

THE 2020 MARYLAND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT SUMMIT WEBINAR SERIES

Small Changes for Big Results: Understanding Equity and Implicit Bias when Engaging Families

Every Second Thursday of the month
3:00pm ET



Dorothy Stoltz:

(silence). Good afternoon, everyone. We'd like to invite you to type in your name and organization in the chat. We're going to wait another moment as people join the session. (silence). Thank you for typing in your name and your organization. We're delighted to have so many people joining us today all across the spectrum of family engagement.

Dorothy Stoltz:

Okay. I'm going to go ahead and get started. Welcome to the Maryland Family Engagement Summit. This is our second in a webinar series of five. At the end of the session today, we'll promote the next three sessions, one per month. And we're delighted have this series, Small Changes for Big Results. We're pleased to have our very special guest presenter today, Dr. Stevenson. I'm Dorothy Stoltz. I'm director for Community Engagement for the Carroll County Public Library in Maryland, and I'm co-chair of the Family Engagement Coalition. And I'd like to give a little shout out to our co-chair, Keri Hyde, who is executive director at Ready At Five.

Dorothy Stoltz:

And this webinar series is sponsored by the Maryland Family Engagement Coalition, MSDE and MAEC, which is the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium. And I just want to say that as people are coming in, I'll just tell the story of when the COVID started in March, and I believe it was the first week that we had closures. I read an article that described the Elizabethan era plague and Shakespeare, who was not only a playwright, but he was a director, actor, producer, et cetera, in the theater.

Dorothy Stoltz:

The theaters were closed. During an 11 month shut down, he wrote Macbeth, King Lear, and Antony and Cleopatra. And I was so inspired by that. I just thought, gosh, if he's writing masterpieces, I could at least try to be as productive as I can be and figure out what we can do with virtual programming and services in the library. And I think everyone's doing a fabulous job pivoting like we did with this summit to turn it into this webinar series.

Dorothy Stoltz:

Let's see. Next slide, please. And today, we have some wonderful behind the scenes folks. Our technical support is Kate Farbry, and our chat box crew is Mariela Puentes and Nikevia Thomas, and they're all from MAEC. So thank you so very much for helping with that. Next slide, please.

Dorothy Stoltz:

So our series is the second Thursday of each month at three o'clock. And like I said, at the end of today's session, we will go over what's coming up. But the series is meant to examine the effects of racial stress and trauma, to take a look at equity and racial literacy, and we're thrilled that we were able to create this wonderful series and we'll ...

Dorothy Stoltz:

Next slide, please. I'd like to introduce what we're going to do logistically. If you need closed captions, please click on more at the bottom of your screen, and you should see what's called show subtitle and

click that. And the caption should come up. For questions, please type it in the Q&A, which you can also find at the bottom at the Q&A symbol. And then for comments, we welcome comments in the chat.

Dorothy Stoltz:

Next slide. To introduce our speaker, I'd like to introduce Dr. Carol Williamson, who's with the Maryland Department of Education. She is a deputy state superintendent for teaching and learning at the Office of Teaching and Learning. Dr. Williamson.

Dr. Carol Williamson:

Thank you so much, Dorothy. Good afternoon, and thank you all so much for being here today. Last month, we kicked off our summit series by discussing birth to 12 equitable family, school, and community engagement. We're going to continue the conversation today by talking about mental health and trauma. As we know, the pandemic has highlighted concerns with equitable access to quality education, childcare, and technology, and so many other programs and services critical to families and children. The protests around long institutionalized racial inequities has created an urgency for us to hold ourselves accountable for working towards solutions. We know the health and the mental health of our children and families are critical to their success.

Dr. Carol Williamson:

However, we need to address how these recent events have had an impact on our children and families. As Maryland enter stage three of recovery and reopening and school systems and programs are beginning to open again for face-to-face learning, we need to ensure that our teachers and providers are equipped and ready to support families and children. This includes reflecting upon and making plans to mitigate what children and families have experienced over the past several months. No two families have experienced COVID and racial inequities in the same way, and no two families will respond to this traumatic experience in the same way.

Dr. Carol Williamson:

While making sure that we are all ready for our children and families to return, we need to remember all of our staff as well. These events have had an impact on each of us, and we need to understand how it affects the impact on our engagement with children and families. That's why we are so fortunate for today's keynote speaker, Dr. Howard Stevenson. He will discuss how trauma affects children and families. He will also help us reflect upon any discomfort we personally may have around these topics and provide us with strategies so we may best support our students, whether they're in early learning settings, childcare programs, schools, or at home for distance learning.

Dr. Carol Williamson:

Dr. Howard Stevenson is the Constance Clayton Professor of Urban Education, Graduate School of Education at the University of Pennsylvania. He is the executive director of the Racial Empowerment Collaborative designed to promote racial literacy in education, health, and community institutions. His most recent research focuses on helping children and adults develop and use assertive coping strategies during face-to-face microaggressions.

Dr. Carol Williamson:

Key to this racial healing work is the use of culture to reduce in the moment threat reactions and increase access to memory, physical mobility, and voice. Dr. Stevenson, we are delighted that you could

join us today and be a part of our Family Engagement Summit series. And we're honored that we have this opportunity to learn from you as we begin a new school year during these unprecedented times. Dr. Stevenson, I turn it over to you.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Thank you very much, Dr. Williamson, and I appreciate that introduction. And I'm very glad to be here today. And I'm interested in not just talking to you or sharing information with you, but also hearing from you. And I invite you to please use the chat to help us continue a dialogue, despite the fact that I'm the only one up here right now. I want to start by telling you the end of the story. The end of that story is that while giving a lecture to teachers at Sidwell Friends School, a White woman, the librarian, walks up to me crying and I started crying too.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

