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BRIEF REPORT

# Critical socialization in White families: Lessons learned from an antiracist parenting program

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## Abstract

**Background:** Racial bias develops at an early age, yet most White parents promote color-evasive racial ideology or do not address race with children. There is a need for White parents to have developmentally appropriate race-conscious conversations with young children to address bias and facilitate antiracist values.

**Objectives:** This paper describes program development, theoretical foundations, implementation challenges, and lessons learned from the pilot of an antiracist parent training program. The program is a six-session training for White parents of preschool-aged children. Grounded in family science, it incorporates children's literature and guidance for parent–child communication on race and racism.

**Applied Experience:** There was high interest in the program and participants responded well to the opportunity to learn from other parents. Considerable variability in parents' racial awareness impacted complexity of discussions and influenced parents' responses. Notably, child factors influenced parent outcomes, suggesting bidirectionality in racial socialization processes.

**Conclusion and Implications:** Parent training may be a promising avenue for addressing Whiteness and promoting

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antiracist action. There is a need to consider program implementation in different settings, such as with different facilitators or in less politically progressive communities. Future programs should consider how to encourage critical self-reflection and facilitate complex discussions toward antiracist skill building.

**KEYWORDS**

antiracism, ethnic–racial socialization, intervention, parent training, parent–child socialization, White racial identity

## OBJECTIVE

As the harm caused by U.S. racism has received increased attention over the last several years (American Public Health Association, 2021), awareness of the need to talk with young White children about race has also increased (Bonilla-Silva, 2023). The logic behind this need is that White families' color-evasive and power-evasive racial socialization practices (Neville et al., 2013) uphold and perpetuate White supremacy and systemic racism by socializing their children into a culture that perceives Whiteness as the norm, impeding White children's ability to understand and critique the racialized nature of U.S. society (Ferguson et al., 2022). Though conversations around race and Whiteness are important, they are often perceived as difficult and experienced as emotionally charged. Generations of color-evasive parenting and White silence have fostered an environment in which White parents feel uncomfortable and unprepared to discuss race (DiAngelo, 2011; Heberle et al., 2021). To support White parents in overcoming this discomfort and engaging in more effective dialogue about race with their children, we used existing theory and research to develop the Antiracist Parenting (ARP) Program. Our program's goals are threefold: (a) to provide White parents with skills to have developmentally appropriate conversations about race and racism with their children, (b) to increase parents' sense of competence in doing so, and (c) to support a sustained commitment to antiracist parenting. In particular, we aimed to assist White parents in leveraging teachable moments for discussing race and racism with their preschool-aged children and reflecting on the ways in which their family conversations challenge or support White privilege, while grappling with their own conflicting emotions that may arise when taking a critical look at their role in the prevention and interruption of prejudice. The goal of this paper is to share challenges and lessons learned from piloting an antiracist parenting training for White parents. To provide context, we will first describe our positionality, program development, and the theoretical and empirical foundations of the program. We provide definitions and explanations for our language use in Table 1.

## BACKGROUND

### Positionality

Before diving into the ARP program, we want to acknowledge the lived experience our team brings to this work. We are a multicultural team of scholars and collaborators with identities that include two White women, a White and Hispanic woman, and a Black woman, all of whom are committed to ongoing antiracist work and personal practice. In addition, three of the team members are parents committed to antiracist parenting in their own families.

**TABLE 1** Explanation of terminology and language use.

| Term | Definition/explanation |
|---|---|
| Antiracism | To date, there is no agreed upon definition of antiracism. We align with other scholars who have defined antiracism as an ongoing process of self-reflecting on one's own thoughts and feelings, gaining awareness of how racism operates across multiple systems and levels, and engaging in action that actively challenges racism across levels (Bañales & Rivas-Drake, 2022; Cooper, 2022; Hazelbaker et al., 2022). |
| Color-evasive | We intentionally use the term "color-evasive" versus "color-blind" in our program to remove the reference to visual impairment that may be experienced as pejorative and to highlight the behavioral dimension of avoiding naming race. Our use of this term aligns with color-blind ideology/racism (Bonilla-Silva, 2003a) and color-blind socialization (Hagerman, 2014; Pahlke et al., 2012). |
| Critical socialization | A new term that we coined to acknowledge parent–child socialization processes that extend beyond race-conscious or antiracist parenting strategies to all forms of oppression. Parents engaging in critical socialization help children name and challenge the norms, policies, structures, and systems that uphold oppression with the hope of fostering critical consciousness development (Heberle et al., 2020). |
| Race-conscious | An alternative to "racial color-blindness"; an "an active state, connoting awareness, responsibility, and action" (Bell, 2016, p. 107). Includes being aware of how policies and systems disadvantage people of color and efforts to understand and challenge racism (Bell, 2016). Our use of race-conscious parenting is synonymous with others' use of color-conscious parenting (e.g., Hagerman, 2014; Perry et al., 2019; Vittrup, 2018). We chose "race" to shift focus away from skin color and instead toward race as a social construct, an important distinction given the overemphasis on skin color observed in conversations between parents in our program and their children. |
| White habitus | White habitus is a term coined by Bonilla-Silva (2003b) who describes it as "a racialized, uninterrupted socialization process that conditions and creates whites' racial taste, perceptions, feelings, and emotions and their views on racial matters" (p. 121). He posits that White habitus is created through Whites' "social and spatial segregation and isolation from minorities" (Bonilla-Silva, 2003b, p. 121). |
| Whiteness | In line with "color-evasive" ideology and White invisibility, there is no agreed upon definition of Whiteness (Doane, 2003). In this paper, we align with the definition used by Bonilla-Silva (2003a), which describes Whiteness as "embodied racial power" (Bonilla-Silva, 2003a, p. 271) that is an evolving social construction that upholds systems of power and inequity by separating the dominant group from the "other" through claims of "biological superiority" (Doane, 2003). |

Regarding professional expertise, all four team members come from a human development and family studies department—two as faculty and two as graduate students—with additional educational backgrounds in developmental psychology, counseling psychology, and education. Collectively, we bring content expertise in mindfulness, parents' experiences, parent education, parent–child relationships, antiracism, White racial socialization, family science, prevention science, implementation science, and contemplative science. The various intersectional identities of our team allowed for accountability and reflection throughout the various stages of this work, including program creation, implementation, and writing. Further, our team discussed at length how to best represent our positionality in this paper, given the importance of reflecting on how our identities and experiences shape our approach to the work while acknowledging that publicly engaging in this reflection has different implications for each of us, especially for those who have lived experiences of oppression. Ultimately, in this paragraph we decided to acknowledge and honor our positionality, note our critical reflection, and protect the lived experiences of our team. Further, throughout the rest of the paper we include discussion of our positionality, critical reflection, and their influence on our program and research process.

