

Resources for Transracial Adoption

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“While some adoptive families may wish to adopt a child of the same racial background as themselves, others choose to diversify their family makeup by adopting a child of a different race or ethnicity. Throughout America, there are thousands of blended families as more couples choose to open their arms to children of all kinds of backgrounds.

Some adoptive families that are open to adopting transracially wonder if an expectant mother will choose a family of another race to raise her child, or if she will prefer a family that is of the same racial background as her child. While it is ultimately up to the expectant mother to choose a family for her child, we work with hundreds of expectant mothers each year who choose to place their babies with waiting families that are of a different race. Typically, those families that demonstrate their openness to adopt a child of a different race in their Adoptive Family Profile, or who highlight their love of different cultures, are often chosen by expectant mothers of a different race.

Families considering transracial adoption should also note that adopting a child of a different race also comes with its own set of unique considerations. Families adopting a child of a different race should be prepared to teach their adopted child about their ethnicity and should foster a home environment that is open and loving of all races and cultures. As the child grows, adoptive parents should be prepared to answer questions their child may have about their own ethnic and cultural identity.

Experts also suggest adoptive parents of transracially adopted children:

- Allow the child to interact with other people and children of the child's race or ethnicity
- Read books about transracial adoption or the child's culture
- Take a foreign language class to learn the child's native language
- Consider living in a multicultural neighborhood
- Find same-race mentors and role models for the child
- Confront racism openly
- Cook ethnic dishes from the child's culture
- Celebrate all cultures, including the child's”(American Adoptions 2012).

African American Children

"There is a strong need for families to adopt African-American children, or biracial children that are part African-American. Because of this, more families are choosing to adopt African-American children and it is becoming more common to see Caucasian, Hispanic and other families expanding their family through the adoption of an African-American or biracial child.

If you are considering adopting a black or biracial child, you may wish to study African-American culture to share this with your child. There are many children's books available that are African-American themed as well as dolls and other toys that will allow your child to embrace their ethnic background. Popular toy manufacturers, including Barbie and American Girl, offer African-American dolls, as well as various other Internet resources, such as www.dollslikeme.com. You also may wish to join playgroups or other organizations that will allow your child to interact with other African-American children. Playgroups are easily found through church or other religious organizations throughout a community or you can organize your own with friends, neighbors and other associates with children close to the age of your child" (American Adoptions 2012).

Our Blended Family **By Sarah Gerstenzang**

"My family of five—me, my husband, our two teenage biological children, and our daughter, Lily, age seven, whom we adopted from the U.S. foster care system—lives in Brooklyn, New York. Brooklyn is as diverse a community as one can find. Still, one night as I walked home from work with a colleague and fellow adoptive parent, she commented that she could not have adopted a black child because living with racism would be too hard. It seemed harsh at first, but, in fact, racism is part of my family's daily life. Like all mixed-race families in America, we face stereotyping as a matter of course.

Whether the stereotyping is positive (as when a friend's parent noted that Lily "had music in her blood") or negative (when another parent mentioned that Lily didn't "seem to have any problems"), it is all racism. Observers are making judgments about abilities based upon a child's race.

So how can parents protect their black children from such attitudes and grow a healthy identity? Here's what I've learned from experts—and how I've put their ideas into practice:

Believe in your right and ability to parent your child. Numerous studies have shown that black children raised by white parents generally grow up to be healthy, well-adjusted adults. Don't worry that your child is being "cheated" or that you are inadequate. Your job is to love your child.

Celebrate black hair styles, dress, and culture. Buy magazines read by African-Americans, read books by black writers, and, as a family, go to events where black artists and musicians are featured.

Fill your home with African-American music, art, books, and toys. One year, my daughter received a cute black baby doll for Christmas. I'd read that children absorb subtle messages that the dominant white culture is superior. So, when Lily and I played with her dolls, I'd say (truthfully), "This one is my favorite. He is so cute. He looks like a real baby."

Expand your social circle. African-American children need friends who look like them—and they need to see their parents with black friends, too. If you can, live around people of color, send your child to schools that are racially diverse, or, if you are religious, attend an integrated church.

