SOUL SPACE

California Reducing Disparities Project
African American Technical Assistance Project

Soul Space supports the use of evidence based approaches, yet embraces and preserves the culturally inclusive approach of storytelling to give a voice to where we've been and inspires us to future community defined innovations

Nobody really thought that black people were inferior. They only hoped that they would behave that way. They only hoped that black people would hear it all and weep or kill or resign or become one. They never thought black people were lazy - ever. Not only because they did all the work, but they certainly hoped they would never try to fulfill their ambitions. And they never thought we were inhuman. You don't give your children over to the care of people you believe to be inhuman, for your children are all the immortality you can express. Racists were never afraid of sexual power or switchblade. They were only interested in the acquisition of wealth and the status quo of the poor. Everybody knows that if the price is high enough, the racists will give you whatever you want.

Toni Morrison

Implicit Racial Bias
Make it Plain

This issue of Soul Space focuses on **implicit racial bias,** what it is, how it contributes to racial disparities, and why it is important for individuals and communities to make them explicit and move beyond them. Due to highly publicized events, the names of Michael Brown, Eric Garner, Rekia Boyd, Tamir Rice, and now, Stephon Clark, have become household names for many. In each of these cases, police officers took the life of an African American person. It is the judgment of many that if these individuals—and the lives of many more African Americans whose lives have seemingly been shortened by unwarranted police violence—had been White, the officers would not have taken their lives.

This same concern that an implicit racial bias against African Americans somehow shapes how police officers interact with African Americans is also present in education, housing, and mental health.

While mental health professionals are frequently viewed as more open to working with a wide range of demographic groups, research indicates that healthcare professionals exhibit the same levels of implicit bias as the general population.

According to two recent studies, implicit bias impacts African Americans with mental health issues from the very moment they choose to see a mental health professional. The studies showed that Black sounding names such as Lakesha received significantly fewer appointment offers with professional counselors and therapists than did individuals seeking mental health support with White sounding names, such as Allison. If implicit bias is, indeed, this far reaching in how it impacts racial disparities, it's important that those who serve African Americans understand what implicit biases are and how they shape the lives of the African American people and communities that the CRDP is designed to improve.

What are the implicit racial biases that companies and mental health agencies are now investing in as a means of address racial incidents and systemic racial inequities. This issue of Soul Space provides tools for understanding how addressing implicit bias in agencies serving African Americans can begin the process of reducing racial disparities and improving the lives of African Americans and those who serve them.

The Power of the Unconscious Mind:
What is Implicit Bias and How is it Measured?

Social scientists have used a variety of methods to study implicit bias. The most researched instrument is the [Implicit Association Test](#) (IAT). The IAT was developed by **Project Implicit**, a 501c3 organization and international collaboration of scientists at Harvard University, University of Virginia, and University of Washington interested in developing a "virtual lab" to study human thoughts and feelings that occur outside of conscious awareness and control. Launched in 1998, the Implicit Association Test measures the relative symmetry or strength of associations between pairs of concepts such as good/bad, pleasure/pain. There are IATs for a range of social identities and categories including, gender, physical ability, religion, weapons, and Black/White.

The tested premise of the IAT is that when there is symmetry, or a correlation, between two concepts, such as "peanut butter/jelly," the test taker is able to match those concepts more quickly than two concepts for which the correlation is not strong like "peanut butter/sneakers. "The IAT requires test takers to sort images or words into categories. In the Black/White, or "Race" IAT, the test taker sorts the faces of Black and White people into groups associated with positive and negative words (i.e., pleasure/pain, good/bad) as quickly as they can. The racial group to which someone most quickly associates with negative terms reflects a negative implicit bias toward that group. Conversely, the more quickly an individual assigns a racial group to positive terms reflects a positive bias toward that group.