## Initial program development

The current program emerged from expressed interest among White parents in the local Midwestern community in which it was developed. These parents, similar to other White parents who are motivated to pursue antiracism, expressed the desire to undertake proactive, antiracist socialization but felt unsure how to proceed (Heberle et al., 2021). Given that racial silence within White families is a key mechanism of the replication of White hegemony (Hagerman, 2016) and upstream intervention in White children's racial socialization is theorized to support White children's later adoption of actions that resist racial oppression (Belizaire et al., 2024; Hazelbaker et al., 2022), the program was developed to support White children's antiracist development by connecting White parents with developmentally appropriate strategies for interrupting the formation of bias and promoting an orientation toward racial equity. The program is research informed, drawing its theoretical basis from five interrelated domains: White identity development, child racial development, socialization processes,

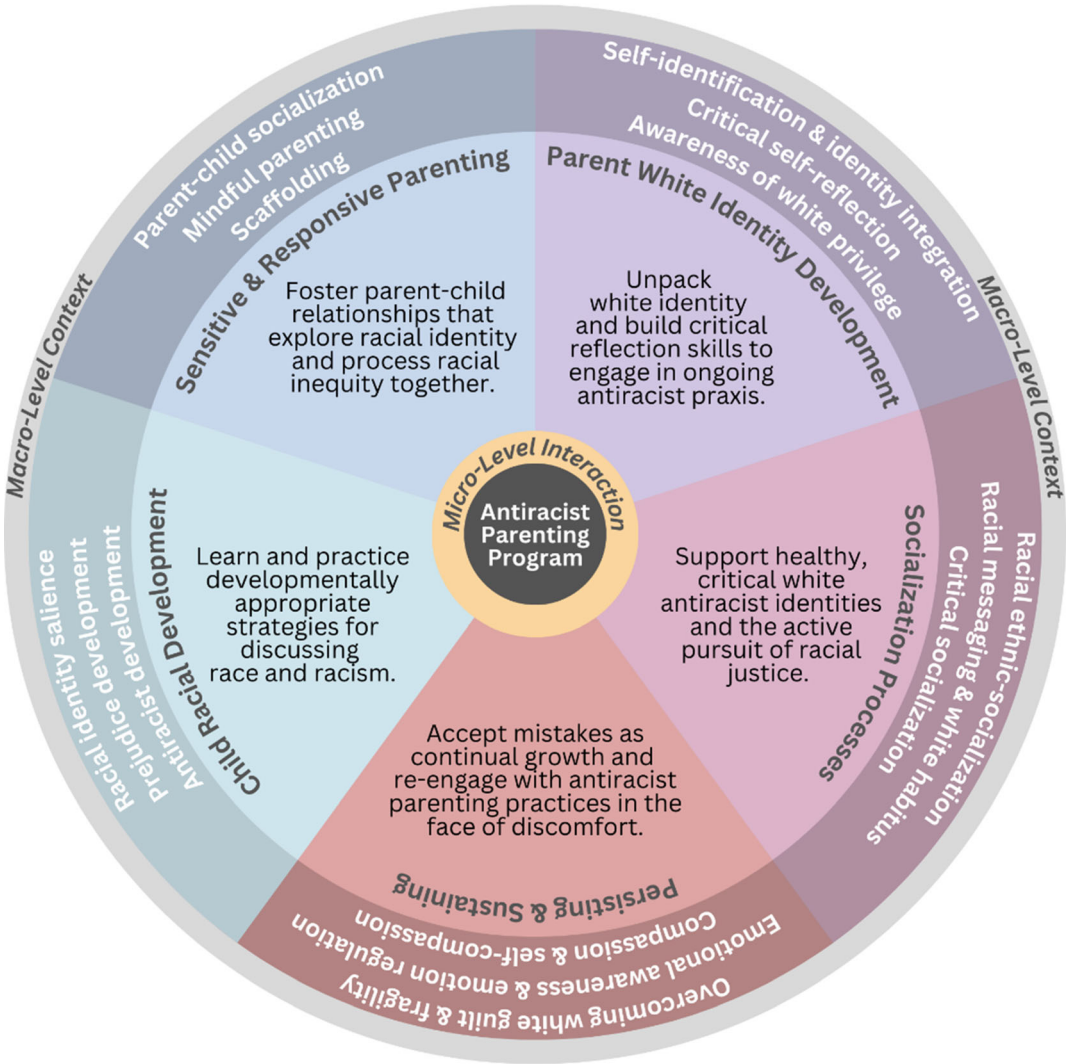


**FIGURE 1** Antiracist parenting (ARP) program conceptual model.

sensitive and responsive parenting, and contemplative practices to sustain antiracist engagement (see Figure 1). When we refer to antiracist parenting throughout this paper, we are referring to parents practicing or discussing the skills taught during the ARP program: having explicit parent–child conversations about race and racism, modeling antiracist actions and behaviors, disrupting normative White silence, critically reflecting on their own White racial identity development, and engaging in contemplative practices aimed at building racial stamina.

During development, the curriculum underwent an iterative process of revisions, including external review by two Black scholars who are experts in antibias, antiracist education, and ethnic–racial socialization, Dr. Traci Baxley and Dr. Kerry-Ann Escayg. Their feedback primarily revolved around integrating more discussion of power and privilege into the program. In addition to integrating this feedback, we used an iterative program development and formative evaluation process over the course of the four pilot study cohorts. After each cohort, researchers and Cooperative Extension parenting educators discussed participant and facilitator feedback and implemented changes to better meet program goals. For example, we extended the program from 1.5 to 2 hours per session to increase time for small group discussions while maintaining sufficient time for content delivery.

## Target population

White people in the United States are the primary beneficiaries of a racial system that places White people at the top of the social hierarchy (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) at the expense of Black and brown humanity. Active resistance is required to dismantle this White supremacist context, yet White people in modern history have largely chosen to remain passive in the face of racial injustice, reinforcing the racial status quo (Roberts & Rizzo, 2021). Sociopolitical shifts following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor in 2020, however, motivated some White parents to take responsibility for their role in raising racial justice–motivated children (Nieri et al., 2024). As key socializers of children's racial learning in early childhood (Quintana, 2007), White parents represent natural interventionists for interrupting prejudice development and promoting racial justice values with their children. Therefore, the ARP program specifically targets White parents raising White children aged 3 to 6, aiming to interrupt the intergenerational transmission of White fragility, passivity, and color evasiveness that uphold the U.S.'s system of racism (Ferguson et al., 2022).

Adopting antiracist parenting actions first requires parents to acquire knowledge of how their parenting practices are complicit in presenting Whiteness as normative and superior (Bonilla-Silva et al., 2006), knowledge of actions that they can take to resist those practices, and a sense of efficacy in pursuing those actions (Diemer et al., 2016). Therefore, the program targets parents situated within the second phase of Helms's model of White racial identity development (Helms, 1990), challenging the status quo, in which White persons have knowledge of race as a sociopolitical construct, conceptually understand their White privilege, and are poised to move toward confronting racism while also feeling comfortable within their White identity. Although Helms's model is often presented in stages, the process is nonlinear, and White people may vacillate between stages (Helms, 1990; Tatum, 1994). Although parents may identify themselves as White and may be motivated toward antiracism, they also may experience undulations in their beliefs and experiences due to their own histories, intersectional identities, and the ubiquity of Whiteness and White supremacy, which could in turn impact the racial socialization practices they enact with their children. Indeed, White parents committed to racial justice often adopt counterproductive approaches to conversations about race and racial injustice with their children (Matlock & DiAngelo, 2015; Vittrup, 2018). Therefore, we anticipated that White parents who enrolled in the program would have a greater understanding of their White identities

than the average White parent and would also experience some of the nonlinear development that is a natural part of White identity development.

