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# **TALK AND TAKE ACTION:**

## **PARENTS' & CAREGIVERS' GUIDE TO CHALLENGING LATINX/HISPANIC DISCRIMINATION**



Hispanic Heritage  
FOUNDATION

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# Nickelodeon's Talk and Take Action: Parents' and Caregivers' Guide to Challenging Latinx/Hispanic Discrimination

For centuries, the Latinx community has faced hate and discrimination in the United States. Today, discrimination is still a common experience in the lives of Latinx people. It stems from prejudgements, misrepresentations, stereotypes, and racist ideas others have about this community. Latinx hate is visible in many ways. We see it in hurtful, untrue words and comments, in bullying, and in threats. We see it in healthcare, education, policies, and media. Even as Latinxs share their experiences and advocate for their rights, they often remain unheard.

This guide, focused on stopping Latinx and Hispanic discrimination, has been written in partnership with the [Hispanic Heritage Foundation](#) and [KID Museum](#). It is designed to provide parents and caregivers with the tools, tips, and language needed to talk with their children about the racism, discrimination, and hate directed at the Latinx community in the United States.

We recognize having conversations focused on racism and hate can be challenging at any age. We hope this guide will help parents and caregivers feel supported as they navigate these tough topics with their kids.

Finally, we want our families to leave these conversations empowered to make change. This guide provides simple, but significant, action steps families can take together to create a more inclusive world.

Latinx is a gender-neutral term used to describe people with roots in Latin America, which include Central and South American countries, Mexico, and the Caribbean. There is a lot of variation in how people identify themselves and which terms they use to describe their culture and their heritage. Some people may prefer to use the term Hispanic, which refers to their roots in Spanish-speaking countries, while those who are Mexican American may prefer Chicanx. In this guide, we use the term Latinx as an inclusive way to talk about this community as a whole.

# TALKING WITH KIDS ABOUT LATINX DISCRIMINATION: BEFORE YOU BEGIN

When preparing to talk about difficult or potentially triggering topics with children, it is important to frame discussions in ways that will maximize their opportunities to learn while at the same time ensuring they won't leave the conversation confused, afraid, or traumatized. These guides include descriptions of racism, discrimination, and violence, which can be challenging for all of us to read and talk about. Here are tips you can use to support conversations with kids about tough topics.

**1. Check in with yourself first.** Take stock of your own feelings and perceptions related to the information included in the guide. Be aware of emotions that you may have when talking about these topics and acknowledge your own biases. If your family has been personally impacted by racism, discrimination, or hate, it may be difficult to revisit those painful experiences. Consider sharing your thoughts with another trusted adult before engaging with your own children.

**2. Review the guides.** Being here, reading this, means you care and your willingness to learn the skills needed to hold these conversations with your kids sends a powerful message. These topics are challenging and you may need help navigating them. If that's the case, take time to look through the Talk and Take Action Guides. Each guide will provide you with an introduction to its topic, a historical and contemporary context for why these conversations need to take place, and how you, as a family, can take action. Focus on the information that you feel is most meaningful and relevant to your conversation's focus.

**3. Lay the foundation.** Before diving into tough topics like racism, discrimination, hate, and bias, it's important to lay the foundation for a safe and secure dialogue. Begin by letting kids know what you'd like to talk about and make sure they know no question is off limits. Speak calmly, clearly and use reassuring words and gestures. It might also be helpful to have general, more informal conversations about fairness and equality before approaching these topics. Talk with your child about your family values, how you cultivate kindness, and what you admire about those who are caring, compassionate, and equitable.

**4. Prepare to be transparent.** Talking honestly and openly about difficult topics with children models positive behaviors that fosters open lines of communications, builds trust, and strengthens bonds. Let kids know that these kinds of conversations are difficult, even for adults. Acknowledging this difficulty tells kids that even though a topic may be uncomfortable, it is important to talk about. As you are tackling tough topics at home, you shouldn't attempt or expect to cover everything in a single conversation. These kinds of conversations will be ongoing. Aim to keep them age appropriate and accessible.



**5. Gauge what they know.** Kids gain information implicitly, or informally, through what they see, hear, and experience. Asking children what they already know about a topic is a great starting point for conversation. Expand on what they bring up to deepen their understanding and fill in their knowledge gaps. Children often notice and absorb much more than we expect.

**6. Lean in and listen.** In a world full of distractions, now is the time to give children your undivided attention. Encourage them to ask questions, and let them know you'll do your best to answer them. Pay attention to the questions they ask and any emotional responses that may be evoked by the information being presented. This means not only listening to their words, but looking at their body language for cues about how they are feeling. When your child shows signs they are feeling uneasy, sad, or scared, reassure them that they are safe and cared for.

**7. Learn with them.** Answer children's questions as clearly and honestly as you can, using kid-friendly language and definitions. Don't feel obligated to answer right away. Slow down, take a pause, and repeat the question. This ensures that you don't answer just for the sake of answering and providing information that is incorrect. And, if you don't know the answer to a question, that's OK! Saying "I don't know" creates an opportunity for you to learn together. If you are caught off guard by a difficult question and are unsure of how to respond in the moment, try one of these:

- *"That's a really big question! Let's explore it together."*
- *"That's a great question. Let's find out more together."*

**8. Consider and validate their feelings.** *"It's not right that people are being mean to someone because they are speaking Spanish!"* Validate their feelings and explain that being upset about this means this is something important that we need to pay attention to. Allowing them to express how they feel lets them know that it's OK to feel emotions such as sadness or anger. Some children may be more likely to suppress their emotions due to learned gender, social, or cultural roles.

**9. Help them frame the situation.** Providing kids with context is useful when helping them make sense of acts of racism, hate, or violence. If they ask why someone would direct hate at someone based on their race, you could say, "Some people wrongly believe that some ethnic groups are better than others. Without the correct information, they sometimes commit acts of violence against other people and think it's OK based on that belief."

