



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

# ANTI-RACISM

## ADVANCING ANTI-RACISM STRATEGIES

As community tensions rise in the wake of multiple acts of police violence, the veil of how racism is embedded in our society is removed. As an organization focused on addressing the most critical needs of our community and dedicated to advancing diversity, equity and inclusion for all, the Y must begin to address how to undo racism and become “anti-racists” at an individual, organizational, and societal level. We seek to more effectively lead as an anti-racist, multi-cultural organization, yet as we embark on this journey together, we do so with humility, fully cognizant that as a local and national institution we also have much work to do.

**Anti-racism** is the work of actively opposing racism by advocating for changes in political, economic, and social life. Anti-racism tends to be an individualized approach and set up in opposition to individual racist behaviors and impacts. (Definition by [Race Forward](#))

This resource serves to provide initial steps that Y staff, volunteers and leaders can implement to strengthen a foundation of access, equity, and inclusion for all.

### ANTI-RACISM PRINCIPLES

Utilizing the [People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond’s Guiding Principles](#) and resources both internal and external to the Y, you can begin your personal journey towards undoing racism as an individual, within the organization and in society.

The anti-racism journey is ongoing and will be ever evolving until the fabrics in society, from which racism has been constructed, have been undone. Through empathy and relationships, individual leaders can work with their local community at a grassroots level building trust, reputation, and partnership to create positive change.

### UNDOING RACISM

Racism is the single most critical barrier to building effective coalitions for social change. Racism has been consciously and systematically erected, and it can be undone only if people understand what it is, where it comes from, how it functions, and why it is perpetuated.

- **Watch: PBS Special, Race the Power of an Illusion:** This documentary unveils the history of how race was constructed in the United States and why it was created to perpetrate oppression. It deeply investigates how race and racism as a construct shape life circumstances.
- Read [Dr. Ibram X Kendi’s novel: How to be an Anti-Racist](#) to begin learning what it means to be an anti-racist.

### LEARNING FROM HISTORY

History is a tool for effective organizing. Understanding the lessons of history allows us to create a more humane future.

- Take the time to **understand the complex history of racism** in the United States.
  - Learn about the different facets on how racism has impacted different communities of color. This [anti-racist bibliography](#) cultivated by the People’s Institute for

Survival and Beyond is comprehensive list of historical and modern-day books and videos to gain broader understanding of racism in US society.

- Consider beginning your journey to understand the history of racism in the United States here:
  - [Stamped from the Beginning](#) – Dr. Ibram X. Kendi
  - [The Peoples History of the United States](#) - Dr. Howard Zinn
- Deepen your knowledge of how the construct of racism has been exported around the world and learn about its impact in other countries. Read [Colonialism in Global Perspective](#) by Kris Manjapra.
  - Discover how organizations and individuals around the [world are advancing anti-racism](#).

## SHARING CULTURE

Culture is the life support system of a community. If a community's culture is respected and nurtured, the community's power will grow.

- Deepen your understanding of cultures by completing the [Cultural Lenses training](#) – this Y-USA training is designed to enhance cross-cultural understanding, relationship, and engagement amount all YMCA staff.
- Create opportunities during times of unrest and high tensions to lead circles for people to share their perspectives and culture – utilize the [Building Bridges: Creating Safe Spaces for Healing & Dialogue](#) as a resource to host crucial conversations for people to share safely.

## Examining Whiteness

When we think about understanding cultures. we often do not study the dominant culture. The only way to undo racism is to gain an understanding of the dominant culture we live in.

- Read [White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk about Racism](#) to begin to understand the complexities of white culture in advancing this work.
- Learn the [manifestations of White Supremacy](#) and how it shows up in the dominant culture
- Further develop your understanding of whiteness and as an white person how you can show up to fight for racial justice in this resource library from the [Coalition of Antiracist Whites](#)

## DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP

Anti-racist leadership needs to be developed intentionally and systematically within local communities and organizations.

## INDIVIDUALS

YMCA of the USA offers [Training and Resources to advance equity and inclusion](#). Developing a foundational understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion concepts and initiatives are important prior to diving deep into anti-racism work and undoing internalized racial oppression. We encourage individuals to take advantage of formal training opportunities in addition to developing their own personal education on racial equity through reading books, watching movies and shows, listening to podcasts, and getting involved in local community efforts.

### Formal Training Opportunities:

- **Orientation to Diversity, Inclusion, and Global (DIG)** introduces key concepts related to how we define diversity, inclusion, and global mindedness in the Y and explore ways to further develop as a leader in this area.

- **Dimensions of Diversity**: this Y-USA training is designed to build empathy for different dimensions of diversity and how this informs relationship building.
  - **Advancing Equity: Understanding My Biases**: This Y-USA online training introduces the concept of bias and explores the positive and negative impact of bias in everyday situations and offers a framework for countering bias.
  - **Undoing Institutional Racism Workshop**: The People's Institute Undoing Racism Workshop is an intensive workshop designed to educate, challenge and empower people to "undo" the racist structures that hinder effective social change. The training is based on the premise that racism has been systematically erected and that it can be "undone" if people understand where it comes from, how it functions and why it is perpetuated.
  - **Virtual Equity Education Offerings**: Continue your learning through these variety of offerings from the YMCA of Greater Twin Cities, Equity Innovation Center.
- Additional Learning Opportunities:**
- Complete **Harvard's Implicit Association Tests** to gain a better understanding of your own implicit biases – in order to tackle internalized oppression or bias.
  - **See this list** of books, films, podcasts, and other anti-racism resources that will consistently be updated by the DIG team.