## Program model

The ARP program consists of six weekly sessions held synchronously via Zoom to alleviate potential barriers to parents' attendance (e.g., child care). To facilitate self-disclosure, each cohort is capped at eight participants, small enough to allow for the development of a trusting community. Parents are encouraged to connect with each other throughout the program, and contact information is shared among willing participants following program completion to support a sustained community of practice.

Within the ARP program, parents are the primary recipients of the intervention who are, in turn, asked to intervene with their children. Therefore, the program aims to strike a balance between time for parental self-reflection and time in-session devoted to developing hands-on parenting skills. Over the course of 6 weeks, parents engage in a variety of learning activities meant to support both their personal racial development as well as the development of their proactive and responsive racial socialization practices (see Table 2). The first session (Module 1) aims to support parents in unpacking their own racial socialization experiences and what things they will need to part with to move toward the adoption of parenting practices that interrupt the intergenerational transmission of racial messaging that upholds White supremacy.

**TABLE 2** Description of antiracist parenting program modules.

| Session | Goals/learning objectives<br>*During this session, parents will…* |
|---|---|
| Week 1 | • Reflect on their own experiences with race and their racial development.<br>• Develop a shared and personal mission for the course.<br>• Ground their motivation for participation in research on antiracist racial socialization. |
| Week 2 | • Build skills to persist in difficult conversations about race and racism even when they feel uncomfortable.<br>• Gain knowledge around children's development of racial awareness.<br>• Develop a growth mindset and think of their experiences with antiracist parenting as a journey of continual practice.<br>• Practice mindful breath awareness and being with difficult emotions. |
| Week 3 | • Understand how race-conscious conversations differ from color- and power-evasive conversations and why proactive, race-conscious strategies are important.<br>• Learn what role parents can play in their children's racial socialization.<br>• Practice strategies for actively having regular, race-conscious conversations with their preschoolers using books, media, and other activity resources.<br>• Practice self-compassion and compassion for others to support persisting in antiracist parenting action. |
| Week 4 | • Workshop challenges they faced when having race-conscious conversations with their children.<br>• Build a network of accountability and support as they pursue antiracism in their parenting practices.<br>• Practice mindful listening. |
| Week 5 | • Build skills to mindfully respond to spontaneous inquiries about race from their children.<br>• Practice strategies to use when talking about race and discrimination in the real world.<br>• Mindful breath awareness practice to support being intentional in the moment with parenting interactions. |
| Week 6 | • Workshop challenges they faced when having race-conscious conversations with their children.<br>• Support each other in continuing to practice using the tool kit and having antiracist conversations with their children.<br>• Set commitments to continued antiracist parenting even after the course ends.<br>• Practice mindful awareness and compassion in relation to systemic injustice and the suffering of the world. |

Considering that most parents targeted by the program were raised in households that actively avoided open discussion of race, the pursuit of antiracist parenting marks a significant departure from the norms of racial silence in which they themselves were socialized. Therefore, parents' process of unpacking and reflecting on their relationship with Whiteness and race more broadly is a necessary prerequisite for identifying opportunities to disrupt the *White habitus* in their own children's upbringing (Heberle et al., 2021; Perry et al., 2019) and is theorized to support continued antiracist praxis (Utt & Tochluk, 2020). With this in mind, the first session invites parents to explore and further analyze their own racial upbringings and the ways in which their White identities continue to inform their lives as adults and their parenting practice.

Module 2 shifts focus from parents' own, received socialization to the role that they play in their children's racial socialization. Through a combination of lecture and small group discussion, parents explore the implications of explicit and implicit racial socialization messages for their children's racial development. Research has linked accurate parent knowledge of children's racial development with more intentional race-conscious engagement between parents and children (Scott et al., 2020a; Sullivan et al., 2021). To counteract misconceptions among White parents that underestimate children's racial biases (Scott et al., 2020a) or assume a lack of developmental readiness to engage in race-conscious conversation among children (Underhill, 2018), parents are introduced to racial development milestones, such as babies noticing racial differences by 6 months (Katz, 2003) or the development of racial preferences by age 4 (Aboud, 2008). Given the early origin of racial biases, parents are then prompted to reimagine this early period that can prime children's longer-term racial development (C. D. Williams et al., 2020), which may be an optimal time to influence positive change while racial attitudes are just developing (Lee et al., 2017).

To support this reimagination, the ARP program connects parents with an alternative vision of their children's racial identity development that moves beyond prejudice reduction and toward interpersonal and collective antiracist action (Hazelbaker et al., 2022). Parents are introduced to preschool-aged children's developing sociocognitive skills that can be leveraged in conjunction with race-conscious parenting strategies to foster antiracism among children, including empathy and perspective taking (Spinrad et al., 2022), moral reasoning about fairness and equality (Elenbaas et al., 2022), and self-identification of one's own Whiteness. By connecting White parents with knowledge of their children's racial development capacities, Session 2 aims to motivate intentional parent engagement in race-conscious strategies and communicate the importance of and potential for scaffolding a critical racial identity in early childhood.

Whereas the first two sessions are more focused on self-reflection, information sharing, and grounding motivation, parents have the opportunity to practice concrete strategies and approaches for initiating proactive, race-conscious conversations with their children in Session 3. Parents are encouraged to utilize the variety of children's media (e.g., books, videos, art and movement activities) to scaffold conversations about multiple dimensions of race, including racial self-identification, racism and discrimination, power, and privilege by linking race-conscious discussion of media to children's developmental capacities. For example, while reading a book about a protagonist of color who faces discrimination, parents may prompt their children to empathize with the character by drawing on children's perspective-taking skills while also encouraging their children to imagine ways in which they could stand up to the depicted injustice and support the protagonist. Parents are also prompted to identify ways in which they can disrupt the unquestioned prevalence of White hegemony and invisibility within their children's media environment, both in terms of ensuring that their children's media environment is representative and includes multiple counter-stereotypical examples as well as through engaging their children in explicit conversation about overrepresentation of Whiteness (e.g., "I noticed that in this [book] there were mostly White people. Where are all of the other people?"). In this way, parents may be able to "front-load" their children's development of an

antiracist lens by modeling the naming and problematizing of their White habitus while celebrating differences and promoting a racial frame that is grounded in justice (Feagin, 2013).

