most national organizations dedicated to children’s racial learning direct their resources mainly to middle and high school educators. There are too few resources for young children available for parents, grandparents or other caregivers or for early childhood educators.

EmbraceRace helps fill that gap.

Although racial bias and inequity is systemic and not simply about interpersonal interaction, we also create the systems. If you want to create better systems, you need to nurture better agents.

— Melissa Giraud, Co-founder of EmbraceRace

Our Story

We worry about what a child will become tomorrow, yet we forget that she is someone today. — Stacia Tauscher

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Insights from our community

The EmbraceRace community grew substantially in 2020 as parents, educators and caregivers grappled with the realities of the coronavirus pandemic and its disproportionate impact on communities of color, and as the murders of Breonna Taylor, George Floyd, and others brought renewed attention to the scourge of police brutality.

Each year, EmbraceRace conducts a survey to understand how our work is influencing parents, educators and caregivers. Highlights from our 2020 survey, with almost 700 respondents, point to the ways in which engaging with EmbraceRace enhances caregivers’ knowledge, skills and motivation with respect to children’s racial learning.

97% planned to learn more about how to help their kids recognize and resist stereotyping
82% agreed that they knew more about how kids develop racial/ethnic stereotypes
96% planned to learn more about how to support their kids’ efforts to advocate for racial justice
86% agreed that they knew more about ways to help kids develop a positive racial identity
94% planned to learn more about how to effectively speak out against prejudice

It’s tempting at times to look for fast fixes to race-related problems, and really, there’s no such thing. Long-term change requires sustained thought, honest talk, and reflection, and the work they’re doing at EmbraceRace embodies all of these.

— Jennifer Gonzalez, educator, Cult of Pedagogy podcast
The EmbraceRace storytelling event was just so, SO good. Brilliantly organized on every level. Engaging, compelling content. The storytellers were all so brave! I was supposed to leave for a 7pm meeting, but texted to tell them I was delayed because I really wanted to hear the second set of storytellers...and so glad I did. The stories still ruminate in my brain.”
— Paul, community member

Dear EmbraceRace,
I am Sarah. I am 8 years old. Every Friday I get 4 Quarters. I saved up $15. I am giving it to you to stop racism. Thank you for your work.

As a Pakistani Muslim parent, from my first EmbraceRace webinar I felt relief and support. EmbraceRace is a gem of an organization that parents of color especially should avail if they are feeling lost, unsure and confused about how to help their children be resilient and courageous in the face of racism and bigotry.
— Nabeela, parent

EmbraceRace has big plans to expand the reach of our programs and launch new tools and resources for parents, teachers and other caring adults.

Here are some of the emerging initiatives about which we are particularly excited:

**Storytelling Project**
Recruiting and coaching community members to share short, personal audio stories that capture the extraordinary range of ways that individuals, families, and communities experience race, childhood and childrearing across lines of race, ethnicity, class, immigrant status, geography, religion and more.

**Research Network**
Collaborating with top researchers and funders to formulate and fund a vigorous research agenda on anti-racism interventions, and trace the implications of current anti-racism research for parenting and caregiving practices.

**Strengthen the EmbraceRace Team**
Shore up our organizational capacity through growth of the EmbraceRace team in communications, evaluation and fundraising as well as establishing a more forceful national advisory group to give the organization a sharper mandate and structure.

**Online Community for Early Childhood Educators and Parents**
Creating resources and opportunities for educators, parents, and families to learn from and with each other in order to create more racially equitable learning and development spaces, especially but not exclusively for 0-8 year-old Black and Indigenous children and children of color.

**Video Intervention Library**
Working with partners that include the Institute for Human Development and Social Change at New York University, we are developing several video-based curricula to educate parents on how to have productive conversations about race that promote the development of anti-racist beliefs and behaviors in children.

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**OUR DREAMS**

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EmbraceRace enjoys a wide range of committed partnerships in our shared work. A few highlights include:

In collaboration with the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, EmbraceRace is creating a toolkit including a video and resources for early childhood educators, librarians, and parents who want to learn how to use picture books explicitly to nurture conscientious racial learning in young children.