When I first came to the University of Pennsylvania, I had dreams. I had spent a lot of time in neighborhoods in Philadelphia as a therapist, as a clinical psychologist, but I was finally getting the chance to study a research question that centered around, does it matter when parents talk to their kids about race? I was so excited about finding out about this question and asking others about the question, and I also was excited about having colleagues in which I had plans that we would write together, that I would be having the time to actually write.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I had dreams that my colleagues and I would go to the coffee houses, I would read their work, they would read my work, and that we could co-write together because you need a lot of support in writing to get through [inaudible 00:12:20]. So I thought, man, this would be great. We would go to the coffee houses, I would look into their eyes, they would look into my eyes, and then the research would begin.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I also knew that because being the only African American in the Psychology Department in the Graduate School of Ed at Penn, that maybe others might be a little nervous about me, in particular, because I wanted to study race that they might be a little shy or uncomfortable talking about race. So I made a decision very early on that I was going to ever so slightly shape shift myself so that I could be the kind and gentle colleague to be less threatening.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I thought that if I could create a sort of connection and be less threatening, then my colleagues would come out of their caves, come out of their huts, and in many respects, we could then go into working together, to reading each other's work, to going to the coffee houses, looking into each other's eyes, and holding hands perhaps, and skipping even into the sunset of academic [inaudible 00:13:32]. I had dreams.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Unfortunately, after a year of trying to shape shift, I was unsuccessful. I mean, it was a big grandiose now that I think back on it, just consider the fact that I could somehow believe that I could influence how another person would feel simply by how I acted. At any rate, I was disillusioned. There was no coffee houses, there was no handholding, there was no skipping.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And so a year later, I came to a place of disillusionment. And I found myself worried about going back to my second year at Penn. In the process, I was thumbing through the newspaper, I don't know how many of you, when you're disillusioned, then you start thumbing through a magazine, and I started seeing some pictures that were eerily familiar to me. And I became more intrigued.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And as I started looking through the magazine article called Another Country, I decided to read the first paragraph. And the paragraph says, "It's out there somewhere between the corporate capital of Wilmington and the neon brightness of Delaware's recreation store. Out there somewhere, after the byway scatter and the pavement goes to dirt, is a place deep within poverty and at the edge of hope." Well, I was intrigued.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

First of all, I grew up in Southern Delaware, and so I wanted to know, where is this place that's like another country. And two, I got a little pissed and not just intrigued. I was a little pissed because I couldn't believe that they misspelled Delaware. That was just too much for me to handle. Here it is, a [inaudible 00:15:24] surprise winning newspaper misspells the state that I grew up in. That didn't make any sense to me. So I was both pissed and intrigued.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And so I went further and I came across the image of Billy Johnson. After a day picking potatoes, Billy Johnson takes a rest in the migrant workers' camp. And all of a sudden, when I read that, I had images of a migrant workers' camp that was literally about two and a half miles from where I grew up in a little town called Slaughter Neck. It's a kind of shanty town. And I remembered that image. It came to my head as I was reading this caption. But I also remembered another person.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Another image came to mind that was Jose Santiago. Jose Santiago was my best friend in first and second grade. And the thing was Jose and I would team up and fight against the White boys who would try to fight us at recess. And fact of the matter is Jose was a little taller than everybody else. I really don't know how old Jose was in the first grade, but I was so happy he was my friend, and whenever Jose was there, we won the battles. And the funny thing though, was Jose wasn't always there. And on the days that Jose wasn't there, I got my butt kicked. A very different scenario.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But I found out much later that Jose was part of a migrant family, which they were not in school in the same area throughout the year. So Jose would be gone for months at a time. But this image triggered it for me. And also, the notion that it said near Dover, Delaware, which where I grew up would have been about an hour and a half from where I grew up at that time. And I'm saying, okay, near Dover, Delaware.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But then I turn the pages and I come to Lakesha Burton. And I'm triggered by the notion that in my area of Delaware, the Burton is a common clan name. There are families of burdens who are Black and some who are White actually, that own stuff and some who do not own stuff, but it's a common term. I went to a school with Burtons. I played Little League with Burton family members. And here, Lakesha Burton, they show that she lives near Milton, Delaware. And then I became angry because I realized they were talking about my neighborhood.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And then I was realizing very clearly that it hit me all of a sudden that this, not only are they talking about my neighborhood, this is not my story. It's true that we grew up without many resources, but you ever been in a place where people label you and that label is supposed to stick, and if somebody ever called you poor, you'd be ready to fight? That's how I felt. I was saying these people did not get the joy, and the laughter, and the survival, and the resilience of the people that I grew up with. And I became even more angry.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I said to myself, as I go back to the University of Penn, I'm not going to shape shift. I'm going to do my best not to shape shift anymore. And I came across the thinking and a saying that helped me 29 years ago, and it's still true today, I said to myself, I belong at the University of Pennsylvania, but I do not fit in. And I define belonging as this disability of our question, do I accept myself? Do I accept my difference? Do I accept my culture? Do I accept my competence? And I define fitting in as a dependence or a question that ask, do I depend on others' acceptance of my difference, my culture, my competence?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Have you ever been in a place where you belong but you don't fit in? That question was big for me because in the beginning, I thought that was very important. The reason I thought fitting in mattered was also the same reason I decided to shape shift myself, try to be kind and gentle. And as we know, for many people who do that, it changes how you walk, or you shift how you talk, you shift how you listen. You're on edge wondering and worrying about, are you shape shifting in the right way? So, that saying really helped me in my 30 years at Penn.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But I also came across another saying that is very reminiscent for me now in the work that we're doing in my center. A proverb that goes, a lion's story will never be known as long as the hunter is the one to tell it. And for us, that means everybody's story is important. Everybody's racial story is important, and everybody's racial story is powerful. Nobody's story is better than another. And mine is not less than anyone else's. And with that, I decided not only to go back to Penn with a sense of resolve, but I was going to make sure no one else distorted my story or told it in a way that was not true.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And so in my life, I've found myself looking at moments, images, social media, television, and print, and realizing you know what, that's not my story. That's not my story. That's not my people's story. And I think if we're going to have a racial literacy in our culture, if we're going to develop a sense of honest engagement and dialogue, we've got to start in the beginning with our own racial stories.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I grew up in a multicultural home. Both my parents were African American, and as you can see in this picture, they are both African American, but they are very different culturally. No different in many respects maybe than other families, but for me growing up very different. My mother grew up in North Philadelphia, and my father grew up in Southern Delaware, the country, Southern Delaware. Most people don't realize there are two Delawares. And maybe folks in Maryland understand this, but there's an upper Delaware and there's a lower Delaware.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I have been to California for my graduate education where I ran into people who wanted to know what state Delaware was in. And it changed my view of California forever just to let you know. But there literally are two Delawares. Upper Delawareans look down on lower Delawareans as slower, lower. Whether you're rich, when you're poor, whether you are finding yourself in situations of wealth with regard to land, with regard to education, you cannot run from that slur of lower, slower. Lower Delaware was very much like the deep South. There were places you could not go because of racism.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

The school systems that we were in were very divided along race. In fact, there was a school not far from where I grew up about three or four miles that was included in the Brown versus Board Education, a 1954 decision to argue on behalf of integration. Southern Delaware was like Alabama, like Mississippi. And North Philly was just the opposite. There could be [inaudible 00:22:50] places too different from each other.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