Given that the parents in the program likely lack a schema from which to pull from when engaging in these parenting practices as a result of their own racial upbringings, Session 3 includes role-play activities to practice these approaches with other parents in the class, allowing them to develop self-efficacy through practice prior to engaging their children in similar conversations. Indeed, research from adult education supports that role playing can promote contextual learning that transcends classroom learning and is applicable in the real world (Greenleaf Brown & Chidume, 2023). Following this session, parents are tasked to complete one of the practiced activities with their children as part of their "At Home Practice" assignment between sessions. Then, Session 4 is devoted to workshopping and debriefing those activities, allowing for the reinforcement of strategies through in-session role-plays of conversations with children and further scaffolding of parents' conversations with their children. The in-session debrief of assignments also allows parents to practice supporting each other in developing their antiracist parenting practice, thereby fostering a community of practice that may support and sustain their engagement (Bunnage, 2014).

Session 5 focuses on reactive racial socialization practices. Given that racial socialization is a bidirectional process (Hughes et al., 2016; Smith-Bynum, 2023), it is likely that once parents begin proactively engaging their children in explicit racial socialization, children will begin to inquire or further the conversation of their own accord. During this session, parents are encouraged to view these questions as opportunities to foster spaces where parents and children can explore their racial identities and process racial inequality together. Parents are encouraged to use responsive parenting strategies to respond to and build on children's inquiry in an open, nonjudgmental way that promotes continued, open parent–child engagement (Belizaire et al., 2024). Finally, in Session 6, parents reflect on their experiences in the course and set goals for continued implementation of antiracist strategies to help solidify long-term change.

The ARP program as a whole is bolstered by its inclusion of scientifically robust practices (mindfulness, mindful parenting, self-compassion) for working with difficult emotions, which are seen as a foundation for adult competence in employing antiracist parenting strategies with young children. In particular, the inclusion of mindfulness and compassion practices are intended to (a) support sensitive, responsive parenting and (b) facilitate White parents' continued commitment to antiracist parenting. Many of the in-session mindfulness exercises include core components of mindful parenting, the interpersonal extension of mindfulness to the parent–child relationship (Duncan et al., 2009), which encourages parents to compassionately notice their own and their children's emotions, while practicing nonjudgment and responding versus reacting to what is arising from their child and within their own experience, fostering a sensitive and responsive environment. Research has shown that warm and sensitive interactions with caregivers create reciprocal, harmonious relationships (Kochanska et al., 2008) and support children's understanding of the social world (Spinrad et al., 2007). High-quality parent–child conversations in which parents validate children's emotions and experiences increase children's willingness to continue engaging and sharing experiences with their parents (Waters et al., 2010). When children are more engaged in parent–child dialogue, they derive greater meaning and understanding from the conversation (Laible et al., 2013). Together, research on parental socialization suggests that warmth, sensitivity, and validation in parent–child interactions can foster an environment in which children feel comfortable exploring difficult topics, such as race, with their parents. This may be particularly important for families' continued engagement in developing an antiracist orientation, and supporting parents with the development of these skills within the context of proactive racial socialization may thereby prepare White families for continued bidirectional and cooperative family socialization over time, even beyond the duration of the course.

Mindfulness practice is also intended to support White parents' capacity building in persisting with and sustaining their antiracist parenting practice. Given the nonlinear experience of developing White racial consciousness (Nnawulezi et al., 2020) and the intense discomfort inherent in breaking White solidarity and interrogating White centrality (DiAngelo, 2011), particularly in a domain as emotionally evocative as parenting, White parents can easily become overwhelmed by the challenges involved in antiracist parenting. White privilege permits them to easily shift back into White silence (DiAngelo, 2012), an option generally unavailable to parents of color due to the necessity of racial socialization to ensure psychosocial adjustment amid experiences of interpersonal and institutional discrimination (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020). When viewed through an emotion regulation lens, this White fragility—or defensiveness as a result of racial stress (DiAngelo, 2011)—is a maladaptive response to negative emotions arising in response to racial cues; conscious emotion regulation strategies therefore hold potential for reducing White fragility responses (Ford et al., 2022).

Specifically, the ARP program is inspired by Black and Switzer's (2022) model of Compassion-Based Racial Stamina Building (CBRSB) for White people that involves "recognizing and responding to White fragility" with compassion (p. 144). CBRSB as they taught it through Mindfulness for the People equips White people with "self-evaluation and self-regulation tools that support a move from denial to awareness; awareness to awakening; and awakening to compassionate action" (Black & Switzer, 2022, p. 144). Antiracist parenting is a daily practice of compassionate action requiring both emotional awareness and skilled emotion regulation, yet it must be grounded in awakening a racial consciousness that goes beyond a focus on simply providing what's best for one's own child (e.g., wanting White children to experience racial diversity), to taking social action disrupting systemic racism. With greater racial awareness, however, ARP participants run the risk of developing "White fatigue" as they develop a more nuanced understanding of the complexity of systemic racism (Flynn, 2015). Bridging this gap may be bolstered through contemplative practices including mindfulness and compassion.

Mindfulness, for example, has been shown to directly reduce intergroup bias (Cosantino, 2023; Oyler et al., 2022) and increase qualities that can support parents in persisting and sustaining with antiracist practices, including reducing avoidance of negative information (Ash et al., 2023) and mitigating the adverse effects of fatigue on emotional processing (Fan et al., 2023). Compassion and self-compassion have been shown to increase moral expansiveness (Kirby et al., 2024) and self-transcendence (Cha et al., 2023), two qualities that can facilitate and motivate antiracist perspectives and actions.

Overall, the ARP program is a research-informed program that aims to provide an instructive and reflective space for White parents to build skills to pursue proactive, antiracist parenting practices with their preschool children, even in the face of the discomfort associated with confronting Whiteness and breaking from normative White racial socialization practices. Although more research is needed to identify research-based strategies that promote antiracist development in young children (Hazelbaker et al., 2022; Scott et al., 2020b), our program is grounded in existing empirical evidence that explicit discussion of race via color-conscious strategies is linked to decreased racial bias in children (e.g., Katz, 2003; Mesman et al., 2022; Pahlke et al., 2021; Perry et al., 2022) and aligns with emerging research that has explored the potential for antiracist racial socialization to move children toward a White critical consciousness (Heberle et al., 2020). We therefore view the ARP program as an upstream intervention that supports White children's development of a racial identity that includes antiracism as a cornerstone of children's developing self-concept. In the following sections, we will share implementation challenges and lessons learned during our initial pilot. To provide context for this discussion, we will first provide a brief overview of the pilot study. Analyses for an acceptability and feasibility paper are underway; we focus here on sharing our lessons from the field to bridge gaps between research and practice in this area.

## FEASIBILITY AND ACCEPTABILITY PILOT

Because the lessons that we recount from "the field" emerged from within the context of a pilot study, we briefly describe our pilot goals and methodology before delving into specific lessons learned. Our pilot study included four cohorts of parents enrolled in the ARP program (approved by University of Wisconsin–Madison IRB #2022–0246). The primary goal of the pilot was to assess the program's feasibility and acceptability among aspiring antiracist White parents.