Expose your child to black role models. I turn on the TV when Venus or Serena Williams plays tennis, and I call attention to newspaper articles about accomplished black people. On an everyday level, our daughter has black teachers at her school; and we enroll her in outside activities in which the instructors are black.

Put your child in the majority. Choosing a vacation spot is a way to accomplish this. We learned this one year, on a trip to a Southern town, when Lily said, "I am the only black person in this whole restaurant." I promised her that the next place we vacationed would be predominantly black. When we went to a black town, the next year, she said, "Do you think that people think I am from here?"

Being part of a mixed-race family has enriched every one of us. And as Lily changes and grows, we'll be opening up—and growing—alongside her" (Adoptive Families Magazine 2012).

Black in Middle America

"Michelle Johnson, 38, adopted by white parents and raised in suburban Minneapolis, recently spoke about her experiences.

AF: What was it like growing up as a black child in Middle America? What was your family like?

MJ: I was adopted by a Swedish-American couple, just before my second birthday. They already had three biological children, who were teenagers at the time. A year later, my parents adopted another child, a two-and-a-half-year-old biracial boy.

When I was growing up, Dad was an anthropology professor, and Mom was a school psychologist. My family was close and supportive, and open to conversations about ethnicity and adoption. My parents had participated in civil rights activities, and truly believed in equality—and that my brother and I would have the same opportunities as anyone else. Our family attended an integrated church, and we camped, fished, and traveled each summer. My brother and I excelled in sports and were in Scouts, and our parents were always there to cheer us on. In many ways, it was an idyllic childhood.

AF: When did you first become aware of racism?

MJ: On the first day of kindergarten, a boy called me the "n" word and refused to play with me because I was black. My parents' "white privilege" protected us in our neighborhood, but not at school nor in the community at large.

AF: How would you describe your experience at school?

MJ: When I started school, my mother had to advocate for me not to be placed in special ed. (People assumed that, because I was not white, I'd be behind, and were embarrassed when I tested off the charts.) Some teachers expected me to fail, and they, as well as a few of my schoolmates, resented my success. I was angry at not seeing anyone who looked like me in

textbooks. I was pressured to be an athlete, but I had a stronger passion for books and knowledge. The hardest part was not seeing people who looked like me. The standard of beauty was blonde hair and a petite frame. I had neither, and this affected my self-esteem.

AF: Did you and your family have contact with other African Americans?

MJ: Yes. My parents moved us from our suburban church to an inner-city church in Minneapolis, which had a predominantly African-American congregation. I was about five at the time. They realized that my younger brother and I needed relationships with children and adults who looked like us. Our whole family worshipped at that church, and two of my three older siblings got married there.

AF: Apart from church, what experiences helped to define you as an African-American woman?

MJ: As I got older, I started going to a community center across the street from the church, and became involved in the life of the neighborhood. College was my next big opportunity. It's where I first lived with groups of African-Americans. I volunteered as a tutor at the African-American Learning Center, participated in the Black Student Union, and chose African-American Studies as my minor to an English degree. All of these experiences forced me to stretch and grow, but, at the same time, I battled prejudice from my new colleagues of color about my family background.

AF: How do you think things have changed with the advent of more transracial adoptions? How have they remained the same?

MJ: I think the world is more accepting of multicultural relationships, including adoption, as we are more diversely intermingled in our daily lives. Each generation is less racist than the last, but we have far to go. While my nieces and nephews of color (adopted cross-culturally by my older siblings) face fewer stares and double takes, and less outright hostility, than my brother and I, their struggles are similar. They live in largely segregated suburban communities, have body-image issues, face insensitive comments from teachers and peers, and are in the minority in their classrooms. Sometimes they're the only children of color in the room.

AF: In retrospect, it sounds like your parents were ahead of the curve in how they raised you. Would you agree?

MJ: Yes. Mom and Dad made the leap that few of their generation did. They viewed themselves not as a European-American family with two African-American children, but as a multiethnic family with a rich cultural heritage. Back in the 70s and 80s, they understood that it was important to talk openly about race and adoption; to read what black psychologists and sociologists had to say about white privilege and black identity development; and to open a door for us into our culture. They advocated for me and my brother at school and in our community, and created a safe haven from the world outside our home.