My father's way of dealing with racial conflict was to have us in church 24 hours a day, seven days a week. He believed if anybody bothered us because of the color of our skin, it was our job to pray for them knowing that God would get them back in the end. He believed in retaliation. It was just not a physical retaliation, it was a spiritual retaliation. He believed that that God would take care of it one day in that great getting up morning, in that better by and by. And you are not supposed to [inaudible 00:23:25] yourself being physical since it's a spiritual warfare.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

My mother on the other hand in North Philly had a very different policy. If my father's policy was more like minus the King, my mother's was more like Malcolm X. Not only did she believe in physical retaliation when somebody mistreated you racially, she also believed you could pick up inanimate objects to help you along the way. In my mother's world, she grew up in segregated neighborhoods, incredibly hostile in which she and her family members were chased out of those neighborhoods. And in many respects, she also gave as much as she got. She and her family and friends would chase White people out of their neighborhoods, so there was equal opportunity hostility.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

When she came to Southern Delaware ... And if I can show you a sense of my father, this is him. He worked at the Rehoboth movie theater, and in many respects, he was with my two sons, was the guy that had us in church all the time. These are some of my church friends growing up, including one of our

elders all the way to the right, who literally, amazing woman, would often take care of young people. She was a saint in many respects. This would be my father's vision of the world. In a sense, in this image, you can see also, I want to point out that both my parents in this case are the only two people happy in this image. My brother and sister and I are a little bit ready for something to fly off. We were never sure when a catastrophe is about to happen, so we were ready for a fight.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

My sister is a wonderful musician. She still lives in the same neighborhood in Southern Delaware. My brother, many people know very well, is a very famous lawyer. His name is Brian Stevenson. He wrote a book called Just Mercy. He started, I think a movement called Equal Justice Initiative down in Montgomery, Alabama. And just the movie that came out about his life. If you haven't seen it, it just came out last year or this year.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

If you haven't seen it, don't mention it to me in the chat. Don't bring it up at all. Okay. But this is him. And as you can see, early on, my brother had a sort of suspicion about the world. You can see here, he's warning if there's an injustice going on with the photographer. And my job was to be the bouncer. My job is to protect my younger brother and sister against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That was my role.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

In a sense people will say to me, "Do you know about this guy named Brian Stevenson?" And they never think that I, when I tell them, "Yeah, he's my brother ..." So I bring pictures now wherever I go so people know that I'm not lying or making it up in many respects. So my mother coming to Southern Delaware had a very different sense of the place. She probably felt like it was coming to another country. She did not understand the Black people in Southern Delaware, she did not understand the Brown people, she did not understand the White people.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Because in Philly, with her Malcolm X approach that was around engagement, she could not understand why many of the Black and Brown people would often be physically deferential in the presence of Whites. They would keep their head down, they would not look people in the eye, and they would move to the side. My mother wasn't like that. She wasn't deferential, she did not care what you thought about her, and if you stared at her, she would stare at you back. There was something about her style and her way that was very different than most people that she ran into.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Before we would go into the public thoroughfares and supermarkets, and in particular, in the Georgetown Acme supermarket, my mother would give us the talk. You know the talk that some parents give to their children to help them navigate the world of racial hostility. That question I'm trying to answer in my research world, does it matter when parents talk to their kids about race? My mother would start that talk by saying to all three of us in the back of the car, "Don't ask for nothing, don't touch nothing. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?"

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And then she would pretend to walk away, but then come back. And we knew she was coming back and she would say, "I don't care how many children in the store climbing the walls, they're not my child. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?" And we would all say in three part harmony, "Yes, mom." My mother would give us that talk over and over and over and over and over again. We would go into the supermarket and we would see. Some days we would go, no problem. Get our food, go home, eat. Great day. Other days though, we could walk in and you could feel the tension. You could feel the stress by the way people looked at us. They would stare.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

You ever been in a space where you walk in and people are staring at you? And we were worried about it. We would see these movements, these attitudes, the sucking of the teeth, the rolling of the eyes. And in our little bodies and our little cells, we were always looking up. We were seeing bodies move with hostility. And on the days where we tried to do whatever we could to ignore and we knew there was going to be a calamity, we would do what our father taught us, and we would pray. We would say, "Lord, please don't let nobody mess with my mom today." And some days that worked. Some days God was with us and we would get out of the store, go home and eat.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But other days, nothing worked. Not even prayer. And in our little minds we would say, maybe God was busy with some other kids in another supermarket. On days that nothing worked and there was no way to stop the calamity, we would get up to the conveyor belt, pay for the food, and the worst thing you can do when you want to disrespect a Black family that's struggling to make ends meet is that you throw her food into the bag. And when that happened, it was on. My mother began to tell the person who they were, who their family was, where to go, how fast to get there.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

You ever been cursed out before? My mother could do it in 30 seconds. And frankly, my brother and sister and I, all three of us have the skills. We try to warn the person before they start throwing, "You probably don't want to mess with my mother," but it'd be too late. It was [inaudible 00:30:34]. When my mother was done, the person would be on the floor, writhing out of decay and devastation. It was a horrible thing to watch.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I tell that story, living in a multi-cultural home, because both my parents are very culturally different. Both of them were Christian. The differences is my father would pray before a racial conflict, and my mother would pray after. The moral of that story for me in my narrative for the work that we do with the Racial Empowerment Collaborative and the work that we do with the lion story is that sometimes when it comes to a racial moment, you got to know how to pray, you got to process, you got to prepare, you got to think through. You can't just jump in. But other times, you got to know how to push, to protest, to speak up, do something.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I would argue that we are lacking a kind of literacy in our culture that involves those two things. We're not sure how to prepare, and we certainly not sure how to speak up. And that's the work of racial

literacy as far as I'm concerned. And in many respects, we are influenced by our own narratives. Let me just throw out a couple of things. This is my family in front of the Supreme Court. And for those of you who've seen or read Just Mercy, my brother was arguing in front of the Supreme Court on behalf of [Johnny D. McMillan 00:32:00] in this case. If you want to know about that, we could talk about it. Very early on, it was his first argument in front of the Supreme Court. He's had many since.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And this is us that the preview of the HBO special called True Justice. We're very, very proud of my brother. This particular documentary was nominated for an Emmy for this year. So I just want to tell you about it because we're proud of him. Again, what is the point? The lion's story will never be known as long as the hunter is the one to tell it.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, if it was my druthers, I would have the ability to put you on the rooms and we could talk about this. And I want to know not just about me, but about your story. I'd be interested in how you manage your own narrative. And in this sense, the way that we think about this is a wonderful poem by Nayyirah Waheed that says, "Some people when they hear your story contract, others upon hearing expand, and this is how you know."