Implicit Bias

Increased by:	Not reduced by:
• Stress	• Good intentions
• Time pressure	• External motivation
• Multi-tasking	• Suppression or avoidance
• Ambiguity	• Perceived objectivity
• Incomplete data	
• Lack of critical mass	

The results of the test since 1998 show that the vast majority of test-takers, regardless of race, test for a pro-White/anti-Black bias. This is not entirely surprising since implicit biases are the result of mental associations that are formed by the direct and indirect messages we receive about different groups of people through the media, and other forms of socialization. For instance, most Americans associate Black people with criminality.

Researchers have noted that the results of a single IAT does not predict whether an *individual* will behave in a racially biased way in any given situation. But, according to its creators, what the IAT does accomplish well is predict the *aggregate* behavior of individuals and large groups of people. At the individual level, this means that rather than relying on taking the test once to determine one's racial bias, the results would have a greater validity if the results of multiple tests, taken over time were averaged. This process itself would encourage individuals to reflect more deeply over a period of time about their racial biases. At the level of large populations, researchers, have found for instance that "metro areas with
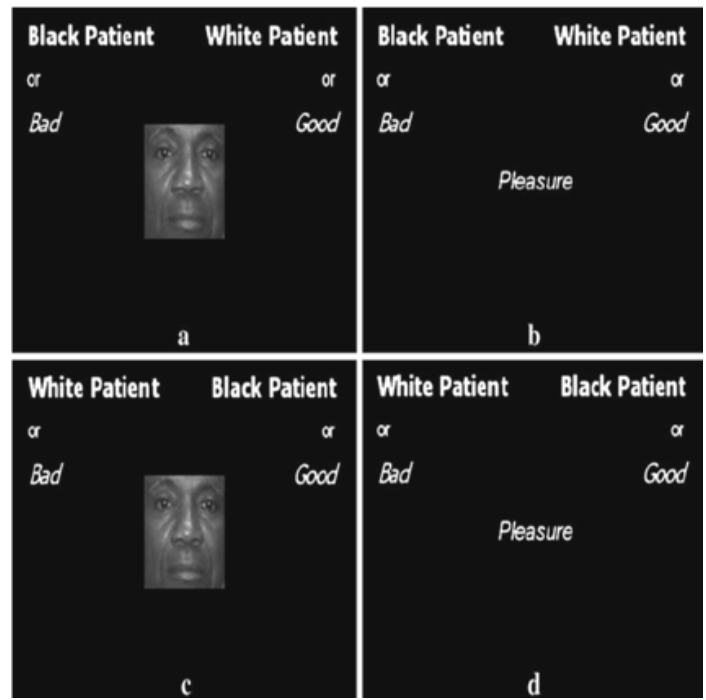
greater average implicit bias have larger racial disparities in police shootings." Additionally, "counties with greater average implicit bias have larger racial disparities in infant health problems. Given this important element of the IAT, one can see how there is a direct connection to the implicit bias of individuals and racial disparities in institutions.

SOME DEFINITIONS

BIAS is the mental state of having a prejudice or preference for a person, place, thing, or feeling over another. Biases can be held by individuals, groups, and organizations. Individuals, institutions, and groups frequently act in ways that reveal these biases. In fact, these biases often show up in actions, policies, programs and values that define the person, group or institution. Biases can be positive or negative. When biases are acted upon in ways that disadvantage a person or group over another they are considered negative and unfair.

RACIAL BIAS refers to the prejudice or preference people have for individuals or groups of different races. These racial biases can be explicit or implicit.