**10. Empower them to make a difference.** Tackling tough topics can sometimes leave us feeling sad, angry, or hopeless. While these feelings are valid, we can use them to engage in meaningful actions to fight hate and discrimination, like showing support for others or volunteering time to a cause can make a big difference. If you need support, each guide includes a list of actions you, as a family, can take to leave the conversation feeling empowered and prepared to build a more just and compassionate world.

# THE DIVERSITY OF THE LATINX COMMUNITY

## **Chicanx**

A person who lives in the United States and is from, or whose family is from, Mexico.

Chicanx is a gender-neutral way of saying Chicano/a.

## **Hispanic**

Someone who is a native of or descends from a Spanish-speaking country.

## **Latinx**

A person with roots in Latin American countries, which include Central and South American countries, Mexico, and the Caribbean. Latinx is a gender-neutral way of saying Latino/a.

The term **Latinx** refers to people with roots in many different regions and countries in North America, South America, Central America, and the Caribbean. Because of this diversity, there can be a lot of variation in how people identify themselves and which terms they use to describe themselves, their culture, and their heritage. Some people may prefer to use the term **Hispanic**, which refers to their roots in Spanish-speaking countries, while those who are Mexican American may prefer Chicana, Chicano, or **Chicanx**. Others might prefer to identify with just a single country.

Members of the Latinx community who identify as female may prefer to use the term Latina and those who identify as male may prefer Latino. This is because in the Spanish language most nouns (people, places, and things) are considered masculine (often ending in -o) or feminine (often ending in -a). Latinx and Chicanx are new terms meant to be inclusive of all genders and may be preferred by people who don't identify as male or female. They can also be used to describe a large group of people with various, or diverse, genders. Another gender-neutral term that can be used is *Latine*. Because *Latine* ends in -e, it is easier to pronounce in the Spanish language than *Latinx*.

Remember, it is up to each individual to decide how they identify with their gender, culture, and heritage. You should never assign or assume how someone identifies. In most cases, it is best to listen closely to how they describe and identify themselves.

# ADDRESSING LATINX HATE AND ITS ROOT CAUSE

## **Bias**

A tendency to lean in a certain direction, either in favor of or against a particular thing or group of people. Some people might be biased against a certain race, ethnicity, culture, or religion because they have been told negative things about that group.

## **Discrimination**

Unfair treatment of one person or group of people because of the person or group's identity, like their race, ethnicity, gender, ability, religion, or culture.

## **Immigrant**

A person who makes the decision to move to another country with the intention of staying there.

## **Racism**

The belief that one race is better than another — and having the power to create systems (i.e., educational system, legal system, etc.) that support that belief.

## **White supremacy**

The norms, laws, treatment, power, access, and opportunities that benefit white people and/or Western cultural practices at the expense of people of color and marginalized communities. It is rooted in the false belief that white people and dominant Western cultural norms are superior.

You may have seen on the news or heard talk about the harmful acts and mean words targeted at Latinx people, or all the many ways people across the country have been speaking out about Latinx hate. **Discrimination** against Latinx people is not new in the United States. It is rooted in hundreds of years of anti-Latinx **racism** and **white supremacy**. Much of that mistreatment is based on Latinx people wrongly being seen as outsiders, or perpetual **immigrants**.

In 1848, the United States won the Mexican-American War and more than half of Mexico's territory, or land, became part of the United States. When the land changed ownership, tens of thousands of Mexican citizens living in that territory became residents of the United States. In the war's treaty, Mexicans who became U.S. citizens were promised their safety and land. This promise, however, was not fully upheld. By the end of the 19th century, many Mexican Americans had lost their land and faced hostility and violence from others in the United States.

Since that time, many laws and policies have limited Latinx people from having equal access to job opportunities, voting rights, healthcare, land, and housing. For example, residential segregation, the act of keeping people from living in certain neighborhoods because of their race, was a common occurrence into the mid- to late-1900s. Latinx families were denied access to financial support that would help them buy homes, faced discrimination when seeking to rent, and were limited to

neighborhoods that didn't have important things like public transportation and parks. Today, even though residential segregation is illegal, the Latinx community still faces housing discrimination due to unfair bank lending, housing costs, and landlords' or realtors' personal biases.

It is these kinds of thoughts and actions that perpetuate, or continue, the "outsider" mentality that many in the United States have about the Latinx community and, over time, has encouraged acts of racism, like offensive name calling and even violence.

## LATINX DISCRIMINATION TODAY AND WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO TAKE ACTION

### Immigration

The act of moving to one country from a different country with the intention of living there permanently.

### Stereotype

A widely held and oversimplified idea about a type of person or group. Racial, religious, and cultural stereotypes are harmful, shape interactions between people, impact policy, and are often believed to be true even when they are false.

Since the Latinx community is so diverse, hatred and discrimination against Latinx people can be seen in many ways and Latinx people can experience discrimination, racism, and hate for more than one reason. This is because people from outside the Latinx community often group everyone who they perceive, or see, as Latinx together and make unfair judgements about them based on the color of their skin or the language that they speak. According to a [2019 Pew Research Center survey](#), about half (48%) of Latinx people had concerns over their place in the United States. Calls for Spanish-speaking Americans to only speak English or even to leave the country, and **stereotypes** about Latinx people are part of everyday life for many in the Latinx community.

The national debate, or discussion, about **immigration** policies in the United States has divided many people. The topic often paints immigrants, especially those from Mexico and Central America, in a bad light. As a result, Latinx people face discrimination and hate. In 2016, a [survey](#) revealed that 52% of people who identify as Latinx had experienced discrimination. The 2019 Pew Research Center survey also showed up to 25% of Latinx respondents reported experiencing forms of racism and discrimination such as being criticized for speaking Spanish in public, being told to go back to their home country, being unfairly treated, and being called offensive names.

America is made up of Indigenous peoples, people of African descent brought here during the slave trade, and immigrants from all over the world. Many people who live in the United States today come from somewhere else. No matter our racial identity or heritage, we all deserve to feel safe, respected, and equal.



We are a country that is only growing more diverse. Today, the Latinx community is the largest minority racial or ethnic group in the United States. People from the Latinx community are an important part of our economy, our communities, and our country's future. Learning about Latinx history, cultures, and contributions, along with how to spot stereotypes, fight discrimination, and show solidarity with the Latinx community are important steps we can all take to combat Latinx discrimination.