Across four cohorts, 28 parents consented to participate with 22 parents completing the six-session program. We only enrolled and collected data from one parent participant per family in the study, although some participants chose to attend with their parenting partners. All participants were married or partnered, ranged from 31 to 41 years old ($M = 36.5$), and lived in predominantly White Midwest communities. Median income was greater than $110,000. Most participants had monoracial White children; two reported raising multiracial children. Most participants identified as either cisgender White women ($n = 17$) or cisgender White men ($n = 3$); one cisgender woman identified as Latiné. Two additional fathers joined their parenting partners (mothers) for the weekly sessions but were not consented and did not complete any assessments. Most participants reported having White partners ($n = 17$); two partners were multiracial/multiethnic, one was Asian/Asian American, and one was Latiné. We did not collect data on sexual identity. All enrolled parents had stated antiracist goals but felt unprepared to engage in critical socialization with their children. As one parent reflected, when asked about their reasons for seeking out the course: "How do I tell my kids about this, like what's the best developmentally appropriate way to begin the conversation? I feel pretty well versed … but wanted specific content that would be appropriate for me to share with my children."

Throughout the pilot, we collected a variety of self-report and observational data to assess its acceptability and feasibility for families. Before starting the program, parents completed a baseline questionnaire with measures of racial socialization practices and competence, bias awareness, White privilege awareness, and White fragility. These assessments were repeated following course completion. We also asked participants to upload audio and video recordings of practice activities with their children to observe parents' racial socialization strategies in practice. For some activities, we also asked parents to provide written reflections, providing insight into how parents interpreted their race-conscious interactions with their children. Video recordings of program sessions and in-class activities such as online discussions, written reflections, and problem-solving sessions provided further information regarding parent engagement and program effects. Feasibility and acceptability assessments were captured throughout ARP: Parents completed brief evaluation surveys about content and structure after each session. Parents also participated in a postcourse focus group that elicited information about whether the program met their needs and expectations, as well as questions or suggestions about course content and delivery.

## LESSONS LEARNED

With the intervention program, we aimed to provide an instructive and reflective space for White parents to build skills to pursue proactive, antiracist parenting practices with their preschool children. Over the course of the 6-week program, we observed how the process of antiracist parenting began to unfold in these White families—both the instances of growth and the points of contention. Some of what we learned was consistent with prior research on racial–ethnic socialization among families of the global majority. For example, we observed wide variability in the content of parent–child racial socialization (Priest et al., 2014), as well as the bidirectional nature of parent–child racial learning (Hughes et al., 2016). In line with work on

racial socialization in White families, however, we also observed the unique differences that emerge when broaching conversations about race, racism, and power among parents and children who hold privileged social positions in U.S. society (e.g., Hagerman, 2016). We also learned unique lessons about what it means to facilitate a program focused on teaching White parents to engage in antiracist socialization. In the following section, we delve into the lessons learned from the program and from three different perspectives: program facilitators, parent participants, and their children. To illustrate our lessons learned, we reference limited excerpts from qualitative data collected for the larger pilot study, such as quotes from participants during sessions or reflection activities. These excerpts are meant to illustrate what we observed ourselves "in the field" during the pilot study, rather than representing formal qualitative data analysis, which will be included in a future empirical paper of pilot results.

## Program considerations

Our first lesson learned emerged during study recruitment. Overall, there was a high level of interest for an antiracist parenting program among families of young children. We initially limited recruitment to Midwestern parents whose oldest child was between the ages of 3 and 5. This was done to reduce potential variability from the influence of older siblings who may have had more exposure to discussions of race through the school context. However, we received high interest from parents with children older than 5, or with a child in our age range who also had an older sibling. To address this, we ultimately expanded eligibility to include children up to 6 years of age and children in the 3-to-5 age range who had older siblings. Research has shown that when White parents do broach discussions of race, it is often with children over 5 (Sullivan et al., 2021), but the fact that parents of older children also wanted to participate despite flyers that clearly stated the age range suggests that even families with older children are looking for support in broaching conversations about race and discrimination.

Further, the largest barrier to enrollment was not a lack of interest, but rather, a lack of time in families' schedules. Among the families who indicated interest but decided not to enroll, the majority ($n = 7$) declined because their schedules did not allow for weekly participation in a parenting program on weeknights. Further, four participants discontinued before the program started and two discontinued after the first session due to scheduling difficulties or lack of time. We believe in the cohort model's utility for fostering community and continued accountability, but more flexible modalities may be necessary for providing programming to families who are also balancing the demands of parenting young children.

Notably, despite marketing our program toward White families, we had several parents of color ($n = 6$) inquire about participation, as well as White parents of multiracial children ($n = 3$). We welcomed these parents to enroll in the program with the caveat that it may not meet their needs because the curriculum focused on skills and knowledge needed by White parents raising White children. For families who decided that the program was not a good fit, we shared a list of resources that were focused on race-related conversations for families of color. Interest among this group of parents, however, suggests that their needs are not currently being met by existing programming. Other research-based programs exist that are specifically designed to support racial socialization practices among families of color (e.g., Anderson et al., 2019; Stein et al., 2021); however, our experience speaks to barriers in bridging research and practice. University outreach programs—such as Cooperative Extension—could play a role in connecting families with existing programs, an important first step in circulating these opportunities more broadly and thereby increasing access for families.

Overall, parents' interest and excitement for this program reflects that it may be addressing an unmet need. Our observations around capacity and scheduling barriers invite practitioners to consider other modalities for supporting parents' antiracist parenting skill building.

However, these lessons also prompt us to consider which families are willing to prioritize antiracist parenting, when decades of White racial silence and White supremacy norms have made it easier (and expected) for parents to avoid these topics (DiAngelo, 2011; Heberle et al., 2021). Further, modern norms of parenthood, infused with White supremacy, have reinforced the idea that maximizing their own children's individual achievement and success to secure educational and economic advantage (Lareau, 2011) should be parents' top priority (Hays, 1996), which may lead some parents to prioritize parenting activities that maximize their child's advantage (e.g., sports, extracurriculars), rather than parenting activities, such as antiracist parenting, that are meant to strengthen a community collectively.

## Facilitator considerations

Existing research on antiracist allyship emphasizes the role of like-minded, similarly privileged peers in developing and sustaining continued antiracist action (Suyemoto & Hochman, 2021). With this in mind, we implemented a cohort model to foster community, accountability, and support among White families committed to antiracist parenting. The facilitated cohort model, however, introduced considerations around how facilitators' social identities intersect with program implementation. Two parallel questions emerged: How do facilitator identities inform (a) the lens through which they facilitate the course? and (b) parents' expectations for and experiences of the program?

One of the main considerations in selecting facilitators was whether the course should be run by facilitators of color or White facilitators. We saw benefits to both scenarios. A facilitator of color would ensure that the course centered the voices of people of the global majority. On the other hand, a White facilitator could establish an affinity space where White parents could be vulnerable and share their challenges (e.g., with White fatigue; Flynn, 2015) while receiving constructive feedback and support from the group. This approach could circumvent some of the stonewalling or defensiveness that often manifests as a result of White people's discomfort with race-related conversations, especially within the context of interracial interactions (DiAngelo, 2011). We have sought to navigate a path for the ARP project that involves seeking expert guidance from Black scholars, while generally aligning with the school of thought that people of color should not be responsible for teaching White people about their own Whiteness and that White people working together to challenge their own Whiteness is a useful tool for advancing social justice (Case, 2012; Tatum, 1994; Utt & Tochluk, 2020).