EXPLICIT RACIAL BIAS, also known as **conscious bias,** refers to the stereotypes and attitudes people
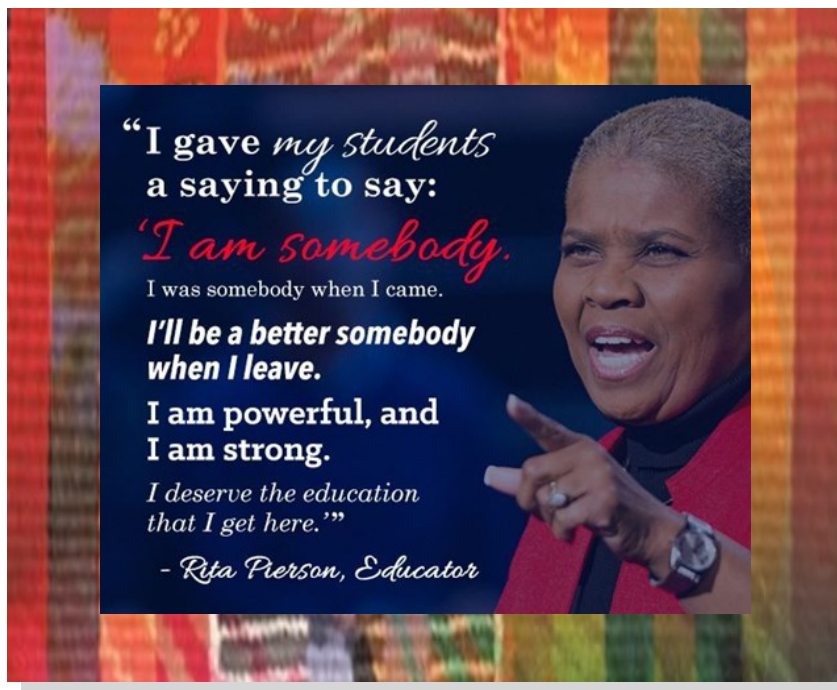
hold about certain racial groups of which they are fully aware.

IMPLICIT OR **UNCONSCIOUS BIAS**, unlike conscious racial bias, refers to the beliefs, attitudes and or stereotypes—positive and negative--that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions about people of different races without our conscious knowledge. Implicit biases are activated involuntarily and quickly, outside of conscious awareness or intentional control.

Implicit biases are pervasive, everyone possesses them, and they are often in conflict with our conscious values and deliberate actions. Evidence shows that people rely on them more when they are multitasking or working under pressure. Placing individuals under pressure to make racial judgments is one of the main strategies, such as the IAT, researchers use to measure implicit bias.

Counter Stereotyping
A strategy of undoing and empowering

"I gave *my students* a saying to say: '**I am somebody.** I was somebody when I came. **I'll be a better somebody when I leave.** I am powerful, and I am strong. I deserve the education that I get here.'"
— *Rita Pierson, Educator*

Counter stereotyping or counter storytelling "reframes the master narrative by highlighting other parts of the story, by telling the story from another perspective, or rejecting misconceptions or half-truths in the master narrative. The counter narrative is a form of identity development and affirmation that has a long history among different communities of color, growing out of colonialism."

Zaretta Hammond, The First Six Weeks

"I am somebody!" "Black is Beautiful!" Counter-stereotyping could be thought of as a community defined practice among African Americans and, in this quote from Ms. Hammond, one of the most important strategies in engaging and empowering African Americans. Exposing students, or clients, to historical and/or admired images and literature of African Americans, as a form of counter storytelling, reduces implicit bias of educators and service providers while contributing to the positive identity development of students and clients.

The Perception Institute's Report *Transforming the Perception of Black Men and Boys* details a number of approaches to counter-stereotyping that have been effective with African American males, noting that "a majority of published studies have shown *implicit bias is reduced in students* after exposure to admired historical and contemporary individuals. The finding suggests that repeated exposure to positive images of Black men and boys [is] an important strategy to reduce the impact of the saturation of continued negative stereotypes.

Research in healthcare shows that counter-storytelling does not have to be explicit in order to be effective. In one study, the posting of posters positively representing African American women in clinics, as a form of counter story telling has been shown to lessen the racial anxiety of clients.

According to Ms. Hammond, focusing on counter story-telling has a twinned effect: first, it reshapes implicit biases teachers may have about students (as well as explicit biases that often show up in teachers' lounges and in off-hand comments made about which student groups can and can't learn); second, students' "personal counter narrative or explanatory story is the foundation of each one's academic mindset." Therefore, counter story telling can mitigate both the

stereotype threat African American students often experience while mitigating the implicit biases of educators.

