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‘It’s Like Planting Seeds Little by Little’: Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization and Children’s Developing Sense of Self and Others

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‘It’s Like Planting Seeds Little by Little’: Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization and Children’s Developing Sense of Self and Others

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy

in Education

by

Anna Mitsuko Kimura

2024

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

‘It’s Like Planting Seeds Little by Little’: Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization and Children’s Developing Sense of Self and Others

by

Anna Mitsuko Kimura

Doctor of Philosophy in Education

University of California, Los Angeles, 2024

Professor Rashmita S. Mistry, Chair

Examining racial-ethnic socialization (RES) during middle childhood and early adolescence (ages 6-12) is critical because, during this period, Asian American children are developing a sense of racial-ethnic identity (REI) and awareness of racial bias. This dissertation includes two studies that qualitatively examined children’s REI development and awareness of racial bias, and how Asian American parents’ RES efforts informed these developmental processes. Both studies draw from a diverse sample of 68 Asian American parents (M_{age} = 43.4 years, *SD* = 5.0, age range = 28-56) and 68 Asian American children (M_{age} = 8.9 years, *SD* = 1.9) who completed parent and child interviews. Data were analyzed using a thematic coding process.

Study 1 examined how Asian American parents’ beliefs and motivations informed the way they engaged in conversations about race and racism with their children. Two-thirds of

parents shared that they had engaged in conversations about race and racism, using approaches like preparation for bias, proactive racial socialization, and collective racial socialization. A third of parents shared that they were waiting to talk about race and racism with their children because they wanted to shield their children from knowing about racism or wanted to de-emphasize racism to protect their children's well-being. Qualitative differences in approaches by generational status and family racial-ethnic make-up (i.e., monoracial, multiracial) are discussed.

Study 2 focused on Asian American children's developing REI and awareness of racial bias, and how parental RES supported these developmental processes. Children were making sense of their REI through both tangible and social meanings, and many were aware of racial bias. Parents' RES approaches were reflective of their children's proximal contexts and macro-level events. Concordance was common among children's REI meaning-making and parents' cultural socialization practices, and examples of concordance and discordance between children's awareness of racial bias and parents' racial socialization practices were evident.

The two studies highlight the diversity of beliefs and motivations that inform Asian American parental RES approaches, and the importance of parental RES to inform children's developing REI and understanding of racial bias during middle childhood and early adolescence. Implications for policymakers, schools, and practitioners are discussed.

The dissertation of Anna Mitsuko Kimura is approved.

Sandra H. Graham

Inmaculada García Sánchez

Anna Shan-Lai Chung

Rashmita S. Mistry, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2024

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I would like to thank my advisor and mentor, Rashmita Mistry for her incredible support over the years and belief in me at every step of the way. If not for your encouragement, I would not have even imagined it possible to make this study a reality. In addition to the countless hours you dedicate to your students, thank you also for wholeheartedly supporting and cheering on our lives outside of academia. I know that not everyone would have been so supportive of pursuing world travels while dissertating, and I am very grateful that you have been so understanding and encouraging throughout my time at UCLA. I would also like to thank members of my

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VITA

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Graduate Student Researcher September 2020 – June 2024
Asian American Families Study, University of California, Los Angeles

Conducted multi-modal, multi-site study to examine Asian American parents' approaches to racial-ethnic socialization with their 6- to 12-year-old children. Co-developed and administered parent survey, observation protocol, and parent and child interview protocols. Coordinated data collection across multiple sites and led data collection at UCLA site. Analyzed data using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

Independent Consultant August 2023 – June 2024
Caregiver Toolkit for Asian American Children, EmbraceRace

Translating research to create evidence-informed online resource to help parents and educators talk about race and racism with Asian American children (ages 0-8)

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SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Kimura, A. M., & Mistry, R. S. (2024). Racial-ethnic socialization among Asian American families with preadolescent children. *Cultural Diversity & Ethnic Minority Psychology*. Advanced online publication. https://doi.org/10.1037/cdp0000654

Mistry, R. S., Hazelbaker, T., Montoro, J. P., Yo, J., & Kimura A. M. (In press). Promoting and nurturing the healthy development of children of color: An ecological perspective on how and why race/ethnicity matter for child development. In M. H. Bornstein, & P. E. Shah (Eds.), *Handbook of pediatric psychology, developmental behavioral pediatrics, and developmental science*. American Psychological Association.

Kimura, A. M., Antón-Oldenburg, M., & Pinderhughes, E. E. (2022). Developing and teaching an anti-bias curriculum in a public elementary school: Leadership, K-1 teachers', and young children's experiences. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education, 36*(2), 183-202. https://doi.org/10.1080/02568543.2021.1912222

Mistry, R. S., Benner, A. D., & Kimura A. M. (2022). Child development and the COVID-19 pandemic. In P. K. Smith & C. H. Hart (Eds.), *The handbook of childhood social development* (3rd ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Kimura, A. M., Durazi, A., Lobo, F. M., Nguyen, S. T., Saavedra, J. A., Mistry, R. S., Lee, R. M., & Asian American Families Study Collaborative (2024, June 16-20). *'Balancing conversations about racism with stories of joy': Asian American parents' RS approaches*. [Paper presentation]. International Society for the Study of Behavioural Development Biennial Meeting, Lisbon, Portugal. (Accepted)

Kimura, A. M., Durazi, A., Lobo, F. M., Nguyen, S. T., Saavedra, J. A., Mistry, R. S., Lee, R. M., & Asian American Families Study Collaborative (2024, May 15-17). *Conversations about race and racism between Asian American parents and middle childhood aged children.* [Poster presentation]. SRCD Anti-Racist Developmental Science Summit: Transforming Research, Practices, and Policies, Panama City, Panama.

Kimura, A. M., & Mistry, R. S. (2023, March 23-25). *Parent correlates of racial-ethnic socialization with Asian American preadolescents.* [Paper presentation]. SRCD 2023 Biennial Meeting, Salt Lake City, UT, United States.

Kimura, A. M., & Mistry, R. S. (2022, May 2-4). *Examining parental racial-ethnic socialization processes among Asian American families with young children.* [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development Special Topic Meeting: Construction of the 'Other': Development, Consequences, and Applied Implications of Racism, Prejudice, and Discrimination, United States.

Kimura, A. M., & Pinderhughes, E. E. (2021, April 7-9). *Leadership, curriculum development, and teaching of anti-bias curriculum in a public K-5 school* [Poster presentation]. Society for Research in Child Development 2021 Biennial Meeting, Virtual, United States

General Introduction

During middle childhood and early adolescence (i.e., ages 6-12), Asian American children must learn how to navigate a multitude of racial narratives and experiences, which informs not only their developing sense of racial-ethnic identity (REI) but also informs their awareness of race and racial bias targeting themselves or others. While children learn about race and ethnicity in a variety of contexts (e.g., school, peers, media), research shows that parents play a critical role in helping children navigate race-related experiences (Ruck et al., 2021). The process by which parents relay messages about race, ethnicity, and culture to their children is referred in the literature as parental racial-ethnic socialization[1] (RES; Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2017). Among studies with Asian American families, RES has been shown to be promotive of positive child outcomes (e.g., self-esteem, REI) and protective against the negative effects of racism (Huguley et al., 2019; Gartner et al., 2014; Park et al., 2021).

The ways that Asian American parents approach RES are shaped by multiple factors, such as their generational status, ethnic group sociopolitical histories, and family migration patterns (Juang et al., 2018; Kiang et al., 2016). Importantly, Asian America is shaped by multiple waves of immigration and settlement, with the first large immigration movement in the 1800s by Chinese, Japanese, and Filipino Americans to traditionally "gateway" cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York (Kiang & Supple, 2016). In contrast, Southeast Asian refugees (e.g., Vietnamese, Hmong) were forced to disperse across the country during the mid- to late-1900s, and concentrations of these communities have emerged in pockets across the country (e.g., large Vietnamese American population in Southern California; large Hmong American

[1] While the broader literature commonly refers to this construct as "ethnic-racial socialization," in line with Juang et al. (2017), I have opted to use "racial-ethnic socialization," to emphasize the racial aspect, since studies with Asian American families have typically overemphasized ethnic socialization, with less attention to racial socialization.

population in the Twin Cities; Bankston III & Zhou, 2020; Liu et al., 2008; Yang, 2003). With the passage of the 1965 Immigration Act, there has been a rapid increase in immigration from many regions of Asia, including many from South Asian countries (e.g., India, Pakistan), with an increasing number of these immigrants settling in new immigrant destinations such as North Carolina and Georgia (Bhatia & Ram, 2018; Kiang & Supple, 2016). These immigration and settlement patterns matter in shaping the resources available to new immigrant families, the racial-ethnic diversity of nearby contexts (e.g., majority White, ethnic enclaves), and the ways that the legacy of racism within family histories can inform Asian Americans' perspectives of racism and how they choose to engage in RES with their children (Kiang et al., 2016).

While RES research on Asian American families has grown in recent years, fewer studies have focused on families with children (ages 6-12). Further, despite the diversity of Asian America and the rapidly growing multiracial population in the United States (Budiman & Ruiz, 2021; Jones et al., 2021; Kiang et al., 2016), fewer RES studies have included the experiences of Southeast and South Asian American families (Juang et al., 2017), and most RES studies have focused on monoracial children (Atkin & Yoo, 2019). Thus, this 2-study dissertation draws upon a diverse sample of Asian American families to examine (1) how parents engage in racial socialization, specifically conversations about race and racism, with their children, and (2) how children are making sense of their parents' RES efforts to inform their developing sense of REI and understanding of racial bias.

The dissertation draws on data from the Asian American Families Study, a multi-modal study that included a total of 477 Asian American parents of 6- to 12-year-old children, including 67 parent-child dyads. The two studies in this dissertation draw from the subset of 68 Asian American parents (M_{age} = 43.4 years, *SD* = 5.0, age range = 28-56) and 68 Asian American

children (M_{age} = 8.9 years, *SD* = 1.9) who completed semi-structured interviews during March to December of 2022. Families in this study come from a diverse range of ethnic groups (e.g., Indian, Filipino, Vietnamese), and the child sample was 43% multiracial (e.g., Asian-White American) and 24% multiethnic (e.g., Chinese-Vietnamese). Families resided in Southern California, as well as the Southwestern, Midwestern, and Eastern regions of the United States.

Study 1

Asian American parents play a key role in helping their children navigate their racialized experiences, to cope with the negative effects of racism, and to build a positive sense of REI—a process known as racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2017). While racial socialization falls under the broader construct of RES, less research has examined how Asian American parents engage in racial socialization, particularly with children (Juang et al., 2017), and with children who are multiracial (Atkin & Yoo, 2019). Thus, the first study aimed to explore how Asian American parents' beliefs and motivations informed their decisions on how to engage in conversations about race and racism with their children, with particular attention to variations depending on parents' generational status and family racial-ethnic make-up.

Study 2

Middle childhood and early adolescence are critical developmental periods when Asian American children are making sense of their REI (e.g., what it is and what it means to me), as well as learning about and contending with racial bias that may target them or others in their proximal contexts (Brown, 2017; Ruble et al., 2004; Williams et al., 2020). Parents play an important role in helping their children navigate these daily interactions and supporting their children's developmental processes. However, few studies have examined how different parental RES approaches may inform children's developing understanding of the REI and awareness of

racial bias, particularly with Asian American children (including those that are multiracial or multiethnic). Thus, guided by the Integrated Conceptual Framework for the Development of Asian American Children and Youth (J. Mistry et al., 2016), the second study aimed to examine (a) how Asian American children are developing a sense of REI and awareness of racial bias, (b) how Asian American parents are using RES to support these processes, and (c) whether children are incorporating their parents' RES efforts into their thinking as they make sense of their own REI and the concepts of race and racial bias.

Study 1

Engaging or Waiting: Variations in Asian American Parental Racial Socialization with Children During Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

Engaging or Waiting: Variations in Asian American Parental Racial Socialization with Children During Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

Racism is endemic within the United States (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020), and poses detrimental consequences for the healthy development of children, including Asian American children (Cheah et al., 2021; Choi et al., 2020; Juang & Kiang, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic spurred an upsurge in overt anti-Asian racism (Gee et al., 2022), and while the public health threat of the virus is subsiding, racism against Asian Americans remains. Amidst this context, Asian American parents have played a key role in helping their children navigate their racialized experiences, to cope with the negative effects of racism, and to build a positive sense of racial-ethnic identity (REI)—a process known as racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2017). Racial socialization falls within the broader construct of racial-ethnic socialization (RES), which encapsulates the process of transmitting messages about race, ethnicity, and culture to children (Hughes et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020), and is distinct from ethnic or cultural socialization, which describes how parents pass on their cultural heritage (e.g., customs, values, language, history) to their children (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2017).

Historically, RES research with Asian American families has focused more on ethnic, rather than racial socialization (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2017). In a seminal review conducted by Hughes and colleagues (2006), the authors noted that the initial focus on ethnic socialization among Asian American families was likely because the studies examined the experiences of immigrant-origin families and stemmed from an interest to better understand how Asian American immigrant parents were navigating acculturation with their children (i.e., balancing assimilation into mainstream culture while simultaneously passing on their cultural heritage to their children; Kim et al., 2009). In fact, when the review was published in 2006, the

term 'racial socialization,' had been used almost exclusively in studies with African American families (Hughes et al., 2006). However, the over-emphasis on ethnic socialization has eclipsed the reality that Asian American families have contended with a long history of racism and exclusion in the United States (Juang et al., 2017). While research on racial socialization among Asian American families has grown in recent years – particularly in response to the rise in anti-Asian hate due to the COVID-19 pandemic – less is known about the underlying beliefs and motivations that guide parents' decisions on engaging in racial socialization with their children. I focus on the middle childhood and early adolescent period (ages 6-12) as a critical time when children are learning about and making sense of their REI and when children are likely to interact with different racial-ethnic groups in their proximal contexts (e.g., school, neighborhood; Rogers et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2020).

Further, few studies have examined parental racial socialization among South and Southeast Asian American families, multiethnic[2] families, and multiracial[3] families with Asian heritages (Atkin & Yoo, 2019; Juang et al., 2017). Given the diversity of cultures, histories, and experiences within Asian America, it is important to expand our understanding of the racial socialization process to include a wider range of ethnic groups, and to include multiethnic families (Kiang et al., 2016). As the multiracial population continues to rapidly grow in the United States (Jones et al., 2021), it is important to examine how Asian American parents are engaging in RES with their multiracial children, such as helping them deal with or prepare for monoracism (i.e., systems and beliefs in the United States that define racial groups as single

[2] Multiethnic is defined as having biological parents that are from two or more ethnic groups (e.g., Chinese and Vietnamese; Atkin et al., 2022). While multiracial families are inherently multiethnic, members from a multiethnic family can identify with the same racial group. For this paper, multiethnic will be used to describe a family or person that comes from two or more ethnic groups and is monoracial.

[3] Multiracial is defined as having biological parents that are from two or more racial groups (e.g., Asian and White; Atkin et al., 2022).

categories; Harris, 2016). Thus, the current study draws on a diverse sample of Asian American parents and uses a qualitative approach to explore the ways that Asian American parents approach racial socialization with their 6- to 12-year-old children.

Parental Racial Socialization within Asian American Families

Despite the diverse array of ethnic and cultural groups that makes up Asian America, within the U.S. context, 'Asians' are treated as a racial group and Asian American parents and children must contend with the consequences of being treated as 'Asian' by others (U.S. Census Bureau, 2022). These racialized experiences are often shaped by racial narratives such as the model minority myth, the perpetual foreigner stereotype, and the yellow peril narrative. The model minority myth misrepresents Asian Americans as a monolith, apolitical, and to benefit from uninhibited upward mobility (Wong & Halgin, 2006; Yoo et al., 2010). The myth also effectively pits Asian Americans against Black, Latinx, Indigenous, and working-class White communities because the perceived "success" of Asian Americans is compared to the perceived "failure" of other groups, ultimately serving to maintain the advantage of Whites and uphold white supremacy (Museus & Iftikar, 2013; Wu, 2015; Lee, 2015). On the other hand, the perpetual foreigner stereotype portrays all Asian Americans, regardless of generational status, as foreigners to the United States (Tuan, 1998; Zou & Cheryan, 2017), and more recently, the yellow peril narrative, which depicts Asian Americans as 'evil,' 'dirty,' and 'diseased,' reemerged as Chinese and Asian Americans broadly were scapegoated for the COVID-19 pandemic (Chen et al., 2020; Yellow Horse & Chen, 2022). In this way, the combination of these racial narratives underlies the everyday racial microaggressions (i.e., brief, subtle everyday slights and insults targeting minoritized groups, resulting in potential negative psychological effects; Sue et al.,

2007a) and discrimination that Asian Americans experience (Juang & Kiang, 2019; Sue et al., 2007b), and shapes the ways that parents approach racial socialization with their children.

Asian American parents help their children navigate their racialized experiences and understand racism within the U.S. context through a multitude of approaches. Some parents may choose to avoid talking about or to minimize race and racism with their children and rely on an egalitarian framing that de-emphasizes racial differences (Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2016). Other parents may choose to explicitly educate their children about race by, for example, talking about stereotypes, preparing them for future experiences of racial bias and helping them cope with and respond to experiences of racial discrimination (i.e., preparation for bias; Hughes et al., 2006; Juang et al., 2016; Juang et al., 2018). Parents may also teach their children about racism more generally in the United States and talk about other racial-ethnic groups, by for instance, telling children to avoid or be distrustful of other racial-ethnic groups (i.e., promotion of mistrust) or encouraging children to appreciate and celebrate racial diversity (i.e., cultural pluralism; Juang et al., 2016). Other parents may try to teach their children how to work in solidarity with other racial-ethnic groups to collectively work to combat racism, an approach known as collective racial socialization (Lei et al., 2022). However, with only a few studies that have examined racial socialization among Asian American families with 6- to 12-year-old children, I aim to focus the investigation on ways that parents approach explicit conversations about race and racism with their children.

Factors that Shape Asian American Parental Racial Socialization

Asian American parents' racial socialization approaches may be informed by past experiences with racial discrimination, their family's everyday contexts, perceptions of their children's developmental readiness to engage in conversations about race and racism, and their

family's racial-ethnic make-up (i.e., monoracial, multiracial). Evidence demonstrates that Asian American parents who experience racial discrimination firsthand, or those that recognize that their children may experience racism are more likely to prepare their children for future racial bias (Benner & Kim, 2009; Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014). For example, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, Chinese American parents shared that they talked about anti-Asian racism with their 5- to 11-year-old children because they believed their children may experience racial discrimination at school (Wang et al., 2022).

The family's everyday contexts, such as the racial diversity of neighborhoods and schools, can also change Asian American children's exposure to other racial-ethnic groups and the way they may experience racial discrimination or microaggressions (i.e., children may be less likely to experience overt racism in a setting with many Asian American peers versus a setting with few Asian American peers). Consequently, the racial-ethnic composition of children's neighborhood and school contexts may raise or lower the sense of urgency that parents may feel in needing to talk about racism with their children (Juang et al., 2018; Wu et al., 2020). Lastly, when deciding how to engage in racial socialization, parents may also consider their children's developmental readiness (Ren et al., 2022). For example, parents with elementary school children may minimize race or emphasize egalitarian messages because they feel unsure about how to talk about racism with their children in a developmentally appropriate way (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022). However, with few studies that have focused specifically on racial socialization among Asian American families, this paper aims to further explore the many ways that parents are approaching these conversations about race and racism with their children.

Parental generational status may also inform how Asian American parents navigate racial socialization. For example, without prior exposure to U.S.-based racial narratives in their home

countries, first generation parents may have trouble identifying racial discrimination and prefer not to talk about racism with their children for fear of generating unnecessary fear or anxiety in their children (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2022; Young et al., 2021). However, when experiences of racial discrimination are clear, first generation parents may reactively engage in preparation for bias with their children as they recognize the need for their own children to know how to respond to racism (Benner & Kim, 2009; Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014; Kimura & Mistry, 2024). On the other hand, parents who grew up in the United States (e.g., 1.5+ generation parents) may be more familiar with the American racial context and may interpret racial narratives differently than their immigrant counterparts. For example, microaggressions that stem from the perpetual foreigner stereotype (e.g., being asked "where are you from?") may be particularly upsetting for U.S.-born parents because such comments assume they are a foreigner in their own homeland, whereas a first generation parent may interpret these comments as benign curiosity. Some second generation parents may feel more empowered to stand up to racism, compared to their own immigrant parents (Juang et al., 2018; Zhou et al., 2021). However, most studies examining racial socialization among Asian American families with children have been conducted with first generation parents. Among the few studies (i.e., Juang et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2020; Zhou et al., 2021) that have included second+ generation parents, most included majority East Asian and monoethnic families. Thus, by drawing on a sample that includes a wider range of ethnic groups (e.g., Southeast and South Asian) and multiethnic families, the present study aims to further illuminate the variability and nuances in Asian American parents' beliefs, motivations, and experiences that inform their racial socialization practices with their children.

Multiracial Families

To date, most studies examining parental racial socialization among Asian American families have been conducted with monoracial families (Juang et al., 2017). However, as the multiracial population with Asian heritage grows (Alba et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2021), it is imperative to also examine how parents of multiracial children are engaging in racial socialization (Atkin & Yoo, 2019). Racial socialization can manifest differently for multiracial families because often the parents and children do not share the same racial identities (e.g., one parent is Asian American and another parent is White, while the child is multiracial Asian and White American). Consequently, parents may not be able to directly relate to their multiracial children's racialized experiences and may face additional barriers to supporting their children as they contend with racism and make sense of their REI (Atkin & Yoo, 2019; Csizmadia & Atkin, 2022).

Multiracial children can be subjected to many forms of microaggressions that are shaped by monoracism, a paradigm in which race in the U.S. context is defined through monoracial categories and systematically excludes multiracial individuals (Harris, 2016; Johnston & Nadal, 2010). Multiracial children may feel excluded or isolated from members of their racial-ethnic groups (e.g., not feeling "enough," having their group membership questioned or misidentified), be exoticized or objectified by others as embodying an "ideal" racial future, and have their racialized experiences minimized by family members (Chang, 2016; Jones & Rogers, 2022; Johnston & Nadal, 2010; Nadal et al., 2013). The physical appearance or phenotype of multiracial children also matters as they explore their REI and because parents may change their racial socialization approaches with their children depending on their phenotype (Chang, 2016; Atkin & Yoo, 2019; Gonzales-Backen, 2013; Nadal et al., 2013; Wu et al., 2020). For example, a study with a sample of adopted Korean American parents raising Asian-White American

multiracial children (ages 3-18) found that parents with children who were phenotypically Asian were more likely to engage in proactive racial socialization because they believed their children could experience anti-Asian discrimination (Wu et al., 2020). On the other hand, parents with children who were phenotypically White were more likely to focus on talking about racial discrimination that others may experience, rather than talking about discrimination that their own children might face (Wu et al., 2020). Thus, while there is some evidence showing how parents are tailoring their racial socialization approaches to their multiracial children's experiences, this study aims to further explore how Asian American parents are helping their multiracial children navigate their racialized experiences.