## HISTORY OF LATINX ACTIVISM

### Activism

The actions people take to change policies, laws, or rules that are unfair or unjust.

### Afro-Latinx

A person from a Latin American country who has African ancestry.

### Protest(er)

When someone or a group of people take a stand against something to show disapproval.

For as long as there has been hatred, discrimination, and racism against Latinx people in the United States, there have been members of the Latinx community, known as activists, who speak out against inequality, stand up for their rights, and fight to bring about social change. Learn more about the history of Latinx activism with these examples.



#### 1928: Octaviano Larrazolo

Octaviano A. Larrazolo became the first Latinx Senator in U.S. history. As an immigrant from Mexico, Larrazolo was an advocate for equal opportunity, especially in education, and supporter of Latinx civil rights. He was known as a great speaker, giving speeches both in English and Spanish, and advocated for the Spanish language to be included in business.



#### 1911: Meeting of the Mexicanist Congress

Hundreds of Latinx men and women gathered for the first Mexicanist Congress, a meeting in Laredo, Texas, to express their anger about segregation, unfair treatment of workers, women's rights, and violence against Mexicans and Mexican Americans and to find solutions to these problems. This became the largest Mexican American civil rights gathering at the time.

### 1946: *Mendez v. Westminster*

When Mexican American parents, Gonzalo and Felicitá Mendez, tried to enroll their children in an all-white school in Orange County, California, they were told they weren't allowed. The Mendezes, along with other Mexican American families in the area, filed a lawsuit against four school districts in the California court system and won. The ruling made it illegal for California schools to keep Mexican American children from attending all-white public schools. Though this was one of the first successful cases to challenge segregation, or the separation of schools based on race, it did not apply to kids from other racial groups. However, arguments from this case were used eight years later in the *Brown v. Board of Education* case that ended segregation for all racial groups.



### 1962: United Farm Workers Union

The United Farm Workers Union was founded by César Chávez, Dolores Huerta, and other Chicánx activists to defend and support the rights of farmworkers.

The organization fought to improve working conditions, raise wages, establish contracts, aid in workers' credit and savings, provide affordable healthcare, and increase voter registration.

### 1938: Pecan Shellers' Strike

Over 10,000 pecan shellers, mostly Latinx women, went on strike to protest poor working conditions and low wages in hundreds of pecan factories across San Antonio, Texas. The strike, which lasted for three months, received national and international attention after police unfairly arrested workers who were protesting peacefully. The shelling companies eventually agreed to raise workers' pay. However, the pecan factory owners, looking for the cheapest production, switched to shelling machines in factories. This switch resulted in the laying off, or dismissal, of about 10,000 shellers.



### 1960s to 1970s: Nuyorican Movement

The Nuyorican Movement was an intellectual and cultural movement led by Puerto Rican poets, writers, artists, and musicians. Their work focused on issues faced by Puerto Ricans in New York City at the time, like discrimination, limited working opportunities, and poor living conditions. However, their songs, stories, and poems also celebrated Puerto Rican experiences, showed pride in their language and identities, and told stories of rebellion, resistance, and resilience.



### 1963: Coral Way Elementary School

This elementary school in Miami, Florida, was the first publicly funded school to provide students a dual-language, or bilingual, immersion program in the United States. Spanish- and English-speaking students learned in both languages. The program was created in response to growth in Miami's Spanish-speaking communities and its success inspired bilingual school programs across the country.

## 1968: East Los Angeles Walkouts or Chicax Blowouts

Thousands of Chicax, students walked out of their schools because of unequal treatment they experienced in some Los Angeles Unified School District high schools.

Students were not allowed to speak Spanish and were discouraged from applying to or attending college. The Educational Issues Coordinating Committee, made up of Chicax students, teachers, parents, and other community members, presented a list of concerns and demands to the Los Angeles Board of Education in their fight for equality. While the demands were not met at the time, it is still one of the largest student protests in U.S. history and strengthened Chicax solidarity.



## 1973: Baseball Hall of Fame Induction of Roberto Clemente

Roberto Clemente, one of America's first Latinx baseball stars, was inducted into the National Baseball Hall of Fame after his death in 1972. He was proud of his Puerto Rican and Afro-Latinx heritage and saw his career as a way to help others, especially those from the Latinx community, live better lives.

## 1976: Founding of The Congressional Hispanic Caucus

The Congressional Hispanic Caucus was founded to address national and international issues that impact the Hispanic community. This group, made up of Hispanic Congress members, advocates for policies and laws that support Latinx and Hispanic people. Today, the Caucus continues to give a voice to the Hispanic community by standing up for their rights, needs, and interests in the lawmaking process.

## 2017: A Day Without Immigrants / A Day Without Latinxs

Thousands of Latinx activists across the country observed "A Day Without Immigrants" meant to highlight the importance and contributions of immigrants in the United States. Many businesses closed while others donated their earnings, or proceeds, to local Latinx organizations. Members of the Latinx community and fellow Upstanders, or allies, also marched to support immigration rights and protest anti-immigration laws.



## 1969: Sylvia Rivera and the Stonewall Riots

The Stonewall Inn was an LGBTQ+ nightclub in New York City. The Inn's customers, who were part of the LGBTQ+ community, were often targeted and harassed by police because of who they were and what they believed in. On June 28, 1969, like many times before, the Inn was raided by police. This time, however, the community came together to fight for their rights and protest their mistreatment in what is called the Stonewall Riots. Sylvia Rivera, a Latinx transgender icon and activist, was a well-known participant in this demonstration and is thought of as one of the "godmothers" of the gay rights movement.

## 1974: Southwest Voter Registration Education Project

This organization was founded in 1974 to promote Latinx voter participation and political empowerment. Through door to door registration drives, voter campaigns, and lawsuits, the Latinx vote grew from 2.1 to 3.7 million people. Today, it is the oldest Latinx voter organization in the United States and continues its mission in empowering the Latinx vote.