Empathy Interventions: Interventions that assist teachers in looking at a situation from the vantage point of students, also known as perspective taking, has been shown to reduce teacher bias against African Americans. In fact, research by Professor Jason A. Okonofua of the University of California, Berkeley demonstrates how empathic interventions and perspective taking drastically reduced suspension rates by one half in a number of California schools involved in the study.

In a 12-week scientific study, Patricia G. Devine concludes that the aforementioned debiasing strategies are effective in producing long-term reductions in implicit bias. The findings are reported in *Long-Term Reduction in Implicit Race Bias: A Prejudice Habit-Breaking Intervention*. Devine shows that the interventions were most effective with "people who were concerned about discrimination or who reported using the strategies showed the greatest reductions. The intervention also produced increases in concern about discrimination and personal awareness of bias. Devine hopes that the studies' results "raise the hope of reducing persistent and unintentional forms of discrimination that arise from implicit bias."

Resources for Reducing Implicit Bias & Racial Anxiety
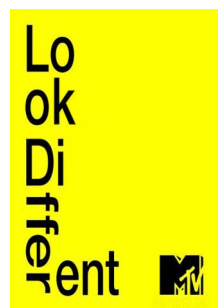
Game: Road to Racial Justice

The **Road to Racial Justice "Board" Game** is a free, engaging tool for reducing implicit bias and racial anxiety—it is collaborative and purposeful. It can be used in classrooms, community groups, family gatherings, and faith and spiritual-based organizations. Individuals will become aware that racism exists in many everyday kinds of situations (interpersonal and institutional), learn why each situation is racist (stereotyping, tokenism, cultural appropriation, etc.), and acquire tools to interrupt these situations. Good for teens and adults. Played in teams. Curriculum included.

Download at www.roadtoracialjustice.org
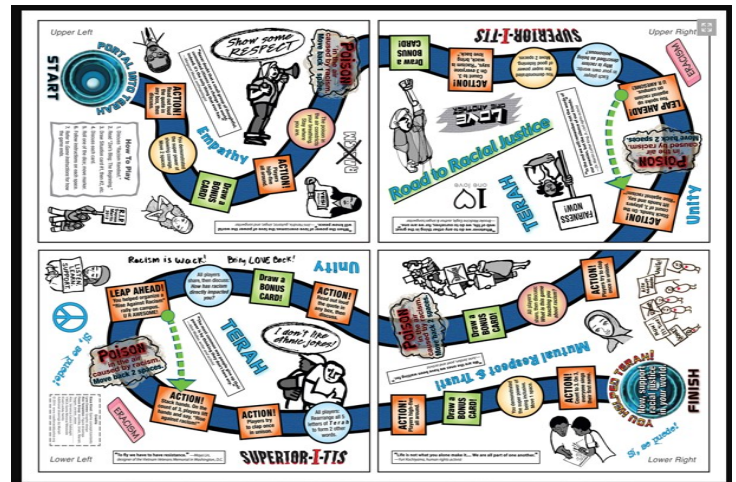
7-Day Debiasing Cleanse

The 7-Day Debiasing Cleanse is a collaboration between MTV's Look Different Campaign, Project Implicit, and the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, The 7-Day Debiasing Cleanse combines the IAT with interactive de-biasing exercises, and a daily e-mail to assist individuals and groups to disrupt institutional racism in organizations and the larger society. Access at: www.lookdifferent.org/what-can-i-do/bias-cleanse