Ultimately, our decision was driven by practicality: The original research team did not have a potential facilitator of color who had the capacity to lead the course at the time that we launched the pilot. Therefore, the pilot cohorts were facilitated by a White woman (first author, F1) and a White and Hispanic woman (second author, F2). F1 hoped to leverage her lived experiences enacting antiracist principles as a parent with her own young children, along with her professional experience and education in parenting and child development. Within the context of this parenting program, F2 hoped to leverage her White identity to build connections with White parents while also pulling from her perspective of holding multiple identities to push parents' thinking about the ways in which race manifests in their daily lives.

Both facilitators were socialized as White people in the United States—and inevitably hold worldviews congruent with the dominant group—and are therefore inherently limited regarding the perspectives of individuals who face oppression and the extent to which their Whiteness influences program development and facilitation. The research team attempted to address these limitations by seeking feedback from experts of color with both professional and lived experience. The program's paid consultants identify as Black women and are experts in antibias education or parenting. In addition, a parent education colleague of Southeast Asian descent, who is engaged in antiracist work in her own community, observed the program and provided

facilitator feedback during an early cohort. This not only allowed us to identify oversights and gaps in the program and its facilitation, but also to continually self-reflect on ways we could further develop our critical lenses as facilitators. In these ways, we felt we were able to achieve a balance of providing an "affinity group" space for White parents (Michael & Conger, 2009) while ensuring that perspectives of those most impacted by U.S. racism were incorporated.

These limitations speak to the inherent challenges of facilitating a course to support White parents' adoption of antiracist practices, which includes encouraging their critical analysis of how Whiteness shapes their parenting practices, while still in the process of unpacking one's own socialization as a White person in the United States. Although our research team has been engaged in antiracist work for many years now, we acknowledge that antiracism is a journey (Kendi, 2019), and we are dedicated to ongoing critical self-reflection as part of our antiracist learning and unlearning (Edwards, 2006). An important consideration for program expansion is how to determine and evaluate necessary competencies for facilitators, especially those identifying as White (Ieva et al., 2021). Further, we were cognizant of the fact that the facilitators' social identities would influence how parents received and engaged with the course. Despite our intentionality behind the decision to have White facilitators, many participants named a desire to have a facilitator of color run the program. Given that we had already given considerable thought to this issue ourselves, this feedback was not surprising. One promising possibility is exploring cross-race facilitation in future iterations of the course, which has been used by other scholars facilitating antiracism education (DiAngelo & Flynn, 2010) and aligns well with research on intergroup dialogue to promote social justice (Frantell et al., 2019).

## Parent considerations

In line with other scholars' observations of parenting as a catalyst for individual antiracist identity development (Heberle et al., 2021), we observed that participants were looking to extend their own inner learning about their racialized identities and positionality into action, such as through antiracist parenting. These parents articulated values consistent with a White antiracist identity (Ball, 2023; Spanierman & Smith, 2017): They acknowledged the existence and impacts of institutional racism and White privilege, engaged in self-reflection about their own racism and privilege, and expressed a sense of responsibility to promote equity through antiracist actions, such as through their parenting. Despite participants' alignment with antiracist values and identities, we observed a range of readiness to engage with the content, as well as variety in how individual parents responded to and participated in the course.

Each parent was on their own journey of White identity development and entered the course at different places in those journeys. For example, one parent remarked that the course was the first time they ever considered the fact that they were White. Though consistent with White invisibility (Frankenburg, 1993), this was unexpected given that we targeted parents with a more advanced understanding of their White racial identities (Helms, 1990), and who self-selected into a program that explicitly centers race and critical Whiteness. Other parents struggled to critique values grounded in the White Protestant ideals underlying the U.S.'s cultural ethos. During a reflection activity using Tema Okun's (2021) "White Supremacy Culture Characteristics", for example, one parent acknowledged they had difficulty critiquing the values because they were so closely aligned with how they defined "what it means to be a good person." This parent seemed to experience internal conflict when presented with new information about Whiteness that challenged their current worldview (Sabnani et al., 1991), demonstrating the difficulty of disentangling value judgements from critical reflections of White hegemony (Nnawulezi et al., 2020).

For parents at this stage, we largely viewed the course as an opportunity to build a critical lens to recognize the White habitus in which they exist (Bonilla-Silva, 2003b) and to reflect on

the corresponding messages their children may be receiving within that context (Harro, 2000). Other parents demonstrated more advanced racial consciousness, such as being acutely aware of the racial isolation of their environments and expressing concern around choosing to live in contexts that protect and uphold their White privilege (Heberle et al., 2021). These parents often questioned how to expose their children to more diverse environments without taking an extractive approach to engaging with communities of color. For parents with this more nuanced approach to critiquing their White habitus, we hoped to motivate antiracist parenting practices that would begin to advance their children's critical consciousness, such as naming and resisting power and privilege. Indeed, we saw evidence of this with some parents who initiated conversations of redlining, voting choices, and segregation with their preschoolers.

Given the spectrum of racial consciousness among our participants, we have continually grappled with the question of how much self-reflection and antiracist "inner work" parents need to effectively engage in this course. Indeed, one course goal is to grow beyond a place of "ambivalence" in which individuals acknowledge the effects of racism while still avoiding active engagement in its dismantling (Nnawulezi et al., 2020) and instead actively pursue antiracist praxis. However, as we saw during the pilot study, participants have been differently positioned to do so. As such, we ask, What does "antiracist action preparation" mean in general, and how does this get reinscribed and reinterpreted within the parenting realm? Given that continued reflection is a key component of critical praxis (Freire, 2018), future research should consider including a critical self-reflection module for parents as a prerequisite for a program such as ours to see if increased awareness of one's own racial position enhances program efficacy.

In addition to parents' own racial consciousness, cultural ideals associated with Whiteness appeared to inform how parents engaged with the course. Two facets seemed especially salient in informing parents' expectations of and approaches to the course material: a tendency toward perfectionism and a sense of urgency (Okun, 2021). Perfectionism regularly appeared in parents' self-imposed pressure to get conversations about race "right" and their desire for a "checklist" approach to discussing these topics with their children. The high standards parents placed on themselves were apparent in how they discussed these moments during the course. During sessions, parents would offer examples of when they felt that they had "fallen short." Parents often reported a sense of "having to get everything in" in a single conversation and feelings of guilt when they felt that they "missed an opportunity to further the conversation," which aligns with both perfectionism and a sense of urgency (Okun, 2021).

