



Princeton & NYU Discoveries in Action

October 2022 NEWSLETTER

Hello Panda Families!

Thank you for joining us! We are excited to publish this newsletter as a celebration of the discoveries we've made together and to build connections with you. PANDA is a virtual research lab focusing on child development. We study child development to understand how parents and teachers can help children learn. We also do research in-person in our lab at New York University. You can learn more about our research at:

<http://kidconcepts.org/>.

And of course, sign up for PANDA to get notified when studies are available!

<https://www.discoveriesinaction.org>

We are always looking for new families to join us on PANDA, so please also share this newsletter with any family or friends who might want to participate!

Best,
Princeton and NYU Discoveries in Action



Instagram: [@discoveriesinaction](https://www.instagram.com/discoveriesinaction)

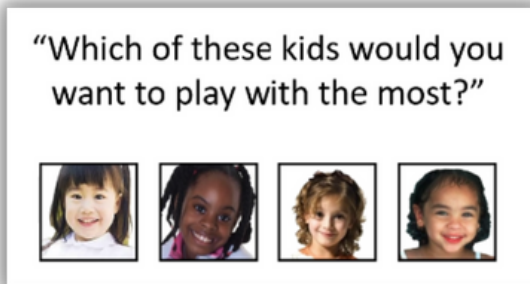


Facebook page: [Princeton & NYU discoveries in action](https://www.facebook.com/Princeton&NYUdiscoveriesinaction)

New Studies on Racial Bias

Early childhood is an important time for children to learn how to make friends and get along with others. As they enter schools and daycare programs, children are introduced to new people from different backgrounds, cultures, and identities with a range of abilities and interests.

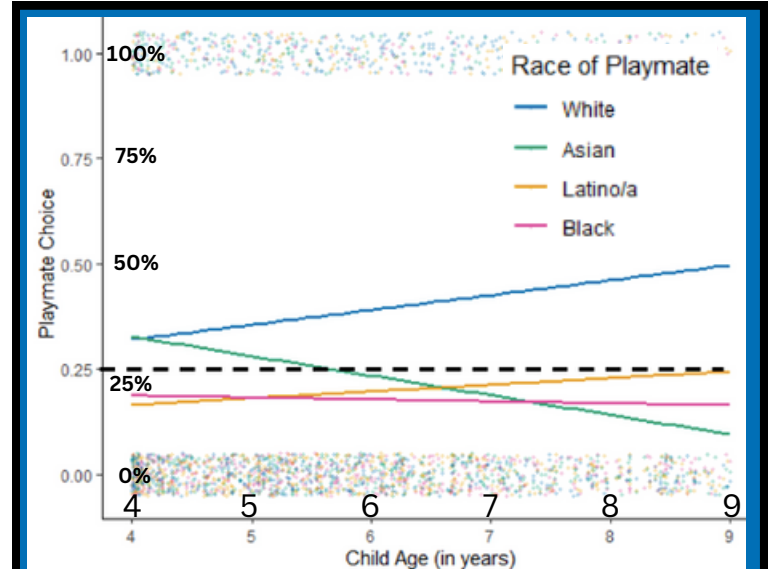
Over the last few years, the PANDA team has run several studies looking at how children make important friendship decisions, with special attention to how racial bias might be developing and limiting children's friendship opportunities (Rizzo et al., 2021; Rizzo, Britton, & Rhodes, 2022*). During these studies, we show children pictures of kids they have never met before and ask them how nice they think those kids might be, whether they think they would like playing with those kids, and who they would want to play with the most (see image below)



Unfortunately, in a study with over 2000 4- to 8-year-old children from the United States, we found that racial bias emerges in children as young as 4 years old, especially in regards to who they would want to play with. Given the choice to play with one of the four children shown in the picture (Asian, Black, White, and Latino/a) the White child received significantly more interest than the Black child. In fact, out of the four, the White child received the most interest and the black child received the least interest.