Current Study

Drawing from a diverse sample of Asian American families, the current study aimed to examine how Asian American parents engaged in racial socialization with their 6- to 12-year-old children. The study was guided by the following research questions: In what ways do Asian Americans parents engage in conversations about race and racism with their 6- to 12-year-old children? What beliefs and motivations inform parents' decisions on how to engage in conversation about race and racism with their children?

Methods

Researcher Positionality

My motivation to pursue this study is grounded in my desire to help children grapple with their lived experiences by providing them with the framework, language, and tools to understand their experiences and even resist injustices in empowered ways. The idea for the Asian American Families Study emerged in response to the rise in overt anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic, and I hoped that the study could better inform how we can help Asian American

families engage in conversations about race and racism with their children in ways that supported their children's positive development.

When considering Asian American parental RES, I reflect upon how my parents engaged in RES with me. As a child, I recall indirect messaging from my first generation Japanese mother to enjoy and stay grounded in Japanese culture and values, and direct REI messaging from my third generation Japanese American father who told me to have pride in my identity and family history as survivors of forced incarceration during World War II. I also think about interactions I have had with young Asian American children and watching them navigate their own identities within the same racial narratives that I once grew up in. I recognize that untying my personal experiences from this research is impossible. As an East Asian American woman from a middle-class background who is cis-gendered, heterosexual, and without a disability, I understand that I have the privilege to have many of my social identities often included within the discourse about Asian Americans. Further, as a monoracial person working with multiracial families and children, I recognize myself as an out-group member. I am conscious that these privileges and my own lived experiences shaped how I interpreted the study findings. In recognition of the value of having multiple perspectives and lived experiences, I co-developed the study with the Principal Investigator, Dr. Rashmita Mistry, who identifies as first generation South Asian (Indian) American, and we conducted different components of the study with a large and diverse group of mostly Asian American scholars (see Procedures below for more detail). The study team's diverse perspectives have strengthened the study at every stage.

Data Source

Data came from a larger multi-modal study that included 69 Asian American families with children (ages 6-12) who were asked to complete parent surveys, parent-child observations,

parent interviews, and child interviews. For the current study, I examined the parent and child interviews. As a multi-site investigation, the primary investigator for the study is Dr. Mistry at UCLA, and co-investigators include Dr. Richard Lee at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Gabriela Livas Stein at the University of Texas at Austin, and Dr. Hyung Chol (Brandon) Yoo at Arizona State University. IRB approval was obtained at each study site. Eligible parents had to identify as Asian or Asian American, have at least one Asian or Asian American child between the ages of 6 and 12, and reside in the United States. Families were recruited from Southern California (SoCal); the Southwest (SW), which included families from the greater Phoenix area and Colorado; the Midwest (MW), which included families from the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area, Ohio, and Indiana; and the East (East), which included families from North Carolina, Maryland, and New Jersey. Specifically, I was involved in the initial conceptualization of the study, coordinated data collection across the four sites, trained research assistants, administered interview sessions, and collaboratively led the subsequent analysis process.

Participants

The final sample included 68 Asian American parents (M_{age} = 43.4 years, SD = 5.0, age range = 28-56) and 68 Asian American children (M_{age} = 8.9 years, SD = 1.9)[4]. Parents were majority monoracial and came from a diverse array of ethnic backgrounds. About three-quarters were mothers, and a quarter were fathers. About a third of parents were first generation, and over half were either second generation or 1.5 generation (i.e., foreign-born and moved to the United States before the age of 12; Rumbaut, 2004; Yoshikawa et al., 2016). A few parents were fourth generation. The majority of parents had a four-year degree or higher and the median household income was between $100,000 - $150,000 (see Table 7 for additional parent demographic

[4] One family only completed a parent interview, but no child interview, and another family completed a child interview, but no parent interview.

information). Children were mostly multiracial or multiethnic. While the ethnic backgrounds of the children largely mirrored the parents' ethnicities, among the multiracial sub-sample, the majority of children were Asian-White American. About two-thirds of the children were girls and a third were boys. One child was non-binary. All children were either born in the United States or moved to the United States as an infant. Lastly, 33 families resided in Southern California, 10 families resided in the Southwest, 17 families resided in the Midwest, and eight families resided in the East.

Procedure

Participants were recruited initially through social media, email listservs, community events, and the professional networks of the study team members. Additional participants were recruited using snowball sampling methods. Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to learn about Asian American parents' experiences and how they support their children's developing sense of self through cultural practices and conversations about their racial-ethnic heritage and about racism. Only one parent and child per family were recruited for the study. If multiple children were eligible within a single family, I prioritized including specific underrepresented demographics (e.g., boys, children ages 6-9) to help balance the demographics of the sample. The study was fielded between March and December of 2022. To better capture the experiences of families currently underrepresented in the literature (i.e., Southeast Asian, South Asian), some sites prioritized recruitment of particular ethnic groups prominent in the location. For example, the SoCal site prioritized recruitment of Filipino and Vietnamese American families whereas the site in the East prioritized recruitment of South Asian (e.g., Indian, Sri Lankan) families.

After confirming eligibility via an online screener, and attaining informed consent electronically, participants completed: (1) a 20-minute online parent survey; (2) a 15- to 25-minute observation where the parent and child were asked to watch and discuss a child-friendly video that explained the concept of racism in a way that was reflective of the racialized experiences of Asian Americans; (3) a 30- to 45-minute, parent interview, and (4) a 15- to 30-minute child interview. The video discussion activity and interviews were all completed in English, conducted on Zoom, and video- and audio-recorded, based on parents' preference. The parent had the option of completing all three components (i.e., observation, parent interview, child interview) in a single session, or across two scheduled sessions. Parents were compensated with a $45 Amazon gift card for participating in all components of the study, and children received a children's book of their choice ($15 value).

During the parent interview, parents were asked a series of questions on how they engaged in RES, including how they passed on their cultural heritage to their children (e.g., "What are some ways that you try to pass on your cultural and ethnic heritage to your children?") and past approaches to racial socialization (e.g., "Have you had conversations together about race and racism before?"). We also asked parents about their race-related beliefs and experiences in the United States and how they influenced their RES practices with their children (e.g., "How do you think your experiences might influence the way you have these conversations with your children about their ethnic heritage or about race and racism?"). See Appendix A for the parent interview questions.

Interviews were conducted by a diverse team of 15 trained graduate and undergraduate research assistants with most identifying as Asian or Asian American: three identified as Indian American, three Chinese American, two Filipino/a American, two Vietnamese American, one

Burmese American, one Japanese American, one Korean American, one Singaporean and Filipino American, and one Indian and White American. One interviewer identified as Latina, African American and White, and conducted all interviews with a secondary interviewer who identified as Asian American. Of the interviewers, 13 identified as cis-gender women, one identified as a cis-gender man, and one identified as non-binary. All interviewers were trained on how to conduct the observations and interviews, completed practice sessions and observed past data collection sessions prior to completing their own.

Coding and Analysis Process

The parent interviews were transcribed verbatim by a team of graduate researchers and undergraduate research assistants. While the interviews were conducted in English, some family's spoke in their heritage language. When possible, excerpts in the family's heritage language were transcribed in the original language and translated to English by a transcriber who was familiar with the language (i.e., Mandarin, Cantonese, Hindi, Korean, Japanese, Tagalog, Vietnamese). The transcripts were checked for accuracy by another undergraduate research assistant or a supervising graduate researcher.

Parent Interviews

A diverse team of Asian American scholars analyzed the parent interview data, following the thematic analysis process outlined by Braun & Clark (2006). First, I familiarized myself with the data by conducting interviews, taking notes during meetings in which the team of interviewers discussed their reflections, transcribing interviews, checking interview transcripts, and reading through 20% of the parent interview transcripts from the SoCal site, since the SoCal site finished data collection before the other study sites (Braun & Clark, 2006). This process

informed the development of a coding scheme using both inductive and deductive code development approaches (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Next, a larger diverse team of seven Asian American researchers (ethnicities represented: Japanese, Korean, Indian, Indian-Iranian, Vietnamese), including the principal investigator at the SoCal site, graduate and undergraduate students, and post-bac and post-doc scholars met weekly to read and discuss reactions and reflections on a subset of transcripts. The purpose of these discussions was to gain a range of in-group and out-group perspectives and interpretations of participants' voices, given the diverse views and experiences that were represented in the team (Armstrong et al., 1997). The transcripts were randomly selected for group discussion, but were balanced by children's age, gender, racial-ethnic make-up, and parent gender to ensure a diverse array of participant voices were examined. After discussing about 10% of the transcripts, I used the detailed discussion notes to revise the initial coding scheme, and then a subgroup of the research team collaborated to further refine the codebook. Although the initial code development was completed with just the SoCal transcripts, I anticipated that the codebook would require some revisions once the codes were applied to the transcripts from the other sites. I then imported all codes and corresponding definitions to the qualitative analysis software, Dedoose.

Coding was completed by a diverse team of coders that consisted of four graduate students (ethnicities: Filipina, Japanese, Indian-Iranian, Vietnamese[5]) and one Indian American post-doctoral scholar. Each transcript from the SoCal site was double-coded in Dedoose. Once coding was complete for all transcripts, the coding team discussed a higher-order reorganization

[5] Approximately midway through the coding process, the Vietnamese American graduate student left the team and another graduate student who was Filipina American joined. The new coder had supervised data collection and conducted interviews with families residing in the Southwest and was already familiar with the study. I onboarded the new coder and reviewed her code applications to ensure she was applying the codes in similar ways with the other coders.

of the codes to identify broader categories and potential themes within the data (Braun & Clark, 2006; Saldaña, 2022). This process led to a restructuring of the codebook, including merging, splitting, and adding new codes. Dr. Mistry and Dr. Lee also provided feedback, which aided in further clarifying elements of the codebook. After the codebook revisions were complete, the transcripts from the SoCal site were recoded using the same double-coding method.

Next, the coding team coded the remaining transcripts from the other three data collection sites. While applying the codes to the new transcripts, several additional inductive codes were added to reflect the new perspectives that were emerging in the transcripts. Many of the codes that were added were related to different RES approaches, experiences, and views shared by first generation parents, who were less represented in the sub-sample from the SoCal site. Once all new codes were added to the codebook, I re-read all transcripts from the SoCal site and added the new codes when present in the data. To determine the themes presented in this paper, in consultation with the coding team and Dr. Mistry, I identified patterns within parents approaches to explicit conversations about race and racism with their children.

Results

While Asian American parents communicated many types of racial socialization messages (e.g., promoting equality, teaching empathy, instilling racial-ethnic pride, encouraging multicultural awareness, appreciating racial diversity), for this paper, I focus on examining the ways that parents engaged in direct conversations about race and racism, and parents' motivations that informed whether they engaged in or preferred to wait to have conversation about race and racism with their 6- to 12-year-old children. First, I delve into practices and motivations among parents who engaged in direct conversations about race and racism with their children. Second, I describe patterns in practices and motivations among parents who preferred

to avoid discussing or to minimize race and racism with their children. I end by describing how parental generational status and family racial-ethnic make-up (i.e., monoracial, multiracial) may have informed parents' motivations and decisions on how to engage in conversations about race and racism with their children. Of note, although a large proportion of the families in the sample were multiethnic, no unique themes emerged among this sub-sample, so the comparison by family racial-ethnic make-up is of monoracial (combining monoethnic and multiethnic families) vs. multiracial families. Further, while all themes emerged across the four study sites, more parents from the SoCal and MW sites discussed engaging in conversations about race and racism with their children, and more parents from the SW and East sites mentioned that they were waiting to discuss race and racism with their children. With smaller sub-samples at the SW and East sites, it was difficult to discern the source of the site differences, but the patterns may be related to geographic factors, differences in sample make-up, and a consequence of different recruitment approaches.

Engaging in Conversations About Race and Racism

About two-thirds of parents mentioned engaging in explicit conversations about race and racism with their children. Parents who engaged in direct conversations about race and racism talked with their children about interpersonal racism, current events (e.g., Black Lives Matter, anti-Asian attacks), and historical racism. The focus of these conversations was often split between a focus on (a) children's racialized experiences and preparing children for racial bias and (b) racism that other Asian Americans and racial-ethnic groups experience and how to engage in collective actions to stand up against racism. Importantly, these foci were not mutually exclusive. While some parents primarily focused on their children's racialized experiences, other parents balanced talking about both their children's and others' racialized experiences.

Preparation for Bias

Parents were motivated to engage in preparation for bias so that their children would know how to recognize, respond to, and cope with racial bias and discrimination. Some parents mentioned how they tried to counteract negative messages with messages that boosted their children's self-confidence. For example, Nimali, a first generation Sri Lankan American mother of Dayani, a 10-year-old Sri Lankan American girl (*SW*) shared, my children's "skin color is the most prevailing thing that strikes them as being different. We've talked about how that's nothing to be worried about. That's just the way that our skin looks, and to be comfortable with the way they look." Other parents mentioned how they validated their children's experiences and feelings and helped them cope with racism. For instance, Ingrid, a first generation Taiwanese American mother of Elise, an 11-year-old Taiwanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), shared how she wanted to make sure Elise could "recognize that, hey, if you feel you're being treated differently, it's okay to feel that way. It's not something that you did wrong. Try to recognize [racism] to learn how to deal with that." Ingrid believed it was important to validate Elise's experiences and reaction as a first step towards helping her deal with the hurtful experiences. Dolores, a second generation Chinese-Filipina American mother of Reyna, a 7-year-old Chinese-Filipina-White American girl (*SoCal*), shared a similar sentiment of wanting to "make sure that the child is first soothed in terms of their big feelings because [it's] very traumatic. Letting them know that things aren't their fault and that they don't deserve that kind of treatment, and that they're amazing."

For some parents, the emphasis on helping children cope with and process their feelings was motivated by a desire to prevent their children from internalizing harmful narratives. For instance, Grace, a second generation Chinese-Vietnamese American mother of Xavier, a 7-year-old Chinese-Vietnamese American boy (*SoCal*), shared the following:

> From my experience, a lot of these things end up affecting [your] self-esteem and how you still perceive those events later. For Xavier, I wouldn't want that to be something he continues to carry with him. But I want him to digest it, so we figure out what the issue is. It's not us. It was whatever that person was saying. And then we move on from it so that we don't keep revisiting it.

Across the messages shared by Ingrid, Dolores, and Grace, it was clear that several parents helped their children process their experiences of racism by de-personalizing the hurtful experience (e.g., "It's not us.") and validating their many feelings. As a part of the preparation for bias process, parents also discussed possible responses with their children so they could draw on these strategies in the future. Amelia, a second generation Chinese-Indonesian-White American mother of Himari, an 11-year-old Chinese-Indonesian-White American girl (*MW*) shared the following approach:

> I like to let [my children] share and just listen, like non-judgmental listening, and then gently prod them to share their feelings about it, and gently guide them to some sort of processing… Sometimes it involves an action step like, "If this were to happen again, how would you handle it? What can you do to support your friend?" I try to guide the conversation [so they] feel more confident and arm them with coping mechanisms.

As exemplified by Amelia's approach, some parents scaffolded conversations using questions to help their children brainstorm strategies that they could use in the future, should they or another person they know experience racism. Like Amelia who wanted her children to have coping mechanisms, Ann, a 1.5 generation Korean American mother of Leia, a 10-year-old Korean-Nepalese American girl (*MW*), shared an anecdote from when she engaged in

preparation for bias when Leia was told by her peers that she could not sit at the back of the school bus. Ann shared the following to Leia:

> Those kids don't own the back of the bus. You can sit wherever you want. You need to tell them that. I don't ever want [my children] to feel like they can't do what they want because they're afraid of how someone's going to respond to them. And I want them to always know that they should stand up for themselves…not to hide or appease other people just to make them happy. I don't think that's healthy.

Parents like Ann wanted to empower their children to stand up for themselves because they believed the alternative of appeasing others would be detrimental to their children's well-being. Thus, in response to their children's experiences with racial bias and discrimination, many Asian American parents mentioned engaging in preparation for bias by helping their children process their feelings and experiences and discussing ways to respond in the future.

Proactive Racial Socialization

Some parents mentioned that they were engaging in proactive conversations about race and racism because, even though their children had yet to experience racial discrimination or bias, parents believed their children should be aware of racism and be prepared for when they would inevitably experience racism. For example, Matthew, a first generation Chinese-Malaysian American father of Evelyn, an 8-year-old Chinese-Malaysian American girl (*SW*), shared that "when she was younger, we told Evelyn that [racism] might happen to her in school. [We] talked to her before so she's prepared. She's different and different is good. [She] should be proud of why she's different." Another father, Ryan, who was a second generation Filipino American of Caleb, a 7-year-old Filipino-White American boy (*East*), shared that while Caleb had yet to experience racism firsthand, he would use big events as an opportunity to talk about

racism with Caleb. Ryan shared: “We just had a Juneteenth celebration and got to explain to him the history of slavery and emancipation and stuff like that.”

Some 1.5 and second generation parents reflected on their own childhood experiences that lacked direct conversations about race and racism, and were motivated to learn from their own experiences to better prepare their own children. Jane, a Chinese-Filipina American mother of Chloe, a 7-year-old Chinese-Filipina-Japanese American girl (*SoCal*), shared the motivations behind her proactive conversations:

> There's that children's book, *Eyes That Kiss in the Corners*, that prompted me to talk about celebrating the shape of Chloe’s eyes and that [other people] have no reason to make fun of your eyes. I feel like it's important to preempt it because, when I was a kid, people would say stuff to me, [and] I just froze and had no idea what they were talking about. So, I feel like if you're primed with a little bit of knowledge, or what to say, that might help in that moment, or help you understand it better.

As exemplified by Jane, parents often used children’ books as a tool to guide their proactive conversations about race and racism (e.g., historical racism, foster racial-ethnic pride, expose children to and build appreciation for racial-ethnic diversity) in age-appropriate ways. Other parents referenced examples of anti-Asian racism in the news to proactively talk about racism with their children. For example, Winona, a 1.5 generation Chinese American mother of Austin, a 6-year-old Chinese American boy (*SoCal*), mentioned a time when she talked about the violent racist attacks targeting Asian American elders during the COVID-19 pandemic:

> There was an old lady in Chinatown in San Francisco that was unfortunately physically hit, and Austin was like, “Why would someone just randomly hit an old lady?” And I said, unfortunately, there's people out there that immediately judge. They thought, since

> COVID came from China and it's easy to say that [this lady's] related to China, they assume that she's [to] blame for why COVID is here. So they just want to put the hate somewhere on somebody and the first Chinese person they saw that was easy [to] target was this old lady.

Winona used the anti-Asian attack as an example to explain to Austin why people can be racist towards others, and she was motivated to do so because she believed, "We will continue to face [racism]. I'm afraid it won't go away…I have to warn my kids." The anti-Asian attacks during the COVID-19 pandemic were often a topic of conversation for the families as parents tried to explain the violent anti-Asian attacks and the scapegoating of Chinese and Asian Americans to their children.

Parents who engaged in proactive conversations often did so in small increments, so as not to overwhelm their children, but rather build their awareness over time. For example, Robert, who was a second generation Filipino-White American father of Erica, a 10-year-old Filipina-Latina-White American girl (*MW*), shared the following approach that he takes with his wife:

> [Our] approach is just like planting some seeds now, so [our children] get a better understanding of what racism is. How it can affect them, how it can affect others. And then figure out what they can eventually do about it as they become young adults… Have the tools to be equipped to do something about it, make things better for yourself [and] for the people who are directly around you.

In this way, parents like Robert viewed their proactive conversations about race and racism as foundational for their children's development and an important way to provide their children with tools to combat racism in the future. However, parents were also cognizant of their children's age and approached the conversations so that their children were not stuck feeling like

the world was only hopeless or terrible. Lily, a second generation Taiwanese American mother of Adelyn, an 8-year-old Taiwanese-Latina American girl (*SoCal*), explained that she wanted Adelyn to know that, "Yes, there are bad things that happen in the world, but then also, here are some constructive things that are happening and things that we can do to help things get better." Thus, for many parents who engaged in proactive conversations about race and racism, these conversations were incremental and were often responsive to their children's developmental age to ensure children learned a sense of agency and retained a positive outlook in the face of racism.

Standing Against Racism: Individual and Collective Action

For some Asian American families, conversations about race and racism included examples of collective racial socialization, in which parents were educating children about other racial-ethnic groups' racialized experiences and helping them find ways to safely engage in individual and collective actions to combat racism. Several parents emphasized that they wanted their children to learn to stand up for others who experience racial discrimination. For example, Mai, a 1.5 generation Vietnamese American mother of Ishaan, an 11-year-old Indian-Vietnamese American boy (*SoCal*) explained that she wants Ishaan to know that racism exists, and that "there are certain things you can't change, but [there are] things that Ishaan can change… And [we talk about] him being an advocate, an ally—to speak up. So that when he grows up, he's thinking critically about things." Beyond encouraging Ishaan to be an ally for others, Mai's hope that Ishaan would grow up to think critically illustrates how these conversations can be used as a base for the development of critical consciousness among Asian American children as they grow older.

In addition to general messages to encourage children to stand up for others, parents explicitly mentioned discussing racism targeting the Black community, often in response to the

2020 Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests. Parents took varied approaches, with some taking the opportunity to primarily educate their children. For example, Juliette, a second generation Indian American mother of Shivani, a 6-year-old Indian American girl (*MW*), shared that she had talked "a little bit about Black Lives Matter. Not explicitly about the specific people and the police killings, but we talked about how they're not treated fairly or kindly, and that sometimes they want to hurt people who are different." Other parents used the BLM protests as an opportunity to explain the importance of being in solidarity with the Black community. George, a first generation Japanese American father of Dawn, an adopted 6-year-old Cambodian American girl (*SoCal*), mentioned how he explained the BLM protests and why it was important to support the Black community to Dawn:

> I explained the reason why [the Black] community is so angry and why we have to support them. Like, when you see someone being bullied, and you're watching, you're a perpetrator [because] you're taking the side of a bully. So that's why people get on the street and [are] taking the side of what we think is right.