## 1988: Hispanic Heritage Month

The recognition and celebration of Latinx contributions and culture started with Hispanic Heritage Week, established in 1968 under former President Lyndon B. Johnson. In 1988, former President Ronald Reagan expanded the weeklong celebration to a full 30-day period from September 15 to October 15. This window of time includes the independence days of Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Mexico, and Chile.

## 2020: Black Lives Matter — "Your Struggle is My Struggle"

After the death of George Floyd, a series of protests against police violence took place in hundreds of cities in the United States. Since many members of the Latinx community, especially those who are Afro-Latinx or have darker skin, experience police violence and racism, they joined the protests to show solidarity with the Black community. They also raised awareness of their own experiences with racism.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

In every example of activism listed here, there was a person, or a group of people, who knew something wasn't right. To speak up against the unfairness they heard, saw, or experienced, they had to stand up to others who did not support or share their views.

- What qualities do you think they needed to stand up for what they believed in?
- How do you think they felt?
- Why do you think activism is an important part of making change?
- Have you engaged in activism within your school or community?
- What issues are important to you and your community?
- There are many different ways to be an activist. What are some ways you could use your own voice to stand up for what you believe in?

## TAKING ACTION! DISCUSSION GUIDES

### COMBATING STEREOTYPES

#### **What are stereotypes and how can I identify them?**

Stereotypes are widely held and oversimplified ideas about a type of person or group. They are harmful because they erase differences within and across communities, shape interactions between people, and are often believed to be true even when they are false.

The Latinx community is made up of people from many different backgrounds, cultures, and heritages. However, people outside of this community often group everyone they perceive, or think, to be Latinx together based on their skin color or the language they speak. A common anti-Latinx stereotype is that everyone who is Latinx (or appears to be Latinx) knows and speaks Spanish. Another common stereotype is the reverse: that Latinx people don't know English or can't speak it well. Neither of these stereotypes are true and both overlook people's individual experiences and identities.

## CAREGIVER REFLECTION

- What reactions do I have if I hear someone speaking in a different language in front of my kids? How do I feel?
- How might my kids perceive my feelings about that person?
- How can I show I am welcoming and open to new people and perspectives?

Hurtful, anti-Latinx stereotypes run deeper than just language. Stereotypes common in media, on TV, and in movies and books often show Latinx people as foreigners, criminals, or villains. Portraying Latinx people in these ways promotes inaccurate, or untrue, ideas about the Latinx community and can result in harmful and unfair treatment toward Latinx people.

Stereotypes seep into our everyday thinking, and create automatic or unconscious thoughts or biases for — or against — groups of people. When left unchecked, these unconscious biases can lead us to prejudge a person just because they belong to a particular group, culture, or religion. These prejudgements can influence the decisions we make about a person or group without even knowing them and impact our behavior. The actions that we take based on these biases and prejudgements can lead to acts of discrimination. This is a cycle that begins with a simple stereotype.

## TAKING ACTION: STOPPING ANTI-LATINX STEREOTYPES

The Latinx experience is unique to each person. By thinking, saying, and believing stereotypes, we overlook people's individuality and what makes them unique, or special. Learning about the diversity of Latinx people's experiences is important in stopping anti-Latinx stereotypes.

**Below are a few ways you, as a family, can stop the spread of anti-Latinx stereotypes:**

- Explore Latinx cultures — go to a museum, listen to music, visit a restaurant, listen to the different languages spoken across Latin America and learn a few words.
- Listen for stereotypes in your conversations with others. Speak up if you hear them. Even stereotypes in jokes and teasing are harmful. Try responding with phrases like, "That's actually not true," or, "That comment is hurtful."
- Look for and call out stereotypes in books, shows, and media. Read books that show diverse characters with unique stories.
- Get to know Latinx individuals living in your community.

## CAREGIVER REFLECTION

Parents and Caregivers, here are a few additional actions you can take to combat anti-Latinx stereotypes:

- Be aware of your own thinking, and ask yourself where your ideas about other people come from. Notice when you make assumptions, or judgments, about people based on stereotypes.
- Think about ways you can actively introduce your child to positive and counter-stereotypical examples of the Latinx community.
- Start conversations with your child about the benefit of diversity and peoples' differences.



- Celebrate your own family's heritage. Does your family have Indigenous roots or an immigration story? If possible, explore your family's history and share it with your child.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Can you think of a moment where you witnessed or had an experience with a stereotype? How do you think the person experiencing that felt?
- Have you ever had a judgmental thought or idea about someone? How did that thought change after you got to know them?
- How do you think stereotypes impact how you see people? Do you think it is harmful or hurtful to be viewed as a stereotype? Why or why not?
- What would you say if you heard someone say something untrue about a person or community?

It can be scary to speak up when you hear others using stereotypes.  
Together, practice what you can say to speak out against stereotypes.

## INCREASING VISIBILITY

From the people of ancient civilizations, like the Mayans, who invented chocolate and the concept of zero, to the scientists, business leaders, and artists of today, Latinx people have made many significant contributions to the world we live in. Many times, these contributions are forgotten or overlooked by our larger society. By not highlighting the rich and diverse contributions of Latinx people, we are erasing and minimizing the impact they had on our history and will have on our future. This affects the way Latinx people are perceived, or seen, as a community and may even create doubt in how Latinx people see themselves.

By learning about the contributions and experiences of the Latinx community, you are taking important steps toward increasing visibility and combating Latinx discrimination. Learn about important Latinx innovators, creators, and groundbreakers below:

- **Guillermo González Camarena** was an electrical engineer and pioneer of color television. He invented the chromoscopic adapter for television equipment at the age of 17, in 1934.
- **Dr. Miguel Cardona** was appointed Secretary of Education in 2021. He is an educator who is passionate about making the education system more equitable for students of color and those who are bilingual.