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, before I exercise or get you all involved, I want to try a little poll just to get your thoughts. And if you could use your phones and see if this still work, I'm interested in, what did you notice about yourself while I was telling my racial story? And if you could go to a menti.com on your phone and use this code, I'd be interested in what the audience would say. What did you notice about yourself, your body, your thoughts, memories, feelings, after I told my racial story?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And if this doesn't work, we'll move on to something else. It doesn't matter what you noticed, did you notice anything about yourself? Thank you. Wow. Pride. Could relate. Intrigued. Heart hurt. Understanding. Heart ache. Cool. Thank you all for participating. We'll see if we can get to 100 and then we'll move on. So right now, captivated, discomfort, understanding, pride, relatable, compassion, sadness are some of the larger words. Okay. Great.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So now, I'm going to ask you, in some respects, to respond to another image. And I want you to use the chat. I'm going to show you an image, and then I'm going to ask you to use the chat to tell me what you think. So the question I'm asking you, what do you see when you look at this image? What comes to mind when you see this image. And maybe, Mariela, if you might help in terms of the chat.

Mariela Puentes:

Absolutely. I'm here.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Great. Thank you. What do you think of when you see this image?

Mariela Puentes:

I don't think we're seeing the image. You need to share your screen.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Maybe I should share my screen. How about that? That's a good idea. Thank you for that. All right. How about this image instead of the other image? Try this image. What comes to mind? What do you see? (silence). Do you see the image?

Mariela Puentes:

Yes, we see the image. It seems like people are raising their hand. Do you prefer for them to raise their hand or for them to type in their response in the chat box?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I prefer for you to type in your response or use your voice actually. Thank you. This is not a trick question just to let you know.

Mariela Puentes:

Okay. So we're seeing a lot of people comment on the Q&A box. We're seeing somebody say, is shape shifting the same as code switching? That's I think from the previous one.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Mariela Puentes:

Let's see. Interested. [inaudible 00:38:35] changing. Parts of the whole.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Okay. All right. My chat box is disabled. Okay. I got you. All right.

Mariela Puentes:

Somebody says, the elephant looks annoyed. Presumption.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Great. Elephant looks annoyed. Okay. How about if ... Great. So let me say if it's okay, if you don't mind using your voice and opening your mic, is that also possible or no?

Mariela Puentes:

I think you can select people to answer the question. Give me one second.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Okay. Sure. If not, we'll just move on. We're getting a lot though. People are saying perspective. Thank you. That is right. Different perspective. Got you. Okay. I'll tell you what, we're going to continue. Let me

ask, maybe if you open your mic in the process or by show of hands, how many of you did not notice that the folks are wearing blindfolds? Okay.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

What will happen sometimes is that when we have a racial discussion, and this work is related to what I think Claude Steele's been talking about, A Racing Mind, when I show this image at times, there will be moments in which folks will not see the blindfold. Some will, some won't. And sometimes the reason is because my graphics are really bad, but often, it's not uncommon for people, if I can keep this image up for minutes at a time, never see the blindfold until someone else mentions it.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And the way I liken the less than I get from that is sometimes during a racial moment or discussion, people are so focused on doing the right thing or saying the right thing that they will see some things right in front of them and not see other things right in front of them. You ever lose your keys and you go looking all over the place for them and they ended up being right where you started, and you swear that somebody is messing with you?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Your brain is funny in the way that it responds during stressful moments. And I would argue, during racially stressful moments, it can also be blind in some respects. How many of you, and again, I can't tell, but I would be asking you how many of you did not see the Delaware was misspelled earlier? It's very common to actually have that happen if we're in a racial moment. And imagine if you're in a racial moment in which you see some things but not see others. Very important.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So one of the lessons I try to teach them this image is that dealing with race and diversity can be both exciting and stressful. And we try to approach racial problem solving or racial stress as it were from a both end lens instead of a sort of either/or lens. We try our best to do that. Either/or lens would be thinking of things as conservative versus liberal, right versus left, right versus wrong. And in many respects, we could think of brilliant not so brilliant.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But one of the things we like to entertain is this both end notion of what if opposites can coexist in the same space? What if at some places and some moments we are conservative, but we might in a rare occasion, vote liberally on one bill? Or vice versa, is that possible that we might be brilliant on some days and other days just as idiotic as a door knob? Is that possible? Is it possible that on some days we are the poster children for normalcy, but if we're caught in the wrong places at the wrong time, being stressed out in the beginning of the school year or the end of the school year, we are so stressed that if someone caught us in those moments, they can easily diagnose us and cart us away without our permission?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

At both end notion, we think change is the way we go about problem solving matters of race. For example, what if you go back to this image and you say, for many people here, they are not just blinded, but they're also cited. They do see some things, and they do not see other things. That's one point I would like to make.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Another point has to do with stress. Again, if I could get a sense of you, I'd be asking you this question of how many of you would agree with me that the person who found a snake here at the bottom is going to be more stressed than the person who discovered a rope? In many ways, I would argue that most people would say yes to that question. If I had the opportunity, I'd ask you to imagine just for a moment, imagine right now, wherever you're sitting or standing or walking while you're in this webinar, let's say eight snakes show up in your neighborhood. And they're interested in learning about racial literacy. They look through your window and they somehow are able to glance that you're watching a webinar on racial literacy, and they're angry because nobody tells snakes anything. Snakes show up, they just run.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So they're interested in racial literacy, they show up in your office, they slither across the room to get to see your laptop or your desktop. And they stood there over the desktop. And they see there's an elephant and they go, "Oh my gosh, we know about elephants. Elephants are some of our best friends." And so they're interested. And I'm interested in you in what do you notice about yourself when that happens? And I usually ask the audience, on a scale of one to 10, 10 being highly stressed, one being not stressed at all, what score would you give yourself? And usually, I get about 95% of people going eight, nine, and 10, or like 100.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But I will get a small percentage of people who actually would say I'm at a two, three or four. And in many respects, when I inquiry them, they're going to tell me that they've had some exposure to snakes even a little bit. And that exposure has lessened their stress to think about this question, think about this image, and also navigate it. I use that as an example to suggest that in many respects, people approach racial moments very similarly.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