Similar to George, another parent, Thao, who was a 1.5 generation Vietnamese American mother with a 9-year-old Vietnamese-Latina-White American girl, Ava (*SoCal*), shared how she explained the importance of attending the BLM protests, and how she explained the protests to Ava, who had a speech disability:

> Ava doesn't know the term Black Lives Matter because of the level of her language development. If she's inundated with all these words or slogans, it gets confusing for her. So, we would say we're going to this protest because some Black people were hurt or killed by the police and other people, because they were Black. So, she understands that…We made signs, and for Ava it was more about the people, so we had names like

> Breonna, George, Ahmad. Also, for her, you build that empathy [and] compassion when you connect with an individual.

Thao and George's responses illustrate how parents were tailoring their language to be developmentally appropriate and responsive to their children's needs as they explained the BLM protests and the importance of being in solidarity with the Black community. Thus, for some Asian American parents, conversations about race and racism entailed talking not only about racism that their children could experience, but also included messages about racism that other racial-ethnic groups – particularly the Black community – can experience, and how their children can stand up for others through individual and collective actions.

In addition to the BLM protests, some parents were also involved in the Stop Asian Hate protests that were organized in response to the rise in overt anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents used these protests to teach their children about collective action to fight anti-Asian racism. For example, Madeline, a Taiwanese American mother of Seth, a 9-year-old Taiwanese American boy (*SoCal*), was actively involved in organizing a Stop Asian Hate youth protest in her community. Madeline shared the following message she hoped to communicate to Seth and his younger sister:

> My main message to Seth is: We can be quiet, or we can speak up. I said a welcome [at the protest], and I had Seth and my daughter stand with me. And in the speech, I said I don't really like public speaking, but I want to show that it's important that we have a voice, and that we do try to – even if it's scary, even if it's hard – to be able to stand up for ourselves.

While most parents did not take such an active role in organizing a Stop Asian Hate protest, several parents echoed Madeline's sentiments of wanting their children to know that it

was possible and important to stand against anti-Asian racism. Additionally, like Madeline, some parents used modeling as a strategy to demonstrate to their children how to engage in collective and individual actions to stand up for themselves. In this way, parents engaged in multiple collective racial socialization practices, including educating about racism targeting other racial-ethnic groups, encouraging children to stand up for others as allies, participating in protests, and modeling ways to combat racism to teach children how they can safely stand up against racism.

Waiting to Discuss Race and Racism

About a third of parents shared that they were primarily waiting to talk about race and racism with their children. These parents preferred to wait because they wanted to protect or shield their children from having to know about racism, particularly at their age, or because they believed minimizing race and racism would better support their children's well-being.

Wanting to Protect or Shield

Some parents preferred to mostly avoid conversations about race and racism because they wanted to protect or shield their children and often believed that their children were too young or not developmentally ready to talk about racism. Most of these parents had children between the ages of 6 and 9, although a few families had children who were between the ages of 10 and 12. For example, Ramona, a first generation Chinese America mother of Alice, a 9-year-old Chinese American girl (*MW*), rarely talked about racism with Alice, explaining:

> I'm looking for the right time. I was reading some research about child development, [and] probably by 10 years or so kids start to form their cultural identity…I don't want to introduce this topic too early because if kids do not realize they [have] different skin colors, I don't want to [make] my kids too sensitive or too vulnerable.

While there is research that demonstrates that children start developing their racial-ethnic and cultural identity from an earlier age than 10 (Williams et al., 2020), with a proliferation of child development information, it is possible that many parents, like Ramona, rely on misleading evidence to make decisions on when to discuss race and racism with their children. Ramona's sentiments mirrored other parents' decisions to avoid discussing race and racism with their children to protect or shield them from the negativity of racism. For example, Gabrielle, a second generation Filipina American mother of Joshua, a 7-year-old Filipino-Latino American boy (*SW*) shared that she had not discussed racism with Joshua until they had participated in the study together. Part of her decision to avoid talking about racism with Joshua was due to an internal tension between wanting to prepare Joshua for future experiences of racism, while also wanting to shield him at his age. Gabrielle shared the following:

> It's pretty difficult [to talk about race and racism]. You want to shield them from all the difficult things that are in the world… But of course, eventually, he's going to have those conversations and it needs to be said. I'd rather [he] be prepared for what the world has in store for him, but I would like to protect him as much as possible, like any parent.

Importantly, while Gabrielle preferred to shield Joshua, she also mentioned that she was prepared to talk about racism more extensively with Joshua, should he experience it in the future. This sentiment was shared among other parents as well, who primarily avoided talking about racism, but were prepared to address the topic with their children when they were older or should their children experience racism firsthand.

In contrast to parents who were mostly avoiding all conversations about race and racism with their children, some parents shared that while they had talked about racism broadly with their children, they specifically felt an urge to protect or shield their children from knowing

about the violent anti-Asian attacks that were in the news. Mia, a second generation Taiwanese American mother of John, a 10-year-old Taiwanese-White American boy (*East*) shared that while she wanted her children to be aware of racism, she hadn't talked to them about the anti-Asian attacks, stating "It would just be a little scary to bring it up." Similarly, Josie, a second generation Filipina American mother of a 10-year-old Filipina-Taiwanese American girl (*SoCal*) avoided talking about the anti-Asian attacks, "Because it's really scary and I don't want them to freak out about [their] grandparents going to Chinatown or anything like that." For Josie, she was worried that talking about the anti-Asian attacks against Asian American elders would unnecessarily worry her children, so she tried to shield them from those news stories as much as possible. The anti-Asian attacks seemed to hit close to home for some parents and was hard to discuss with their children. For example, Dolores explained that it was hard to talk about anti-Asian racism and that talking about "Black Lives Matter seems to be a little easier because you don't feel like you're basically robbing your child and their innocence" (*Second generation Chinese-Filipina American mother of 7-year-old Chinese-Filipina-White American girl, Reyna, SoCal*). In this way, some Asian American parents felt a strong urge to shield their children from the anti-Asian attacks because they believed the attacks were scary, hit close to home, and would cause excessive worry or anxiety in their children.

Minimize and De-Emphasize Racism

A few parents who preferred to wait to talk about race and racism shared that they preferred to minimize or de-emphasize the importance of race and racism because they did not want their children to overly fixate on racism or believe that race was deterministic of life outcomes. For instance, Henry, a fourth generation Japanese American father of Lucia, a 12-year-

old Filipina-Japanese American girl (*SoCal*), shared how he did not want Lucia to learn a pessimistic view of the world:

> I'm concerned for my daughter that she's going to think that everyone's bad [and] mean, [and] that she will see race as more of a deciding factor in life than it should be… In the formative years of youth, it's possible to put too much weight on the shoulders of children such that they don't understand how to see the good people and good in life, too.

Henry's sentiments were shared by several parents who were reticent to talk about racism with their children because they were worried that their children may think too much about race and racism in a way that could be detrimental to their well-being and outlook on life. A few parents were worried that talking about racism at this age could cause them to develop biased beliefs. For example, Ela, a first generation Indian American mother of Rian, a 7-year-old Indian-Iranian American boy (*East*) shared the following worry, "I don't want to stick ideas in my kid's head that make him prejudiced, whether it's towards himself or somebody else." Similarly, Ming, a first generation Chinese American mother of Tyler, an 11-year-old Chinese-White American boy (*SW*), shared the following belief:

> We don't even want to mention racism to give them that initial thought. We don't want to mention, "Oh, because this kid is Black, or this kid is from India, or this kid is from Asia…" I felt like, if you don't say it, probably we wouldn't even develop it.

Both Ela and Ming did not talk about race and racism with their children because they shared a similar belief that talking about racism or using racial labels with their children could cause them to learn prejudicial or racist beliefs. In a similar vein, Ajay, a first generation Indian American father of Rani, a 12-year-old Indian American girl (*East*) believed that in life, you will "probably not get what you want, but it doesn't mean it's because of racism. You work hard to get

something…You don't want to have [racism] heavily loaded in your mind because that sometimes inhibits your development." Ajay believed that an over-emphasis on race and racism would teach Rani that race or racism was more influential than other factors, like hard work, in determining life successes. Therefore, he believed that avoiding the topics of race and racism would help Rani focus on traits she could control that would support her long-term success. Notably, for all of these parents, their preference to minimize or de-emphasize race and racism was related, in part, to parents' perceptions that their children had not directly experienced racism and, thus, racism felt less like an immediate threat to their children.

The Role of Parental Generational Status and Family Racial-Ethnic Make-up

Differences by Generational Status

While there were similarities in approaches across parental generational status, it was evident that there were also generational differences – often related to acculturation and immigration experiences – that informed whether and how Asian American parents engaged in or avoided conversation about race and racism with their children. 1.5 and second generation parents more frequently mentioned engaging in proactive racial socialization and talking about ways to combat racism with their children than first generation parents. Many 1.5 and second generation parents reflected on their own childhood and were motivated to create a different experience for their own children. Specifically, they had engaged in few conversations about racism with their own immigrant parents and felt unprepared to navigate race and racism during their childhood, so they were trying instead to take a proactive approach to talking about racism with their own children. For example, Adam, a second generation Chinese American father of Katherine, an 11-year-old Chinese-Korean American girl (*MW*), shared the following reflection:

> I didn't have the same kind of conversations or openness with my parents because their experience was different as immigrants. So, it's important for me to have those conversations with my kids. Not that I want them to have the same experience, but I want them to be better prepared and [know] how to be better advocates and allies.

Like Adam, many 1.5 and second generation parents held compassion towards their parents' decisions, but were also hoping to learn from their own childhood experiences and cultivate an even better experience for their own children.

In contrast, first generation parents in the sample more frequently mentioned that they were waiting to talk about race and racism with their children because they wanted to protect or shield their children and/or to minimize and de-emphasize racism. As an important contextual note, all of the first generation parents in the sample were voluntary immigrants with high levels of education, and thus, the acculturation process for most parents was related to settling and establishing their careers in the United States, assimilating to new cultural norms, and learning how to cope with and respond to any racial bias or discrimination. Perhaps because of these circumstances, many of the first generation parents shared a positive and optimistic outlook towards their life in the United States, even in the face of setbacks due to racism. For example, James, a first generation Chinese-Filipino American father of Aaron, a 7-year-old Chinese-Filipino American boy (*SW*), shared that being an immigrant was one of his strengths:

> I may not have the advantage of having the color of the majority. But that gave me good motivation in myself when I came to this country, to be more hardworking, to have the mentality of an immigrant…With racism, if it's a blocking factor to me, I will not let that take me down because I was brought up to just move on and not give up.

While James recognized and accepted that Aaron's experiences were not the same as his own immigrant experiences, he hoped that his son could lean on a similar form of inner strength, by telling Aaron, "There's a lot of different color[s] in this world. And it's okay to be unique. It's okay to be different. We always thrive with our uniqueness. And that makes you special." James shared that while he had talked about different skin tones and colors with Aaron before, he had not yet talked about racism with Aaron because it had not come up in conversation. In this way, similar to James, other first generation parents were waiting to talk about race and/or racism with their children, and were often waiting for their children to bring up the topic first. Further, perhaps because many believed they could overcome setbacks, including racism, they did not believe that they needed to proactively discuss race and racism with their children and were prepared to reactively help their children, should they experience racism in the future.

Importantly, not all first generation parents were waiting to talk about race and racism with their children, and not all 1.5 and second generation parents were engaging in conversations about race and racism. However, it is helpful to examine general trends within these two groups to better understand the experiences and motivations that informed different parents' decisions on whether to engage in or avoid conversations about race and racism with their children.

Differences by Family Racial-Ethnic Make-up

Patterns of engagement in or avoidance of conversations about race and racism were slightly varied between monoracial and multiracial families because parents of multiracial children considered their children's phenotype and unique racialized experiences as they decided their racial socialization approaches. For some parents, the threat of monoracism motivated them to engage in conversations about race and racism because they wanted to help their children process and cope with monoracist microaggressions, warn their children about monoracism, or

anticipated that they would need to help their children navigate monoracism as they grew older. For example, Patricia, a second generation Taiwanese-White American mother of Sloan, an 8-year-old Taiwanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), shared an anecdote from when they participated in a virtual Chinese choir class together:

> Sloan went into the Zoom room, and in Chinese, [a] girl [said], "Wait, this is Chinese choir. You don't know how to speak Chinese. Do you know how to speak Chinese? This is not English. How do you speak Chinese?" … [Afterwards] I asked Sloan if it upset her, and how did she feel, and she didn't seem bothered by it… Sloan is fully able to read and sing along, and I explained, it's not okay [for] somebody to target you in a public environment to try to make you feel bad.

Patricia and Sloan's experience during the Chinese choir class illustrates how multiracial microaggressions can be a critical aspect of racial socialization among multiracial families. Although Sloan said she was not upset, Patricia made sure to explain why such comments were hurtful and unacceptable, an important follow-up step because monoracism can be omitted from default conceptions of racism that are often solely based within monoracial experiences. Some parents were also preparing their children for future experiences with monoracism, like Vivian, a second generation Filipina American mother of Malia, a 10-year-old Filipina-Japanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), who shared the following experience:

> When we were in Philippines, I was on Messenger with one of their cousins, and I made a comment, "I hate how people tell my kids that they're not Filipino." And he's like, "Well, they're not really Filipino because they're half." And I'm like, "What does that mean? They're not pure?" It makes me upset when I hear people say that… [It] bothers

me because it makes someone feel like they don't belong. So, I like to forewarn them [my kids] because I don't want them to be blindsided.

Vivian's anecdote illustrates how preparation for bias among multiracial families can include preparation for monoracism. While Vivian herself was monoracial, she explained that she was sensitive to monoracist comments because as a child growing up in the United States, she was made to feel "not Filipino enough." She explained, "I want [my kids] to know that they don't have to be enough of something to prove themselves… I don't want them to struggle with that because that was tough growing up." Thus, while Vivian did not share the same racialized experiences as her own children, she drew upon similar experiences to better relate to her multiracial children's experiences. In this way, many Asian American parents of multiracial children were incorporating monoracism into their preparation for bias and messages to empower their children to stand up against racism against themselves and others.

In contrast, some parents chose to avoid talking about race and racism with their children because they believed racism was not a threat to their multiracial children, due to their White-presenting phenotype. For instance, Ming, shared the following, "Because Tyler's a mix – he looks biracial – I don't think he ever felt like, "Oh, I'm different from the rest of the American or White kids." (*First generation Chinese American mother of 11-year-old Chinese-White American boy, SW*). Ming's comment illustrates how some Asian American parents with Asian-White American children believed that their children were protected from experiencing racism because they could be perceived as White, and consequently, could lead parents to de-prioritize conversations about race and racism.

In a separate approach from Ming, a few parents of White-presenting multiracial children shared that they focused more on collective racial socialization because they wanted their

children to learn to be allies and stand up for others. Mia shared, “I feel like [my children] look more White than the typical biracial kids,” and followed by saying, “I want John to know about racism. I think it's irresponsible to not know about racism, and not teach kids that it's happening. But my focus would be on teaching [my] kids about racism against African Americans and Latinos” (*Second generation Taiwanese American mother of John, a 10-year-old Taiwanese-White American boy, East*). In this way, while Mia was just among a few of the parents with multiracial children who took this approach, Mia’s approach may reflect how some parents of multiracial children may engage in racial socialization that is reflective of how others will perceive their children’s racial identities (i.e., how should a White-presenting person combat racism?). Thus, these examples illustrate how Asian American parents of multiracial children are aware of their children’s phenotype as they decide whether to engage in or avoid conversations about race and racism with their children.

Discussion

As important socializing agents, Asian American parents can play a critical role in helping children navigate their racialized experiences and develop a positive sense of REI and self (Juang et al., 2017). Despite the middle childhood and early adolescent period (ages 6-12) being an important time when children are beginning to develop their sense of REI and are learning about concepts like race and racism, less research has examined how Asian American parents engage in racial socialization with children during this developmental period. This study aimed to address this gap by examining Asian American parents’ beliefs and motivations that guided how they approached conversations about race and racism with their children. Findings highlight that Asian American parents were split between actively engaging and waiting to have conversations about race and racism with their children.

Parents Engaging in Conversations About Race and Racism With Their Children

Starting first with parents who engaged in conversations about race and racism with their children, many mentioned engaging in preparation for bias, proactive racial socialization, and encouraging their children to stand against racism through interpersonal and collective actions. When engaging in preparation for bias, parents emphasized the importance of listening to their children, validating and helping them cope with any negative feelings, and discussing possible strategies should they encounter a similar situation in the future. Some parents of multiracial children were also cognizant of monoracism and helped their children cope with monoracist experiences or warned their children that they may experience monoracism in the future. Parents' recognition of monoracism as another form of racial discrimination for multiracial children was important because prior studies with multiracial young adults shared that they felt more parental support when their parents validated and empathized with their unique experiences of discrimination and suggested ways to respond (Atkin & Jackson, 2021).

While most of the parents who engaged in preparation for bias were 1.5 or second generation parents, a few were first generation parents, which supports, but also nuances the narrative that first generation Asian American parents tend to refrain from engaging in preparation for bias (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2022; Young et al., 2021). Among the first generation parents who were engaging in preparation for bias in the current study, parents shared beliefs such as a critical awareness of discrimination against minority groups in their home countries, experiences with overt racism, or a more in-depth understanding of the racial history of the United States (e.g., recognition that police started as slave patrols). While there were some parallels with prior studies that have suggested that first generation parents who experience racism firsthand are more likely to report engaging in preparation for bias (e.g.,

Benner & Kim, 2009; Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014; Kimura & Mistry, 2024), since there were only a few first generation parents who mentioned engaging in preparation for bias, there was not enough evidence to identify patterns in what beliefs, motivations, or prior experiences may lead some first generation parents to engage in preparation for bias.

Many 1.5 and second generation parents mentioned engaging in proactive racial socialization approaches, a finding similar to a study with second generation Asian American families with 3- to 10-year-old children (Juang et al., 2018). Parents mentioned using children's books as a tool to scaffold proactive conversations about race and racism, an approach that has been proposed by Curenton and colleagues (2022) as particularly supportive for the development of racial literacy among young children. Specifically, parents in the current study used books to expose their children to racially diverse characters, support their children's burgeoning sense of racial-ethnic pride, and to raise their children's awareness of racism through examples of historical racism.

In consideration of their children's age, parents who used proactive racial socialization approaches often did so in small doses and framed the conversations in a constructive way, so that their children did not develop a pessimistic view of society. Aligned with findings from the Juang et al. (2018) study, parents in the current study often shared that, as children, they had not talked about race and racism with their immigrant parents. These parents were motivated to create a different experience for their own children and wanted their children to be prepared for when they would inevitably face racism in the future. In addition, some parents shared an urge to have proactive conversations about race and racism because of the rise in anti-Asian attacks during the COVID-19 pandemic, a sentiment that has also been documented in a study with Chinese American parents with 5- to 11-year-old children (Wang et al., 2023).

Some parents also focused on educating their children about racism targeting other racial-ethnic groups, with some encouraging their children to stand up as allies to others, both through individual and collective actions (i.e., collective racial socialization). Since Lei et al. (2022) proposed the term collective racial socialization as a new construct within the field of RES, our study provides empirical insights on how Asian American parents are starting the collective racial socialization process with children. Parents often mentioned engaging in collective racial socialization practices in response to the BLM protests in 2020, and there was variation in parents' approaches. Some parents focused solely on educating their children about racism targeting other racial-ethnic groups, while other parents also sought to empower their children to stand up for others at an interpersonal level.

A few parents talked to their children explicitly about the importance of standing in solidarity with other racial-ethnic groups and modeled how to engage in collective actions (e.g., attended protest) to combat racism at a societal level. These conversations and actions were often in response to the several high-profile examples of racism targeting both Black and Asian American communities that occurred during or prior to the data collection period. Research shows that the BLM protests and the anti-Asian hate attacks during the COVID-19 pandemic may have pushed some Asian American parents to become more critically aware of racism targeting other minoritized racial-ethnic groups and more motivated to engage in activism (Kiang et al., 2022). Thus, we may have captured a particularly unique period when some Asian American parents were more motivated to address racial injustices, and this may have influenced parents' decisions to engage in collective racial socialization with their children.

These patterns in how parents engaged in conversations about race and racism suggests that we should expand how Asian American RES is measured quantitatively. Despite the

prevalence of preparation for bias messages that emphasized helping children cope with experiences of racism, specific proactive racial socialization practices (e.g., using children's books), and engagement in collective racial socialization, these types of messages and practices are notably missing from the Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization Scale (AAPRS; Juang et al., 2016), an RES scale that was developed specifically for Asian American families. Since the AAPRS was originally developed with Asian American adolescents with immigrant parents, it is possible that these other types of racial socialization approaches did not emerge because they may be more common among 1.5 and second generation Asian American parents. Therefore, future research should test an RES scale that can better capture how 1.5 and second generation Asian American parents are engaging in racial socialization with their children.

Parents Waiting to Talk About Race and Racism With Their Children

In contrast to the parents who engaged in conversations about race and racism with their children, a smaller subset of parents shared that they were primarily waiting to talk about race and racism with their children because they wanted to protect or shield their child from knowing about racism and/or wanted to minimize or de-emphasize the importance of racism. These sentiments mirrored findings from prior studies that have documented similar patterns among some Asian American parents who minimized or avoided talking about racism with their children (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Kimura & Mistry, 2024; Juang et al., 2016; Patel et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Young et al., 2021). In our study, parents opted to wait to discuss race and racism with their children because they thought it would benefit their children's well-being. Some parents believed that avoiding the topic of racism would protect their children because they believed they were too young or not developmentally ready to comprehend racism. Other parents feared that

talking too much about race and racism could negatively affect their children's self-esteem, detract from their children's ability to develop a positive outlook on life, cause children to develop prejudicial beliefs towards other racial-ethnic groups, or teach their children that race was deterministic of life outcomes. Low engagement in preparation for bias has also been documented among Black, Latinx, and White families with elementary-age children, suggesting that Asian American parents may be similar to parents of other racial-ethnic groups who are hesitant to talk about racial discrimination with young children (Williams & Banarjee, 2021).