Children from all racial backgrounds had a slight bias for peers from their own racial group, but White children were considerably more likely to show this pattern.

Nearly 40% of White children preferred playing with other White children over Asian, Black, and Latino/a children, and only 18% of White children said they would want to play with a Black or Latino/a child.



This graph shows the proportion of White children who said they would most want to play with the White (blue line), Asian (green line), Latino/a (yellow line), and Black (red line) children. Children's age is on the horizontal axis. Each dot represents one child's playmate choice. The black, hashed line at 0.25 represents the proportion of children who would have chosen to play with each racial group by "chance" (i.e., if children's choices were not influenced by racial bias).

The emergence of racial bias in early childhood is troubling because it can lead children to express racial prejudices or act in racially discriminatory ways. Experiencing prejudice and discrimination is a major threat to the health and well-being of children from marginalized backgrounds, and upwards of 90% of Black children and adolescents in the United States report having experienced some form of racial or ethnic discrimination (Seaton & Zeiders, 2021).

Importantly, racial biases are also harmful to the children who hold them because they limit children’s opportunities to form lifelong friendships and to learn about different people, cultures, and perspectives. Research consistently shows that children with more diverse friend groups have an easier time adjusting socially and develop a healthier and more adaptive set of social skills throughout childhood and adolescence (Rivas-Drake et al., 2017).

What Can Parents Do?

Here are a few ideas grounded in research that parents can do to help their children develop inclusive friendships.

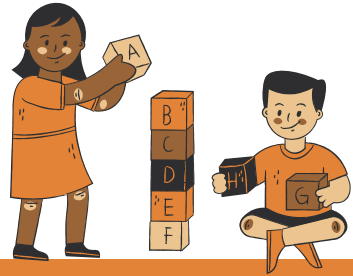


Show your children that you value diversity and inclusion early.

The Science: Starting in early childhood, children’s friendship biases are closely linked to who they think their parents would want them to play with.

The Action:

- Be intentional about selecting books and media that feature characters from different racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Support and nurture your child’s friendships with people with different lived experiences and cultural backgrounds.
- Express interest in learning about experiences and cultures that are different from your own.



Talk to your children about the societal factors that cause racial inequalities.

The Science: Young children are incredibly perceptive! By 4- to 5-years-old, children are already aware of the racial inequalities that exist in the world around them. They pick up on who lives in wealthier neighborhoods, who is called on (or not) by their teachers, and who is watched more closely by authority figures (e.g., teachers, school security, police) and use these patterns to make inferences about how the world works.

The Action: One of the best things parents can do is talk to their children to ensure they understand the societal biases and systems that underlie racial inequality and make sure that their children are not attributing these patterns to internal differences between racial groups (e.g., that one group is harder working, smarter, or nicer than another)(Olson et al., 2012; Rizzo, Britton, & Rhodes, 2022*).





RESEARCH SPOTLIGHT



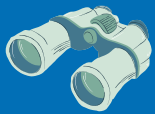
3

Get involved in anti-racist community action!

Search for local organizations or get involved with one of the many online organizations—including our friends at **Embrace Race**, **Story Starters**, and **We Stories**—doing anti-racist work. By taking these steps to redress racial injustice—and including your child in this process—you can make a difference in your community and help your child see the importance of this work, too.



*Rizzo, Britton, & Rhodes, (2022) has been accepted for publication and will be published sometime in the next two months



PANDA ACTIVITIES



Doing Science For Fun



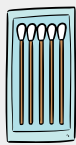
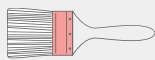
Begin doing science by introducing new concept:

Lemon juice is made up of 90% water with some molecules like citric acid, sugar and carbon compounds. These carbon molecules are invisible at room temperature. When you write a message with lemon juice the water dries, evaporating into the air. What's left behind are the sugar, acid, and carbon. When these things are heated, they begin to interact with the oxygen in the air in a process called oxidation which turns the carbon compounds brown. So when you heat up paper with dried lemon juice on it the invisible message becomes visible!