- **Natalie Diaz** was awarded the 2021 Pulitzer Prize in Poetry for her poetry collection called *Postcolonial Love Poem*. The poems are about Indigenous peoples' experiences with the erasure, or invisibility, of their culture, heritage, and history. She was the first Latinx woman to receive this award.
- **Christina Hernandez** is one of three women to receive the 2021 Hispanic Heritage STEM Award for work as an engineer on the Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover. She oversaw the construction of the rover's on-board systems.
- **Frida Kahlo**, who lived from 1907 to 1954, was a painter known for her brilliant colors and thought-provoking self-portraits. She is considered one of Mexico's greatest artists.
- **Carlos Saavedra Lamas** was the first Latinx person to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize, for his role in ending the Chaco War and for creating peace between Paraguay and Bolivia, in 1935.
- **Lin-Manuel Miranda** is an award-winning composer, actor, and creator of the groundbreaking musicals, *Hamilton*, which opened on Broadway in 2015, and *In the Heights*, which opened on Broadway in 2008.
- **Ellen Ochoa** was the first Latinx woman to go to space, in 1993, and in 2003 became the first Latinx director of the Johnson Space Center.
- **Clara O'Farrell** is one of three women to receive the 2021 Hispanic Heritage STEM Award for her work on the supersonic parachute that was vital to the Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover's safe landing.
- **Ivy Queen** is an important figure in Reggaetón. Her lyrics represent the voice of women, offering a feminist perspective. She has worked hard to build her career as a respected Reggaetón musician. The genre is mostly male artists, and she has paved the way for many female musicians to come.
- **Sonia Maria Sotomayor** has served as a Supreme Court Justice since 2009, when she became the first woman of color and the first Latinx member of the Court.
- **Diana Trujillo** is one of three women to receive the 2021 Hispanic Heritage STEM Award for her leadership in the Mars 2020 Perseverance Rover's journey from planning to launch to landing.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Choose a name from the list above and find out more about them. What is their story? How would our world today be different without their contributions? Once you've learned about them, spread the word! Share their contributions with your friends, family, or teachers.
- Are there any other Latinx inventors, leaders, musicians, authors, or creatives you know? How did you learn about them? If not, what can you do to learn more about other important Latinx contributors?
- What do you think of when you hear the word invisibility? Have you ever experienced a time when you felt invisible, unheard, or overlooked? How did it make you feel? Do you think others feel similarly?

## UNDERSTANDING INTERSECTIONALITY

### **Intersectionality**

The way a person's identities, like their race, gender, and abilities, interconnect to shape who they are and how they experience the world. These identities combine to create their unique experiences with power, privilege, and discrimination.

**Intersectionality** refers to the interconnected, or overlapping, nature of people's identities. We all identify with and belong to multiple communities. All the ways we identify work together to make us who we are and how we experience the world. The communities we belong to also shape our exposure to things like discrimination and bias.

Latinx people are diverse in every way: race, culture, language, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, and more. Each Latinx individual is part of, and adds to, the community they identify with. This means each person's experiences are different from anyone else's and no one person can represent the entire Latinx community.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Think about yourself. What communities do you belong to or identify with? It could be your race, ethnicity, language, culture, gender, school, grade, interests, or more!
- What parts of your identity make you feel special and unique?
- Have you experienced discrimination or stereotyping based on part of your identity?
- Why do you think it's important to learn about each other's identities?
- What are some ways you can think to show respect for others' identities?

## CAREGIVER REFLECTION

Take a moment to think about your identity and the communities you belong to.

- What are three major parts of your identity that influence your everyday experiences?
- Has your identity, or major parts of your identity, changed or evolved as you've gotten older?
- Are there times you've faced discrimination because of your identity?
- Are there times you've experienced privilege because of your identity?

## CREATING CONNECTIONS

### **Citizen**

A person who is granted the full rights of and protection from a country because it is their birthplace, their parents' nationality, or where they were naturalized.

### **Deportation**

The removal of an immigrant from a country for a legal reason. People may be deported for overstaying their visa or breaking immigration laws.

### **Naturalization**

The process of becoming a citizen of a country.

### **Refugee**

A person who has been forced to leave their home because of war or violence, to find safety in another country.

### **Undocumented Immigrant**

A person living in the United States without U.S. citizenship or other legal permission.

### **Visa**

A permit, or permission, for a person to enter a country for a specific reason like travel, study, or work and for a specific period of time.

People immigrate, or move, to the United States for many reasons. Some want to join their families already living here, while others are looking for more opportunities, like in work and school, than they may have in their home countries. Refugees, people trying to escape persecution, or mistreatment, for their identities and beliefs, also want to come to America because it is a safer place to live.

There are many different programs available for people to immigrate to the United States. Some

people have visas, apply for safety as a refugee, or can get sponsored through their work. These programs can lead to naturalization, or the process of becoming a citizen. Sometimes, people do not qualify for these programs, fit the criteria, or have the resources needed to enter the country, so they enter without documentation, or permission. There are certain protections that can be given to those that are undocumented. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, or DACA, is a policy that protects young people whose families came to the United States without permission. It keeps them safe from deportation, or removal from the country, and allows them to apply for a driver's license and a work permit. The DREAM Act is a proposal that would permanently protect certain undocumented immigrants who came to the United States as kids but may be deported. This Act has never been signed into law.

Immigration is a complicated issue. Some people believe the United States should have stricter policies on immigration that limit the number of immigrants coming into the country and have more rules for those coming without documentation. Other people believe the United States should have a more open immigration policy that welcomes immigrants into the country and gives them support and access to things like U.S. citizenship.

**No matter where we come from, we all deserve to feel safe, respected, and equal.**

Chances are if you ask a teacher, neighbor, or friend about their heritage, you'll learn they had relatives that came to (or were brought to) America from somewhere else. In fact, 25% of kids under the age of 18 have an immigrant parent or grandparent. United States history is full of stories of immigration and it is this history that makes us so diverse.

Many towns and cities across America are working to embrace their diverse populations and create safe spaces for all people to live. Hazleton, Pennsylvania, is one example.

In the 1800s, Hazleton was a busy coal-mining town that was made up of immigrants from Germany, Poland, and Italy. Residents of the town worked together to create a safe and respectful place to live. In the 1990s, Hazleton saw another increase in its population. This time, it was immigrants from South America, Mexico, and the Dominican Republic looking for job opportunities and a better, safer way of life. Since then, the town has been working on how to connect and bring together its white and Latinx communities. It hasn't been easy, but the Hazleton Integration Project has helped.

