Creating Connections: Cultures and Races

Connecting your child to his or her culture and racial identity is important when he or she is from a different race and culture than your own.

- **Honor the birth culture**
- **Involve your child in your family’s culture**
- **Connect your child to same-race peers and role models**

### Honor the birth culture

- Participate with your child and show your interest and respect for his or her birth culture. To respect the birth culture is to respect the whole child.

- Learn and teach about your child’s country of origin. The heritage, ancestry, and modern-day culture of the country of origin is a part of what makes your child who they are. Introduce your child to the “museum culture” and modern culture as well. Who are some famous citizens or leaders in the country? What languages are spoken? What sports and music are popular? What are some of the country’s current events and achievements? Visiting the country of origin is one of the best ways to explore the culture.

- If your child was adopted domestically, learn and teach about the diversity of culture within our own country because his or her birth culture may be different from yours. Seek out and explore your child’s culture through community events and media. Consider visiting your child’s place of birth.

### Involve your child in your family’s culture

- It is also important to connect your child to your family’s culture and traditions. Teach by example the importance of culture in your own life. Sharing stories about your cultural background helps a child understand the importance of cultural identity.

- Don’t feel that you must abandon one culture for the sake of the other. Consider your child’s sense of belonging in your family as well as their sense of belonging to their birth culture.

### Connect your child to same-race peers and role models

- Having same-race peers and role models in your child’s life is also very important. Same-race role models and peers understand what it is like to be a racial minority and can provide emotional support to your family. These relationships can help your child form a healthy cultural and racial identity and develop solutions to challenges they will face. You lead the way.

- Put yourself in settings where authentic relationships can develop naturally.

- Provide your child with same-race role models through biographies, media, internet resources and travel.

- Get involved as a family in causes and organizations that promote diversity. Through community involvement, you can make a difference and form life-long connections as a family.