Resources for Reducing Implicit Bias & Racial Anxiety

Virtual Reality: 1000 Cuts

Virtual Reality has come to the rescue in the Trump era. In this immersive virtual-reality experience, the viewer becomes Michael Sterling, a black man, encountering racism as a young child, adolescent, and young adult. The ***1,000 Cut Journey*** allows the user to "feel" the impact of microaggressions, discipline and punishment. Professor Courtney Cogburn's passionate Ted Talk discusses the role of perspective and feelings in addressing the 1000 cuts of racism. Her Ted Talk can be downloaded here: https://youtu.be/M7T_u4hpiSE
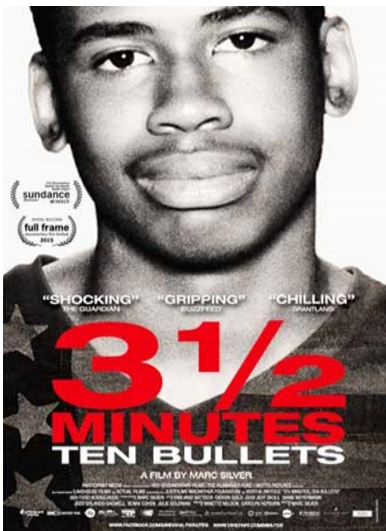
Film: 3 1/2 Minutes, Ten Bullets

3 1/2 Minutes, Ten Bullets is a film that reveals the ways that implicit bias and the associations of rap music and Black boys with thuggery and violence. The discussion guide, free curriculum and video clips assist individuals and groups, particularly educators, engage with their implicit biases about African Americans and begin to take actions individually and organizationally. The curriculum was created by the Perception Institute—experts in implicit bias and the developers of the Starbuck's curriculum.

Download at: https://www.participantmedia.com/film/3-12-minutes-ten-bullets

Webinar: Addressing Classroom Bias to Improve Learning

In this sixty-minute webinar, Philip Goff, an internationally renowned scholar on implicit bias and policing discusses the relationship between implicit bias and racial disparities while explaining key strategies for dismantling the school-to-prison pipeline. Download at:

http://schottfoundation.org/videos/webinar-addressing-classroom-bias-improve-learning-center-policing-equity

CRDP African American IPP Spotlight:
Experience Hope for Teens

In California Reducing Disparities Project (CRDP) Phase 2, the 35 grantees who are receiving funding to conduct demonstration projects under intensive evaluation are called **Implementation Pilot Projects (IPPs).** In each of our newsletters, we will include a spotlight on one of the seven IPPs that focus on serving African Americans.

In this issue of **Soul Space**, we feature *EXPERIENCE HOPE FOR TEENS***,** a program of *Catholic Charities of the East Bay* based in Oakland California. Catholic Charities is one of seven CRDP IPPs focused on serving African Americans.

EXPERIENCE HOPE FOR TEENS is a school-based program designed to address the many forms of trauma among African American students. The program serves students in both Richmond and Oakland, California, two communities in which high levels of community violence, poverty, and trauma exposure are distressingly commonplace among African American populations. The program's work in Oakland is especially compelling in how it addresses both the student's mental health needs and Oakland Unified School District's (OUSD) effort to reduce the suspension rates of African Americans.

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR) initiated a compliance review of OUSD to "investigate whether the District had subjected African American students to discrimination on the basis of race by disciplining them more frequently and more harshly than similarly situated White students."

Prior to the conclusion of the review, the District entered into a Voluntary Resolution Agreement with OCR and initiated a plan to reduce suspensions through a number of interventions, including a revision of their discipline procedures, addressing student-teacher relationships and implementing effective trauma-informed practices and restorative justice programming.

Catholic Charities' *EXPERIENCE HOPE FOR TEENS* program shares many of OUSD's stated goals to reduce the number of suspensions and expulsions of African American's in OUSD. The program seeks to achieve these goals through institutionalizing a comprehensive therapeutic model of student, family, and campus engagement at Montera Middle School. The program supports students by providing them with services designed to decrease their racial anxiety, and trauma symptoms, such as PTSD, depression, dissociation, internalizing, externalizing, and complicated grief reactions. Jordan Thompson, Director of Mental Health for Catholic Charities, notes that these direct services to students are "complimented by the programs work with school staff, families, and administration to increase their capacity to respond in a non-punitive, healing-focused and restorative manner to

trauma-related behavior," thereby transforming school into a place of healing and learning rather than a source of trauma and re-traumatization.