The goal of the Hazleton Integration Project is to unite Hazleton's diverse population, spread acceptance, and celebrate differences. The project runs a community center that offers classes in Spanish and English for both children and adults, afterschool sports programs, citizenship classes, and cultural discussions and events. Through these programs, Hazleton is building trust and respect between all the town's residents.



Discrimination stems from a lack of understanding of other peoples' experiences and a disconnection, or divide, between people who are different from ourselves. Like we saw in Hazleton, there are ways to build a sense of community and belonging with our neighbors — no matter their background, race, or ethnicity. Making these kinds of connections can help dismantle, or break, stereotypes, combat hate, and promote acceptance.

## FAMILY DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Why do you think it is important to connect with people who are different from yourself?
- What can you learn from someone who has different experiences and perspectives?
- Do you, a friend, or a family member have an immigration story? If so, what is it?
- Are there any ways in which Hazleton is similar to your community? If yes, in what ways?
- How can you build a deeper sense of community in your neighborhood or at your school? Are there others you'd like to make connections with or include in your actions?
- What are some things that might keep people from making connections and building friendships with those who are different from themselves? What are some things that might promote, or help, people to make connections and build friendships?

Learn more about immigration, equality, and the kids of Hazleton, PA, from [\*Nick News: Kids, Immigration and Equality\*](#).

## SHOWING SOLIDARITY

Solidarity is about expressing support and taking action when people are being treated unfairly. It means taking on racial justice issues as your own and listening to and believing those experiencing injustice. When we fail to speak up and act against Latinx hate, we play a role in allowing racism and harm to continue.

**Here is a list of small ways we can show solidarity with the Latinx community:**

- Speak up or find a grown-up if you witness racism, Latinx discrimination, or bullying at school or in your community.
- Research the history and contributions of Latinx people in the United States and around the world.
- Explore books, movies, and music created by Latinx authors and artists.

- Commit to treating others with respect and spreading kindness. Avoid teasing, bullying, or joking about Latinx people online and in person.
- Recognize and call out anti-Latinx stereotypes in TV shows, books, and movies.
- Find events in your community that celebrate Latinx cultures.
- Appreciate those speaking in Spanish or another language. Try to learn a few phrases!
- Get to know Latinx individuals in your community.

## REVIEW, REFLECT, AND REIMAGINE

### FAMILY REFLECTION

As a family, review and reflect on ways you can challenge Latinx hate and discrimination using the activities and prompts below. Brainstorm the things you can say and do to be an Upstander, learn about and build appreciation for Latinx cultures, art, and music, and create community connection by spreading messages of solidarity and acceptance.

### ACTIVIST AND UPSTANDER BRAINSTORM

When we see discrimination, racism, and hate happening in the world, it's important to use our voices to speak out and stand up for what we believe in. Taking inspiration from Latinx activists and their stories, think about ways that you can become an activist in your own community to fight injustice.

**Here are a few of the many Latinx activists using their voices to make change around problems affecting their communities:**

- **Ramón Contreras** cofounded Youth Over Guns, an organization that promotes solutions to end gun violence in Black and Latinx communities, after the loss of a friend.
- **Sophie Cruz** was worried about how the current immigration policies in the United States would impact her family. She fought for immigration reform by taking her concerns straight to the Pope at the age of 5, then to the Women's March, the Supreme Court, and former President Barack Obama.
- **Sage Grade Dolan-Sandrino** is an Afro-Latinx artist, public speaker, and activist. When she came out in 2013, the lack of support she received from her high school led her to fight for transgender students and found *Team Mag*, a digital magazine, to help transgender people share their stories.
- **Faith Florez** heard stories from her grandfather about the challenges he and many other farmworkers face, and is developing an app called Calor, which helps those working in farm fields combat heat stress. She advocates for more tech solutions to challenges that affect the Latinx community.

Draw or sketch yourself as an Upstander or activist. What will you do or say to fight injustice and take action in solidarity with the Latinx community?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin orange border, intended for a drawing or sketch. It occupies the majority of the page below the instruction text.

# CULTURE SPOTLIGHT: REGGAETÓN

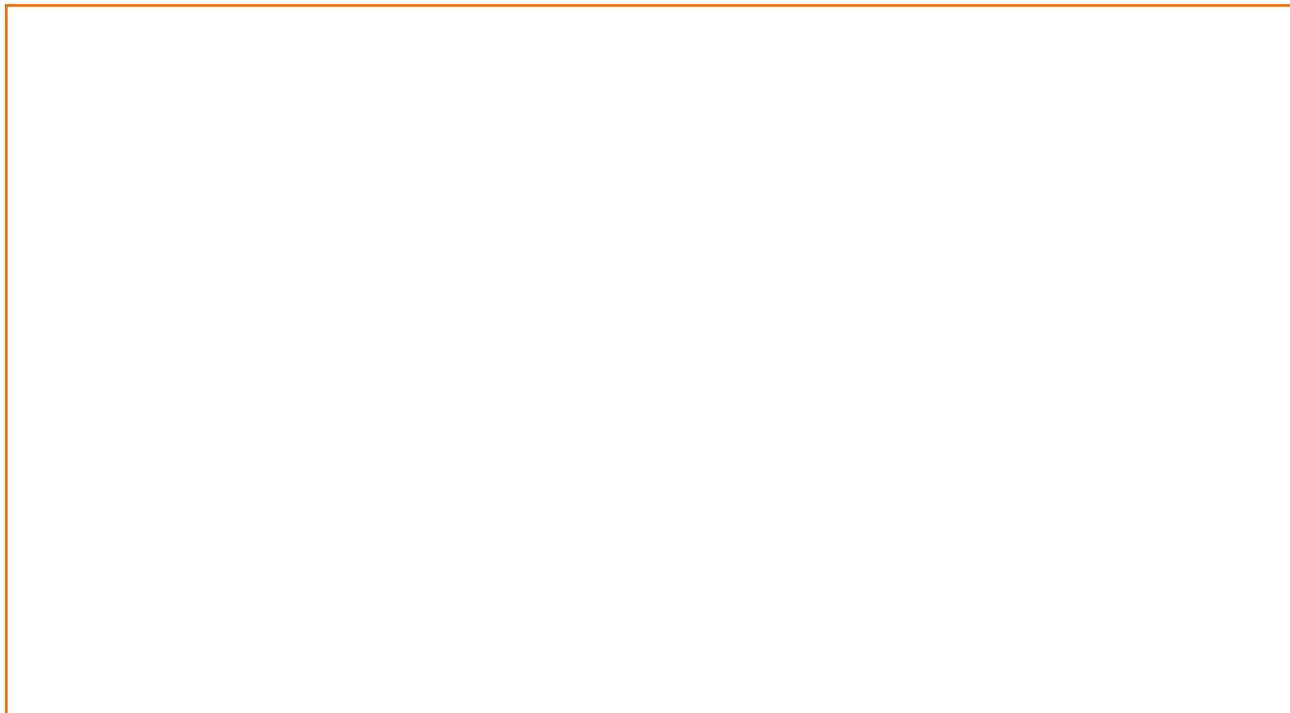
What do you think of when you hear boom-ch-boom-chick? If you say it aloud a few times in a row, you're actually making the signature beat of a popular type of music called Reggaetón. This style of music originated from Puerto Rico and started out being called underground, because it was mostly played at clubs and wasn't widely known. Reggaetón has many influences from all over Latin America and the world.

