Young children notice and think about race. Adults often worry that talking about race will encourage racial bias in children, but the opposite is true. **Silence about race reinforces racism** by letting children draw their own conclusions based on what they see. Teachers and families can play a powerful role in helping children of all ages develop positive attitudes about race and diversity and skills to promote a more just future—but only if we talk about it!

- At birth, babies look equally at faces of all races. At 3 months, babies look more at faces that match the race of their caregivers. (Kelly et al, 2005)
- Children as young as two years use race to reason about people's behaviors. (Hirschfeld, 2008)
- By 30 months, most children use race to choose playmates. (Katz & Kolkin, 1997)
- Expressions of racial prejudice often peak at ages 4 and 5. (Aboud, 2008)
- By five, Black and Latinx children in research settings show no preference toward their own groups compared to Whites; White children at this age remain strongly biased in favor of whiteness. (Dunham et al, 2008)
- By kindergarten, children show many of the same racial attitudes that adults in our culture hold—they have already learned to associate some groups with higher status than others. (Kinzler, 2016)
- By five, Black and Latinx children in research settings show no preference toward their own groups compared to Whites; White children at this age remain strongly biased in favor of whiteness. (Dunham et al, 2008)
- Explicit conversations with 5–7 year olds about interracial friendship can dramatically improve their racial attitudes in as little as a single week. (Bronson & Merryman, 2009)

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**Do some learning of your own** to get ready for conversations with children. Here are some good places to seek information and training:

- Teaching Tolerance — [tolerance.org](http://tolerance.org)
- Raising Race Conscious Children — [raceconscious.org](http://raceconscious.org)
- Embrace Race — [embracerace.org](http://embracerace.org)
- Teaching for Change — [teachingforchange.org](http://teachingforchange.org)
- AORTA Cooperative — [aorta.coop](http://aorta.coop)
- Fortify Community Health (CA) — [fortifycommunityhealth@gmail.com](mailto:fortifycommunityhealth@gmail.com)
- Delaware Valley Assoc. for the Education of Young Children (PA) — [dvaeyece.org](http://dvaeyece.org)