Ms. Thompson views school discipline and student behavior as interrelated and reinforcing, begetting cycles of reactive behaviors, disciplinary punishment, and traumatization.

AIM OF THE UNIVERSAL PLAN

According to Ms. Thompson, the majority of the program's work happens in **Tier 3**, the Universal Plan, and the newly integrated implicit bias component holds special promise in "creating a restorative, equitable community in which the entire school community "wrestles with the causes and effects of disproportionality in the suspension rate of African American students." This implicit bias component of Tier Three comports with the OUSD's School Board's expectation that teachers and administrators receive implicit bias training. Moira DeNike, the implicit bias trainer and *EXPERIENCE HOPE FOR TEENS* evaluator, notes that "we need to explore the reasons for suspension disparity. Our assumption is that kid's own trauma [it is about them] without looking at the school environment in which students and teachers operate."

"Our Lady Mother of Ferguson and All Those Killed by Gun Violence." A new icon written by Mark Dukes.

EXPERIENCE HOPE FOR TEENS implements three tiers of support to combat this circuitous cycle of discipline and traumatization to improve the mental health of Montera's African American students. The three tiers of support include:

1) **TIER I: INTENSIVE SUPPORT/INTERVENTIONS**

   Tier I provides group and individual trauma-informed clinical and nonclinical interventions to students experiencing or at risk for mental illness. The clinical interventions integrate such restorative justice principles as "personalization/realness," and the "centrality of community" in a unique way that draws on students' own African American cultural background. The services are provided by a Masters-level clinician trained in restorative justice.
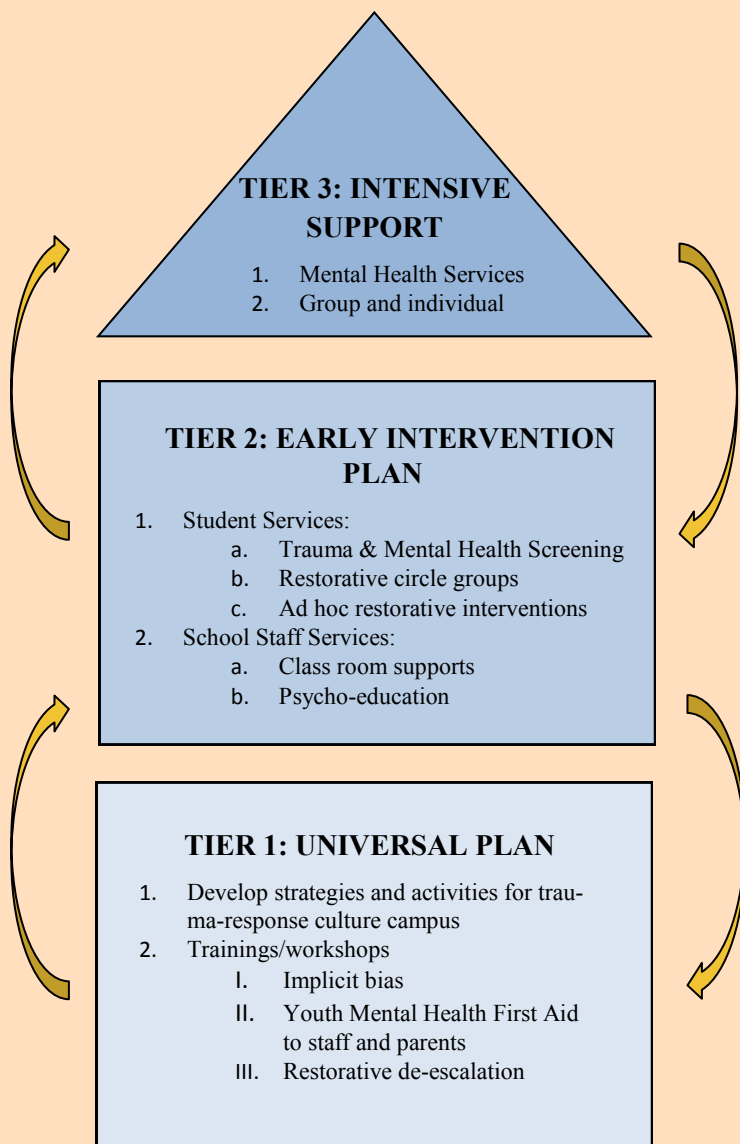
2) **TIER II: RESTORATIVE JUSTICE PRACTITIONER**