*Reggae*, the first part of the word *Reggaetón*, refers to a style of music from Jamaica, but its roots are actually in African music and dance traditions brought to Latin American and the Caribbean by enslaved people. Reggaetón has been influenced by Spanish Reggae (from Panama), dancehall (from Jamaica), hip-hop (from New York), salsa (from Cuba), and bomba (also from Puerto Rico).

Reggaetón serves as a way for Puerto Ricans to express their feelings about urban life and social problems like racism, poverty, and crime. A unique aspect of Reggaetón is that it is mostly rapped or sung in Spanish. Currently, Reggaetón is one of the most listened to music genres around the world and its popularity continues to grow.

Reggaetón music is linked to the artists' culture and environment and often talks about inequities and social movements important to the Latinx community. Create your own original song that reflects some aspect of your own identity, or confronts a problem or issue that is important to you. Try writing the lyrics, creating your own beat, or remixing a song that you already know and love.

## MY SONG LYRICS



Learn more about the history of Reggaetón and how to create your own music with [this activity](#) from KID Museum.

# CREATE COMMUNITY

Discrimination often stems from a lack of understanding of other peoples' experiences. For generations, Latinx artists, authors, musicians, and activists have used their voices to speak out against injustices, spread messages of hope, and create connections across communities. Sharing their stories helps dismantle anti-Latinx stereotypes, biases, and hate by encouraging understanding and acceptance. There are many small, but meaningful, actions you can take to build understanding and connect with others in your neighborhood or community.

## **First, think about your neighborhood, school, city, or town.**

- What problems, inequities, or injustices do you see or experience and want to change for the better? What causes or movements are you passionate about? What communities do you want to connect together? What ideas or messages do you want to spread?

## **Once you've got your cause or message:**

- What problems, inequities, or injustices do you see or experience and want to change for the better? What causes or movements are you passionate about? What communities do you want to connect together? What ideas or messages do you want to spread?

## **Then, ask yourself:**

- How can I share my message with my community? Try one of these activities or think of something new!

# ROCKS AGAINST RACISM

Rocks may seem like an unlikely way to spread an anti-hate message, but a community in Frisco, Texas, did just that! Community members came together to paint rocks with anti-hate messages and symbols then spread them throughout their neighborhood. As they painted their messaging, they talked about racial justice and how they could come together to spread positive messages within their community. Create your own anti-hate rocks and put them around your neighborhood, a park, or your school.

# SIGNS OF ACCEPTANCE

A simple, but very successful, way to spread your message is with a sign, poster, or a flag. You may already see anti-hate signs, posters, or flags in front of neighbors' homes or windows or in your local shops and stores. These signs are an easy way to show solidarity with those who are experiencing hate or discrimination. They also let those people know they are safe, welcome, and accepted by others in the community. Create a sign, poster, or a flag to put in your window or on your lawn that shows your solidarity for others in your community. Be sure to include positive messages and symbols of love, acceptance, and hope. Encourage a neighbor or friend to do the same!



## SMILES ON THE SIDEWALK

Take to the sidewalk! Neighbors in Washington, DC, created the “Write Kind Words” project, which encouraged others walking by to write chalk messages of kindness and encouragement to others in the neighborhood. Use sidewalk chalk on your sidewalk or at the park to spread your messages of acceptance and connect your community. You can even leave the chalk out to encourage others to do the same.

## RESOURCES

### GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

#### **Activism**

The actions people take to change policies, laws, or rules that are unfair or unjust.

#### **Afro-Latinx**

A person from a Latin American country who has African ancestry.

#### **Bias**

A tendency to lean in a certain direction, either in favor of or against a particular thing or group of people. Some people might be biased against a certain race, ethnicity, culture, or religion because they have been told negative things about that group.

#### **Chicanx**

A person who lives in the United States and is from, or whose family is from, Mexico. Chicanx is a gender-neutral way of saying Chicano/a.

#### **Citizen**

A person who is granted the full rights of and protection from a country because it is their birthplace, their parents’ nationality, or where they were naturalized.

#### **Culture**

An action, or practice, shared by a community, which is meaningful and has been done over a long period of time. Culture is something all people and communities participate in through their language, traditions, and beliefs.

#### **Deportation**

The removal of an immigrant from a country for a legal reason. People may be deported for overstaying their visa or breaking immigration laws.

#### **Discrimination**

Unfair treatment of one person or group of people because of the person or group’s identity, like their race, ethnicity, gender, ability, religion, or culture. Discrimination is an action that can come from prejudice.