Equipment:

- 1 lemon
- Small container (jar, bowl, glass etc.)
- A cotton swab or paintbrush
- Paper
- Candle



Methods:

- 1 Squeeze the lemon in your dish (tip: it is okay to have seeds!)
- 2 Draw a picture or write a note using the cotton swabs on a piece of paper and leave to dry.
- 3 Adults: Light your candle!
- 4 Adults: Heat the paper evenly making sure not to put the flame too close or keep the paper in one spot for too long.

Results & Discussion

★ An important part of doing science is discussing why we think things happen ★

- What did you observe?
- Can you see your words/pictures?
- How long did it take for your words/ picture to appear?
- What do you see/ smell/ hear?
- What caused the ink to turn brown?

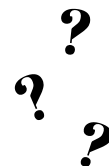


Upcoming Studies

How Do Children See and Remember Things?

Inviting PANDA families with **9-10 year-olds** to participate in our latest study. A short, fun online study where your child can contribute to science and get a \$10 Amazon gift card!

Children will be able to complete the study on their own with parental consent at the start of the study. You can register your kids and teens at <http://discoveriesinaction.org>



Word Find

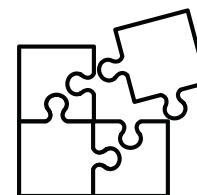
A	A	M	N	E	X	C	M	O	O	N
P	C	T	Y	J	X	H	E	P	I	H
P	O	J	V	A	R	N	A	L	S	J
L	R	Z	A	C	I	B	M	O	C	B
E	N	H	C	K	V	F	Q	T	H	H
B	O	O	P	E	K	S	A	Y	O	O
A	L	M	L	T	F	E	L	L	O	L
K	U	W	C	B	O	T	I	C	L	C
P	E	Z	E	N	P	L	E	A	F	E

- ACORN
- APPLE
- FALL
- JACKET
- LEAF
- PUMPKIN
- SCHOOL
- MOON
- BOO

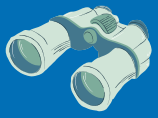


Riddles

I have to be opened but I don't have a lid or a key to get in. What am I?



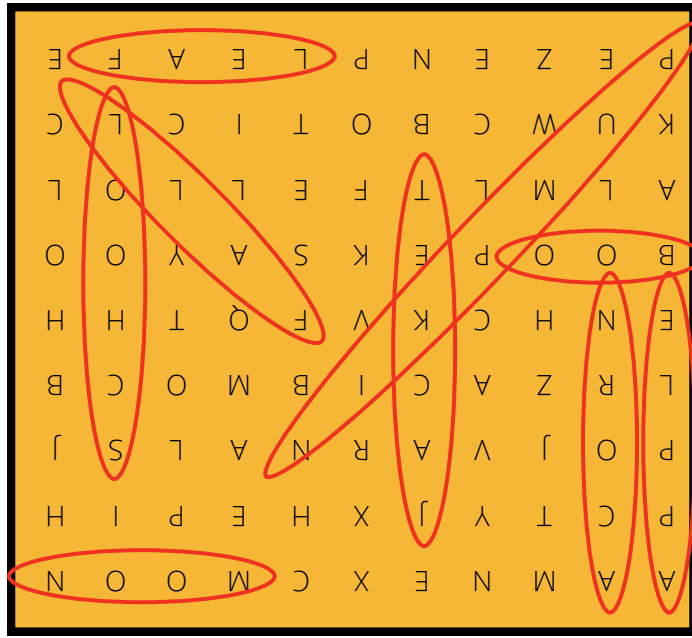
Tom's father has three sons: Jim, John, and what's the third one's name?



PUZZLE ANSWERS



Puzzle Answers



Tom!

An egg!

A big thank you to Peregrine for drawing us this picture!



Happy Halloween!