But don't be fooled. It's been a long, hard journey for all of us, one that is still painful at times. However, I adore and respect my parents and siblings. They are genuinely good people who love their children. I do hope that my nieces and nephews will have easier lives, because we are all more vigilant about what it takes to assist them in being healthy and happy, culturally connected adults"(Adoptive Families 2004).

5 Ways to Talk with Your Child About Racism

By Deborah Johnson

Talking about racism makes most of us uncomfortable. The ugliness of the topic, and our anxiety about using the wrong words, leads us to avoid the subject altogether. Still, parents of transracially adopted children should resist the urge not to talk. Kids should hear about racism before they experience it (typically, this will be early in grade school, when children start to perceive differences among themselves). Here's how to begin:

1. Talk about families. Let your child know that, while your family values people of different races and cultures, not all families do. "Some kids grow up in families who are afraid of people who are different," you can say. "They may not know how to react when meeting a kid who looks different, and that may make them afraid. And when kids or grownups are afraid, they can do mean things." Reinforce the fact that your family is different. "Isn't that sad?" you can add. "I'm glad our family isn't like that."

2. Explain that racism isn't her fault. Tell your child that she might get teased about the kind of hair she has or the color of her skin, simply because it's different. "Some kids may call you names or not invite you to play with them because you have darker skin," you can suggest gently. But emphasize that your child is not causing the bad behavior—the child doing the teasing or harassing is the only one responsible for such thoughts and actions.

3. Begin conversations early. Even after such preparation, your child may not tell you if she has been teased or harassed. Kids sense that such incidents will upset you. Talking about it can also make them feel like they're reliving the hurt or embarrassment of the incident. They may even feel that

Caucasian parents won't be able to understand. This "no-tell" tendency is another reason to discuss racism early and often at home.

4. Don't be too direct. It's best to avoid asking your children directly whether they've faced racism. This puts them on the defensive and shuts down the discussion. Instead, bring up a racist incident in the news or something that might have happened in your neighborhood. Then say, "I hope if anything like that happens to you, you'll share it with me. I may not know exactly what you're experiencing, but we can learn together how to handle it." Your child may groan, but at least she'll know that you're thinking about these issues and are open to discussing them with her.

5. Become a resource—and an advocate. Even if you haven't experienced racism yourself, you can help your child by understanding this: Racism is, ultimately, an attempt to define who belongs in the human race, in our world, and in our community—and who doesn't. While exclusion is tough for anyone to handle, it can be especially difficult for transracial adoptees, who may wonder whether they belong in their families and communities. As a parent, you'll have to make yourself a credible resource on this topic. Talk with other parents of children of color and with adults of color, read books about parenting children of color, or seek a mentor.

Help your child understand that, no matter what is said on the playground, her place in the world is assured. Let her know that she is loved and safe with you, and help her grow into a confident young adult who, instead of being defeated by racism, sees it for what it is and knows how to challenge it (Pact Adoption Alliance 2012).

BOOKS FOR KIDS

The Colors of Us, by Karen Katz

African-American Heritage, Schlessinger Media

A Family from Ethiopia, by Julia Waterlow

Dealing with Racism, by Jen Green

Racism Explained to my Daughter, by Tahar Ben Jelloun

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

Different and Wonderful: Raising Black Children in a Race-conscious Society, by Dr. Darlene Powell Hopson and Dr. Derek S. Hopson

I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla: Raising Healthy Black and Biracial Children in a Race-conscious World, by Marguerite Wright

Inside Transracial Adoption, by Gail Steinberg and Beth Hall

Does Anybody Else Look Like Me?: A parent's Guide to Raising Multicultural Children, by Donna Jackson Nakazawa

Hispanic Children

"More families also are choosing to adopt a child with a Hispanic background. Throughout America, the Hispanic community continues to grow and today is one of the largest, most influential communities in the nation. Couples choosing to adopt a Hispanic child may wish to learn more about Hispanic traditions, including traditional food, stories and celebrations. Families adopting a Hispanic child may wish to learn to speak Spanish and raise their child in a bilingual home. Families also may join playgroups or other organizations that will allow the child to interact with other Hispanic children or families. These playgroups may be found at church or other religious organizations, or organize your own! If you know of any other Hispanic families in your community with children similar in age to your child, simply plan times for your children to play together, or ask them if they know of any other Hispanic families looking to form a playgroup"(American Adoptions 2012).