Some Asian American parents shared that, while they wanted to talk about racism generally with their children, they preferred to shield their children from hearing about the violent anti-Asian attacks because they believed it was too scary and not age appropriate. A few parents did not want their children to unnecessarily worry about their own grandparents, since many Asian American elders were being targeted. Additionally, unique to multiracial families, a few parents of Asian-White American children chose not to discuss racism with their children because they believed their children were unlikely to experience racism since they presented as White. A few other parents shared that they wanted their White-presenting multiracial children to learn how to be an ally for others who experience racism, which is similar to findings in a study by Wu et al. (2020) in which parents of multiracial Asian-White American children tailored their messages, depending on their children's phenotype.

While parents from all generational statuses were represented in the subset of parents who preferred to wait to talk about race and racism with their children, a larger proportion of first generation parents were represented in this group, which is again reflective of previous studies examining RES among first generation Asian American parents (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2022; Young et al., 2021). In the current study, some first generation parents shared that they

were waiting to talk about race and racism until their children were older or until their children came to them with an experience related to racism. However, studies with Asian American adolescents and young adults (e.g., Patel et al., 2022; Young et al., 2021), and even the voices of 1.5 and second generation parents in our study illustrated that many Asian American children with immigrant parents wished they could have talked more candidly about race and racism with their parents *before* they experienced racism. Thus, it is important to dispel any myths (e.g., talking about racism may cause my child to learn prejudicial beliefs) that may prevent first generation parents from engaging in conversations about race and racism, and to provide support to help first generation parents navigate direct conversations about racism with their children in ways that parents feel are supportive of their children's overall development.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the current study sought to address several gaps in the literature, there were some limitations. The findings reflect the racial socialization practices of highly educated, English proficient Asian American parents during a particularly racially volatile time, who were living in specific geographic locations across the United States. The sample included a higher representation of mothers than fathers, and most parents politically identified as a Democrat or Independent. Only three of the parents were fourth generation, so there were not enough data to identify patterns among this sub-sample. However, there appeared to be evidence that fourth generation parents approached racial socialization differently than their 1.5 and second generation counterparts, warranting further research to examine how there may be further generational differences among 1.5+ Asian American parents. Further, while the current study included a few multiracial parents, there were not enough multiracial parents to identify unique patterns. Future research should examine whether there are differences in approaches between

monoracial and multiracial parents as multiracial parents may be able to draw on their lived experiences and may be more aware of multiracial microaggressions as they engage in racial socialization with their multiracial children (Atkin & Yoo, 2019).

Further, while I aimed to better examine the diversity of Asian American experiences by recruiting a racially and ethnically diverse sample, the heterogeneity of the sample prevented my ability to analyze for ethnic sub-group differences. Since Asian American ethnic groups each have unique sociopolitical histories, immigration contexts, and cultures (Kiang et al., 2016), future research should dive deeper into specific ethnic group experiences. Further, future studies should include the experiences of low-income Asian American families, compare differences in racial socialization approaches between Asian American fathers and mothers, and include the voices of Asian Americans who identify as Republican, third+ generation, and those who are not proficient in English. Importantly, findings were also based on parent-reported data and their decisions on how to engage in conversations about race and racism were based on their perceptions of their children's readiness and cognitive abilities. Further, interviews were conducted with one parent, and therefore exclude the perspectives of another parent in a two-parent family. Particularly for multiracial and multiethnic families, the study design excluded the perspectives of parents who were of a different racial-ethnic identity than the parent who participated in the study.

As a study that included an observation task where parents talked directly with children about racism, the findings reflect the views of Asian American parents who were willing to not only engage in conversations about racism with their 6- to 12-year-old children but were also comfortable being observed doing so. Although there were several parents who mentioned that the observation task was the first time they had talked about racism with their children, the

findings likely skewed towards Asian American parents who may have been particularly active in engaging in racial socialization. Due to time constraints, I was also limited in the number of questions that I could include in the interview protocol. As a result, I was not able to ask questions to systematically investigate parents' level of critical consciousness or their beliefs related to internalized racism. Since studies with Asian Americans suggest that these belief systems are related to parental RES approaches (Kiang et al., 2021; Patel et al., 2022; Yi & Todd, 2021) future research should examine the influence of these belief systems on racial socialization, and the development of critical consciousness among children (Saavedra et al., 2023). Overall, with these limitations in mind, the study findings add to the literature by providing greater insight into how a diverse sample of Asian American parents, including parents of multiracial children with Asian heritages, approaches conversations about race and racism with their 6- to 12-year-old children.

Conclusion

Findings from the current study suggest that Asian American parents' decisions to engage in or wait to have conversations about race and racism stem from an underlying desire to support their children's well-being and development. For many parents, they believed engaging in conversations about race and racism supported their children's well-being because they could help their children cope and prepare for racism, and/or believed it to be important to teach their children how to stand in solidarity with other racial-ethnic groups as a way to contribute to societal change. In contrast, some parents believed waiting to talk about race and racism with their children was supportive of their well-being because they believed raising awareness of, or over-emphasizing racism to their children could be harmful to their self-esteem or cause their children to believe that race was deterministic of life outcomes. Findings highlight that many

Asian American parents with 6- to 12-year-old children are discussing race and racism together and point to some ways that teachers and practitioners could better support parents as they seek to engage in these conversations in various ways.

Table 1

Study 1: Detailed Sample Demographics

Parent Demographics	Total Sample (N = 68)	SoCal Sample (n = 33)	SW Sample (n = 10)	MW Sample (n = 17)	East Sample (n = 8)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Gender					
Woman	53 (78)	30 (91)	8 (80)	11 (65)	4 (50)
Man	15 (22)	3 (9)	2 (20)	6 (35)	4 (50)
Race and Ethnicity					
Monoracial	53 (78)	24 (73)	7 (70)	14 (82)	8 (100)
Chinese	12 (18)	3 (9)	3 (30)	6 (35)	6 (75)
Filipino	10 (15)	7 (21)	2 (20)	0 (0)	1 (13)
Indian	10 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (24)	0 (0)
Vietnamese	6 (9)	6 (18)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Taiwanese	5 (7)	4 (12)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12)
Sri Lankan	3 (4)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Japanese	3 (4)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Another ethnicity (e.g., Korean, Hmong)	5 (7)	1 (3)	0 (0)	2 (12)	0 (0)
Multiethnic (e.g., Chinese-Vietnamese)	9 (13)	6 (18)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Multiracial (all Asian-White)	6 (9)	3 (9)	1 (10)	2 (12)	0 (0)
Generational Status					
First generation	21 (31)	2 (6)	7 (70)	7 (41)	5 (63)
1.5 generation	11 (16)	7 (21)	1 (10)	2 (12)	1 (12)
Second generation	33 (49)	23 (70)	1 (10)	7 (41)	2 (25)
Fourth generation	3 (4)	1 (3)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Relationship Status					
Married to child's parent or legal guardian	58 (85)	27 (82)	9 (90)	15 (88)	7 (88)
Divorced	5 (7)	4 (12)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Another relationship status (e.g., widowed)	3 (4)	2 (6)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6)	1 (12)
Parent Education					

Two year degree or lower	3 (4)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Four year college degree	19 (28)	10 (30)	4 (40)	4 (24)	1 (13)
Master's or doctorate degree	44 (65)	20 (61)	6 (60)	12 (70)	6 (75)
Missing	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6)	1 (12)
Household Income					
Below $50,000	1 (1)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
$50,000 – $75,000	4 (6)	3 (9)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
$75,001 - $100,000	7 (10)	3 (9)	2 (20)	2 (12)	0 (0)
$100,001 - $150,000	17 (25)	8 (24)	2 (20)	3 (18)	4 (50)
Above $150,000	28 (41)	12 (36)	5 (50)	9 (53)	2 (25)
Missing	11 (16)	6 (18)	1 (10)	1 (12)	2 (25)
Political Affiliation					
Democrat	41 (60)	21 (64)	4 (40)	11 (65)	5 (63)
Independent	9 (13)	4 (12)	2 (20)	3 (18)	0 (0)
Republican	3 (4)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Other	4 (6)	2 (6)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Missing	11 (16)	6 (18)	1 (10)	1 (6)	3 (37)
Political Ideology					
Very liberal	11 (16)	4 (12)	2 (20)	4 (24)	1 (12)
Liberal	27 (40)	15 (46)	1 (10)	8 (47)	3 (38)
Moderate	19 (28)	9 (27)	4 (40)	4 (24)	2 (25)
Conservative	2 (3)	0 (0)	2 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Very conservative	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	9 (13)	5 (15)	1 (10)	1 (6)	2 (25)

Study 2

The Role of Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization in Supporting Children's Developing Sense of Racial-Ethnic Identity and Awareness of Racial Bias

The Role of Asian American Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization in Supporting Children's Developing Sense of Racial-Ethnic Identity and Awareness of Racial Bias

The Asian American as well as the multiracial[6] and multiethnic[7] child populations continue to rapidly increase in the United States (Alba et al., 2018; Jones et al., 2021; Budiman & Ruiz, 2021). During middle childhood and early adolescence (ages 6-12), these children start to contend with how to define and make sense of their own racial-ethnic identity (REI), particularly in relation to how others treat them as racialized individuals (Ruble et al., 2004; Williams et al., 2020). In tandem, children during this developmental period are learning about concepts like race and the existence of racial bias through daily interactions across various contexts (Brown, 2017). In support of these processes, parents engage in racial-ethnic socialization (RES) to communicate messages about race, ethnicity, and culture to their children and to help them navigate the myriad race-related messages that they encounter about their own selves and others (Hughes et al., 2006; Ruck et al., 2021). However, few studies have examined how different parental RES approaches inform children's developing understanding of their REI and awareness of racial bias when children are between the ages of 6 and 12, particularly with Asian American children (including those that are multiracial or multiethnic).

The present study is guided by the Integrated Conceptual Framework for the Development of Asian American Children and Youth (J. Mistry et al., 2016). The framework highlights three core tenets – context, culture as a meaning making process, and developmental domains – through a metaphor of interlocked gears that turn together to shape development (J.

[6] Multiracial is defined as having biological parents that are from two or more racial groups (Atkin et al., 2022).

[7] Multiethnic is defined as having biological parents that are from two or more ethnic groups (Atkin et al., 2022). While multiracial families are inherently multiethnic, members from a multiethnic family can identify with the same racial group. For this paper, multiethnic will be used to describe a family or person that comes from two or more ethnic groups and is monoracial.

Mistry et al., 2016). The central tenet, culture as meaning making, represents the ways in which parents and children interpret contexts by using shared ideologies, and use these interpretations to inform interactions and socialization. The second tenet, context, highlights how the developmental process is embedded within multiple culturally interpreted contexts, such as the broader racialized context, and more proximal contexts, including the home and school environments. Lastly, the third tenet, developmental domains, represents areas of development pertinent to children, such as identity development in a racialized context. Applying the Integrated Conceptual Framework to the current study, I aim to delve deeper into the meaning making processes of both children and parents to better understand how children are exploring their REI and learning about race and racial bias and how parents are deciding the best ways to approach RES with their children. In recognition of the importance of context, I pay particular attention to children's proximal contexts with the goal of better understanding how context and parents' and children's meaning-making processes interlock to support or potentially constrain children's developing REI and awareness of racial bias.

Further, most studies on RES have relied on single informant designs, and either rely on parent- or youth-reported data (Juang et al., 2017). However, because RES is a dynamic, two-way process, it is important to examine both parents' and children's perspectives to better understand not only how parents approach their RES, but also how children are making sense of their parents' socialization in conjunction with their own developing sense of self and awareness of others (Hughes et al., 2008; Juang et al., 2017; Patel et al., 2022). Thus, the current study aims to examine (a) how Asian American children during middle childhood and early adolescence are developing a sense of REI and awareness of racial bias, (b) how Asian American parents are using RES to support these processes, and (c) whether children are incorporating their parents'

RES efforts into their thinking as they make sense of their own REI and the concepts of race and racial bias.

REI Development During Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

Middle childhood and early adolescence are important times when children are beginning to explore their REI and learning about how their identities are connected to larger social groups (Akiba et al., 2004; Ruble et al., 2004; Williams et al., 2020). Between ages 5 and 6, most children can label their REI, and by late childhood and early adolescence, children demonstrate an understanding of the social meanings associated with race and ethnicity, such as noticing social class differences between racial-ethnic groups and showing an awareness of how others may treat them differently because of their racial-ethnic background (Quintana, 1998; Rogers et al., 2012; Williams et al., 2020). The ways that Asian American children choose to identify their REI is related to their family's immigration experiences (Marks et al., 2007), and sense of connection to their national identity as Americans (Rodriguez et al., 2016). Further, during this developmental period, evidence shows that second generation Asian American children make sense of their REI by referencing factors such as language, birthplace, and family heritage (Akiba et al, 2004; Rogers et al., 2012). The REI labels that children select can also change over time as children explore what their REI labels mean and they interact with different people and contexts that may influence children's attitudes towards different REI labels (Morton et al., 2023).

For multiracial and multiethnic children, this early period of REI development is an opportunity to explore different racial-ethnic labels, with evidence showing that during early adolescence, peers and friends can play an important role in their racial-ethnic identification decisions (Echols et al., 2017; Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2015). Parents of multiracial children often

help facilitate children's self-categorization process, with many encouraging their children to explore and embrace their multiple identities, and supporting their children's exploration by engaging in cultural socialization practices that honor the family's multiple heritages (Seider et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2020). However, few studies have focused on how parents may uniquely support multiethnic Asian American children explore and develop their REI.

While much of the REI literature has focused on adolescence (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014; Williams et al., 2020), studies that have focused on REI development during middle childhood and early adolescence point to the importance of REI as protective against the negative effects of racial discrimination, and promotive of positive outcomes like self-esteem for children of color (Marcelo et al., 2019; Rivas-Drake et al., 2007). For example, a study conducted by Marcelo et al. (2019) found that among Black, Latinx and multiracial children, a higher sense of belonging to REI at age 7 was protective against the negative effects (i.e., internalizing and externalizing behaviors) of racial discrimination one year later. In a study with Chinese American sixth graders, more positive perceptions of their own REI were positively associated with higher self-esteem, and a perception that others had positive views of their racial-ethnic group helped to reduce the negative effects of racial discrimination on depressive symptoms (Rivas-Drake et al., 2007). Therefore, while children during middle childhood and early adolescence are still exploring their REI and deciding what it means to them, there is evidence that positive REI attitudes are promotive of positive outcomes for Asian American children.

Awareness of Racial Bias During Middle Childhood and Early Adolescence

During middle childhood and early adolescence, children undergo tremendous socio-cognitive growth and gain an understanding of not only what their REI means to them, but also begin to recognize that others may exhibit biased or prejudicial beliefs toward their racial-ethnic

group (Quintana, 2008; Williams et al., 2020). For example, in a study conducted by Gillen O'Neel et al. (2011), Chinese, African, Dominican, Russian, and European American second and fourth graders demonstrated an awareness of ethnicity-based stigma. Further, children's awareness of stigma towards their own ethnic group was associated with higher levels of academic anxiety and lower intrinsic motivation, suggesting that knowledge of ethnicity-based stigma can have detrimental consequences for children's outcomes during the middle childhood period (Gillen O'Neel et al., 2011). Evidence also suggests that racially minoritized children may become aware of racial bias earlier than their White counterparts because they may experience racial bias themselves or learn about racial bias from RES socialization agents (Hughes et al., 2006; Brown et al., 2011).

Further, the middle childhood and early adolescent period includes two important transitions to both elementary and middle school, which creates new opportunities for children to interact with a more diverse array of people and develop attitudes towards racial-ethnic groups that are different from their own (Baron, 2015; Chen & Graham, 2015; Marks et al., 2007). Attending school also means that children are likely exposed to dominant color-evasive racial narratives and may begin to develop inaccurate views about race and racism, such as seeing racism as a concept of the past, rather than a contemporary issue (Rogers et al., 2021). In this way, middle childhood and early adolescence marks a time when children are not only actively making sense of their own REI, but they are also developing an understanding of race, racial bias, and general racism within the U.S. context. Notably, few studies have examined how Asian American and multiracial children exhibit awareness of racial bias during the middle childhood and early adolescent period, and how children's developing awareness of racial bias may be informed by their parents' RES practices.

Parental Racial-Ethnic Socialization

RES is an overarching construct encompassing a multitude of approaches to convey messages about race, ethnicity, racism, and culture to children (Hughes et al., 2006). Hughes and colleagues (2006) identified four common RES messages: (a) cultural socialization, which includes passing on the family's cultural or ethnic heritage to their children (e.g., values, language, traditions, cultural celebrations, history); (b) preparation for bias, which includes warning children about and helping them cope with racial discrimination (sometimes referred to as raise awareness of racial discrimination); (c) promotion of mistrust, which includes telling children to stay away or avoid certain racial-ethnic groups; and (d) egalitarian and silence about racism, which includes messages that emphasize equality and may include an avoidance of talking about racism (sometimes referred to as minimization of race).

While research on Asian American parental RES has grown in recent years, research examining parental RES practices during middle childhood and early adolescence remains limited. Among the few that have focused on middle childhood and early adolescence, studies illustrate how Asian American parents use different meaning-making processes to decide how to engage in RES. For example, in a survey-based study examining patterns in RES engagement among Asian American parents with children (ages 6-12), findings suggested that Asian American parents tended to report engaging in more cultural socialization practices than engaging in raising awareness of racial discrimination or minimization of race (Kimura & Mistry, 2024). Further, differences in RES approaches have been documented between first and second generation Asian American parents. For instance, Juang and colleagues (2018) examined parental RES among second generation Asian American families with children (ages 3-10) and highlighted that second generation Asian American parents engaged in RES both proactively and

reactively. At times, parental RES was reactive to their children's experiences and comments, and at other times, parents proactively started conversations about race and racism with their children, so that their children would be better prepared to encounter racism in the future. These findings contrast with studies with first generation Indian American and Chinese American parents, which have documented a hesitancy to engage in preparation for bias with their adolescents (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2022). Some first generation Asian American parents, shared a sense of unfamiliarity with racism as immigrants in the U.S. context, or a fear that talking about racism could be harmful to their children's development (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Patel et al., 2022). Notably, instead of preparation for bias messages, first generation Asian American parents often chose to emphasize cultural pride messages instead (Patel et al., 2022).

While these generational difference have emerged in the literature, studies have also found that, across generational status, parent who experience racial discrimination are more likely to report engaging in preparation for bias messages with their children, suggesting that the underlying belief systems that inform parents' RES decisions are malleable and can change in response to their contexts and encounters with racism (Benner & Kim, 2009; Hagelskamp & Hughes, 2014; Kimura & Mistry, 2024). For instance, in a study with Chinese American families with 5- to 11-year-old children, parents mentioned their RES was sparked by their children's experiences with racial discrimination, and parents were worried about the changing racial context and rise in overt anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wang et al., 2022). While an increasing number of studies on Asian American parental RES during the COVID-19 pandemic have been published (e.g., Cheah et al., 2020; Kiang et al., 2022; Kimura & Mistry, 2024; Lei et al., 2024; Ren et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022), only a couple studies have focused on the middle childhood and early adolescent period.

Further, studies examining RES among multiracial families with Asian heritages and children in the middle childhood and early adolescent period are scarce (Atkin & Yoo, 2019). A few studies have documented how some parental RES practices may be unique for multiracial families. For example, some parents mentioned the importance of helping their children explore different REI labels and to help their children self-categorize their REI, and other parents mentioned changing their parental RES approach depending on their children's phenotype and how they anticipate they will be racialized by others (Wu et al., 2020; Seider et al., 2023). Parents of multiracial children must also help their children navigate multiracial racial narratives and stereotypes, such as monoracism, which is a paradigm in which race in the U.S. context is defined through monoracial categories and systematically excludes multiracial individuals (Harris, 2016; Johnston & Nadal, 2010). Of note, the studies that have examined parental RES among multiracial families have focused either on older adolescents and emerging adults or spanned a wide age range (e.g., Wu et al., 2020; Seider et al., 2023; Atkin & Jones, 2021). There is a need to continue to build our understanding of how parents of multiracial children engage in parental RES and to focus our investigations during specific developmental periods to better understand how parental RES may vary by developmental stage. In the present study, I aim to address these gaps by examining how Asian American parents with both monoracial and multiracial children engaged in parental RES during a particular time of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Children's Perceptions of Parental RES

Although parental RES is a dynamic, two-way process between parents and children, most existing studies have not included both perspectives (Atkin & Yoo, 2019; Juang et al., 2017). Among the few studies that have included both parents' and children's voices, the studies

have focused on monoracial families, with findings showing that while some children will internalize their parents' messages, others may ignore, forget, or disagree with their parents' beliefs (Gonzalez et al., 2022; Hughes et al., 2008; Patel et al., 2022). Less is known around how Asian American parents' cultural and REI socialization efforts directly compare with how children describe their developing sense of REI during the middle childhood and early adolescent period. While studies with Asian American adolescents and young adults, demonstrate that parental cultural socialization efforts are associated with positive REI feelings (Atkin et al., 2019; Elyse-Quest & Morse, 2014), few similar studies have been conducted with families with 6- to 12-yer-old children and among multiracial families. Comparing both children's and parents' perspectives may help to illuminate which forms of cultural socialization particularly resonate with children during this developmental period.

Additionally, few studies have examined how parental racial socialization efforts inform children's developing understanding of race and racial bias. As an exception, a study conducted by Scott et al. (2023) investigated whether parents' reports of acknowledging racism to their Asian, Latinx, and White children (ages 4-10) were related to the children's approval or disapproval of racial bias (i.e., race-based peer exclusion). The study found that children were more likely to disapprove of racial bias, if their parent had acknowledged racism in a prior conversation with them, illustrating how parents' decisions to talk about racism with their children can inform how children view racial bias among their peers (Scott et al., 2023). Similarly, in the current study, I aim to examine whether and how children are making sense of their parents' racial socialization efforts as they talk about their awareness of race and racial bias. Thus, by drawing on both children's and parents' perspectives, I aim to examine how children are developing a sense of REI and learning about racial bias, how parents are engaging in RES to

support these developmental processes, and whether and how children use their parental RES efforts to inform their REI and awareness of racial bias.