   As an Early Intervention, an onsite Restorative Justice Practitioner (Practitioner) provides technical assistance for school staff on trauma, its impact on student behavior, and the effectiveness of trauma-informed services. The Practitioner is drawn from the same community as the students and trained in restorative practices, group facilitation, and a clinical model. S/he conducts restorative circles, facilitate community-building activities, and help the school to develop restorative values and guidelines. Additionally, the Practitioner serves as an ad-hoc crisis intervention specialist, diffusing situations involving students and, sometimes, parents.

3) **TIER III: UNIVERSAL PLAN**

   The aim of the Universal Plan is to create a non-punitive and engaging school and home environment for students. This is accomplished through educating both school and community on the impact of trauma and its mental health effects. Staff training includes information on trauma and how it affects student behavior, enabling staff to recognize trauma and other mental health issues and respond to student behavior in trauma-informed ways. Additionally, through an implicit bias consultant, the program provides a day-long training for teachers on implicit bias at the beginning of the school year. This training is coupled with providing "racial anxiety" support to students to enable them to cope with stereotypes that challenge their intelligence and social-emotional intelligence. Other campus-wide activities include:

   ⇒ De-Escalation Training
   ⇒ Youth Mental Health First Aid training for <u>staff and parents</u>

TIER 3: INTENSIVE SUPPORT
1. Mental Health Services
2. Group and individual

TIER 2: EARLY INTERVENTION PLAN
1. Student Services:
   a. Trauma & Mental Health Screening
   b. Restorative circle groups
   c. Ad hoc restorative interventions
2. School Staff Services:
   a. Class room supports
   b. Psycho-education

TIER 1: UNIVERSAL PLAN
1. Develop strategies and activities for trauma-response culture campus
2. Trainings/workshops
   I. Implicit bias
   II. Youth Mental Health First Aid to staff and parents
   III. Restorative de-escalation

⇒ Restorative Practices training and TA
⇒ Setting up values and guidelines in classrooms
   ◊ Creating respect agreements
   ◊ Restorative inquiry
   ◊ Introduction to circle keeping
⇒ Orientation to trauma and trauma-responsive care
⇒ School-wide psychoeducational presentations for students
   ◊ Stereotyping and racial anxiety
   ◊ Setting up values and guidelines in classrooms
   ◊ Creating respect agreements
   ◊ Restorative inquiry
   ◊ Introduction to circle keeping

IMPLICIT BIAS TRAINING

The implicit bias training that Dr. DeNike, along with the help of OUSD administrators, has developed is personal, local, and immediate for the participants. It makes use of data specific to OUSD and Montera Middle School. This approach engages teachers at the deepest level, assisting them in understanding racial trauma and how it manifests within the school and district. The training has 6 modules designed to move teachers from understanding their personal implicit biases to developing classroom and school-wide strategies to reduce racial disparities.

Module 1 helps teachers understand their own racial biases. Teachers take the Black/White IAT during this module.

Module 2 debriefs IAT scores and discusses how implicit biases effect behavior. This is all accomplished during a review of school-level discipline data.

**Module 3** helps educators understand how negative associations of African Americans are created.

Module 4 looks at racial trauma and how it is triggered.