Learning Spanish can help your child explore her birth culture and identity. By Laurie R. Weaver, Ed.D.

"By the time I became a parent, I had definite ideas about how I wanted to raise my Guatemalan-born child. One thing was sure: I wanted my daughter, Marisa, to be bilingual. As a former bilingual teacher, I knew that learning two languages would be valuable for any child. As an adoptive parent, I knew that learning Spanish would help Marisa develop a strong cultural identity. If you want your child to be bilingual, or to at least have a working knowledge of Spanish, here's how to begin.

1 Know your goal. Start with a clear idea of what "learning Spanish" means to you. Ask yourself, Do you want your child to be exposed to the language in a general way, perhaps as a precursor to taking foreign language courses later on? If so, an after-school class once or twice a week is a good option. Do you want her to be orally fluent in Spanish—to speak it as well as she speaks English? For many children, two to three years of everyday exposure to Spanish will help them become orally fluent.

If you want your child to be able to read, write, and speak Spanish, then she will need to attend school in Spanish (for instance, in a two-way immersion program). Often, children need up to 10 years of study to reach grade-level fluency in a language.

2 Know your options. Many families use a method called "one person, one language," in which one parent speaks to the child exclusively in one language, while a second parent (or caregiver) uses another. Other families use the "one place, one language" approach. For example, a parent speaks to her child only in English at home, then enrolls her in a day care or preschool where the caregivers or teachers primarily speak Spanish. This way, the child is exposed to both languages every day.

There are also educational options. I wanted Marisa, now nine, to develop grade-level proficiency in English and Spanish, so I enrolled her in a two-way immersion program, starting in Kindergarten. In such programs, children from two different language backgrounds are educated in the classroom in both languages. (The Center for Applied Linguistics offers a directory of programs nationwide at www.cal.org/twi/directory.)

If this choice isn't quite right for your child, you can enroll her in after-school Spanish classes; hire a local high school or college student to provide one-on-one tutoring in your home; or, more informally, look for library story hours presented in Spanish, bilingual music classes for kids, or play dates with children who speak Spanish.

3 Know your child. Finally, remember that your child's interest in learning a foreign language may wax and wane over time. While she may embrace learning a second language in her early years, other activities may take precedence as she grows. If her interest flags, you might take a Spanish class together—either locally or abroad—or vacation in a place where you can practice Spanish" (Adoption Guide 2012).

My Boys, "the Immigrants"

By Skila Brown

"As the mother of three Guatemalan boys, all under the age of seven, I am accustomed to challenges. Manipulating Transformers, finding missing shin guards, and keeping enough snacks in the house are tough. But by far, the most difficult aspect of raising my Latino children is how to do so within the current climate of immigration debates. With the presidential election upon us, it seems everywhere we turn people are talking about immigration. And they are talking with fervor, no matter which way they lean.

Sadly, I have found that people are using this national conversation about immigration as a forum to air their prejudices against Latino people. As an example, I recently had a conversation with a friend of a friend about the Spanish-language immersion school in our district. After telling her that we were considering it, she balked and gave me an earful about how that was unacceptable, saying, "I'm not against children learning another language. I've been trying to teach my daughter some French. But I have to draw the line somewhere. These immigrants are taking our jobs and ruining this town!"

So...she was opposed to the Spanish part of the school, and used that as an opportunity to launch into a political rant. Unfortunately, this kind of interaction is becoming commonplace. I hear people calling all Latinos "immigrants." Although they are usually trying to make a point about undocumented workers, the tone of their conversation drifts from issues about taxes and welfare to blatant prejudices: "Nobody speaks any English!" or "They've taken over the neighborhood!" And I hear this talk in front of my own Latino children.

When I read stories about the crazy ranch owner in Texas who started holding Latino people at gunpoint until authorities could come and check their papers, I wonder what life will be like for my sons when they become Latino men. Will they constantly be asked to verify their legal status? Will they continually be criticized for "taking the jobs" of their peers?