Current Study

The current study draws from a diverse sample of Asian American families with 6- to 12-year-old children to explore how parental RES efforts may be supporting or constraining Asian American children's developing sense of REI and understanding of racial bias. The investigation was divided into three parts, in which I first examined children's perspectives, followed by the parents' perspectives and then ended by comparing the perspectives of children and parents. The following two research questions guided the investigation of the children's perspectives: (1a) How do Asian American children identify and make sense of their racial-ethnic identity (REI)? (1b) How do Asian American children describe their understanding of race and racial bias? Next, the following research question guided the examination of the parent perspectives: (2) How do parents use RES to help their Asian American children make sense of their REI, their racialized experiences, and concepts like race and racism? Lastly, the following two research questions guided the comparison between children's and parent's responses: (3a) In what ways are there areas of concordance or discordance between Asian American children's REI knowledge and attitudes and their parents' RES practices? (3b) In what ways are there areas of concordance or discordance between Asian American children's perspectives about racial bias and their parents' RES practices?

Methods

Researcher Positionality

My motivation to pursue this study is grounded in my desire to help children grapple with their lived experiences by providing them with the framework, language, and tools to

understand their experiences and even resist injustices in empowered ways. The idea for the Asian American Families Study emerged in response to the rise in overt anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic, and I hoped that the study could better inform how we can help Asian American families engage in conversations about race and racism with their children in ways that supported their children's positive development.

When considering Asian American parental RES, I reflect upon how my parents engaged in RES with me. As a child, I recall indirect messaging from my first generation Japanese mother to enjoy and stay grounded in Japanese culture and values, and direct REI messaging from my third generation Japanese American father who told me to have pride in my identity and family history as survivors of forced incarceration during World War II. I also think about interactions I have had with young Asian American children and watching them navigate their own identities within the same racial narratives that I once grew up in. I recognize that untying my personal experiences from this research is impossible. As an East Asian American woman from a middle-class background who is cis-gendered, heterosexual, and without a disability, I understand that I have the privilege to have many of my social identities often included within the discourse about Asian Americans. Further, as a monoracial person working with multiracial families and children, I recognize myself as an out-group member. I am conscious that these privileges and my own lived experiences shaped how I interpreted the study findings. In recognition of the value of having multiple perspectives and lived experiences, I co-developed the study with the Principal Investigator, Dr. Rashmita Mistry, who identifies as first generation South Asian (Indian) American, and we conducted different components of the study with a large and diverse group of mostly Asian American scholars (see Procedures below for more detail). The study team's diverse perspectives have strengthened the study at every stage.

Data Source

Data came from a larger multi-modal study that included 69 Asian American families with children (ages 6-12) who were asked to complete parent surveys, parent-child observations, parent interviews, and child interviews. For the current study, I examined the parent and child interviews. As a multi-site investigation, the primary investigator for the study is Dr. Mistry at UCLA, and co-investigators include Dr. Richard Lee at the University of Minnesota, Dr. Gabriela Livas Stein at the University of Texas at Austin, and Dr. Hyung Chol (Brandon) Yoo at Arizona State University. IRB approval was obtained at each study site. Eligible parents had to identify as Asian or Asian American, have at least one Asian or Asian American child between the ages of 6 and 12, and reside in the United States. Families were recruited from Southern California (SoCal); the Southwest (SW), which included families from the greater Phoenix area and Colorado; the Midwest (MW), which included families from the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul Area, Ohio, and Indiana; and the East (East), which included families from North Carolina, Maryland, and New Jersey. Specifically, I was involved in the initial conceptualization of the study, coordinated data collection across the four sites, trained research assistants, administered interview sessions, and collaboratively led the subsequent analysis process.

Participants

The final sample included 68 Asian American children (M_{age} = 8.9 years, SD = 1.9) and 68 Asian American parents (M_{age} = 43.4 years, SD = 5.0, age range = 28-56). The sample included 67 parent-child dyads because one family only completed a parent interview, but no child interview, and another family completed a child interview, but no parent interview. Parents were majority monoracial and came from diverse ethnic backgrounds. About three-quarters were mothers, and a quarter were fathers. About a third of parents were first generation, and over half

were either second generation or 1.5 generation (i.e., foreign-born and moved to the United States before the age of 12; Rumbaut, 2004; Yoshikawa et al., 2016). A few parents were fourth generation. The majority of parents had a four-year degree or higher and the median household income was between $100,000 - $150,000 (see Table 1 for additional parent demographic information). Children were mostly multiracial or multiethnic. While the ethnic backgrounds of the children largely mirrored the parents' ethnicities, among the multiracial sub-sample, the majority of children were Asian-White American. About two-thirds of the children were girls and a third were boys. One child was non-binary. All children were either born in the United States or moved to the United States as an infant (see Table 2 for additional child demographic information). Lastly, 33 families resided in Southern California, 10 families resided in the Southwest, 17 families resided in the Midwest, and nine families resided in the East.

Procedure

Participants were recruited initially through social media, email listservs, community events, and the professional networks of the study team members. Additional participants were recruited using snowball sampling methods. Participants were told that the purpose of the study was to learn about Asian American parents' experiences and how they support their children's developing sense of self through cultural practices and conversations about their racial-ethnic heritage and about racism. Only one parent and child per family were recruited for the study. If multiple children were eligible within a single family, I prioritized including specific underrepresented demographics (e.g., boys, children ages 6-9) to help balance the demographics of the sample. The study was fielded between March and December of 2022. To better capture the experiences of families currently underrepresented in the literature (i.e., Southeast Asian, South Asian), some sites prioritized recruitment of particular ethnic groups prominent in the

location. For example, the SoCal site prioritized recruitment of Filipino and Vietnamese American families whereas the site in the East prioritized recruitment of South Asian (e.g., Indian, Sri Lankan) American families.

After confirming eligibility via an online screener, and attaining informed consent electronically, participants completed: (1) a 20-minute online parent survey; (2) a 15- to 25-minute observation where the parent and child were asked to watch and discuss a child-friendly video that explained the concept of racism in a way that was reflective of the racialized experiences of Asian Americans; (3) a 30- to 45-minute parent interview, and (4) a 15- to 30-minute child interview. The video discussion activity and interviews were all completed in English, conducted on Zoom, and video- and audio-recorded, based on parents' preference. The parent had the option of completing all three components (i.e., observation, parent interview, child interview) in a single session, or across two scheduled sessions. Parents were compensated with a $45 Amazon gift card for participating in all components of the study, and children received a children's book of their choice ($15 value).

Child Interview

Children were asked to identify their REI using an adapted version of the Phinney (1992) Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. The interviewer first read the following prompt, "In this country, people come from a lot of different places and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from," and asked children, "How would you describe yourself in terms of your ethnic group or race?" If children were unsure, they were provided a definition of the term "ethnic group" (i.e., "The name we sometimes give to a group of people that come from the same culture. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican, Latino, Black, African American, White, Asian, Chinese,

American Indian, Italian, and many others."). Sometimes children ages 6-8 could not identify their ethnic group or race based on the open-ended question, so the interviewers presented a series of forced-choice questions to help children identify their racial-ethnic labels (e.g., "Are you Chinese?"). Next, if children identified several racial-ethnic labels, they were asked to rank-order the labels in order of importance. Multiracial and multiethnic children were offered the option to rank more than one label as equally important.

Referencing the racial-ethnic label that best described the child, the interviewer assessed children's REI attitudes by using a format like that used in the Perceived Competence Scale for Children (Harter, 1982). Specifically, for each of five items (e.g., proud, important), children were first asked to pick which of two statements they identified with more (e.g., "Some kids DO NOT LIKE being [racial-ethnic label] BUT Other kids LIKE being [racial-ethnic label]"). Next, children were asked to decide whether the statement they chose was "very true," or "sort of true," for them. Each item received a score on a 4-point scale, with a higher score indicating more positive REI attitudes. Next, drawing from prior studies that examined REI among children from a similar age range (e.g., Brown et al., 2011; Hazelbaker & Mistry, 2022; Rodriguez et al., 2016), children were also asked several open-ended questions to better understand how they were making sense of their REI (e.g., "How do you feel about being [racial-ethnic label]?") and to better understand their awareness of racial bias (e.g., "Sometimes kids get treated differently than other kids because of their skin color, race, or ethnicity, like where they are from. Has this ever happened to someone you know?"). See Appendix A for the child interview questions.

Parent Interview

Parents were asked a series of questions on how they engaged in RES, including how they passed on their cultural heritage to their children (e.g., "What are some ways that you try to

pass on your cultural and ethnic heritage to your children?") and past approaches to racial socialization (e.g., "Have you had conversations together about race and racism before?"). Parents were also asked about their race-related beliefs and experiences in the United States and how they influenced their RES practices with their children (e.g., "How do you think your experiences might influence the way you have these conversations with your children about their ethnic heritage or about race and racism?"). See Appendix B for the parent interview questions.

Interviews were conducted by a diverse team of 15 trained graduate and undergraduate research assistants with most identifying as Asian or Asian American: three identified as Indian American, three Chinese American, two Filipino/a American, two Vietnamese American, one Burmese American, one Japanese American, one Korean American, one Singaporean and Filipino American, and one Indian and White American. One interviewer identified as Latina, African American and White, and conducted all interviews with a secondary interviewer who identified as Asian American. Of the interviewers, 13 identified as cis-gender women, one identified as a cis-gender man, and one identified as non-binary. All interviewers were trained on how to conduct the observations and interviews, completed practice sessions, and observed past data collection sessions prior to completing their own.

Coding and Analysis Process

All elements of the interviews (i.e., parent-child observation, parent interview, and child interview) were transcribed verbatim by a team of graduate researchers and undergraduate research assistants. While the interviews were conducted in English, some family's spoke in their heritage language. When possible, excerpts in the family's heritage language were transcribed in the original language and translated to English by a transcriber who was familiar with the language (i.e., Mandarin, Cantonese, Hindi, Korean, Japanese, Tagalog, Vietnamese). The

transcripts were checked for accuracy by another undergraduate research assistant or a supervising graduate researcher.

Child Interviews

The semi-structured portions of the child interview were analyzed following the thematic analysis process outlined by Braun & Clark (2006), which includes (1) familiarization with the data, (2) development of initial codes, (3) organization of codes to identify themes, (4) checking whether the emerging themes align with the full dataset, and (5) iteratively refining themes with clear definitions and names. I primarily conducted the analysis and used an open coding approach (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) to generate a preliminary coding scheme, based on a subset of transcripts. While coding, when the child referenced a conversation that had occurred during the observation portion of the procedures, the corresponding observation transcript was reviewed and coded for the relevant information. Another graduate student who identified as Vietnamese American independently coded a portion of the transcripts to clarify the codes and examine their fit with the data. Coders discussed and revised the coding scheme accordingly and separated the codes into two categories: (a) REI knowledge and attitudes, and (b) knowledge of race and racial-bias. I then coded the remainder of the child interviews. Once coding was complete, themes in the data were discerned by examining code counts and differences in responses by demographic characteristics such as children's age, gender, and racial make-up (i.e., multiracial, multiethnic, specific ethnic groups).

Parent Interviews

A diverse team of Asian American scholars analyzed the parent interview data, following the thematic analysis process outlined by Braun & Clark (2006). First, I familiarized myself with the data by conducting interviews, taking notes during meetings in which the team of

interviewers discussed their reflections, transcribing interviews, checking interview transcripts, and reading through 20% of the parent interview transcripts from the SoCal site, since the SoCal site finished data collection before the other study sites (Braun & Clark, 2006). This process informed the development of a coding scheme using both inductive and deductive code development approaches (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Next, a larger diverse team of seven Asian American researchers (ethnicities represented: Japanese, Korean, Indian, Indian-Iranian, Vietnamese), including the principal investigator at the SoCal site, graduate and undergraduate students, and post-bac and post-doc scholars met weekly to read and discuss reactions and reflections on a subset of transcripts. The purpose of these discussions was to gain a range of in-group and out-group perspectives and interpretations of participants' voices, given the diverse views and experiences that were represented in the team (Armstrong et al., 1997). The transcripts were randomly selected for group discussion, but were balanced by children's age, gender, racial-ethnic make-up, and parent gender to ensure a diverse array of participant voices were examined. After discussing about 10% of the SoCal transcripts, I used the detailed discussion notes to revise the initial coding scheme, and then a subgroup of the research team collaborated to further refine the codebook. Although the initial code development was completed with just the SoCal transcripts, I anticipated that the codebook would require some revisions once the codes were applied to the transcripts from the other sites. I then imported all codes and corresponding definitions to the qualitative analysis software, Dedoose.

Coding was completed by a diverse team of coders that consisted of four graduate students (ethnicities: Filipina, Japanese, Indian-Iranian, Vietnamese[8]) and one Indian American

[8] Approximately midway through the coding process, the Vietnamese American graduate student left the team and another graduate student who was Filipina American joined. The new coder had supervised data collection and conducted interviews with families residing in the Southwest and was already familiar with the study. I onboarded

post-doctoral scholar. Each transcript from the SoCal site was double-coded in Dedoose. Once coding was complete for all transcripts, the coding team discussed a higher-order reorganization of the codes to identify broader categories and potential themes within the data (Braun & Clark, 2006; Saldaña, 2022). This process led to a restructuring of the codebook, including merging, splitting, and adding new codes. Dr. Mistry and Dr. Lee also provided feedback, which aided in further clarifying elements of the codebook. After the codebook revisions were complete, the transcripts from the SoCal site were recoded using the same double-coding method.

Next, the coding team coded the remaining transcripts from the other three data collection sites. While applying the codes to the new transcripts, several additional inductive codes were added to reflect the new perspectives that were emerging in the transcripts. Many of the codes that were added were related to different RES approaches, experiences, and views shared by first generation parents, who were less represented in the sub-sample from the SoCal site. Once all new codes were added to the codebook, I re-read all transcripts from the SoCal site and added the new codes when present in the data. To identify themes for this study, I identified a subset of parent interview themes that were particularly relevant to the child interview and parent-child dyad comparison themes. This process occurred in tandem with the child-parent comparison analysis, which is described in detail next.

Child and Parent Interview Comparisons

I primarily conducted the analysis to compare child and parent interviews, in close consultation with Dr. Mistry. Since I had gained familiarity with the child and parent interview data through the above coding processes, the first step included completing close readings of both parent and child interviews within a parent-child dyad, and writing memos to document

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the new coder and reviewed her code applications to ensure she was applying the codes in similar ways with the other coders.

areas of concordance (i.e., when the child and the parent shared similar perspectives around the same topic) and potential areas of discordance (i.e., when the child and parent shared different perspectives around the same topic). After reading through 25% of the parent-child dyad data, I organized the emerging areas of concordance and discordance into two categories: (1) children's REI knowledge and attitudes vs. parents' cultural and REI socialization practices, and (2) children's knowledge of race and racial bias vs. parents' racial socialization practices.

The remaining transcripts were then systematically compared by examining children's interview responses with the codes that had been applied to their parents' interview. Specifically, I checked whether parent interview codes that described the content of (a) cultural socialization (e.g., celebration of cultural holidays and festivals), (b) REI socialization (e.g., explicit discussion with child about their REI), and (c) racial socialization (e.g., prior conversations about interpersonal racism) had been applied. For example, if the child mentioned that they were aware of their REI because they had talked about their REI with their parent, and the code, "parent discusses REI with child," was present in the corresponding parent interview, concordance between child and parent perspectives was documented, along with a brief memo that described the concordance (i.e., both child and parent mention prior discussions about REI). When areas of concordance or discordance were unclear, the full parent interview transcript was referenced to gain a deeper understanding of the parent's perspective. During the systematic comparison process, it became apparent that, for some parent-child dyads, there were no clear examples of concordance or discordance, often because the child interview data were limited (e.g., child mostly said "I don't know," or provided very brief responses). In these instances, excerpts were categorized as "vague." Once all parent-child dyad data had been compared, I examined the memos for all three categories (i.e., concordance, discordance, vague) to examine patterns and

themes within each category. These emerging themes were discussed with Dr. Mistry, to clarify theme definitions and gain additional interpretations of the data.

Results

I first present findings from the child interviews, specifically outlining how children identified and made sense of their REI and described their understanding of race and racism. Then, I describe related themes from the parent interviews on their REI socialization and racial socialization practices. I end by comparing children's and parents' perspectives, examining for areas of concordance or discordance between (a) children's REI identification and meaning making and parents' REI socialization, and (b) children's understanding and experiences with racial bias and parents' racial socialization practices. When describing the themes, "many" is used to describe findings that were present in 51% or more participants, "some," is used to describe findings that are present in 21-50% of participants, and "few" is used to describe findings that are present in 20% or fewer participants.

RQ1a: Asian American Children's REI Identification and Meaning Making

Most children were able to identify their REI and their responses were categorized as: *Ethnicity American* (e.g., Filipino American), *monoethnic* (e.g., Vietnamese), *American*, *Asian*, *Asian American*, *multiracial* (e.g., Chinese and White), and *other* (e.g., Southeast Asian). The most common response (28%, n = 19) across all ages and racial-ethnic make-up was *monoethnic*, followed by *American* (19%, n = 13) (see Table 3). The variation in ways that children identified their REI seemed to reflect, in part, how children were wrestling with integrating their nationality and racial-ethnic identity. Some children who identified with an *Ethnicity* label shared a strong connection with their family's origin country and ethnic heritage, like Nadeeka, a 10-year-old Sri Lankan American girl (*SW*), who explained why she identified most with being Sri Lankan: "I

always feel like I really belong in Sri Lanka. I'm not saying that I don't belong here [in America]. It's just [that] I know that I can really relate to people in Sri Lanka."

In contrast, other children who identified with their *American* identity felt a strong connection with their birthplace. For instance, Aaron, a 7-year-old Filipino-Chinese American boy (*SW*), shared that he identified most as American "because the only language that I could [*sic*] speak is English because I'm from America." For children who identified as either *Asian American* or *Ethnicity American*, a few described the process of integrating their racial-ethnic and American identities, including a 7-year-old Indian American boy, Rian (*East*), who described his confusion with his ethnic and American identities: "I didn't think that I was Indian because I was of born here [in America]. But then I realized that my parents are Indian." In this way, the process of REI identification required many Asian American children to consider how they integrated or separated their racial-ethnic heritage with their nationality.

Children's racial-ethnic make-up (i.e., monoethnic, multiethnic, or multiracial) seemed to inform how children thought about different racial-ethnic labels. For instance, multiethnic children most often selected the term *Asian*, which may have been due in part to the pan-ethnic label encompassing their multiple ethnic identities (e.g., "I'm both Korean and Chinese. I feel like Asian would sum it all up" *Sara, 11-year-old, Chinese-Korean American girl, SW*). The labels, *Asian American* or *Ethnicity American*, appeared to have different meanings for monoracial and multiracial children. Monoracial children often selected *Asian American* or *Ethnicity American* as labels that integrated their racial-ethnic heritage and birthplace (e.g., "I'm obviously Indian and then I also was born here so I'm American. So, Indian American" *Neeta, 8-year-old, Indian American girl, East*). Instead, multiracial children often selected *Asian American* or *Ethnicity American* as labels that represented their mixed heritage (e.g., "Because

my mom is Asian and my dad's American" *Tyler, 11-year-old, Chinese-White American boy, SW*). Since most of the multiracial children were Asian-White American, it is possible that many children equated *American* with their White heritage and opted to use *Asian American* or *Ethnicity American* to represent their multiple racial-ethnic heritages. Thus, there was also variability in how children identified their REI as they considered their own racial-ethnic make-up and nationality.

Sources of REI Knowledge for Children

Children described their REI in terms of: (a) *their heritage, birthplace, and where they lived*, (b) *their family's heritage and origins*, (c) *cultural activities*, (d) *conversations with parents*, (e) *their language abilities*, and (f) *their phenotype* (see Table 4 for example quotes). Most children referenced their own *heritage, birthplace, and where they lived* and/or their *family's heritage* (e.g., "I wasn't born in China, but my parents were. I was born in the U.S." *Gianna, 9-year-old, Chinese American girl, MW*) and provided examples of cultural activities (e.g., food, holidays, visiting origin country) that made them feel like they belonged to their racial-ethnic group (e.g., "We eat a lot of rice and curries. There's this traditional celebration called Vesak, where we celebrate the death, the enlightenment and the birth of Lord Buddha." *Anesha, 7-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, MW*). Some children referenced prior conversations with their parents, demonstrating how children rely on their parents to learn the appropriate language to describe their REI (e.g., "I asked my dad if I was Filipino, and he said 'Yes,' because my mom is Filipino." *Autumn, 7-year-old, Filipino-White-Native American girl, SW*). In addition, some children referenced their language abilities (e.g., "I can speak Chinese and I know how to say [*sic*] English and spell English." *Austin, 6-year-old, Chinese American boy, SoCal*). A few children referenced their own phenotype when discussing their REI (e.g., "I

feel like I look more Indian." *Ishaan, 11-year-old, Indian-Vietnamese American boy, SoCal*). Thus, Asian American children were making sense of their REI by considering factors like, their birthplace, cultural markers (e.g., language), family origins, explicit conversations with their parents, and perceptions from others.

Children's REI Attitudes

Overall, children expressed positive REI attitudes (e.g., proud, happy, like, important) (*Mean* = 3.7; *SD* = 0.4). In justifying their responses, children referenced: (a) *their REI was a part of their self and family*, (b) *being different or unique*, (c) *liking engaging in cultural activities*, (d) *other*, and (e) *I don't know* (see Table 5 for example quotes). For example, children frequently attributed their positive attitudes to their REI being an integral part of their sense of self and/or an important aspect of their family (e.g., "[Being Asian American is] very important because it's a part of my identity." *Anela, 11-year-old, Chinese-Japanese-Vietnamese American girl, SoCal*). A few children expressed positive REI attitudes because they felt different, unique, or special in comparison to their peers (e.g., "I feel proud that I'm Sri Lankan. And I'm glad that I'm different from everyone else." *Dayani, 10-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, SW*). In contrast, a few children shared mixed feelings – they liked aspects of their REI but their REI was not a core part of their sense of self because they believed race did not matter or that their REI was not a major part of their everyday experiences. For example, one 11-year-old Japanese-Korean-White American girl, Maddie (*MW*), shared, "I like [that] my heritage is more than one race… [But being Asian] doesn't really matter to me that much because I don't think it matters what race you are." Another 11-year-old girl, Elise, who was Taiwanese-White American (*SoCal*) shared mixed feelings, "It's pretty cool that I can go to Taiwan and I won't be completely out of place since I'm partially Taiwanese…[But] I don't really think that [being Taiwanese] matters

because I haven't been there much." In this way, a few children, like Maddie and Elise, liked aspects of their REI, but did not feel that their REI was central to their identity.