For some people, when a racial moment shows up, we are stressed at the level of a three or four. It's no big deal. We've been there before. We've engaged these moments before. We're not thrown by them because we're kind of prepared. But others who come across the racial moment may be at an eight, nine or 10. And that is a highly threatening space. And in many respects, when we talk about stress on a scale of one to 10, we think of eight, nine, and 10 as threat.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And a racial encounter at eight, nine, and 10 would be like facing a tsunami or a poisonous snake. A racial encounter that stresses you out at five, six or seven would be like facing the challenge of climbing a mountain. It's difficult but not impossible. Hard but possible. And one through four is not stressful at all. And that's the way we want to approach racial moments, racial encounter, and in many ways.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So we think about racial moments and encounters on a particular way as what's happening to your body, your emotions, your thoughts, and how all of that affects your voice. [inaudible 00:47:28] definition around race-related stress, and as well as the work of Robert Carter at a teacher's college says

a lot about how we understand race-based traumatic stress. And in many respects, our work is connected in how we notice or aware of the effects of that racially stressful moment on your body, on your thoughts, on your emotions, and then how that eventually might affect your decision-making.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, for many of you, I would also ask to this, how many of you, while I gave you the image of snakes, started seeing snakes coming into your room? How many of you, for example made some comments to yourself? Did you say anything to yourself while you were imagining the image of snakes? Did you notice your feelings? Did you notice what your body was doing as I was giving you the example? We're going to come back to that.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So for us, what is a racial encounter? Well, a racial encounter would be having, in our view, a face-to-face or in the moment racial moment. And for us, a racial encounter can be before, during, and after. And a racial encounter is anything that draws on your resources, that taxes you, that in some respects, causes you to respond in a particular way, emotionally, physiologically, or thinking wise.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So let me give you an example. Let's say you're a teacher in a school, maybe it's a preschool, maybe it's a childcare agency, and you have a meeting at three o'clock. It's now 9:00 AM, but you have a parent meeting with my mother, Alice Stevenson at three o'clock. And you know that sometimes, knowing my mother, things can get a little intense. But in nine o'clock, you're working in a play group and you realize you're distracted because you're worried about what's going to happen at three o'clock. And so you're not giving the kiddies all their attention at nine in the morning. That is considered a racial encounter because it's drawing on your psychological, emotional, and physiological resources.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Three o'clock comes, you are ready, and it goes well, or maybe not. It doesn't go well, that's a racial encounter. And then nine o'clock at night, you look back and you start thinking about things you should have done, said, or things you did say and you are so proud of yourself. What were you worried about anyway? That's also a racial encounter. In our work, a lot of folks we think don't often focus on race from this angle. A lot of people think about race as ideological. What I believe, who I will vote for. And in many respects, that's very important. It's very ideological though.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

We're interested in how is it that people can navigate face-to-face moments? Where we believe they have some of the most tragic outcomes. If you think about Tamir Rice, there was no time in that interaction for him to be able to protect himself six seconds before that officer decided to shoot. And most of the cases that go awry, we've got to be able to be nimble, to make healthy racial decisions in less than two minutes. And that's our focus.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, the funny thing is that racial encounters are very stressful and threatening. But before I go there, I want to stop. And I feel like I'm talking at you, and I want to open it up for questions. And maybe, Dr. Puentes, you can help me in any Q&A that people might have and give people a breather.

Mariela Puentes:

Sure. So it looks like earlier, we may have had a temporary issue with Zoom. People can now access the chat box and the Q&A. I don't see any questions right now, but let's see as we go along, if other people ask questions.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Okay. All right. Cool. All right. So I want to then move on just a little bit of research before I go to my next space on this stuff. And I will share with you regarding racial stress. All right. So the Racing Mind I was telling you about is coming from Claude Steele's work [inaudible 00:52:15] other research he's done over time, the brain is working overtime is the point. The point I want to make about racism as it relates to racial stress is how it poisons our health, it affects how we see and perceive things.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Some of the neuroscience research on this has identified some wonderful research and researchers who have been trying to understand how do people make decisions? How do they think when they only have very little time to make a decision when they're looking at Black and Brown faces versus White faces? And in many respects, what decisions are people going to make. And there's one study by [Trawalter 00:52:55] and others talked about the stereotype of threatening young Black males is so ingrained in the collective American unconscious that Black men now capture attention much like evolved threats, such as spiders and snakes.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

The reason I use the snake example is because of that sort of primitive response, shoot first, run first, frighten first, reaction, that is really not about racial relations, it's really about racial threat. And I think the research on racial threat is a better way to understand what's happening in our country today. There's the research on how children as young as five year olds, when you compare Black and White boys in this case, are perceived very differently and less like children. But one author [inaudible 00:53:43] describe as, "Although young children are typically viewed as harmless and innocent, seeing faces of five-year-old Black boys appears to trigger thoughts of guns and violence."

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Some of the work by Phillip Goff, I think is brilliant as his work with police and how to understand decision-making and police encounters. And some of the work he's done here looks at comparing Black and White boys at 10 years old, and asking the participants of police and White undergraduate females how they perceive these boys, where they projected the Black boys to be four and a half years older than the White boys in a place or in a way in which he called a form of dehumanization.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Can you imagine what it is like if someone sees your little child who is 10 as a teenager? The problem of that is that I might be more afraid of a teenager than I would a child, and I also might justify making decisions towards somebody who might scare me very differently if I perceived them to be older than they really are.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

The research on race to thread also suggest that in close encounters, whether it's children or adults, Black and Brown kids and adults are more perceived as close to than they really are in those moments, older than they really are and larger than they really are, all factors that I think help us to understand this [inaudible 00:55:12] issue is important. Goff called this dehumanization, which I think is beautiful because if you ...