When my sons were babies, white people on the street couldn't stop cooing over how cute they were. Strangers approached me daily with compliments for my children. Usually, people would begin with an excited, "Was he

adopted?" As my sons move into childhood, I rarely get approached. Instead, I feel looks of disgust bare into my sides if my children and I speak Spanish in public. And when people ask about one of my children, they usually say, "Is his father Mexican or something?" They don't seem particularly happy about that thought.

Because of the immigration debate, our society seems to have some large issues with Latinos today. And it will certainly be something that our Latino children will face head-on as they grow into young adulthood" (Adoptive Families Magazine 2012).

What to Say

"If your Latino child is teased by another child in one of the following ways, here's how he or she can respond:

- "Go back to your country!"
- "This is my country. I am an American citizen, just like you." (Tell your child that he became a U.S. citizen when you adopted him.)
- "You don't belong here!"
- "I do belong here, and if you don't stop this bullying, I'm going to tell the teacher."
- "If you were born in Guatemala, how come you don't speak Spanish?"
- "Not everyone who is Latino speaks Spanish. I came to the United States as a baby, and I was brought up speaking English."
- "Why is your skin so dark?"
- "I am Latina [or I was born in Colombia, etc.], and I am proud of it. This world would look funny if we were all the same color."
- "Does your family only eat burritos?"
- "Why do you ask? As a matter of fact, I do like burritos. But I also like hot dogs and pizza."
- "Hey, Taco [Speedy Gonzalez, etc.]!"
- "I know you're just joking when you say that. But that's not appropriate, and I'd prefer that you call me by my name."(Adoptive Families 2012).

BOOKS FOR KIDS

Carolyn's Story: A Book About an Adopted Girl, by Perry Schwartz
Central American Heritage, Schlessinger Media
We Wanted You, by Liz Rosenberg

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

Raising Nuestros Niños: Bringing Up Latino Children in a Bicultural World, by
Gloria G. Rodriguez, Ph.D.
Inside Transracial Adoption, by Gail Steinberg and Beth Hall

Asian Children

"With the rise of international adoptions, it is also becoming more common for families to adopt Asian children. However, you don't have to adopt overseas to adopt a child with an Asian background, as there are many Asian children available for adoption in the U.S.

Families wishing to adopt an Asian child are encouraged to learn more about Asian culture, including traditions, holidays and stories. There also are many children's books available that focus on traditional Asian themes and stories that will allow your child to identify with their culture at a young age" (American Adoptions 2012).

Who Is a Whiz Kid?

"When my son was five months old, friends predicted he would be a good student—probably a mathematician."By Ted Gup

"Some years ago, I adopted my first son from Korea. His name was David, and he was five months old when he arrived. This did not stop some otherwise sophisticated friends from volunteering that David would no doubt be a good student. Probably a mathematician, they opined, with a tone that uncomfortably straddled jest and prediction. I tried to take it all with good humor, this idea that a five-month-old who could not yet sit up, speak a word, or control his bowels was already destined for academic greatness. Even his major seemed foreordained.

Several months after David arrived home, he and I entered a small mom-and-pop convenience store in our neighborhood. The owners were Korean. I noticed that the husband, who was standing behind the cash register, was eyeing my son.

"Is he Korean?" he asked. "Yes," I nodded. He reached out for the baby and took my son into his arms. "He'll be good in math," declared the man. "My God," I muttered to myself. Not him, too!

It was preposterous. It was funny. And it was unnerving. Embedded in such elevated expectations were real threats to my son. Suppose, I wondered, he should turn out to be only a mediocre student, or, worse yet, not a student at all. I resented the stereotypes and saw them for what they were, the other side of the coin of racism. It is easy to delude oneself into thinking it harmless to offer racial compliments, but that is an inherent contradiction in terms. Such sweeping descriptives, be they negative or positive, deny the one thing most precious to all people—individuality.

"People often say how smart Asians are and how good we are in math. It annoys me because they think I can solve certain math problems when I can't."

—Elizabeth, age 14

"When I beat someone at ping-pong, they'll say, 'He's good because he's Asian.'"