RQ1b: Children's Knowledge and Awareness of Racial Bias

Across all ages, most children were aware of racial bias (i.e., sometimes children can be treated differently because of their skin color, race, ethnicity, or how they look). Their responses justifying this fell into one of five categories: (a) *knew someone who experienced racial bias*, (b) *experienced racial bias*, (c) *learned in school*, (d) *media*, and (e) *conversations with parents* (see Table 6 for example quotes). Some children mentioned knowing someone, such as a friend or family member, who had experienced racial bias (e.g., "Someone called my friend a terrorist, which I think is really wrong." *Himari, 11-year-old, Chinese-Indonesian-White American girl, MW*). A few children mentioned their own firsthand experiences with racial bias (e.g., "I told [a friend that] I use my hands to eat. And she's like 'Ew, I would never like to be part of that culture.' … It didn't make me feel good." *Anesha, 7-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, MW*). In this way, many children were aware of racial bias through first or secondhand experiences.

While some children had neither experienced racial bias nor knew anyone who had experienced racial bias, they mentioned learning about racial bias in school (e.g., "[My teacher] just mentioned it when a lot of kids were being really mean…They were calling them names." *Jordan, 7-year-old, Japanese-Latina-White American girl, SW*). Often, children shared that they learned about racial bias in school through lessons about Black history, like Martin Luther King Jr. and enslavement of Black individuals (e.g., "In school, we were learning about Martin Luther King Jr. That's where I think I heard where people- they were treated… because of their skin color and stuff" *Louis, 7-year-old, Filipino-White American boy, SoCal*). A few children mentioned learning about racial bias through media (e.g., "I read some books about racism...I

heard that story I was like, 'Oh, okay. Yep. That's important.'" *Isaac, 11-year-old boy, Chinese-White American boy, MW*) or through prior conversations with their parents (e.g., "My mom told me." *Chloe, 7-year-old, Chinese-Filipino-Japanese American girl, SoCal*). Notably, a few children between the ages of 6 and 9 were unaware of racism or thought it had ended (e.g., "I think it's been all sorted out with Martin Luther King, so I think we're good." *Maya, 7-year-old, Japanese-White American girl, SoCal*). Thus, children were making sense of race and racial bias through a variety of sources of information.

RQ2: The Role of Parental RES

In alignment with the children's perspectives outlined above, I first describe parents' socialization efforts related to their children' REI. Then, I describe how parents' approaches to talking about race and racism with their children were shaped by their children's proximal contexts (e.g., current events, racial-ethnic diversity of school and neighborhood).

REI Socialization

Parents conveyed information about children's REI through everyday practices (e.g., eating Asian foods, speaking heritage language at home), cultural activities (e.g., visiting origin country, celebrating holidays, spending time with extended family), and direct conversations about REI with their children. While some parents reported engaging in both cultural activities and direct conversations about REI with their children, first generation parents mentioned focusing on cultural practices more often than having explicit REI conversations with their children. For example, Sanjay, a first generation Indian American father of Anya, an 8-year-old Indian American girl (*MW*), explained how they relied on community groups to maintain cultural traditions: "I'm from India, [and] we don't celebrate the way we used to in India. But, there are lots of groups in Minnesota, [even] from our state [in India]. They conduct the celebrations, so

we go to most of those." In contrast, 1.5+ generation parents expressed varied levels of comfort in engaging in cultural practices and more frequently mentioned engaging in direct conversations about REI with their children. For instance, Madeline, a second generation Taiwanese American mother of Seth, a 9-year-old Taiwanese American boy (*SoCal*), shared:

> Since birth, I made it a point to solely speak to Seth in Mandarin. Now we speak English because I was born here too, so I can't really keep up with his questions in Mandarin …[But] doing that was very definitive, like this is part of our identity. And…when we went back to Taiwan, at a young age, like one or two, [I had to] explain like, 'Yeah, you're American,' [and] Seth was like, 'Wait, I'm American? But I'm Taiwanese.'

Madeline's experience illustrates the very intentional and effortful decisions required for many 1.5 and second generation Asian American parents when engaging in cultural socialization, and the explicit REI conversations that may arise at a very young age as children are learning about their identities. Further, most parents of multiracial children mentioned explicitly talking about REI with their children. Vivian, a second generation Filipina American mother of Malia, a 10-year-old Filipina-Japanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), shared that when her children were younger they had asked, "'What am I?' 'Am I Japanese? Am I Filipino?' So, I would just tell them, 'You're mixed race. Or you can tell people that I'm Japanese and Filipino.'" While Malia had asked Vivian explicitly for REI labels, other parents shared prior conversations in which their multiracial children decided their own identities. For example, Ingrid, a first generation Taiwanese American mother of Elise, an 11-year-old Taiwanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), mentioned how Elise was exploring her many identities:

> For Elise, since she's biracial, maybe it's a little bit more complicated for her to find that identity. I think she identifies with a lot of different things. She would tell us that she is

one-third American, one-third Belgian, and one-third Taiwanese, and I thought that was a really interesting concept.

Like Vivian and Ingrid, other parents shared that they had helped their multiracial children name their multiple identities and many anticipated that the conversation would evolve as their children grew older and continue to explore their identities and develop a sense of self. In this way, Asian American parents were actively engaged in cultural socialization activities and explicit REI conversations to help their children learn about and make sense of their REIs.

Racial Socialization

Parents' decisions on how to talk about race and racism with their children were often driven by their children's proximal contexts. Most parents mentioned that their children were exposed to racially diverse environments, whether in their neighborhood or their school. There were a few regional patterns in the sample, wherein families who resided in the East and the Southwest were more likely to describe residing in neighborhoods or attending schools that had same-ethnic peers or other Asian American peers, whereas families who resided in the Midwest more often described their neighborhood as majority White, with sometimes more exposure to other Asian Americans and non-White peers in their children's schools. Among families who resided in Southern California, some parents described being in racially diverse contexts (i.e., exposure to many different racial-ethnic groups, including Asian Americans), and some described being in majority White neighborhoods with some exposure to other Asian Americans or same-ethnic peers in their children' schools. Importantly, the neighborhood and school contexts shaped how parents oriented towards their racial socialization practices. For some families, conversations about race and racism were sparked by children' firsthand experiences with racism and observations about race, other people's experiences with racism, and current

events (e.g., Black Lives Matter protests, anti-Asian attacks during COVID-19 pandemic). In contrast, for another subset of families, parents believed that their children's proximal contexts lowered the chance of their children experiencing racism, and thus informed parents' decisions to avoid conversations about race and racism with their children.

Children's Experiences with Racism and Observations About Race. Conversations about race and racism were sometimes sparked by children's experiences with racism as well as children's questions and comments about their skin color and race. For example, Vivian shared an anecdote that illustrates how the racial make-up of children's proximal contexts matter in shaping children's racialized experiences, and subsequent RES conversations:

> [A] kid called Malia ching chong… I think she feels very alone dealing with it. Her school is predominantly White, very old money. So, I told her those kids are never going to experience the world the way you are. (*Vivian, second generation Filipina American mother of Malia, 11-year-old Filipina-Japanese-White American girl, SoCal*)

Other parents mentioned how their children made comments or asked questions about skin color, prompting a conversation about race. For example, James, a first generation Chinese-Filipino American father of Aaron, a 7-year-old Chinese-Filipino American boy (*SW*), shared the following conversation together:

> Aaron's always [been] observant with his skin color. It started with him [asking], 'Oh, why is my brother darker than me? He's more brown than me.' And then when he went to school, he would ask me, 'Why are there more light-colored people in this side, and here there's not a whole lot?' … So, we explain to him that we're different because we're not from here. Your parents came from another country.

Through both excerpts, it is evident that children at this age are developing their sense of self in relation to the people they interact with daily, like classmates and siblings. Given these observations and curiosities, parents let their children's experiences and questions direct their conversations about race and racism, with many using these opportunities to create brief teachable moments.

Other's Experiences with Racism. Some parents mentioned that they had talked about racism with their children because a friend or family member had experienced racism. For example, Mai, a 1.5 generation Vietnamese American mother of Ishaan, an 11-year-old Indian-Vietnamese American boy (*SoCal*), mentioned a prior conversation she had with her son: "Ishaan's friend who's Black told him when he's out with his father who's Black [they've] been called the N-word. It obviously made an impression on Ishaan because he told me, and he still talks about his friend's experience." Mai then emotionally shared how she wanted Ishaan to be aware of racism targeting the Black community:

> We talk about Black Lives Matter. We talk about (*voice cracks*) … Trayvon Martin … I think about what it's like as a mother and if Ishaan were just walking home (*wipes eyes*) and having something like that happen. He usually doesn't see me get this emotional about it, but I cried when the verdict came down for Ahmaud Arbery. So, he knows [about] the racist things that happened (*sniffles*) … I talk to him about [how] he's privileged in a lot of ways, that we have resources, and he hasn't had these overt things happening, [but] that it does happen all the time. And then he relates that back to his friend, where he's a child and he's walking with his dad, and he's called these things.

Mai highlighted how she wanted Ishaan to be aware of examples of anti-Black racial incidents that were more distal to Ishaan and could tell that he was connecting those distal events

to his own everyday contexts as he considered his own friend's experiences with racism. Her approach and motivation illustrates how some parents' RES efforts intentionally raised awareness of racism that other racial-ethnic groups faced so that their children could recognize and stand up for their friends and peers.

Current Events. The period of data collection (i.e., March - December 2022) followed a period that included several recent high-profile racial events, including the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests in 2020 and the violent anti-Asian attacks and Stop Asian Hate rallies during the COVID-19 pandemic. Parents' conversations about race and racism with their children were often shaped by these events and subsequent reactions within children's proximal contexts.

Black Lives Matter. Conversation about BLM varied depending on whether families were within or outside of the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Since George Floyd was murdered in Minneapolis in March 2020, most parents in the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area felt that conversations about racism were unavoidable, with many also discussing the role of police with their children. Marcus, a first generation Chinese American father of Isaac, a 10-year-old Chinese-White American boy (*MW*), shared:

> In the city, [the] George Floyd thing, that [was a] big moment. And [explaining] why people behave the way they behave. The cop will never do that to a White person. Just reverse [the] roles – if the cops are Black and then the person you kneed on the neck is White, and you'll see the difference. It would never happen. So those big, singular events, yes, we talk to them about that specifically.

Another parent, Mang, a second generation Hmong American mother of Hlee, a 6-year-old Hmong American girl (*MW*), shared that the George Floyd murder was one of the few instances where she had talked about racism with Hlee:

> We don't really talk about [racism] unless something happens, and then we talk about it. Like, with the George Floyd murder and stuff, [we talked] about what's going on… For them, they learn from school [that] police are good, they're helpful. And it's like, yes, and for some people, sometimes when they call the police, bad things happen.

In this way, for many families in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, conversations seemed centered on why George Floyd was murdered, including explaining the racial and power dynamics between a White police officer and a Black man, and a broader conversation about the role of police. In contrast, families in other regions of the United States focused conversations less on George Floyd's murder and placed more attention on the BLM protests that were occurring in closer proximity to their home. For instance, in Southern California, Kendall, a second generation Chinese American mother of Riley, an 11-year-old Chinese-White American girl, talked about BLM with Riley, without mentioning George Floyd:

> During Black Lives Matter, we talked about it a lot. We didn't talk about George Floyd specifically. At the time, I just thought [it was] not age appropriate. I think she knew in general what happened, but we didn't talk about specifics. That was probably one of the first big times we've ever specifically talked about racism.

Distinct from the parents in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Kendall's physical distance from where George Floyd was murdered likely provided her the choice on whether to talk about Floyd with Riley, illustrating how the proximal context can dictate the content of conversations about racism. Notably, for some parents like Kendall and Mang, the BLM protests sparked conversations about racism for the first time with their children, highlighting the important role that macro-level events can play in sparking general conversations about racism, including racism targeting other racial-ethnic groups.

Sometimes conversations about BLM that children had with peers or in school sparked conversations in the home. As an example, Ingrid mentioned an anecdote when she talked about BLM with her daughter, Elise, as she reflected on her teacher's comments:

> Elise brought up to us that her teacher in the virtual classroom, [was] saying that while Black lives matter, she thought all lives matter. Surprisingly, Elise told us that she didn't think her teacher understood what Black Lives Matter really means. Because that really means that they have been treated unfairly for a long time, and therefore, it has to be emphasized that their lives matter, too. She was nine or ten-years-old and said that was a misinterpretation by her teacher, so I thought that was pretty encouraging. (*Ingrid, first generation Taiwanese American mother of Elise, 11-year-old Taiwanese-White American girl, SoCal*)

Ingrid's story highlights how children like Elise are critically processing messages from various sources (e.g., teachers, school) as they construct their own understanding of race-related concepts, like racism and BLM.

Anti-Asian Racism. The rise in overt anti-Asian racism during the COVID-19 pandemic also spurred conversations about race and racism among many Asian American families. For example, Ramona, a first generation Chinese American mother of Alice, a 9-year-old Chinese American girl (*MW*) shared the following anecdote:

> I think Alice's first impression about racism might be from President Trump, [when he] was saying this is like [a] Chinese virus. And I think she remembers people had protests like Stop Asian Hate. And that's her very first exposure, being 6 or 7 years old. She probably saw [the] news [and] asked me, 'Why [do] people hate Asians?'

Ramona's story illustrates how macro-level events and narratives can seep into the home in a way that makes conversations about racism feel unavoidable and necessary to help children understand what is happening, particularly when their in-group is targeted. Another parent, Adam, a second generation Chinese American father with an 11-year-old Chinese-Korean American daughter, Katherine (*MW*), shared how their conversations about race and racism shifted since the murders of Asian American women in Atlanta in 2021:

> We've talked a lot since the murders in Atlanta in 2021, about [how], as young Asian females, there are certain things that people will expect out of them, [including] that they're quiet or submissive. And those are not children that I'm raising. I'm raising kids to be outspoken, and to stand up for themselves and their feelings.

Adam's approach exemplifies how some parents are tailoring their RES to their children's intersectional experiences – in this case as Asian American girls – and how specific macro-level events can sharpen parents' attention to particular racial stereotypes. In sum, many Asian American parents engaged in conversations about race and racism with their children often in response to experiences and events relevant to or sparked by children's proximal contexts.

Racism Not Relevant to Children' Proximal Context. In contrast to having explicit conversations about race and racism, another subset of parents shared that they mostly had not or rarely talked about race and racism with their children because their children did not encounter racism in their daily lives. A few 1.5+ generation parents shared this sentiment, like Allison, a second generation Filipina American mother of Louis, a 7-year-old Filipino-White American boy (*SoCal*), who shared the following:

> We don't... talk about racism. It's not that I'm afraid of it. It's just that it hasn't happened in our family yet, where it needed to be addressed. Just because I feel like it can be kind of an adult thing and I don't know how much Louis grasps.

Allison's uncertainty on how to talk about racism with her 7-year-old son was common among many parents as they grappled with how to explain racism to their children in developmentally appropriate and relatable ways. However, this uncertainty, combined with the perceived lack of need to address any race-related events in the family seemed to lead Allison to avoid the topic of racism with Louis. Similarly, Henry, a fourth generation Japanese American father of Lucia, a 12-year-old Filipina-Japanese American girl (*SoCal*), mentioned that they had not talked about the recent rise in anti-Asian hate because Henry believed it was not relevant to Lucia's daily experiences. Henry explained, "If it was happening to people we knew, or in our area, it would have been something that I would have wanted to warn Lucia about." Thus, for some parents like Henry, the decision to proactively talk about anti-Asian racism was dependent on the likelihood that their children would encounter it in their daily lives, with many anticipating that they would talk more about race and racism with their children as they got older.

Several parents who voiced these sentiments were first generation parents, with many explaining that they had not talked about race and racism with their children because their children had never mentioned experiencing racism. For example, Sheila a first generation mother of an 8-year-old girl, Neeta (*NC*), shared that she had never talked about racism with Neeta before because "I have never seen her coming from school or some other place being upset [that] someone has [made fun of] her hair or her language or anything else. I haven't heard anything, so we probably have never had a conversation." Some parents did not take a proactive approach

because they felt the conversation about racism was unnecessary or they felt protective of their children's well-being. For instance, Ela, a first generation Indian American mother of a 7-year-old Indian American boy, Rian (*East*), shared that she had not told Rian that he might experience racism because "this community is a lot safer than if I was living in an all-White Republican state. We have a lot of cultural diversity. I never want [my kids] to feel less than or feel fearful because of who they are." In this way, the children's proximal contexts and the perceived low likelihood of encountering racism dictated first generation parents' decisions to avoid conversations about race and racism with their children.

RQ3: Concordance and Discordance in Children's and Parents' Perspectives

Comparing Children's REI Knowledge and Attitudes with Parents' REI Socialization

Most parent-child dyads demonstrated concordance between the ways that children identified and made sense of their REI and parents' reported RES practices, particularly their cultural and REI socialization efforts. For parent-child dyads in which the child identified most with their *American* identity, the potential concordance or discordance was unclear because of methodological limitations: Since parents were not systematically asked about how they engaged in socializing their children about being American, there were limited parent data to compare with children's responses about their knowledge and feelings about being American. Notably, there were no examples of discordance between children's and parents' responses.

There were three common patterns of concordance in the content of children's and parents' responses. The first form of concordance was when children referenced prior conversations with their parents about their REI and parents also mentioned deliberate conversations about their children's REI. For example, Jordan, a 7-year-old Japanese-Mexican-White American girl (*SW*), shared that she had talked to her parents about being Asian American

and "…that I'm not fully Asian. 'Cause I'm Asian American. [And] how my eyes are…different from fully Asian people?" Jordan's mother, Hana, who was a fourth generation Japanese-White American also shared, "I do have more explicit conversations around being Japanese or half Mexican with Jordan than my parents ever did." As a parent of a multiracial child, Hana mentioned she was deliberate in her REI conversations with Jordan, and Jordan's response suggests that these conversations may be resonating and helping to shape how Jordan thinks about her own REI.

The second form of concordance was when children referenced participating in cultural activities that their parents had also mentioned during their interviews. For example, when asked to share a cultural activity that made him feel Filipino American, Aidan, a 10-year-old Filipino American boy (*SoCal*), shared, "One time my family gathered, and it's called the 'boodle fight,' and it's a bunch of banana leaves on a table and there's a bunch of food. And you just take the food and eat it." Similarly, his mother, Louella, a second generation Filipina American mother shared that "food is another top experience that we have them learn about our heritage and culture. So, we try to cook it at home, and I try to teach them the names in Tagalog." The focus on food experiences as well as cultural and religious celebrations (e.g., Diwali, Lunar New Year) was common among many children's and parent's responses, demonstrating how parent's cultural socialization efforts related to food and celebrations particularly resonated with children.

The final form of concordance was when children expressed positive attitudes (e.g., pride, happiness) towards their REI and parents shared a desire to instill racial-ethnic pride and/or positive REI attitudes in their children. For example, Himari, an 11-year-old Indonesian-Chinese-White American girl (*MW*) shared that being Asian made her feel "empowered and different in a good way." These sentiments were mirrored in her second generation Indonesian-

Chinese-White American mother, Amelia's, hope to instill in her children, "confidence and appreciation [for] why they are the way they are. And, to celebrate it and not feel shame about it and to just really embrace all of it." Another child, Seth, a 9-year-old Taiwanese American boy (*SoCal*), shared, "My mom said that I should be proud that I'm Asian American." Similarly, his mother, Madeline, who was second generation Taiwanese American, shared that "Being Asian American has always been a big part of who I am…So, I want Seth to be proud of being Taiwanese [and] being Asian American." Thus, Amelia and Madeline's efforts to instill feelings of REI pride and confidence appeared to be resonating with their children, illustrating the importance of parental RES efforts during this developmental period so that Asian American children build a positive sense of self and identity.

Comparing Children's Knowledge of Racial Bias with Parents' Racial Socialization Practices

Some parent-child dyads demonstrated concordance between children's understanding of racial bias and parents' RES efforts, particularly their racial socialization practices. Some parent-child dyads demonstrated discordance, whether parents misunderstanding their children's awareness of race and racism, or children sharing limited awareness of racial bias, despite parents' racial socialization efforts. For some parent-child dyads, the concordance or discordance between children's and parents' responses were unclear due to limited data on the children's understanding of racial bias.

Concordance between Children's and Parents' Perspectives. The following two forms of concordance were identified: (a) children demonstrated an awareness of racial bias – whether providing an example for when they or someone they knew experienced racial bias or explaining where they learned about racial bias – and parents described prior conversations about race and racism with their children; and (b) children stated that they were unaware of racial bias and

parents also shared that they had not talked about race and racism with their children. As an example of the first form of concordance, Riley, an 11-year-old Chinese-White American girl (*SoCal*) shared that she was aware of racial bias because "a lot of times people in my class, they talk about their parents who were kind of bullied because they were Asian. And my mom also talked about it." Riley's mother, Kendall, who was second generation Chinese American, shared that she had talked about racism with Riley so that she knows that "racism exists, whether or not she experiences it. I hope she never does. But, bets are that she will, so I wanted her to be prepared." The concordance between Riley and Kendall's responses illustrates how direct conversations between parents and children can play an important role in informing children's developing understanding of race and racial bias during this developmental period. In contrast, a few parent-child dyads demonstrated concordance when children were unaware of racial bias, and parents similarly mentioned that they had not, or rarely, talked about racism. For example, as mentioned, Sheila shared that she had not talked about race and racism with her 8-year-old daughter, Neeta, because Neeta had never come to her talking about an experience with racism (*First generation Indian American mother of 8-year-old Indian American girl, East*). In concordance with Sheila's approach, when the interviewer asked Neeta if she knew that people are sometimes treated differently because of skin color, race, or ethnicity, Neeta shared, "I actually never knew." While there were only a few parent-child dyads that demonstrated this form of concordance, all were those with children between the ages of 6 and 8.