Module 5 explores strategies for de-biasing and how to rewire the brain for more realistic racial associations between students and teachers

Module 6 places students and their voices at the center of inquiry as a means of creating empathy and interrupting the dominant narrative about student groups

Dr. DeNike believes that once teachers are aware of racial biases, work can be done on having them "adopt a growth mindset around discipline practices and offer them an iterative process of de-biasing that initially employs practical tools that are "low effort but high impact."

According to Dr. DeNike the training will soon be used across OUSD as a major strategy for reducing school discipline disparities and ensuring that students have a school community in which racial bias is not an obstacle to learning.

Common—Seeing Your Own Bias
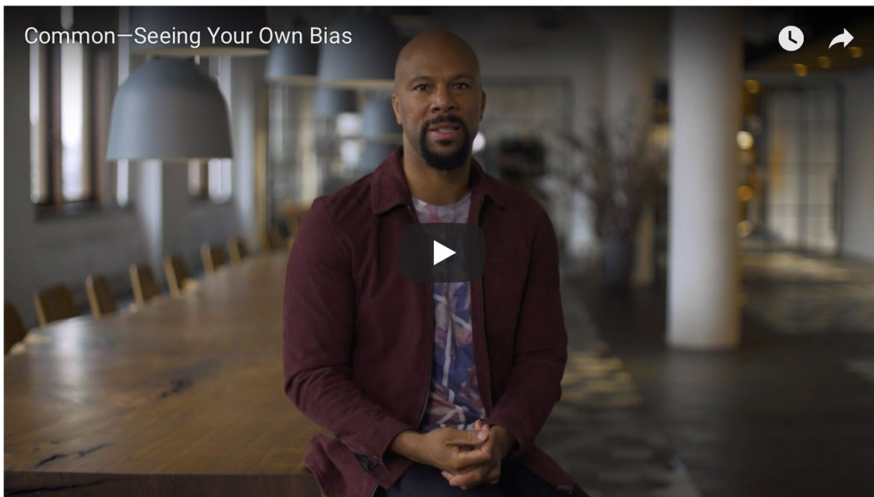
The Third Place
Starbucks' Commitment Renewed

On April 12, 2018, two African American men, Donte Robinson and Reshon Nelson, were waiting for a business partner when they were arrested for refusing to leave a Philadelphia Starbucks after a manager told them they couldn't stay if they weren't purchasing anything. Another customer caught the incident with her cellphone camera and the video went viral, with over 4 million views within the first 48 hours. In response, Starbucks closed all of its 8,000+ stores on May 29, 2018 to begin a discussion about race, bias and a welcoming environment.

Starbucks refers to the place where these discussions should occur as the **Third Place**, a place between home (the *first* place) and work (the *second place)* where people come together in their fullness as equals to build community. But more than just a place, Starbucks views the Third Place as a "feeling, an emotion, an aspiration where people come together and are uplifted as a result of a sense of belonging." Given the racial divisions that have demonstrably grown since the election of the United States' 45th president, Starbucks' intentional effort to renew their commitment to being a *third place*, particularly as it refers to race relations and inequities is a welcome development. How Starbucks intentional community building effort around race can be sustained over time remains to be seen. But, their willingness to make the curriculum public is a step in the right direction.

Starbucks' Implicit Bias Training

Starbucks' Implicit Bias curriculum is a study in "belonging." The curriculum is structured by six modules:

Module 1: Why we are here today

Practice: Seeing difference as positive

Module 2: Who we are, who we aspire to be

Practice: Reflecting on what belonging feels like

Module 3: Understanding bias

Practice: Becoming color brave

Module 4: Structural bias

Practice: Envisioning belonging

Module 5: Making every customer feel they belong

Practice: See. Respect. Uplift.

Module 6: Commitments

Practice: Building new habits

The entire Starbucks curriculum: *A Conversation and Learning Session on Race, Bias, and Creating an Environment that is Welcoming to All* can be found here:

https://starbuckschannel.com/thethirdplace/