—Shen Bo, age 13

Such stereotypes also place a crushing burden on Asians. Few would deny that disproportionate numbers of Asian surnames appear each year among the winners of the Westinghouse science prizes or in the ranks of National Merit Scholars. But it might be a reflection of parental influences, personal commitment, and cultural predilections, not genetic predisposition. A decade ago, as a Fulbright Lecturer in Beijing, I saw firsthand the staggering hours my Chinese students devoted to their studies. Were my students in the United States to invest similar time in their books, I would have every reason to expect similar results.

My son David is now in the first grade. He is already taking math with the second-graders and asking me about square roots and percentiles. I think back to the Korean merchant who took him in his arms and pronounced him a math whiz. Was he right? Do Asians have it easier, endowed with some special strand of DNA? The answer is a resounding no. Especially in our house. David has learning disabilities to overcome, and what progress he has made is individual in the purest and most heroic sense. No one can or should take that away from him, suggesting that he is just another wunderkind belonging to a favored race.

A year after my first son arrived, we adopted his brother from Korea. His name is Matthew. Let it be known that Matthew couldn't care less about math. He's a bug man. Slugs and earthworms. I suspect he will never be featured in any cover stories about Asian-American whiz kids, but I will continue to resist anything and anyone who attempts to dictate either his interests or his abilities based on race or place of birth. Bugs are fine by me and should be more than fine by him"(American Adoptions 2012).

Dealing with Stereotypes

When our children get hit with negative—or positive—labels, it robs them of who they really are. By Deborah Johnson

As parents, we want our children to be aware of racial stereotypes, but not feel defined or restricted by them. We want to encourage their individuality. Here are some ways to begin.

"Sometimes my friend jokes about the way Chinese people speak English. She'll say that the vendors who sell imitation Gucci bags on the streets in New York yell, 'One dallah! One dallah!' When I hear this, I get a little offended."

—Lindiana, age 13

"I was adopted as a baby from Korea, but I often get asked where I'm from. When I tell people I grew up in the Midwest, they'll say, 'No, where are you really from?' I once had a lady welcome me to America, and people often tell me how good my English is. 'You don't even have an accent!' they'll exclaim."

—Jennifer, age 27

Stay current. New racial stereotypes are always cropping up, in the media and in our culture. Become aware of them—and their power—by viewing what your kids watch on TV and at the movies. Even when Asian characters seem harmless (an exotic beauty) or humorous (American Idol contestant William Hung), these stereotypes perpetuate racist myths.

Talk about the negative. If your child has been called a "math geek" or teased because he has "slanty eyes," take some time to discuss this. You might say, "Sometimes people don't have friends who are different, so they just believe what they've seen in the movies or on TV. They haven't been taught to respect people of other backgrounds." Then help your child come up with appropriate ways to respond.

Explore positive labels, too. Asians are often referred to as a "model minority"—a race that is collectively labeled hard-working, well-mannered, quiet, and smart. But what if your child is expected to be a math or science whiz, a musical prodigy, or an honor-roll student at school? What if your daughter is always referred to as beautiful or exotic, rather than complimented for her inner traits? These labels can be harmful, too. Children who have unrealistic—or inaccurate—expectations placed on them can feel inadequate or disappointed in themselves for not living up to these assumptions. As a parent, it's important to help your child find and nurture her unique talents.

Take action. Racial stereotypes are sometimes perpetuated by those closest to us. If family members or friends make comments that unfairly label a group of people, share with them how harmful this can be. If Uncle Bill says, "You have to watch those Chinese; they're really sneaky," you might respond, "Uncle Bill, how many Chinese people do you know? You're making a generalization about more than one billion people!" Then you might add, "Your niece Jenny was adopted from Asia. You wouldn't want people to speak of Jenny in that way, would you?"

Seek support. As a transracial family, you can often find support among adult adoptees or others in the Asian community. These people can be role models for your child, teaching her how to react in hurtful situations. They can also help you effectively respond to stereotypes in the media. For example, if you find an ad to be racially offensive, you might get together as a group to write, call, or boycott the sponsor of the product. If a radio deejay or other media personality says or writes something offensive, you can pressure that person to apologize. Creating social change begins with small steps. But making the personal commitment to fight back against stereotypes is the first step in making a better world for all of us (Adoptive Families Magazine 2012).