Discordance between Children's and Parents' Perspectives. There were also some examples of discordance between children's understanding of racial bias and parents' RS-related beliefs and practices. While the examples of discordance were mostly among parent-child dyads with 6- to 9-year-old children, there were a few examples of discordance among parent-child

dyads with 10- to 12-year-old children as well. The first form of discordance emerged across all ages and was apparent when parents mostly avoided conversations about race and racism with their children, but children shared that they were aware of racial bias, either through other sources (e.g., school lessons, media) or their own experiences. Within these instances of discordance, some parents mentioned that they rarely talked about racism with their children because they were not sure how much their children understood about race and racism. For example, Mei, a first generation Chinese American mother with a 12-year-old Chinese-White American daughter, Jenny (*SW*), shared the following:

> [School peers] may not think Jenny's Asian [even though] she does look Asian… Somehow, she may not feel this racism thing. And, we are bless[ed] in a good state, city and school. So, I didn't talk too much about racism. It may still take a little time for Jenny to totally understand, at this age. I don't know how much she understands.

In the excerpt, Mei explained that she considered Jenny's multiracial phenotype, the low likelihood of experiencing racism in their "good" neighborhood, and her uncertainty around Jenny's understanding of racism due to her age, to explain why she had not broached the topic of racism with her daughter. However, Jenny shared an example of how she was thinking about her multiracial REI and how she navigated others' monoracist assumptions about her REI with the following response: "I think I should tell people that I'm Scandinavian [to explain] why I don't look Asian that much. I speak Mandarin, sometimes Cantonese, too. So I want to let people know that I'm Asian too…that I can speak those languages." While Jenny's response is not necessarily focused on a specific experience of racial bias, her response implies that she has received monoracist questions or assumptions about her racial identity. Comparing their responses, there appears to be discordance because Mei did not recognize Jenny's experiences with monoracism

and assumed her daughter had a limited understanding of racism, whereas Jenny shared that she was aware of, and tried to combat, others' incorrect assumptions about her multiracial REI, highlighting a more sophisticated awareness of racial bias than what Mei seemed to recognize.

A few parents of multiracial, Asian-White American children shared that they avoided talking about race and racism with their children because they believed their children's multiracial or White-presenting phenotype would protect them from experiencing racism. However, this view was discordant with their children's perspectives, in which children were clearly negotiating their racialized experiences as Asian-White Americans and contending with racial bias from others. For example, Esther, a second generation Japanese-White American mother of Maya, a 7-year-old Japanese-White American girl (*SoCal*), shared that "I don't think anyone would see Maya as Asian. So, she'll never have that experience of being discriminated as an Asian." In contrast, Maya shared how she was negotiating her multiracial identity, in the face of monoracism, where others often denied her Japanese identity, due to her phenotype. Maya shared, "I like being called Japanese… but I don't think it would describe me. People don't believe that I'm Japanese. I like Japan and their culture. I try to be as Japanese as I can, but it's hard to be Japanese." In this way, there was discordance between Esther's belief that her daughter would not experience anti-Asian racism and Maya's racialized experiences, in which she faced another form of racial bias, monoracism, as a mixed-race person.

In addition, there were a few examples of discordance for when parents mentioned engaging in racial socialization with their children, but children seemed unaware of racial bias, or thought that it had ended. For instance, Grace, who was a second generation Vietnamese-Chinese American mother of Xavier, a 7-year-old Vietnamese-Chinese American boy (*SoCal*), shared that she had engaged in racial socialization with Xavier in various ways, including using

books to talk about acknowledging and embracing differences between people, and teaching her son important Asian American historical events. However, during the observation portion of the interview, Xavier appeared to believe that racism had ended:

Xavier: But I don't think I've had this [racism] before because I was born in 2015, so does that happen?

Grace: Oh, so you're asking does racism still exist?

Xavier: It would be stopped by like at least 2005 maybe or something.

Grace: Well, it still exists.

In this way, while Grace was engaging in racial socialization in various ways with her son, Xavier was under the impression that racism was a thing of the past, illustrating how there can be discordance between parents' racial socialization efforts and the ways that children internalize these messages. Notably, this form of discordance only emerged among parent-child dyads with 6- to 9-year-old children. Across these examples of discordance, it is evident that parents' assumptions about their children's racialized experiences and knowledge of racism are not always correct and that parents should check-in with their children about their beliefs and experiences to avoid these misunderstandings.

Discussion

During middle childhood and early adolescence (ages 6-12), Asian American children are beginning to develop their sense of REI and understandings of racial bias in relation to their racialized experiences and the broader discourse about race and racism in the United States (Akiba et al., 2004; Ruble et al., 2004; Williams et al., 2020). Asian American parents are vital in supporting their children as they develop their REI and navigate their racialized environments (Juang et al., 2017; Nguyen et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2022), but limited studies on Asian

American families have examined the role of parental RES in children's REI development and understandings around racial bias, particularly during the middle childhood and early adolescent period. Guided by the Integrated Conceptual Framework, the purpose of the current study was to examine how Asian American children were making sense of their REI and describing their understanding of racial bias, and whether Asian American parents' RES efforts were resonating with their children, by looking for concordance or discordance in children's and parents' responses. Overall, findings demonstrated how context shapes both children's meaning-making around their REI and understanding of racial bias and parents' decisions on how to engage in RES, and how these processes interact together to shape and inform children's developing REI and understandings of race and racial bias.

Asian American Children's REI Knowledge and Attitudes

Asian American 6- to 12-year-old children demonstrated an awareness of their REI and indicated primarily positive REI attitudes. These finding mirror prior findings in which Asian American second and fourth graders have expressed positive REI attitudes and racial in-group preferences (Marks et al., 2007; Pfeifer et al., 2007). When explaining how they were making sense of their REI, children referenced factors like their birthplace, cultural markers of connection (e.g., language, celebrations), and family origins. Children's tendency to reference concrete aspects of their REI aligns with prior studies with Chinese American children (Rogers et al., 2012), and multiethnic and multiracial early adolescents (Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2012). Beyond these concrete examples, children also described how they were beginning to understand the social meanings of their REI, particularly in relation their sense of belonging to their racial-ethnic groups and nationality as Americans. Children were split between identifying strongly with a single racial or ethnic group (e.g., Asian, Filipino), identifying with just their American

nationality (i.e., American), or identifying with a combination of their racial-ethnic and American identities (e.g., Asian American). While the variation in ways of identification were similar to other studies with early adolescents from diverse racial-ethnic backgrounds (Gillen-O'Neel et al., 2012; Rodriguez et al., 2015), the process of figuring out which REI labels to use was perhaps unique for Asian American children, given their racial positioning in which they are perceived as culturally foreign or excluded from the prototypical American identity (Zou & Cheryan, 2017). Thus, Asian American children must contend with how to reconcile their seemingly contradictory identities and decide which identities best represent their sense of belonging to their REI and the United States.

This process of figuring out which identity labels to use also varied by racial-ethnic make-up. Monoracial children tended to wrestle with how or if they wanted to integrate their racial-ethnic identities with their American identity. On the other hand, some Asian-White American multiracial children seemed to conflate the American label with their White identity and used the Asian American or Ethnicity American terms as multiracial labels. In prior studies, White elementary-aged children have been shown to use the American label in place of using the White racial label to describe their REI (Hazelbaker & Mistry, 2021), and while it is possible that the Asian-White American multiracial children in the sample were also conflating White and American, the decision to use American in lieu of White may also be different for Asian-White American multiracial children. For example, it is possible that Asian-White American multiracial children who phenotypically were perceived as Asian or non-White preferred to use the term Asian American to reflect how other people treated them as not White. Since prior literature describes how multiracial children tend to change and shift which REI labels they prefer over time (Echols et al., 2018; Nishina et al., 2010), it is possible that these children may more

critically interrogate their White, Asian, and American identities during adolescence. In sum, Asian American children – both monoracial and multiracial – talked about an active process to figure out what labels to use to describe their REI.

Asian American Children's Awareness of Racial Bias

Most Asian American children in this study were aware of racial bias, and some could provide concrete examples (e.g., firsthand or others' experiences with racial bias) to explain their understanding. This awareness of racial bias is aligned with prior research demonstrating that children from racially diverse backgrounds are aware of racial bias and disapprove of racial discrimination during this developmental period (Brown et al., 2011; Scott et al., 2023). Several children who mentioned learning about racial bias in school provided examples of school lessons about Black civil rights activists (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks) and history (e.g., slavery, segregation), reflecting how Asian American children are often learning about race and racism from a Black-and-White frame (An, 2016), which erases the racialized experiences of Asian Americans and other non-Black People of Color. An examination of history and social studies standards in the four states (i.e., California, Arizona, Minnesota, and North Carolina) where most children resided, revealed that these standards often required that children learn about Black historical figures and events, but only sometimes explicitly recommended that classrooms also include some Asian American historical events (e.g., Japanese American internment, the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act) or learning about immigration or colonization, which could include examples of Asian American experiences (Arizona Department of Education, 2018; California Department of Education, 1998; Minnesota Department of Education, 2021; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2021). Thus, given that Asian American children in this study said they were aware of racial bias because they learned about it

through Black history lessons in school, including Asian American history in elementary-level history and social studies lessons may then help to expand Asian American children's understanding of racial bias so that it also includes their own racial-ethnic group's experiences.

A few children between the ages of 6 and 9 were unaware of racial bias or thought that racism had ended, a sentiment that prior studies have also documented (Rogers et al., 2021). It is important to consider these Asian American children's unawareness of racial bias within context (J. Mistry et al., 2016; Rogers et al., 2020). Their unawareness of racial bias is likely due to a combination of multiple factors, including: (a) their developmental status, (b) the racial diversity of children's contexts as many parents noted that their children were in racially diverse contexts (e.g., exposed to many different racial-ethnic groups, same-race or ethnic peers) and so it was possible that children had yet to encounter (or realize they have encountered) racial bias, and (c) the content of school lessons in which they may not yet have learned about historical or contemporary racism. Looking again at the history and social studies standards in the four states where most children resided, starting from second grade, all four states required gradual learning about the experiences of racially minoritized communities in the United States, but there was considerably more attention on learning about historical racism, starting in third or fourth grade, or approximately ages 8-10 (Arizona Department of Education, 2018; California Department of Education, 1998; Minnesota Department of Education, 2021; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2021). Thus, the variation in awareness of racial bias among these Asian American children reflects how children's developing understandings of race and racial bias are tied to their proximal contexts through everyday experiences, the racial diversity of school and neighborhood environments, and lessons at school. Notably, some children mentioned that they had talked to their parents about race and racial bias, and I now turn to describe how Asian

American parents' RES efforts played a role in both children's developing REI and understanding of racial bias.

Parental RES Informs Children's Developing REI and Understanding of Racial Bias

Parental Cultural Socialization and Children's Developing REI

Asian American parents supported their children's REI development largely through cultural socialization practices and explicit conversations about their REI. In alignment with prior studies, first generation parents expressed an ease with engaging in cultural socialization practices and many were connected to community organizations to support their efforts (Patel et al., 2022). In contrast, 1.5+ generation parents mentioned varied levels of ability to engage in cultural socialization and more reliance on explicit REI discussions to educate their children about their racial-ethnic heritage. These findings are similar to a study by Juang and colleagues (2018) where they found that second generation Asian American parents were more likely to face barriers to engaging in cultural socialization, in comparison to their immigrant parents. In addition, parents of multiracial children most commonly mentioned they had explicitly talked about their children's REI to help them identify and explore their REI labels, supporting prior evidence that parents of multiracial children often intentionally help their children self-categorize their multiracial identities (Seider et al., 2023; Wu et al., 2020). Notably, there were examples of concordance between children's and parents' responses: Children referenced both their parents' cultural socialization efforts (e.g., cultural activities, language) and explicit REI conversations as they talked about how they made sense of their REI. These examples of concordance suggest that parents' cultural and REI socialization efforts are indeed resonating with children and parental socialization serves as an important source of information as children consider what their REI is and what it means to them.

Parental Racial Socialization and Children's Awareness of Racial Bias

Context played an important role in how Asian American parents approached conversations about race and racism with the children. Conversations were often sparked by children's experiences with racial bias or their questions and comments about race and skin color, a theme that has been found in prior studies examining RES among Asian American families (Juang et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2023). Some parents also wanted their children to be aware of racism targeting other racial-ethnic groups and talked about the racialized experiences of people close to their children (e.g., friends, family members) and encouraged their children to stand up for others in the face of racism. In this way, children's proximal contexts shaped the experiences of children and the people in their intimate social circles, which in turn dictated the content of parental racial socialization messages.

Further, since the parent interviews were conducted in the wake of the BLM protests and increasing threat of anti-Asian attacks during the COVID-19 pandemic, many of the parents mentioned that these current events sparked conversations about race and racism with their children. The content of these conversations varied by geographic region, where families that resided in the greater Minneapolis-St. Paul area commonly talked about the murder of George Floyd, the role of police, and the BLM protests with their children, whereas families that resided in other areas of the country tended to focus primarily on the BLM protests. The difference in conversation content was also likely a reflection of the events happening most proximally to the children, highlighting that even the way that macro-level events are discussed can still be shaped by children's contexts.

The racial diversity of children's proximal contexts sometimes influenced parents' decisions not to engage in explicit conversations about race and racism with their children. Some

parents believed that talking about race and racism with their children was not urgent because their children were protected from racism in racially diverse school and neighborhood environments. Parents in the current study mentioned that their children had never told them about experiences of racism, but were ready to address racism, should it become an issue for their children. Thus, for some Asian American parents, the sense of security in environments that were racially diverse or majority Asian American, may have lowered the sense of urgency to discuss racism with their children during the middle childhood and early adolescent period, a belief that was also documented in a study with second generation Asian American parents (Juang et al., 2018), and another study with transracially adopted Korean American parents raising multiracial Asian-White American children (Wu et al., 2020).

Children often referenced some of their parents' racial socialization efforts as they talked about their understanding of race and racial bias. While research shows that children learn about racial bias from multiple sources (Ruck et al., 2021), the concordance between children and parents' responses also provides evidence that parental racial socialization during the middle childhood and early adolescent period is important to help children make sense of race and racial bias. The study findings align with results from a study conducted by Scott et al. (2023), which found that among Asian, Latinx, and White 4- to 10-year-old children, those with parents who had acknowledged racism with their children before were more likely not to approve of race-based discrimination, in comparison to children whose parents reported that they had not acknowledged racism with their children. This suggests that particularly at this younger age, parents' messages about race and racism can inform how children recognize and evaluate examples of racial bias in their everyday contexts.

Notably, a few parent-child dyads demonstrated concordance in views because children who were unaware of racial bias, and parents mentioned they had not discussed race and racism with their children. This form of concordance only emerged among parent-child dyads with 6- to 9-year-olds, potentially reflecting the developmental period in which children are still learning about the existence of racial bias (Brown et al. 2011), and a time when parents may decide to avoid discussions about racism with their children because they believe their children are too young. Further, some parent-child dyads displayed moments of discordance between children's and parents' views. Some parents mentioned that they avoided talking about race and racism with their children because they believed their children were too young to understand racism or believed that there was a low likelihood that their children would experience racism due to their White-presenting phenotype as Asian-White Americans. However, children of these parents exhibited varied examples of awareness of race and racial bias, whether providing examples of racial bias (including monoracism), or describing an internal struggle with their REI, which reflects children's ability to recognize and contend with race-related concepts. The discordance between parents' perceptions of their children's experiences and multiracial children's lived experiences has been documented in other studies with emerging adults (e.g., Atkin & Jones, 2021), but this study may be one of the few examples when such discordance has been examined with parents and their children during the 6 to 12 age range.

A second form of discordance was evident when parents mentioned engaging in racial socialization with their children, but children said they were unaware of racial bias or thought that racism had ended. This provides a helpful example to demonstrate how racial socialization is a dynamic process that requires children to listen and make sense of their parents' messages in relation to other sources of input (e.g., school, peer interactions, media) about race and racial bias

in their lives (Ruck et al., 2021). Sometimes, children may misunderstand, misinterpret, or forget their parents' messages (Hughes et al., 2008). Both forms of discordance demonstrate the importance of checking in with children to better understand their racialized experiences and learn how they are developing their understandings of race and racial bias.

Limitations and Future Directions

While the current study presents novel contributions, there are several limitations to note. The perspectives of Asian American children and parents in the sample are context specific. Families resided in specific geographic regions of the United States, most parents had a four-year college degree or higher, there was a higher representation of mothers than fathers, and all first generation parents were English proficient. Most parents identified as a Democrat or Independent. The study findings should be interpreted with these sample specifications in mind. Future research should examine the experiences of Asian American families from other regions of the United States, such as new immigrant and rural destinations (Kiang & Supple, 2016), and include more fathers, parents who have a two-year college degree or lower, first generation parents who are not comfortable participating in an English-medium study, and parents who identify as Republican. Further, data collection occurred a couple years after the BLM protests in 2020 and during a period of time when there were several high-profile anti-Asian attacks and Stop Asian Hate rallies across the United States. As the findings suggested, these racial events shaped how children were noticing and learning about race and racial bias, and parents often referenced these racial events as catalysts for their conversations about race and racism with their children. Thus, future research should continue to examine how parental RES may shift in relation to different macro-level events and contexts.

In addition, while a large proportion of the sample was multiracial, most of the multiracial families were Asian-White American, which is reflective of most multiracial individuals with Asian heritages in the United States (Budiman & Ruiz, 2021). However, the experiences of multiracial Asian Americans with different racial-ethnic heritages are underrepresented or missing, particularly those that are Asian-Black American. Since the results from this study and prior findings demonstrate that parents will change their RES based on their children's phenotype (Seider et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2020), and the content of race-related conversations will likely change based on whether children may be the targets of anti-Black racism vs. allies with the Black community, future studies should examine how Asian American parental RES may look different among Asian-Black American families. Further, there is a self-selection bias in the sample because only parents who were willing to engage in an explicit conversation about racism with their children participated in the study. As a result, the parents in the sample were likely comfortable or at least willing to engage in such conversations with their children. A couple of parents expressed interest in participating in the study, but either declined or withdrew their data after learning about or engaging in the observation task. Future research should use a different set of procedures that do not require parents to engage in explicit conversations about racism with their children to capture a wider range of Asian American parent perspectives.

From a methodological perspective, because most children completed their semi-structured interviews after they completed the observation task, which included talking about race and racism with their parents, it is possible that children were primed to think more about race and racism, and their REI. Particularly for multiethnic and multiracial children with two parents, children may have been primed to think about their REI that overlapped with the parent

that participated in the observation task with them (e.g., child who was Vietnamese-Chinese American who completed observation with their Vietnamese American mother then may have been primed to think more about their Vietnamese identity when asked to identify their REI). While children may have had a heightened awareness of racial bias, some children still shared that they were unaware of racial bias, suggesting that the priming effect may have been small. Additionally, while we noted patterns by children's age, parental generational status and family racial-ethnic make-up, these were qualitative comparisons and findings are not generalizable to the larger population of Asian American families. Despite these limitations, the study includes notable strengths, such as a diverse Asian American sample, including multiethnic and multiracial families, and specific attention to the middle childhood and early adolescent period, a developmental period that is understudied among literature on children's REI development and parental RES. This study is also one of the few that has directly compared the perspectives of parents and children to better capture how Asian American children are making sense of their parents' RES efforts as they develop their REI and awareness of racial bias.

Conclusion

The study findings highlight that middle childhood and early adolescence are critical developmental periods during which Asian American children are developing their REI and understanding of racial bias, and the important role of parents in facilitating and supporting these developmental processes. As posited by the Integrated Conceptual Framework, context plays a significant role in not only how children make sense of their REI and whether and how they encounter racial bias (e.g., firsthand experience, school lessons, no awareness), but also shapes how parents engage in RES with their children. Notably, findings demonstrate that children are incorporating their parents' RES efforts into their own meaning-making processes as they

describe their sense of REI and awareness of racial bias. Understandably, there were also examples of misunderstandings when comparing children's and parents' perspectives, reaffirming that RES is a dynamic, two-way process that requires children and parents to communicate their views to each other (Juang et al., 2017; Hughes et al., 2008). Since research shows that children are learning about their REI and race-related concepts from a multitude of sources (Ruck et al., 2021), future research should expand on these findings to examine how children are incorporating not only their parents' RES, but other sources of information as they develop their sense of REI and awareness of racial bias.