## **Ethnicity**

The social and cultural groups someone belongs to based on shared traditions, ancestry, language, history, nation, and religion.

## **Hispanic**

Someone who is a native of or descends from a Spanish-speaking country.

## **Immigrant**

A person who makes the decision to move to another country with the intention of staying there.

## **Immigration**

The act of moving to one country from a different country with the intention of living there permanently.

## **Intersectionality**

The way a person's identities, like their race, gender, and abilities, interconnect to shape who they are and how they experience the world. These identities combine to create their unique experiences with power, privilege, and discrimination.

## **Latin America**

A region of the world including Central and South America, Mexico, and the Caribbean.

## **Latino/Latina/Latinx/Latine**

Someone of Latin American cultural or ethnic identity. Latinx and Latine are both gender-neutral ways of saying Latino/a. Latinx is increasingly popular in the U.S., while Latine is more prevalent in Latin America.

## **Naturalization**

The process of becoming a citizen of a country.

## **Prejudice**

Prejudging or making a decision about a person or group of people without enough knowledge or information. Prejudicial thinking is often based on stereotypes.

## **Protest(er)**

When someone or a group of people take a stand against something to show disapproval.

## **Race**

An idea invented by humans, not based on biology, that categorizes people into different groups by their perceived physical differences, such as skin color, hair color, or facial characteristics.

**Racism**

The belief that one race is better than another — and having the power to create systems (i.e., educational system, legal system, etc.) that support that belief.

**Refugee**

A person who has been forced to leave their home because of war or violence, to find safety in another country.

**Segregation**

The practice or policy of keeping people of different races, classes, genders, religions, or ethnic groups separate from one another. It can include separate housing, education, transportation, access to public spaces and services, and more.

**Solidarity**

Being an Upstander by expressing support, standing up for, and helping a group of people being mistreated or discriminated against.

**Stereotype**

A widely held and oversimplified idea about a type of person or group. Racial, religious, and cultural stereotypes are harmful, shape interactions between people, impact policy, and are often believed to be true even when they are false.

**Undocumented immigrant**

A person living in the United States without U.S. citizenship or other legal permission.

**Upstander**

A person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied.

**Visa**

A permit, or permission, for a person to enter a country for a specific reason like travel, study, or work and for a specific period of time.

**White supremacy**

The norms, laws, treatment, power, access, and opportunities that benefit white people and/or Western cultural practices at the expense of people of color and marginalized communities. It is rooted in the false belief that white people and dominant Western cultural norms are superior.

# CHILDREN'S READING LIST



## Ages 4-7

*How Tia Lola Came to Stay*, by Julia Alvarez

*Sembrando historias: Pura Belpre: bibliotecaria y narradora de cuentos/Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpre*, by Anika Aldamuy Denise

*My Two Border Towns*, by David Bowles

*Frida Kahlo and Her Animalitos*, by Monica Brown

*Tito Puente: Rey del Mambo/Tito Puente: Mambo King*, by Monica Brown

*Tales Our Abuelitas Told: A Hispanic Folktale Collection*, by Isabel Campoy

*Paletero Man*, by Lucky Diaz

*La Joven Aviadora: Aida de Acosta sube muy alto/The Flying Girl: How Aida Acosta Learned to Soar*, by Margarita Engle

*Queen of Tejano Music: Selena*, by Silvia López

*El Primer Corte de Mesita de Furqan/Furqan's First Flat Top*, by Robert Lui-Trujillo

*Alma y Cómo Obtuvo su Nombre*, by Juana Martínez-Neal

*Mango, Abuela, and Me*, by Meg Medina

*¿De dónde eres?/Where Are You From?*, by Yamilé Saied Méndez and Jaime Kim

*Dreamers*, by Yuyi Morales

*Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book*, by Yuyi Morales

*Soñadores*, by Yuyi Morales

*Pasando Páginas: La historia de mi vida*, by Sonia Sotomayor

*Funny Bones: Posada and His Day of the Dead Calaveras*, by Duncan Tonatiuh

*Grandma's Records*, by Eric Velasquez

*Octopus Stew*, by Eric Velasquez

## Ages 8-12

*The Epic Fail of Arturo Zamora*, by Pablo Cartaya

*Alicia Alonso: Prima Ballerina, Diego: Bigger than Life*, by Carmen Bernier-Grand  
*Schomburg: The Man Who Built a Library*, by Carole Boston Weatherford

*Stella Diaz Has Something to Say*, by Angela Dominguez

*Dancing Home, Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba*, by Alma Flor Ada

*Maximilian & the Mystery of the Guardian Angel*, by Xavier Garza

*The Bossy Gallito*, by Lucia Gonzalez

*Calling the Doves/El Encanto De Las Palomas*, by Juan Felipe Herrera

*Messi*, by Illugi Jökullsson

*Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*, by Kathleen Krull

*Merci Suarez Changes Gears*, by Meg Medina

*Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music*, by Rafael Lopez

*Puerto Rican Americans*, by Hal Marcovitz

*Hands-on Latin America: Art Activities for All Ages*, by Yvonne Y. Merrill

*The Dreamer*, by Pam Muñoz Ryan

*Me, Frida*, by Amy Novesky

*Cuba 15: A Novel*, by Nancy Osa

*The First Rule of Punk*, by Celina C. Perez

*Separate Is Never Equal: Sylvia Mendez and Her Family's Fight for Desegregation*, by Duncan Tonatiuh

*Roberto Clemente: Pride Of The Pittsburgh Pirates*, by Jonah Winter

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

"Share My Lesson: Teaching for Racial Equity and Justice," [American Federation of Teachers.](#)

"Global Immigration," [Facing History and Ourselves.](#)

"Maker Playground," [KID Museum.](#)

"Immigration," [Learning for Justice.](#)

"Hispanic Children and Families," [National PTA.](#)

"Latino Center," [Smithsonian.](#)

"Teaching Central America," [Teaching Central America.](#)

"Discover Hispanic heritage at these historic sites," [U.S. Department of the Interior.](#)

"Books for Hispanic Heritage Month," [DC Public Library.](#)



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