In line with this sense of urgency, parents reported mixed feelings about the inclusion of contemplative practices in sessions. These mindfulness, compassion, and self-compassion practices were designed to help parents build the emotional capacity to tolerate the emotional discomfort that conversations around race and racism can engender in White people (Black & Switzer, 2022). In addition to feelings of White guilt, the prospect of pursuing antiracist parenting practices poses stress among parents who are in the process of unlearning the color-evasive egalitarian messages of their own childhoods (DiAngelo, 2011) and learning new race- and power-conscious strategies for discussing race and racism with their own children. Antiracism demands sustained action, and aspiring antiracist allies must be able to endure discomfort for the long haul, often pursuing justice at cost to themselves (M. T. Williams et al., 2023). Potential costs or discomfort for White people engaging in antiracism is utterly minimal compared to the vast suffering caused to people of color by systemic racism; contemplative practices hold promise for reducing bias and promoting compassionate antiracist action.

Despite mixed feedback from parents, we maintain that contemplative practices are an essential component of our program and to antiracist parenting more broadly. As each cohort progressed through the 6 weeks, we noticed parents increasingly encouraging each other to extend self-compassion and to view their practices through a growth mindset: to see conversations with their children as "building blocks" rather than "soapboxes." The ability to extend compassion to each other allowed parents to eventually extend that same compassion to

themselves, thereby resisting some of the self-imposed perfectionism and instead viewing their antiracist parenting practice as a continued journey that includes constant self-reflection, adjustment, and recommitment. This aligns well with our program goal of helping parents perceive antiracism as a lifelong process rather than a status to be achieved (Kendi, 2019).

Parents often attributed this growth to the opportunity to connect with other White parents who were also working toward disrupting the perpetuation of the racial status quo. These connections represented a source of emotional support and accountability as they engaged in a new parenting approach. Parents relied on each other to troubleshoot attempts to integrate an antiracist lens to their parenting and to lend support when this practice did not go as planned. Many participants reported connecting with others after their cohort had finished with the hope of maintaining this network of like-minded parents. A sense of collective identity grounded in shared values and relationships with others may help sustain this practice, as seen in other work on antiracist parenting and social activism (Bunnage, 2014; Heberle et al., 2021).

Though we hope our parent considerations will be useful for researchers or practitioners attempting antiracist parent training in general, it is important to acknowledge that this initial pilot work included a homogenous sample of predominantly White, married, high-income parents from a Midwestern area with extreme racial disparities. Given that children's racial socialization occurs across contexts (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020) and the racial makeup varies drastically across U.S. regions, it is unclear how our lessons learned during this pilot would transfer to other U.S. regions or families with different socioeconomic backgrounds. We intentionally targeted recruitment of White families in our region as an important demographic to equip with antiracist parenting skills and our ongoing work involves Cooperative Extension parent educators across our state who are working with a wider demographic range.

## Child considerations

Most research on White racial socialization focuses on a unidirectional transmission of socialization from parent to child: what White parents say and the barriers they face when discussing race or racism with their children (Perry et al., 2022). Little research focuses on the child's role in informing White parents' racial socialization practices, and although more is known about child effects among families of color, outstanding questions remain (Rogers et al., 2020). In line with evidence that acknowledges children's active role in socialization (Hagerman, 2016), it became clear throughout program implementation that child-related factors impacted parents' conversations with their children. Given the bidirectional nature of parent–child interactions and socialization processes (Maccoby, 1992), many of the child considerations that we identified overlap with the parent considerations outlined in the previous section.

There was noticeable variability in children's comprehension of and engagement in race conscious content. Some families limited conversations to basic concepts like skin color or unfairness, and, in some of these cases, children expressed that they already knew what the parent was talking about (e.g., "I already know that"), when repeatedly approached about the same topic (e.g., skin color). Other families reported sophisticated and nuanced conversations on topics of racism, power and privilege, and segregation. For example, one parent was able to discuss voting choices with their preschooler using a critical race lens. In talking about why they were voting for a certain politician in the upcoming election, the parent said,

> He's also a Black person [and] he's talked about how he's going to do things to make sure that the situation for Black people gets better in [our area], which is something that I agree with too. We were talking before about how it's important that everybody gets a vote. Right now, nobody's doing anything to make sure that

> everybody gets a vote. And sometimes people even try to make it harder for Black people to vote, which is really unfair, right? Because they should have a vote.

To which their child responded: "Yeah. Because it's not fair to make other people not have a vote so you—that's kinda cheating." There were other instances in which conversations were ended abruptly by the parent who was not prepared for a deeper conversation. As one parent shared:

> We read, *Not Quite Snow White*. And before reading this book … I had an idea of how I wanted to talk with her about it … Halfway through, the kids talk behind Tameika's back saying that she is too tall, too big and too brown. [Child] immediately says, well, that's not very nice. And then, at the end, she was happy that Tameika got the part because she was the best singer. I asked [child] why those kids might have said that about her. And she's like, well, Tameika has more melanin than the other kids, and they thought that Snow White would look like us or something to that effect … And then when she said all that stuff, it kind of stumped me and I didn't know where to go from there.

These reports of feeling unprepared—often despite children's readiness to engage in conversations beyond skin color—were not atypical. Many parents gravitated toward the more heavily scaffolded activities, such as books with questions and conversation starters that offered a "script" for their conversations, which mostly focused on skin color differences. Books with more complex messaging—such as the discrimination present in *Not Quite Snow White* (Franklin, 2019)—tended to have less built-in guidance. Though children often demonstrated a capacity to identify and question complex concepts, parents seemed uncertain about how to engage once they went off script, often reverting to a power-evasive discussion of content.

There are likely many explanations for the observed variability in parent–child conversations. Parents' perceptions of children's cognitive capacity may influence how they interact with their children when scaffolding conversations about race. Research with families of color suggests that age is a factor in parents' decisions of how and when to discuss race (Hughes et al., 2006; Hughes & Chen, 1997), and White parents in particular underestimate their children's racial biases and ability to process race-related information (Scott et al., 2023; Sullivan et al., 2021). Therefore, it is possible that some participants misjudged their children's capacities and limited their conversations. As illustrated in the above examples, however, children often demonstrated capacity beyond what parents had anticipated. These instances may serve as opportunities for parents to gauge their child's understanding more accurately, and in turn deepen the conversation to more complex topics. It may also be the case that parents and children enact different levels of readiness to discuss race: Parents may be in the process of unlearning years of White racial socialization that has complicated their ability to comfortably discuss race whereas children are developing their racial awareness for the first time. A mismatch between parent and child racial identity development may impact the potential for deeper conversation. The variability of parent–child conversation prompted us to consider how to assess children's understanding of race-related information in future iterations of our program to better understand bidirectionality in parent–child racial learning.

Overall, our initial learnings from piloting our program highlight that more research is needed on child factors and the transactional nature of White families' critical socialization processes, including the influence of child-related factors. Children in our study demonstrated a wide variety of engagement in and comprehension of race-related conversations, which seemed highly dependent on factors such as children's interest, mood, comprehension, and attention span. To keep children engaged in the learning process, parents may need to build skills around following their children's lead, including a willingness to diverge from the original intent of the

conversation, often into topics they may feel less prepared to facilitate. A cohort-based, multiple session curriculum, such as the ARP program, may help support these practices better than a checklist of question prompts or discussion topics that parents can use with children. Although many parents report looking for "back pocket phrases" they can use with their children to teach them about race or racism, developing an antiracist parenting mindset might instead involve a willingness to move outside one's comfort zone and to colearn alongside the child.