Table 2

Study 2: Detailed Parent Demographics

Parent Demographics	Total Sample (N = 68)	SoCal Sample (n = 33)	SW Sample (n = 10)	MW Sample (n = 17)	East Sample (n = 8)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Gender					
Woman	53 (78)	30 (91)	8 (80)	11 (65)	4 (50)
Man	15 (22)	3 (9)	2 (20)	6 (35)	4 (50)
Race and Ethnicity					
Monoracial	53 (78)	24 (73)	7 (70)	14 (82)	8 (100)
Chinese	12 (18)	3 (9)	3 (30)	6 (35)	6 (75)
Filipino	10 (15)	7 (21)	2 (20)	0 (0)	1 (13)
Indian	10 (15)	0 (0)	0 (0)	4 (24)	0 (0)
Vietnamese	6 (9)	6 (18)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Taiwanese	5 (7)	4 (12)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (12)
Sri Lankan	3 (4)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Japanese	3 (4)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Another ethnicity (e.g., Korean, Hmong)	5 (7)	1 (3)	0 (0)	2 (12)	0 (0)
Multiethnic (e.g., Chinese-Vietnamese)	9 (13	6 (18)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Multiracial (all Asian-White)	6 (9)	3 (9)	1 (10)	2 (12)	0 (0)
Generational Status					
First generation	21 (31)	2 (6)	7 (70)	7 (41)	5 (63)
1.5 generation	11 (16)	7 (21)	1 (10)	2 (12)	1 (12)
Second generation	33 (49)	23 (70)	1 (10)	7 (41)	2 (25)
Fourth generation	3 (4)	1 (3)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Relationship Status					
Married to child's parent or legal guardian	58 (85)	27 (82)	9 (90)	15 (88)	7 (88)
Divorced	5 (7)	4 (12)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Another relationship status (e.g., widowed)	3 (4)	2 (6)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6)	1 (12)
Parent Education					

Two-year degree or lower	3 (4)	3 (9)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Four-year college degree	19 (28)	10 (30)	4 (40)	4 (24)	1 (13)
Master's or doctorate degree	44 (65)	20 (61)	6 (60)	12 (70)	6 (75)
Missing	2 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	1 (6)	1 (12)
Household Income					
Below $50,000	1 (1)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
$50,000 – $75,000	4 (6)	3 (9)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
$75,001 - $100,000	7 (10)	3 (9)	2 (20)	2 (12)	0 (0)
$100,001 - $150,000	17 (25)	8 (24)	2 (20)	3 (18)	4 (50)
Above $150,000	28 (41)	12 (36)	5 (50)	9 (53)	2 (25)
Missing	11 (16)	6 (18)	1 (10)	1 (12)	2 (25)
Political Affiliation					
Democrat	41 (60)	21 (64)	4 (40)	11 (65)	5 (63)
Independent	9 (13)	4 (12)	2 (20)	3 (18)	0 (0)
Republican	3 (4)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Other	4 (6)	2 (6)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Missing	11 (16)	6 (18)	1 (10)	1 (6)	3 (37)
Political Ideology					
Very liberal	11 (16)	4 (12)	2 (20)	4 (24)	1 (12)
Liberal	27 (40)	15 (46)	1 (10)	8 (47)	3 (38)
Moderate	19 (28)	9 (27)	4 (40)	4 (24)	2 (25)
Conservative	2 (3)	0 (0)	2 (20)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Very conservative	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Missing	9 (13)	5 (15)	1 (10)	1 (6)	2 (25)

Table 3

Study 2: Detailed Child Demographics

Child Demographics	Total Sample (N = 68)	SoCal Sample (n = 32)	SW Sample (n = 10)	MW Sample (n = 17)	East Sample (n = 9)
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Gender					
Girl	42 (62)	18 (56)	7 (70)	13 (77)	4 (44)
Boy	25 (37)	13 (41)	3 (30)	4 (24)	5 (56)
Non-binary	1 (1)	1 (3)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Race and Ethnicity					
Monoracial	22 (32)	7 (22)	2 (20)	7 (41)	7 (67)
Indian	9 (13)	0 (0)	0 (0)	2 (12)	7 (67)
Chinese	6 (9)	2 (6)	0 (0)	3 (18)	0 (0)
Sri Lankan	3 (4)	0 (0)	2 (20)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Another ethnicity (e.g., Cambodian, Taiwanese)	6 (9)	3 (9)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Multiethnic	17 (25)	11 (34)	3 (30)	3 (18)	0 (0)
Chinese-Vietnamese	3 (4)	2 (6)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Chinese-Filipino	2 (3)	1 (3)	1 (10)	0 (0)	0 (0)
Another ethnic background (e.g., Korean-Nepalese)	11 (16)	8 (25)	2 (20)	3 (18)	0 (0)
Multiracial	29 (43)	14 (44)	5 (50)	7 (41)	3 (33)
Asian-White	21 (31)	12 (38)	2 (20)	6 (35)	2 (22)
Asian-Latinx-White	3 (4)	1 (3)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Another racial-ethnic background (e.g., Asian-Latinx)	3 (4)	1 (3)	2 (20)	0 (0)	1 (11)
Generational Status					
1.5 generation	2 (3)	1 (3)	0 (0)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Second generation	20 (29)	2 (6)	7 (70)	6 (35)	6 (67)
Third generation	43 (63)	28 (88)	2 (20)	9 (53)	3 (33)
Fifth generation	3 (4)	1 (3)	1 (10)	1 (6)	0 (0)
Number of Siblings					
Only child	35 (51)	15 (47)	3 (30)	5 (29)	4 (44)
1 sibling	33 (49)	14 (44)	5 (50)	10 (59)	4 (44)
2 or 3 siblings	8 (12)	3 (9)	2 (20)	2 (12)	1 (11)

Table 4

Patterns in Children's REI Identification

		Racial-Ethnic Make-up			Age Group	
Racial-Ethnic Identity Label	Full Sample (N = 68)	Monoethnic (n = 22)	Multiethnic (n = 17)	Multiracial (n = 29)	6-9 (n = 37)	10-12 (n = 31)
American	13 (19%)	4 (18%)	3 (18%)	6 (21%)	7 (19%)	6 (19%)
Asian	8 (12%)	1 (5%)	5 (29%)	2 (7%)	2 (5%)	6 (19%)
Asian American	8 (12%)	2 (9%)	2 (12%)	4 (14%)	5 (14%)	3 (10%)
Ethnicity	19 (28%)	8 (36%)	4 (24%)	7 (24%)	10 (27%)	9 (29%)
Ethnicity American (e.g., Filipino American)	12 (18%)	6 (27%)	3 (18%)	3 (10%)	8 (22%)	4 (13%)
Multiracial identity (e.g., Asian and White)	5 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	5 (17%)	4 (11%)	1 (3%)
Other (e.g., Southeast Asian)	3 (4%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	2 (7%)	1 (3%)	2 6%)

Table 5

Children's REI Meaning Making

Code	Example Quotes
Children's heritage, birthplace, where they live	"I'm Asian, but I'm from America." (*Ella, 7-year-old, Chinese-Korean American girl, SoCal*) "I wasn't born in China, but my parents were. I was born in the U.S." (*Gianna, 9-year-old, Chinese American girl, SW*)
Family heritage and origins	"My parents were born in Asia." (*Leia, 10-year-old Korean-Nepalese American girl, MW*) "Because our family comes from all over India" (*Shivani, 6-year-old Indian American girl, East*)
Cultural activities	"We celebrate Chinese New Year, and we eat a lot of Chinese food. At my school, we sometimes give out red envelopes and sometimes there's a lion dance that comes to the school." (*Sloan, 8-year-old, Taiwanese-White American girl, SoCal*) "We eat a lot of rice and curries. There's this traditional celebration called Vesak, where we celebrate the death, the enlightenment and the birth of Lord Buddha." (*Anesha, 7-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, MW*)
Conversations with parents	"I asked my dad if I was Filipino, and he said 'Yes,' because my mom is Filipino" (*Autumn, 7-year-old, Filipino-White-Native American girl, SW*) "I remember we all used to think that we were Chinese, and then my parents told us that we were more specifically Taiwanese." (*John, 10-year-old, Taiwanese-White American boy, MD*)
Children's language abilities	"I can speak Chinese and I know how to say [*sic*] English and spell English" (*Austin, 6-year-old, Chinese American boy, SoCal*) "The main thing that makes me feel Vietnamese is speaking Vietnamese with my family." (*Jack, 12-year-old, Chinese-Vietnamese American boy, SoCal*)
Children's phenotype	"I look Scandinavian and I can speak Chinese and Cantonese" (*Jenny, 12-year-old, Chinese-White American girl, SW*) "I feel like I look more Indian" (*Ishaan, 11-year-old, Indian-Vietnamese American boy, SoCal*)

Table 6

Common Children's Responses to Explain Positive REI Attitudes

Code	Example Quotes
Part of self and family	"[Being Asian American is] very important because it's a part of my identity." (*Anela, 11-year-old, Chinese-Japanese-Vietnamese American girl, SoCal*) "[Being Indian is] really important because my whole family I think is Indian." (*Asha, 8-year-old Indian American girl, East*)
Different or unique	"I don't really know people outside of my family that are Filipino American. I have like one or two friends that are Filipino Americans, but that's it. So I think it's kind of unique" (*Aidan, 10-year-old, Filipino American boy, SoCal*) "I feel proud that I'm Sri Lankan. And I'm glad that I'm different from everyone else" (*Dayani, 10-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, SW*)
Cultural activities	"[Being Indian is] one hundred percent [important because] I like the festivals. And almost all my cousins, and everyone like that is Indian" (*Anya, 8-year-old, Indian American girl, MW*) "I like being Asian and Taiwanese because I like going to Taiwan and meeting my cousins and Grandpa" (*Dylan, 10-year-old, Taiwanese American boy, SoCal*)
Other	"I'd say [being Asian is] really important to me, because quite a few of my friends are Asian, and I get to learn about different things from them and from my own culture" (*Genevieve, 12-year-old, Chinese-Filipino American non-binary child, SoCal*) "I feel like I can do more things with other people. Like, if someone doesn't understand Chinese maybe I could help them?" (*Adelyn*, *8-year-old, Taiwanese-Mexican American girl, SoCal*)
Don't know	"I'm not sure, [being Sri Lankan] just feels important…kind of" (*Anesha, 7-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, SW*) "I'm proud of being Viet. I can't really…find words to describe [why], but…it makes me feel special." (*Jack, 12-year-old, Chinese-Vietnamese American boy, SoCal*)

Table 7

Children's Awareness of Race and Racism: Sources of Knowledge

Codes	Example Quotes
Knows someone who has experienced racism	"[My friend's] name is Elijah and he's Black. Sometimes when he's with his dad, who's also Black, some people call them [a] certain word that's really bad." (*Ishaan, 11-year-old, Indian-Vietnamese American boy, SoCal*)
	"They were judging [my friend] about [her] lunch and I just jumped in and said 'Hey, that looks pretty good… It's not actually that bad. I've had it before.'" (*Dayani, 10-year-old Sri Lankan American girl, SW*)
Experienced racism	"There was this Latino father or grandfather, and he was just sitting on the bleachers. And then one kid was, like, 'Is that your father?' She thought that I was Mexican… [I felt] really weird since I'm not from Mexico." (*Elise, 11-year-old, Taiwanese-White American girl, SoCal*)
	"Once I had this friend [and] I told [her] I use my hands to eat. And she's like 'Ew, I would never like to be part of that type of culture.' … It didn't make me feel good that she would just be like 'Oh, no, I wouldn't like to be there.'" (*Anesha, 7-year-old, Sri Lankan American girl, MW*)
Learned in school	"In school, we were learning about Martin Luther King Jr. That's where I think I heard where people- they were treated… because of their skin color and stuff" (*Louis, 7-year-old, Filipino-White American boy, SoCal*)
	"[My teacher] just mentioned it [racism] when a lot of kids were being really mean…They were calling them names." (*Jordan, 7-year-old, Japanese-Latina-White American girl, SW*)
Media (e.g., books, movies)	"I read some books about racism...I heard that story I was like, 'Oh, okay. Yep. That's important'" (*Isaac, 11-year-old boy, Chinese-White American boy, MW*)
	"I usually read [about racism] in books. There's a book called *Tryout*. It's about a girl who is Asian American, and her parents once weren't served in a diner just because someone thought they were biracial [and] it was a sin to be biracial." (*Rina, 10-year-old, Indonesian-White American girl, MW*)
Prior conversations with parents	"My mom told me [about racism]" (*Chloe, 7-year-old, Chinese-Filipino-Japanese American girl, SoCal*)
	"My parents taught me about [racism] when I was younger" (*Maddie, 11-year-old, Japanese-Korean-White American girl, MW*)
Unaware of racism	"I think [racism has] been all sorted out with Martin Luther King, so I think we're good." (*Maya, 7-year-old, Japanese-White American girl, SoCal*)
	"I actually never knew." (*Neeta, 8-year-old Indian American girl, East*)

General Discussion

Asian American parents play an important role in supporting their children as they navigate their racialized experiences, develop a positive sense of REI, and learn about concepts like race and racism (Umaña-Taylor & Hill, 2020; Juang et al., 2017). Parental RES is integral to helping children better understand concepts related to race, ethnicity, racism, and culture (Hughes et al., 2006), but studies on Asian American parental RES have focused less on how parents have engaged in direct conversations about race and racism with their children, particularly during middle childhood and early adolescence (Juang et al., 2017). Since the middle childhood and early adolescent years are an important time when Asian American children (including multiracial children) are making sense of their REI and demonstrating awareness of racial bias (Brown, 2011; Rogers et al., 2012), it is important to examine how Asian American parents are engaging in RES to support these developmental processes. Further, as racism remains an unwavering feature of American society (Roberts & Rizzo, 2020), it is important to better understand how Asian American parents are approaching these conversations with their children to highlight what parents are doing well and identify ways to support parents as they navigate these, at times, tough conversations.

This two-study qualitative dissertation aimed to address these gaps by, first, examining the beliefs and motivations undergirding parents' decisions on whether and how to engage in conversations about race and racism with their children. Findings from Study 1 highlight that while some Asian American parents were still waiting to talk about race and racism with their children during the 6- to 12-year-old period, other parents took an active role in talking not only about racism that their children and others may experience, but also how they can constructively combat racism through individual and collective actions. To further examine how parents'

approaches to conversations about race and racism were resonated with their children, in Study 2, I combined the perspectives of parents and children to investigate (a) how children were making sense of their REI and developing an awareness of racial bias, (b) how context shaped parental RES engagement, and (c) how children were incorporating their parents' RES efforts into their own meaning-making processes about REI and racial bias. Findings from both studies are complementary as Study 1 provides an initial deep orientation into parents' beliefs and motivations that informed how they approached conversations about race and racism with their children, and Study 2 provides insights into how contexts plays a role in shaping parents' RES practice and how children are referencing their parents' RES efforts to inform their meaning-making processes, which in turn, guides their developing REI and awareness of racial bias.

Future Research Directions

While the present studies provide important new insights into how Asian American parents approach RES with their 6- to 12-year-old children, the study limitations and findings suggest important future research directions. First, while participants resided in several geographic regions across the United States, very few geographic differences emerged in the findings. Future studies should use methods that can more specifically examine how geographic regions may uniquely shape the experiences of Asian American families from various areas of the United States, including new immigrant and rural destinations (Kiang & Supple, 2016). Second, although this dissertation was one of few studies that has examined RES among multiracial families with Asian heritages, the majority of the multiracial families were Asian and White. It is important for future research to focus attention on multiracial families with different racial-ethnic compositions, such as Asian-Black American and Asian-Latinx American. Third, while gender differences did not emerge across both studies, given that prior research with

African American families demonstrates that how RES resonates with children can differ by child gender (Hughes et al., 2009; Lambert et al., 2016), future research should further examine whether such gender differences may be present within Asian American families.

Implications

The findings suggest several implications for how teachers, practitioners, and policymakers can better support Asian American parents engage in RES with the goal of facilitating the positive development of their children. First, Asian American parents have different comfort levels and views on how to best engage in conversations about race and racism with their children, and these views and values should be put in the forefront when providing guidance to parents. Simultaneously, some parents expressed misinformed beliefs, such as believing their children did not notice race or racism—a common confusion, as adults tend to underestimate when children begin to process race (Sullivan et al., 2021). Teachers and practitioners can play an important role in helping to answer parents' questions about their children's developing awareness of race and racism. Further, practitioners (e.g., pediatricians, social workers, parenting coaches) can help support parents who are hesitant to engage in conversations about race and racism by suggesting constructive ways to start the conversation or providing guidance on how to take advantage of teachable moments as children naturally make observations and ask questions about themselves and others. While being respectful and cognizant of culturally relevant communication styles (Ng & Wang, 2019; Park et al., 2010), practitioners can also encourage parents to foster open communication between themselves and their children so that children feel comfortable sharing their experiences with their parents.

Second, several parents mentioned relying on children's books to facilitate their conversations about racism with their children, and a few children stated that they were aware of

racial bias because they learned about it through children's books. Therefore, Asian American families will likely benefit from increased access to children's books that not only touch on a wide variety of race-related topics, but also feature a range of racially diverse characters and represent the diversity of stories within Asian America. School and public libraries should work to continuously expand their book collections with these points in mind. Simultaneously, there is a strong movement across the United States to ban books that focus on race and racism (American Library Association, 2024). Policymakers and advocacy groups play a key role in countering these book ban movements to ensure that children have access to books that can facilitate RES and help children learn about their REI and racial bias in developmentally appropriate ways.

Third, several children mentioned they were aware of racial bias because they had learned about it during school lessons about Black historical figures and events (e.g., Martin Luther King Jr., slavery, segregation). These references illustrate the importance of school lessons in informing children's understanding of race and racial bias (Saleem & Byrd, 2021). Notably, a few children were unaware of the existence of racial bias, or thought that it ended, thanks to Black civil rights leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. These misconceptions of racial bias provide empirical evidence that schools still have room to improve in helping children understand race-related concepts. Simultaneously, in light of the strong national movements to ban lessons on race and racism, fueled by efforts to ban so-called lessons on critical race theory in K-12 schools (Morgan, 2022), policymakers, school leaders, and families can play an important role in pushing back against these movements. Further, for Asian American children, learning about racism through a Black-and-White lens omits the ways in which Asian Americans were historically and continue to be affected by racism. In fact, a review of U.S. history

standards in ten states revealed that Asian American history is often omitted from U.S. history curricula (An, 2016). Therefore, policymakers, school leaders, and teachers can help to expand Asian American children's understanding of racial bias by incorporating lessons about Asian American history in U.S. history lessons. Importantly, including Asian American history in elementary history and social science curricula could not only help to educate more Asian American children about their histories, but could also spark more RES conversations in the home.

Finally, while this dissertation did not include an analysis of the observation task, during the parent interview portion, many parents mentioned that they appreciated the observation task as an opportunity to formally sit with their children to talk about race and racism together. For some parents, it was a chance to check their children's understanding – were their children listening to and understanding their messages? For other parents, it was an opportunity to hear their children's perspectives and learn about some of their experiences for the first time. In this way, the observation task could serve as a starting point for a future intervention with Asian American parents who may be looking for guidance on how to engage in these conversations with their 6- to 12-year-old children. With only a handful of parental RES interventions in the field (e.g., Anderson et al., 2019; Stein et al., 2021), future research could consider adapting or expanding the observation task as a component of a RES intervention program for Asian American families.

Conclusion

This dissertation provides a deeper understanding on how Asian American parents are engaging in conversations about race and racism with their children (ages 6-12), and how Asian American children are making sense of their parents RES messages in relation to their own

developing sense of REI and understanding of racial bias. The findings illustrate that Asian American parents are engaging in conversations about race and racism with their children, although there are distinct patterns in engagement by generational status and unique considerations among multiracial families. Importantly, not *all* first generation parents and not *all* 1.5 or second generation parents engage in these conversations in the same ways, and instead, it is critical to understand the underlying beliefs and motivations that lead parents to take different RES approaches. Further, findings suggest that during middle childhood and early adolescence, children are developing their REI and an awareness of racial bias, and parents play an important role in facilitating their meaning making processes. Recognizing that Asian American parents are making RES decisions with the intent of supporting their children's well-being and positive development, it is necessary to consider how to differentially support parents according to these varying beliefs and values.

APPENDIX A

Child Interview Questions

I. Questions to help child identify their racial-ethnic identity:

In this country, people come from a lot of different places and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or ethnic groups that people come from. An ethnic group is the name we sometimes give to a group of people that come from the same culture. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Mexican, Latino, Black, African American, White, Asian, Chinese, American Indian, Italian, and many others.

- *How would you describe yourself in terms of your ethnic group or race?*
- If child (ages 6-8) cannot identify their racial-ethnic group(s), go through forced-choice questions that ask child whether they are a specific ethnic group (e.g., "*Are you Chinese?*" with response options: Yes, No, I don't know). The ethnic groups presented were: Chinese, Indian (from India), Korean, Filipino or Filipina, Thai, Pakistani, Vietnamese, Laotian, Japanese, Cambodian, Hmong, Sri Lankan, Asian, American, Asian American, Native American, Black, Latino or Latina, African American, White, Mexican.
- After child identifies all racial-ethnic group labels that describe them: *Now we want to know which group you feel like describes you the most. Can you tell me which of these words _____, _____ or _____ would you say is most like you?*
    - If child is multiracial or multiethnic: *Would you say that one of these words describe you the most, or do you think they describe you the same?*
    - Continue questions to create rank order and identify racial-ethnic label(s) that child identifies with most.

II. Questions related to child's REI meaning-making and attitudes

- *Can you tell me an example about a time when you've talked with your parents about being [your race / ethnicity]? What did you talk about?*
- *Why did you choose [racial-ethnic label] as best describing you?*
- *How do you know that you are [racial-ethnic label]?*
- *How do you feel about being [racial-ethnic label]?*
- *How important is it to you that are you are [racial-ethnic label]?*
- *Are there certain foods that you eat or festivals or religious activities that make you feel like you belong to your racial or ethnic group?*

III. Forced-choice questions to assess child's REI attitudes:

People differ on how they feel about the words they use to describe themselves and how much they think about it. You'll be asked questions about how two groups of kids feel about being [racial/ethnic group] and we want to know which group is more like you.

- *Some kids are happy that they are [group] BUT Other kids are not happy that they are [group]. Which kids are you most like? Is that very true or sort of true?*
- *Some kids are proud to be [group] BUT Other kids are not proud to be [group]. Which kids are you most like? Is that very true or sort of true?*
- *Some kids do not like being [group] BUT Other kids like being [group]. Which kids are you most like? Is that very true or sort of true?*

- *Some kids feel that being [group] is a big part of who they are BUT Other kids feel that being [group] is a small part of who they are. Which kids are you most like? Is that very true or sort of true?*
- *Some kids feel that being [group] is not an important part of themselves BUT Other kids feel that being [group] is an important part of themselves. Which kids are you most like? Is that very true or sort of true?*

IV. Questions related to child's awareness of racial bias:

- *Sometimes kids get treated differently than other kids because of their skin color, race, or ethnicity (like where they are from). Has this ever happened to someone you know?*
    - [Follow-up – No]: *Did you know before that sometimes people get treated differently than others because of their skin color or how they look?*
    - [Follow-up - YES]: *Can you tell me about it? What happened?*
- *Have you ever been treated differently because of your skin color, race, or ethnicity?*

APPENDIX B

Parent Interview Questions

- *How would you describe the racial diversity of your neighborhood and school?*
    - ***Follow-up**: How did you decide to live where you are now? How did you decide where to send your child(ren) to school?*
- *Do you know if your child has experienced or observed racism before?*
    - *[**Follow-up: Yes**] How did you learn about this incident?*
- *Have you had conversations together about race and racism before?*
    - *[**Follow-up: No**] How do you think this first conversation went?*
        - ***Follow-up**: Do you plan on having more conversations about race and racism in the future?*
            - *[**Follow-up: Yes**] How do you plan to approach having more of these conversations together?*
    - *[**Follow-up: Yes**] What do you consider when framing race and racism to your children? Or, what do you think is important to tell your kids when you talk about race and racism together?*
        - ***Follow-up**: Have you talked about the Black Lives Matter protests in 2020 or the recent rise in anti-Asian hate?*
- *Thinking ahead into the future, whether the preteen or teen years, do you foresee how these conversations might change as your children grow older?*
- *How important is it for you to talk about race and racism with your child?*
- *Thinking more broadly about experiences during childhood, young adulthood, and then now as a parent, how do you think these experiences may influence the way you have these conversations with your children about their ethnic heritage or about race and racism?*
- *Have you experienced or observed racism in the U.S. before, or been treated differently because of your race?*
    - *[**Follow-up: Yes**] How do you think these experiences might influence how you talk about race and racism with [Child Name]?*
- *Did you ever have conversations about race and racism with your parents?*
    - ***Follow-up**: Do you think their approach has influenced your conversations with your child in any way?*

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