Multiracial youth identity development and education

Rebecca Wyllie de Echeverria
Christopher Berntsen
"I think in English, but my tongue is dressed in Spanish. I am always missing a word for something in either language."

-YESIKA SALGADO
Biracial and Multiracial

- Schwartz (1998) explained the difference between biracial, which is someone who has parents of two different races, and multiracial, which is someone who family background is comprised of three or more heritages.
- There is also a wide variety of ways in which multiracial youth identify and those who have a truly multicultural influence from their family are often happier than those who do not (AACAP, 2015).
- According to Poston (1990), racial identity is defined by a person’s pride in their racial and cultural identity.
- Teachers and counselors need to know both of the heritages that make up the students’ background and how those histories effect the student today. (Ratliff, 2010).
- Our society teaches people to understand biracial and multiracial individuals in a black and white binary. (Ratliff, 2010).
Changing Demographics

**Interracial marriage**

Interethnic and interracial marriages have reached an all-time high of 8.4 percent.

![Bar graph showing increase in interracial marriage rates from 1980 to 2010.](chart.png)

SOURCE: Pew Research Center, AP
The Future of Multiracial Identity

https://youtu.be/ww3rZ9koFdw
Bill of Rights for People of Mixed Heritage
By Dr. Root

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
Not to justify my existence in this world.
Not to keep the races separate within me.
Not to justify my ethnic legitimacy.
Not to be responsible for people’s discomfort with my physical or ethnic ambiguity.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
To identify myself differently than strangers expect me to identify.
To identify myself differently than how my parents identify me.

To identify myself differently than my brothers and sisters.
To identify myself differently in different situations.

I HAVE THE RIGHT...
To create a vocabulary to communicate about being multiracial or multiethnic.
To change my identity over my lifetime—and more than once.
To have loyalties and identification with more than one group of people.
To freely choose whom I befriend and love.
Beverly Tatum:

“Why are all the Black Kids sitting together in the cafeteria?”

- Racial identity development in Cross’s model states that adolescents go through the stage of encountering race in junior high and high school.
- Experience all the stages in spirals throughout their life, which are pre-encounter, encounter, immersion/emersion, commitment, invested-commitment.
- Multiracial families should work to cultivate multicultural experiences for multiracial children, with the involvement of all family members.
- Multiracial children will encounter racism and be pushed toward a monoracial identity by society, thus their experiences often align with other adolescents of color.
American Psychology Association: Seven Essential Facts about Multiracial Youth

2. Multiracial children are the largest demographic group among U.S. citizens under the age of 18. This growth is because mixed marriages and families are at an all time high.
3. Multiracial youth receive unique forms of discrimination (family, school, society).
4. Multiracial youth are discriminated by institutions by not being able to choose more than one box, which has been shown to have a negative effect on mental health.
5. Multiracial youth need multiracial role models and community
6. Multiracial youth must have an integrated multiracial identity to be mentally healthy
7. Multiracial youth are resilient because they have an increased appreciation for cultural diversity and often understand that race is not biological, but a social construct.
MAVIN Project

- A educational resource about for mixed people.
- Mixed Heritage Center which is an online clearinghouse for mixed heritage resources
- Loving Day
Sabine French

- A Psychologist that studies ethnic identity development in adolescents, her work is important because she focuses on developmental stages of adolescent racial identity
Critical Mixed Race Studies
Additional Information on and Supports for Multiracial Students

• It is also important that biracial and multiracial adolescents develop positive identities of different races (Schwartz, 1998).
• Biracial and multiracial adolescents often feel oppressed and do not live in integrated and stable neighborhoods that are unsegregated (Schwartz, 1998).
• Multiracial youth should receive multicultural support and influence from the whole family (AACAP, 2015).
• Adolescents learn to either navigate between racial groups or chose to remain loyal to just one having recognized the different statuses and opportunities of being in each group (Herman, 2004).
What Not to Say

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mgHf9ZayI8Y

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Discussion Questions

What can teachers do to support multiracial identity development in their students?

What are the unique strengths and struggles that biracial students bring into the classroom?
Further Research and Resources


http://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources?keys=mixed+race&type=All&topic=All&grade=All&domain=All&subject=All

http://multiasianfamilies.blogspot.com/2016/02/how-our-multiracial-6yo-was-pushed-into.html

https://issuu.com/poczineproject/docs/mixedup_2013_rev
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Astrea Greig. Seven essential facts about multiracial youth


https://home.psych.uic.edu/content/sabineelizabeth-french


http://www.wa-schoolcounselor.org/Files/WhatAreYou.pdf


Ted Talk on being Multiracial. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ww3rZ9koFdw