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Maybe you don't understand that from a racial lens, but imagine you are a parent of an early maturing girl who is 10 but looks 14 or 12 but looks 17. Do you not parent differently if you're worried about how other people will perceive her as older than she is? And in this sense, there's a different kind of stress that you might have as a parent parenting an early maturing child versus a late maturing child.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

My brother was a late maturer, I was an early maturer. My brother could grow a beard at 12 years old. I can go back to that picture where we were at the church and you'll see, he has a full grown beard and we're barely in our mid to late teens. That means the world will respond to them differently. And that is important if we're going to understand these politics.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Racism and racial stress also affects decision-making. Now, I know many of you may get this question, but I'm going to ask it anyway. And I'm going to first stop here and ask you to see if you can use [Mentishare 00:56:30] again. Thank you for being patient with my experimentation. But if you have the opportunity now to go to Mentimeter, menti.com, I believe it is, and answer this question. Which grade do you think students of all racial groups are expelled the most? Let's see how many we get. Thank you. We've got pre-K, we've got first to third grade, fourth to sixth grade. All right. Great. All right. We'll get a few more and then we'll move on.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So we got more going for pre-K. Pre-K is in the lead. First and third grades coming up. Seventh and eighth grade sneaking in. All right. Seventh and eighth grade, fourth to sixth are tied for second. Coming in third is first to third grade. All right. Most folks here are going for pre-K, which I'm going to stop there. Thank you very much. Very glad to see it. And those who picked pre-K are absolutely right. The answer is pre-K. And if you go to pre-K Left Behind, you'll find out more of this data.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I understand you've had [Walter Gilliam 00:58:25] come by. And I and Walter are very good friends and I can go back and tell him this is the first group I've actually been in front of in the last, I guess, 10 years, that's actually picked pre-K. But you guys know your stuff, which is great. And the point as Walter has said so many times, he and I will go around the country, he talks about implicit bias and I talk about racial literacy, is that he's focused a lot on the racial disproportionality in preschool.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I'm going to stop there around that research, and I want to get to more regarding racial literacy. So the question I wanted to ask about racial socialization was, does it matter when children talk to their parents or parents talk to their children about race? We found out a lot, frankly, about why that might be a very useful approach. And there's an article that we've written about this. But the theory that we have is called RECAST theory. And we found out a lot about racial socialization, which is the way in which not only what parents transmit, but also what children acquire regarding skills, intellectual skills, emotional behavior skills, to navigate racial moments.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

The research on this about the benefits of racial socialization, I think outweighs the neutral or minuses of racial socialization, and that children across the age span either even in preschool, have some benefits if they have reported parents talking to their kids about race. So we have more information about that as important, the benefits, but also as intervention to some of our work. We've used barbershops and barbers to be counselors of young men between the ages of 18 and 24. We've used basketball and physical activity as a vehicle to manage stress that teaching about race is also very useful in intervention work for young, particularly kids of color, around anger management, depression management.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But the point that I wanted to say regarding the theory is that we know now more about why talking to kids about race is useful. And it so happens that not only does it prepare them for racial moments, it prepares them because it helps to reduce the stress of those moments where people aren't fight, flight, or frightening, and it builds their confidence in the process to engage instead of avoid those moments. So I've seen this before, this is not the first time someone has come at me. And in that sense, the goal is I am not unprepared.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, literacy is about how do I get [inaudible 01:01:32] prepared if socialization is, I'm going to say stuff to my kids about how to navigate the stress and trauma of racism? Literacy is about how to do it through skill building. And that's the work that we're working on now. There's an article in [American Psychologist 01:01:48] last year if you want to read more about the theory, but the skills part, racial literacy skills is defined as the ability to read, recast, and resolve racially stressful encounters.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Reading is about how well do I notice if a race elephant shows up in the room? Do I actually accurately interpret the meaning of actors and actions during those moments, during a racial encounter? What about written texts? What about social media? Am I accurately reading the racial meaning of those conversations? Reading is fundamental to racial literacy. Recasting is the ability to reduce my racial stress during a racial moment using mindfulness. It's about reframing. It's about thinking and reframing the impossible to be possible. And it's also about breathing.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

The strategy that we use called CLCBE, called calculate, locate, communicate, breathe, and exhale is about how well do we calculate or notice the feelings that we're having right now? They could be actually similar sad and disappointed, or they could be opposite side and excited that's possible. And can I tell you what score or what level of intensity am I sad and am I excited. That ability to calculate allows

you to manage the moment a little easier. Locate is where in my body do I feel the stress? The more specific, the better.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Communicate is do I say anything to myself through myself talk, and do I say anything to myself through the images or memories that come to mind? And then the final step is breathing in four counts and hold it, and then exhaling out even slower six counts. It allows me to bring oxygen to my brain, and if I'm at a crisis moment of eight, nine, and 10, it can bring my peripheral vision and hearing back on line because at eight, nine, and 10, we lose what we see to the left and right, which makes us lousy decision makers. Calculate, locate, communicate, breathing, and exhale.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I was in a fifth grade classroom in Chicago many years ago teaching this to fifth graders 7:30 in the morning. Before I could get to communicate, a native American girl stood up and said, "I'm the only native American girl in this school, and I'm angry at a nine. And I can feel it in my stomach." She said, "It's like a bunch of butterflies fighting with each other so much so that they fly up into my throat and chock me." Very clear, very explicit. And I think young people do this better than adults to be honest with you. To know themselves. What do I notice in the middle of a moment?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Resolving is the last racial literacy skill. And it really is about how well can I engage rather than run from a racial encounter? How well can I not underreact or overreact to erase this stressful moment? How well can I actually make a healthy racial decision that matches my social justice values, where I don't underreact where I think it's really not that big a deal when it really is, or overreact when I end up cursing out everything and everybody including the cat and the dog and they had nothing to do with it? So I mean, literacy skills for us around racial literacy is around reading, recasting through mindfulness, and resolving.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, the thing about this story, let me end before I share one other thing, I was at the Sidwell Friends School giving a lecture to teachers there, and a White woman, the librarian, walks up to me crying, and I started crying too. And she was crying so much so that I was worried that I said something to offend her, but you know how when people get to really crying, it triggers your own tear ducts and you start wondering whether you should be crying? That's how it was. I wasn't sure if I should be crying, but it was really emotional for her.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And she walked up to me and she said, "I know about Georgetown [inaudible 01:05:58]." Sorry about that. "I know about Georgetown, Delaware. And I know about that Acme supermarket store in Georgetown, Delaware." And I said, "Shut up," because I didn't believe her. But I was intrigued. She said, "My father worked as a butcher in that store." And then I started crying for real because I have been a lot of places talking about this stuff all over the country. And some people get that Delaware is two Delawares. And I can tell this story to my brother and sister, and they will understand it and get it every time.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But I have never had anybody come up to me and know about the supermarket in Georgetown, Delaware. She validated me in that moment. She made me feel it was a gift that she gave me in this moment to affirm my narrative. She got me in that moment. And I was thinking about, how many places can we go in this world where we belong and some people get us? Imagine going to my therapist who gets me. Imagine going to my childcare agency and the teacher gets me. Imagine going to preschool and my teacher gets me. Imagine walking into a policeman on my way to school and a policeman gets me, affirms my style, my talent, my difference, my narrative. That is a beautiful thing.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But then she said, "There's something you do not know. While the people in that store were definitely racist, and while my father was also and said some really ugly things, you do not know that he only had a sixth grade education, and his whole life, he was treated as if he was dumb. And he took that anger of being mistreated out on other people because this was a job that he got." And in many respects, we both started crying at that moment because she was sticking up for her father, which was beautiful. Her story added to my story.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And I say to you all, before we open it up to questions, the lion's story will never be known as long as the hunter is the one to tell it. I think we can make a difference in the world that we're living in now by how we navigate these face-to-face moments. It's going to take a racial literacy, but it's also going to take practice. And I know some of you are saying, "Practice? We're talking about practice?" Absolutely. We're talking about practice. Now, I was going to share a video, but I think, Dr. Puentes, should I ... I think we might want to leave it open for Q&A about now?