EmbraceRace is working with Claire’s Stores, Inc., one of the world’s leading fashion jewelry and accessories retailers, to bring to its audience tools and resources that can help parents and other caregivers raise children who are thoughtful, informed and brave about race. The collaboration encompasses a range of social media and other communications campaigns throughout 2020 and 2021.

Together with the Conceptual Development and Social Cognition Lab at New York University (CDSC), EmbraceRace is developing a new video-based intervention for parents to promote the development of anti-racist beliefs and behaviors in children by targeting early developing beliefs about racial inequality. CDSC is also among our key partners in an emerging effort to formulate free and freely available to all. We don’t have space (or permission) to thank our individual donors by name here, but please know: we so appreciate you.

We are because you are.

Over these last five years members of the EmbraceRace community have been wonderfully supportive. You have shared EmbraceRace articles, posts, and stories with your friends, families, and colleagues; entrusted us, publicly and privately, with your own stories; contributed heartfelt blog pieces and guiding questions and comments; and brought us treasure troves of content about race, kids, and caregiving that we continue to share forward.

Donations from over 2,500 of you—parents, teachers, grandparents, aunt and uncles, researchers, children, caring others—have allowed us to do this work, and to keep our offerings free and freely available to all. We have space (or permission) to thank our individual donors by name here, but please know: we so appreciate you.

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Thank you for the consistent wonderfulness of your webinars! My coworkers have been alerting me to the webinars as they come up. I’ve seen the one about structural racism, a second about helping children to be disaster-resilient, and a third about choosing “good” picture books for children. Your panelists are always wonderful, and I have discovered information watching the webinars that I have honestly never heard anywhere else. — Francis L, public librarian

OUR SUPPORTERS

Corporate & Institutional Funders in 2020

$500,000+
- Rite Aid Foundation
- $250,000-$499,999
- LEGO Community Fund
- Novo Foundation
- Sheitz
- $50,000-$249,999
- Claire’s, Inc
- Gap Inc.
- Heising-Simons Foundation
- Live Well Charities
- Western Digital Corporation Fund
- $10,000-$49,999
- 4Moms
- Access Financial
- Cable One/Sparklight
- Cedars-Sinai Medical Center
- Conrad Hilton Foundation
- Dernart Brands, Inc
- Green Sprouts, Inc.
- The Irene E. and George A. Davis Foundation
- KielCo, Inc.
- Munchkin, Inc.
- New World Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson President’s Grant Fund
- S H Cowell Foundation
- Standard Life Aberdeen Charitable Foundation
- Steve Sarowitz

$2,000-$9,999
- Access USA Shipping
- Anonymous
- Baystate Medical Center
- The Beveridge Family Foundation
- Camp Gladiator
- Chan Clan Justice and Mercy Fund
- Chan Lau
- Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts
- DIT International
- Emerge
- JHM Charitable Fund
- Jewish Communal Foundation
- Layoff Family Foundation
- Louis Legacy Fund
- Menasha Corporation Foundation
- Meredith Corporation
- MBK Fine Arts, LLC
- Pacific Living Properties
- Pactimo LLC
- Radnorberry Foundation
- Soapy Joe’s
- Teddy the Dog Apparel

$500-$1,999
- Carolyn W. & Charles T. Beaud Family Foundation
- Dogound Fitness, Inc.
- Douglas C. Coutts and Lynne T. Coutts Family Foundation
- James and Bernice Brown Family Fund
- Pro Cure, LLC
- River Valley Market
- Saputo Dairy Foods
- Semtech Corporation
- Wild Roots

OUR PARTNERS

In partnership with Gaming Revolution for Inspiring Development, EmbraceRace is developing a game that educates users about the structural factors that underlie and largely explain the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on people of color in the United States. The game is designed for teens and adults of all races and ethnicities. We expect to partner with schools and youth organizations interested in incorporating the game into their programming.
JOIN THE EMBRACERACE COMMUNITY

Join our community of Possibilists!
Sign up for our monthly newsletter.
Connect with our community on social.
Learn more at embracerace.org