## Navigating contextual implementation barriers and supports

From an implementation science perspective, this work developed in a particular socio-historical-political context. Our approach to overcoming contextual barriers and leveraging elements of community support for this work provides additional lessons regarding implementation factors affecting the program. In fall 2014, the Wisconsin Council on Children and Families released a report highlighting extreme racial and ethnic disparities in child and family well-being in the state (Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, 2014), prompting a community-led effort to support families, educators, and early childhood care providers in starting "challenging conversations" with young children about race, racism, and other forms of identity-based bias (Winkler, 2015). Following that effort, starting in 2016 we attempted to develop a tool kit geared toward parents, caregivers, and early childcare providers to promote equity and justice starting in early childhood. Despite a wide array of committed community and university partners, shifts in national and state political climates during those years appeared to lead to hesitancy on the part of funders and administrative leadership to support the work, posing persistent barriers that ultimately led to the project's pause in 2018.

Two years later, amid the Movement for Black Lives and Allies for Black Lives uprisings in the summer of 2020, two major factors shifted: (a) White parents and caregivers felt a renewed sense of responsibility to start proactive conversations about race with their children but felt inadequately prepared to do so, echoing feelings observed in the initial attempts of this project, and actively sought professional guidance from our county-based Extension educator partners about how to talk with their children about systemic racism and protests happening in their communities; and (b) many major institutions and funders returned their attention to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts. Our team took the opportunity to meet the demand from White families for evidence-based guidance and obtained several sources of funding to leverage existing theoretical frameworks and evidence to expand the prior project. With this additional funding, we aimed to design a program that would harness White parents' motivations to pursue antiracist parenting while providing the family science-based knowledge, prevention science strategies, and the social support of a group intervention to adopt proactive, race- and power-conscious approaches to raising their children in an unequal society.

The context within which we are conducting this research is dynamic and has changed since the first pilot cohort in fall 2022. During the writing of this paper in 2023–2024, DEI spending in higher education has been challenged and banned in some U.S. states, our own university system has restricted the use of DEI statements as required elements for hiring practices, and legislators in our state are proposing a constitutional amendment to ban DEI. These rapid contextual shifts highlight a new wave of potential barriers to our ARP work, yet underscore the importance of moving the work forward. We plan to continue exploring the impacts of this program and hope that our lessons learned can assist other researchers and practitioners engaged in similar work, as it is our combined collective efforts that create change.

## IMPLICATIONS

We have been conscientious about building the ARP program from the ground up, with existing evidence and theory informing each element of the program. In this pilot work, we learned several key takeaways and lessons that will inform our future directions. The high program interest suggests that it is meeting a need among the families in our target demographic, as well as families we were not explicitly targeting, such as those with older or multiracial children. To advance this pilot work, it is critical to understand how to effectively implement the program more widely. Initial parent feedback indicated that the program was acceptable when taught by White-identifying facilitators who have been engaged in antiracist work for many years. Though our current facilitators acknowledge that as dominant U.S. racial group members, their own Whiteness inevitably impacted their program facilitation, we must determine what skills and racial identity awareness levels are needed for program facilitators to be effective, and how to work within communities that may be less accepting of the program than a predominantly White, highly educated, and politically progressive sample. Even in this sample, parents joined the program with a wide variety of skills and awareness of their own Whiteness and racial upbringing, and most parents still had difficulty moving past surface-level conversations around skin color onto more complex topics of power and privilege. This seeming inconsistency is actually consistent with the nonlinearity of White racial identity development (Helms, 2020). Indeed, it is possible to have fluidity in expressing one's Whiteness in some contexts, but to struggle in other contexts, such as when faced with discussing White privilege with a 4-year-old. Future program iterations will explore how to effectively balance parents' need to reflect on their own identities and biases with antiracist skill building that can support parental efficacy in broaching more difficult—but essential—conversations about power and privilege. Along these lines, examining program efficacy is necessary prior to widespread dissemination. Initial next steps include thorough analysis of the pilot study data, followed by a more rigorous examination of program efficacy, such as a randomized controlled trial.

We also observed different ways that children contributed to and drove families' conversations about race. Research on White families' antiracist socialization processes is in its infancy and, moving forward, we need to better understand the bidirectional and transactional nature of these processes. It would also be useful to further define the outcomes we hope to see in practice beyond the reduction of prejudice, such as building children's capacity to engage in individual and collective action to challenge discrimination and structural racism. Existing research highlights the ways in which parenting strategies (Belizaire et al., 2024), as well as prosocial (Spinrad et al., 2023), sociocognitive (Hazelbaker et al., 2022), and critical consciousness skills (Heberle et al., 2020) may each promote these ends. However, more research is needed to support these theoretical models and to better understand the development of White children's racial identity over time in White families pursuing critical antiracist socialization and the interplay of parent, child, and bidirectional processes.

Future directions of this work extend to incorporating more aspects of structural and community change. By expanding our curriculum to include more emphasis on specific strategies and guidance for groups of parents to work together to select and enact community-engaged activities focused on antiracism (e.g., writing letters or speaking to their city council or school board about equity- and justice-related policy issues), we hope to support broader scale social change. Examples exist of evidence-based, family-focused programs that have had community-level impact. For example, the Strengthening Families Program: For Parents and Youth Age 10–14 (SFP 10–14; Molgaard & Spoth, 2001) includes a community resource guide and recommends that families reach out to other community members to share what they learned. In a large study of 28 communities in Pennsylvania and Iowa, social network analysis showed that nonparticipants benefited on key study outcomes (i.e., lower drug use) when more of their friends participated in SFP 10–14, suggesting an indirect diffusion of intervention effects, in part

through changes in attitudes (Rulison et al., 2015). Although we are far from wide-scale delivery of the ARP program, explicitly offering guidance on extending the family-focused prevention strategies to the broader community may be a promising avenue for community-level change.

## CONCLUSION

Despite our outstanding questions and the implications they hold for future work, we assert that the ARP program is a promising first step in disrupting the replication of Whiteness within the family by promoting race- and power-conscious conversations that would not otherwise occur. As one parent said:

> The lesson that I took away was don't spend time worrying about the fact that I don't have all the answers because it was clear to me from this class that what matters is just diving in and learning and practicing. Like anything else … it's just practice and show up. And then give everything time, and in this case, probably our entire lives, right? So I guess the big takeaway is … I learned that it's better to have the conversations, and that there really is no wrong if we're curious, and we're always learning and, and I have an idea of how to continue that learning.

Although there is still much to learn, we believe this initial pilot study shows promise and hope that it inspires others to develop and adopt programming that helps parents engage in critical socialization processes that challenge the status quo and raise a generation of White children who resist inequitable, racist systems.

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