Mariela Puentes:

Yes. There are a few questions that have come in if that's okay with you.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Sure.

Mariela Puentes:

Okay. So the first question, and this was one we got a little while ago, but the question is, where do microaggressions fit into racial encounters? And if you could talk a little bit more about that.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Sure. So microaggressions would be another way of thinking of a racial encounter, but it's all dependent on the eye of the beholder as it were, in the sense that if I perceive something to have happened to me, that perception would still affect how I respond, or how I feel, or my body, thoughts, and feelings will react. And in that sense, the work that [Derald Sue 01:09:46] has been accomplishing around racial microaggressions also demonstrates that those can be a cumulative then in the sense that they can lead to negative outcomes with regard to health.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Some of the research that I did not present that Derald Sue and colleagues have talked about and David Williams would argue, some of the best researchers in the country connect racial stress and these moments and microaggressions to health outcomes such as sleep quality. And not only in adults, but in youth. There's a study that looks at breast cancer in Black women as another place. And the kinds of microaggressions or discrimination experiences that are used in that study of about 59,000 Black women, controlling for a host of factors is both acute and chronic examples of discrimination.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Subtleties, where you walk into a store and you're followed, where you're perceived to be less intelligent, those are considered microaggressions under many definitions, as well as some really chronic stuff like being rejected for housing or credit, even though you have the qualifications. So microaggressions are very important as related to negative health outcomes.

Mariela Puentes:

That segues into the next question. How do we help children develop a racial literacy?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Well, we start with CLCBE. We teach them how to notice, what are their feelings? What are you feeling right now? What do you notice about yourself when someone has just said something to you? We've talked to young children in the early grades. In another school I was at, a fourth grader African American boy, when I was meeting with a group of fourth graders said, "I got called this N word once, and I did not know what it was. And I went home and told my mother about it and father, and they were really upset. And then they told me what it was and they told me, here's what you say when somebody says that to you." And he said, "I came back the next day and I told them exactly what they told me to tell them and I felt so much better."

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Now, the fourth grade was just being upfront and honest about the reality of that sort of experience. But the ability to notice how you feel in a particular moment is not different when we teach kids about good touch and bad touch, about what to do in case of an emergency, like a fire. So we can teach children some very scary things which some people say are scary. And a lot of parents will ask me, "I don't want to burden my child with these issues," or, "Frankly, children should have a peaceful childhood, and won't this make them in pain? Won't this harm them?" And I would say, "We say a lot of scary things to children that are part of our parenting role."

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I asked that same group of fifth graders, "Do your parents ever say anything scary to you?" And they said, "Yup." And I said, "What?" And they said, "Don't talk to strangers and don't take candy from strangers." I said, "Very good." And I said, "Did anybody you don't know ever come up to you and offer you candy?" And they said, "No, but we're real prepared for it." So they're basically saying my family has taught me things about how to manage danger in the world, and we're not having nightmares. And I would say the same is true about talking about race. How do we teach kids to know what's happening to them, but also to be prepared for when someone treats them as not a human?

Mariela Puentes:
What do you think-

Dr. Howard Stevenson:
Can I add some other thing? Can I add something else to that?

Mariela Puentes:
Yeah, of course.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:
So another part of our work is work taught in a program we call EMBRace, working with families about how to talk to their children about race. And Dr. Riana Anderson and I developed the program. She's at the University of Michigan. And frankly, another part is having parents have their own time to process their own racial stories because a lot of parents freeze when they're trying to talk their children because they remember trauma from the past. And so helping parents manage their trauma separately from children. And then we bring them together to have a dialogue. It's a lot easier from parents getting out what they really want to say.

Mariela Puentes:
And so I was about to ask you as a follow-up to that, what do you think are some of the barriers, and why do you think parents or educators don't talk to children about race?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:
Well, I think a big issue is that fear, the sense that I'm going to damage their childhood. And I think it's different for White families, frankly, versus families of color and parents. I see, in many respects, there are a lot of parents who don't know how to talk about these things. They themselves are stressed, their bodies, their thoughts, and their feelings are very mixed as to what this means. And in many respects, the thing that I started to say to people is that fear of fight, flight, or fright response is also a kind of socialization.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:
We know more of the parents might be saying a lot more by what they don't say as opposed to what they do say, and so kids can pick up that, oh, she or he is not really wanting to talk about this just as a scary thing, and maybe I shouldn't talk about this, and that's a kind of teaching that is a socialization non-verbally. So I think we're all talking about race, whether we know it or not, and children are able to pick that up in very early ages. And some wonderful [inaudible 01:15:42] work on this. But I would say fear and anxiety, which is why we think CLCBE is a strategy to manage that fear and anxiety.

Mariela Puentes:
I know you mentioned CLCBE as a strategy, but what are some ways that educators can get started to support students in their social-emotional wellbeing, and with dealing with these sorts of situations of racial trauma?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Well, I think you've got to have your own story. You've got to excavate your own narrative. And in the social-emotional learning world, and even now in anti-racism focus, there's a lot of statements around sitting with discomfort. But what we know about humans is that we don't really do that very well. We don't sit with discomfort. And if we don't recognize that we are actually at a 10 and a nine when we're trying to teach, we're not any good to anybody, to be honest.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And most people, when you're at eight, nine and 10, I think in the educational context where you've had no practice around race, you're going to punch, you're going to basically avoid and change the subject, or abuse power maybe unknowingly. And so the social-emotional learning process is, do you know what's happening to you? Practicing your own racial story will give you some clues as to know that. So when kids come at you, you'll be able to first check yourself to understand what's going on and realize I am communicating through my non-verbals, and let me explain where I'm feeling right now as a model for how you want children to also explain how they're feeling.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And that's not a lesson, that's an emotional conversation. Explaining, deciphering your own emotions for others, I think is still the first thing. Somebody will say, "Well, that's nice, doc, so what if I am reading about the Harlem Renaissance or the N word shows up in my class?" And I'll say, "CLCBE." "Okay. But what if a [inaudible 01:17:38] shows up in the middle of social studies? What do I do?" I'll say CLCBE because that's where your strength is going to come. And that's where kids, I would say nine times out of 10, are asking from.