## **ORGANIZATIONAL**

Start your journey by learning about the **Diversity, Inclusion, and Global (DIG) strategies** offered through Y-USA. **The Y's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and global (DIG)** serves as a compass for the Y as it works alongside communities to drive social progress. Utilize these resources to begin your DIG journey, beginning with **convening a DIG committee** and **making an organizational commitment to equity**.

- **Best Practices in Diversity, Inclusion and Global (DIG) Committee Work**
- **The Business Case for Diversity, Inclusion and Global Work**
- **Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Metrics**
- **Local DIG Metrics Dashboard Report**

If your Y is further along in its DIG journey, we encourage you to consider these next steps in embedding an anti-racist framework into your operations:

- **Anti-Racist Multicultural Organization Continuum** : Use this resource created by Crossroads Ministry with your DIG Committee to lead a discussion to assess where your Y lands on the anti-racism multicultural organization continuum and **create an actionable plan** for improving collectively.
- **Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)**: Consider having your team complete the IDI to understand the cross-cultural assessment of intercultural competence of your team and organization to build intercultural competence to achieve international and domestic diversity and inclusion goals and outcomes.
- **Racial Equity Impact Assessment Toolkit**: Created by Race Forward this toolkit provides an analysis of how different racial and ethnic groups will likely be affected by a proposed action or decision. Use this to minimize unanticipated adverse consequences and can be a vital tool for preventing institutional racism and for identifying new options to remedy long-standing inequities.

## MAINTAINING ACCOUNTABILITY

To organize with integrity requires that we be accountable to the communities struggling with racist oppression.

- Understand the [Five Community Engagement Strategies](#) to strengthen engagement and inclusion in your community
- In partnership with community, **develop your commitment as an organization to implementing anti-racism principles** both within the organization and in your services to community. This should be a board-approved document that is shared publicly with community to ensure additional accountability. [See this example from an organization in Seattle, Solid Ground.](#)
- Ensure that your **board has adequate representation from the communities being most directly impacted by racist oppression** to hold your organization accountable to your anti-racism and DIG commitment. [Utilize this resource](#) for considerations on ensuring diversity at the governance level.

## NETWORKING

The growth of an effective broad-based movement for social transformation requires networking or “building a net that works”. As the movement develops a strong net, people are less likely to fall through.

- **DIG Innovation Network:** The Diversity, Inclusion and Global (DIG) Innovation Network consists of YMCAs that have made an organizational commitment to integrate diversity, inclusion and global strategies across key operational and programmatic areas to strengthen their capacity to serve diverse and underserved populations, foster community cohesion, and address social equity and inclusion issues.
- **Employee Resource Groups:** Led by Y employees, employee resource groups (ERGs) are spaces for Y staff to network, mentor one another, share knowledge and experiences, participate in professional development, and enhance leadership skills. There are groups at the national and local levels.

## ANALYZING POWER

As a society, we often believe that individuals and/or their communities are solely responsible for their conditions. Through the analysis of institutional power, we can identify and unpack the systems external to the community that create the internal realities that many people experience daily.

- **What is Systemic Racism – Race Forward:** This series of videos from Race Forward explain what systemic racism is and how it is embedded in systems to perpetuate oppression of people of color – and what systems hold the power.

## GATEKEEPING

People who work in institutions often function as gatekeepers to ensure that the institution perpetuates itself. By operating with anti-racist values and networking with those who share those values and maintaining accountability in the community, the gatekeeper becomes an agent of institutional transformation.

## OTHER ANTI-RACISM RESOURCES

### A FOCUS ON EMBEDDING ANTI-RACISM IN YOUTH PROGRAMS

The Y's Commitment to America is developing new generations of changemakers who will create communities we all want to live in—young people who grow into thriving adults and transform communities by influencing systems change, bridging social divides and giving back. Anti-racism work can begin at any age and we are often asked for resources and support for our youth and families to talk about race, whether at the Y or at home, here is a place to start:

- [National Museum of African American History & Culture Talking About Race](#)
- [Raising Race Conscious Children](#)
- [Anti-Racism for Kids 101: Starting to Talk About Race](#)
- [Anti-Racism 102: Why Not All Racial Discrimination is "Racism"](#)
- [Talking about Race and Anti-Racism with Children](#)
- [Talking About Racism and Justice Oakland Library](#)
- [Coretta Scott King Book Award Winners: books for children and young adults](#)
- [31 Children's books to support conversations on race, racism and resistance](#)
- [PBS's Teaching Your Child About Black History Month](#)
- [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup from Pretty Good](#)
- [Teaching Tolerance: Teaching About Race, Racism, and Police Violence](#)

For additional resources or support, please contact the Y-USA Diversity, Inclusion, and Global Teams at [\*\*DIG@ymca.net\*\*](mailto:DIG@ymca.net).