What To Say

"How can your child respond to racist or stereotypical comments? Here are a few suggestions.

□ "Do you speak Chinese?"

"No. Why should I? I came to America as a baby, and my family speaks English. What languages do you speak?"

□ "Why do your eyes look like that?"

"Everyone who is Asian—and there are billions of us—has eyes like mine. It's part of my heritage. Why are your eyes green?"

□ "Does your family eat rice every night?"

"No. We eat rice on some nights. On other days, we eat pasta or potatoes with dinner. Why? Does your family?"

□ "You're Asian. How come you don't like math?"

"I know lots of Asians who don't like math. I also know lots of kids who do. I guess I take after my mom. We love sports! What do you like?"

□ "You're beautiful. You look just like a China doll."

"Thank you, but I'm not really into dolls. I'm a beautiful person on the inside, too—where it really counts."(Adoptive Families 2012)

BOOKS FOR KIDS

At Home in This World: A China Adoption Story, by Jean MacLeod

Kids Like Me in China, by Ying Ying Fry

After the Morning Calm: Reflections of Korean Adoptees, Edited By Dr.
Sook Wilkinson and Nancy Fox

The Lucky Gourd Shop, by Joanna C. Scott

Central American Heritage, Schlessinger Media

BOOKS FOR PARENTS

Yellow: Race in America Beyond Black and White, by Frank H. Wu

*The Lost Daughters of China: Abandoned Girls, Their Journey to America,
and the Search for a Missing Past*, by Karin Evans

*Wanting a Daughter, Needing a Son: Abandonment, Adoption, and Orphanage
Care in China*, by Kay Ann Johnson

Wuhu Diary: On Taking My Daughter Back to her Hometown in China, by
Emily Prager

Inside Transracial Adoption, by Gail Steinberg and Beth Hall

Indian/Native American Children

"Native American adoption is regulated by federal law, instead of state laws like most other adoptions. In 1978, the U.S. passed the Indian Child Welfare Act, which allows sovereign states to regulate the adoption of tribal members. The ICWA states that Native American adoptees have a right to know of their cultural origins and maintain the opportunity to be active in the Native heritage. Depending on the child's familial circumstance, the voluntary or involuntary placement of a child in an adoptive or foster home may be handled by the federal court or transferred to a tribal court.

The federal position in Native adoption is part of a dark past in American history, when between 1958 and 1967 the Indian Adoption Project removed about a quarter of all Native children from their families because the "white man knew better." Because of this dark past and the suggested effort to keep Native adoptees interactive with their tribal roots, a Native American adoption takes extra work to make the child feel integrated in both the adoptive family and Native tradition. This is an adoption choice where an open adoption may be recommended.

Families adopting a Native-American child are encouraged to research the child's tribe of origin in order to share with the child the traditions, celebrations, dress and other tribe customs. Families may also wish to seek out other Native-American families in their community to allow their child to interact with other Native-American children and families" (Adoption Media 2012).

To Learn with Your Child About His or Her Tribe:

1. Native American Chart with basic facts:

http://www.mce.k12tn.net/indians/navigation/native_american_chart.htm

2. Native American Facts For Kids:

<http://www.native-languages.org/kids.htm>

3. Native American Tribes:

<http://www.intertribal.net/NAT/NA Tribes.htm>

4. Native American Tribes and Their Languages:

<http://www.native-languages.org/languages.htm>

Books for Children

We Wanted You by Liz Rosenberg

Tell Me Again About the Night I Was Born by Jamie Lee Curtis

The Best For You by Kelsey Stewart

Books for Parents

Inside Transracial Adoption by Gail Steinberg, Beth Hall

Does Anybody Else Look Like Me?: A Parent's Guide to Raising Multiracial Children by Donna Jackson Nakazawa

Of Many Colors: Portraits of Multiracial Families by: Gigi Kaeser

For Further Resources on Transracial Adoption Visit the resource tab at:
www.pactadopt.org.