Mariela Puentes:

And then one participant specifically is wondering, how should White parents talk to their White children about race, because it seems like that conversation isn't happening very often?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Yeah. And I think we know that also from some of the research that Eleonora Bartoli, Ali Michael have done, that some White families define successful racial conversations as when their kids don't want to talk about it or don't talk about it because in their minds, bringing up race can be very problematic. It might cause harm for their children, but it also is, for some families, benevolently worried about their friends of color might also be harmed by bringing out race. So saying nothing is thought of as a good thing.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

But I think that leaves us mostly not competent to actually engage. So it's an avoiding approach. And I will still say to White parents, what's your racial story? And to the degree that you're able to navigate, excavate that with support. And there's shame in all of our stories as much as there's triumph. That is still a fundamental base. And then sharing that with your kids is also fantastic. It's so happens, compared to the 60s, that children know a lot more now than parents because they have access to information. And so some White parents are not able to get away from not saying anything about it because their children are starting to trigger in this conversation in a big way.

Mariela Puentes:

And then following that up, someone's asking if you have any thoughts on acknowledging racial privileges as a way to begin the conversation or discussion, I assume with children.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Sure, absolutely. And I think the visuals are also very helpful. I was just reviewing the Procter & Gamble actually, and actually, Prezi has this wonderful display of access to both information and images that explain systemic racism, racial wealth gap, what does equality mean versus equity? And young people can catch a lot from that, and so can parents. A lot of adults do not understand this very well, and it's quite eye opening. And I'm always interested in when people actually do face privilege. How do you emote about it? How you feel, think, how do your body react to that? And then think about how I will talk to my children about this.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And what I find is that despite it being disturbing, if you want to make a difference in the world, starting at home is the best. And I believe it's important to change the law. But legal remedies will not address the trauma or the stress reactions that happen every day, not only for kids of color, but allies of kids of color who witness the same things. It doesn't matter who you are, if you're witnessing race with dehumanization in your classroom, you're affected by it.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And the question is, do you want your children to swallow that and internalize that? And that's a vicarious form of racial stress or trauma. And I think more parents, regardless of race, are going to be compelled for health reasons. What if your child navigating racial moments meant they got an hour of sleep over the next 10 years? It added to their lives. What would that be like? Would you be interested in talking about race then if you knew it would help your child manage anxiety related to race better in their daily lives? So, that's how I'd approach it.

Mariela Puentes:

And then somebody in the chat box is saying that they don't know how to respond when they're a target of racial discrimination, that they freeze and don't know what to say or how to react. So maybe some strategies or suggestions that you can recommend.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Sure. So again, I would say, for everybody, CLCBE first. Can you calculate, locate, communicate, breathe, and exhale? And I know some of you are thinking that's a cop out, but it's not because if you can get oxygen to your brain, you are absolutely making a big difference in the moment. But there's also, if I can share my screen, another thing we call healthy racial comeback lines.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

And we've been using this, especially for young people. Adults can use them too. But at the times when you are assaulted by someone's verbal moments, and I would argue that this is a problem of shape-shifting and swallowing, is that we know over time, that's going to affect your body. It's going to affect your health. It's going to affect the way you think about yourself.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

So we think it doesn't make sense that when you are mistreated or dehumanized, that you swallow it. It's not a good thing. And so healthy racial comeback lines are statements, thoughts, attitudes, mannerisms, movements, words, and assertions that allow one to deflect insult or injury from microaggressions, both subtle and blatant, without resorting to physical retaliation. Basically, it's just saying to yourself, I reject your rejection of me. I will not walk one other step from this moment, I will not let a minute pass before I say to myself, this was not right what you said.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

I did not deserve this, I will not accept it, I reject your rejection of me. Now, this takes practice. And in the practice, you're going to need to practice some healthy comeback lines and some unhealthy comeback lines until you get to the comeback line that you really, really want to get to. The only other thing that's important is you got to say it to yourself first, not to say it to others. You ever tell a joke and then you screw up the punchline and it comes out bad?

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Same thing for comeback lines. You got to practice them and they got to be in your own style, if that makes any sense. What we're finding is that years later, when people ask them like, "What do you remember about moments in which you could've, should've, would've, I wished I could have [inaudible 01:24:32]," it's really about the fact that I did not protect myself when someone came at me. And I blamed myself for years not having something to do or stay in that moment. And we think this is one way that you can use. But you've got to CLCBE through it and you've got to practice.

Mariela Puentes:

Thank you so much, Dr. Stevenson. I think that's a great way to end our Q&A section, and I think this gives people very tangible ways of navigating these stressful moments in the moment, and also to practice how to navigate them in the future as well.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

Thank you very much.

Mariela Puentes:

So now, I will turn it over to Dorothy to let us know about the next webinar.

Dorothy Stoltz:

Thank you, Mariela, and thank you, Dr. Stevenson, for your wonderful insights, your really brilliant information that I think will be very useful for Maryland going forward and working with our families. Just much gratitude. Thank you, again.

Dr. Howard Stevenson:

You're welcome. Thank you.

Dorothy Stoltz:

For October session, we will be focused on structural inequalities, and our guest presenter will be [Natalie Gillard 01:25:54]. She's creator and facilitator for FACTUALITY. And it's a comprehensive tool that serves as a crash course, facilitated dialogue, and a board game. And it's all in one. And it's going to be sort of a fast-paced session. It's going to be limited for registration, but it'll be disseminating facts pertaining to various tiers of structural inequality in America.

Dorothy Stoltz:

And we'll be doing this in less than 90 minutes. So keep an eye out for the information coming across to register early. Again, it will be a session where we won't be able to have as many people as we do today. Let's see. And so you can see that's October eighth at three o'clock. And then, again, we'll have two more, one in November and December. Next slide.

Dorothy Stoltz:

All right. So please visit the Family Engagement Coalition website, and we have some information about MEAC. And again, Dr. Stevenson, thank you. And thanks, everybody, for joining us. And please take a survey if you will, to help us out because your feedback helps us shape these webinar, the content, the presentation, and providing an opportunity to have these important discussions [inaudible 01:27:36]. Thanks again.