Meeting the Needs of Multi/Biracial Children

in School and at Home

by

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ABSTRACT

In an extension of research on marginalized populations, the present study identified and explored the unique needs of biracial/multiracial children. Unlike their single-race counterparts, the experience of the multiracial child is substantially different due to their ambiguous ethnicity. A review of literature on this topic revealed six major themes among the multiracial community. Following a thorough discussion of each need, implications for the school counselor and parents of biracial children has been provided. To raise awareness and concern for this population in schools and at home, recommendations for application of research in this area of study center on educational and childrearing strategies for the school counselor and parents of biracial children. Practical suggestions are provided in a convenient manual, along with a supplementary list of resources.

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This work is dedicated to Travis Turner.

I love you.

"If our surroundings are a mirror that reflects human life, then all children who interact within their environment need to see themselves reflected as part of humanity."

~Anonymous

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I: Introduction

Interracial unions have dramatically increased over the past three decades (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2003). These unions are producing children and, as a result, multiracial individuals represent an expanding population of America's diverse society (Harris, 2003). Estimates from Census 2000 suggested that 6.8 million of the 281.4 million people in the United States identified themselves as having consisted of more than just one race (Lopez, 2003). Nearly three million of the respondents who indicated mixed backgrounds were under the age of 18.

Multiracial children may be described as the offspring born to parents of different racial and ethnic backgrounds (Wardle, 1998). Although not synonymous, many terms have been used to define these children, including *biracial, mixed race*, and *multiethnic*. This study will use the term biracial and multiracial interchangeably, as the best current descriptors of those children whose biological parents come from two or more traditional racial groups, while interracial will be used to describe their families. It is important, however, to note the distinction.

Given that a multiracial community is the present and future profile of America, it is safe to assume that interactions with these individuals—both at home and in the schools—will occur. With respect to this rising presence of biracial children in today's society, numerous studies have underscored the importance of recognizing the possible ramifications of growing up under these circumstances. Although much attention has been devoted to the counseling and parenting concerns of minority children, few have addressed the needs of other marginalized populations.

In 1990, Gibbs described multiracial children as "an emerging population . . . who have some unique characteristics, some potential problems, and some social needs . . . all related to their ambiguous ethnicity and their need to define their identities in a society where race has always been a significant social dimension" (p. 322). Processing more than one ethnic and racial

identity can be confusing in and of itself, but dealing with the biases and assumptions from peers and the community has been characterized as yet another challenge. Similar to data presented by Francis Wardle (as cited in Morrison & Rodgers, 1996), Gibbs (1990) proposed that children of dual-racial heritage risk experiencing the pressure of being different. In fact, studies have shown that biracial children may not be prepared for racism, or for how society views them compared to how they view themselves (Root, 1992; McClurg, 2004). Such pressure and negative attitudes from society may manifest in a lack of support from family, friends, and people within the community.

Like all youth, multiracial and biracial children need heroes with whom they can identify. Since parents of biracial children are single-race individuals limited to only their world, McClurg (2004) reported that their offspring often do not receive the opportunity to identify with them—both in looks and in understanding his or her biracial experience. As a result, studies have shown that biracial children often feel forced to choose one parent's identity over the other (Wright, 1998; Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2002, 2004; McClurg, 2004). Rockquemore and Laszloffy (2003) contended that the greatest difficulty arises "when individuals select a racial identity that is routinely invalidated by others, especially others who are emotionally significant to that individual" (p. 121). According to Rockquemore and Brunsma (2004), this absence of validation and of a role model may also extend to interactions with peers in the classroom and on television.

While considerable literature points to identity formation as the major issue for both multiracial and biracial individuals, research has also examined other factors. Numerous analyses have been conducted to determine the influence of a person's biracial status on his or her self esteem, mental health, and achievement in school (Bracey, Bámaca, & Umaña-Taylor, 2004; Reid & Henry, 2000; Morrison & Rodgers, 1996).

This is not to suggest, however, that all multiracial children are conflicted individuals who are likely to exhibit identity or academic problems as a result of their background. To do so would perpetuate the myths regarding the multiracial community, for there are many biracial individuals that function very well dualistically in each culture they represent. On the one hand, the overall needs of the biracial child are not unlike most children who prosper in a loving environment where they feel valued and respected. On the other hand, the nature of these needs grow more complex with the intricacies of multiple races, which raise special considerations that warrant society's attention.

In spite of all of the material available to those working in the best interest of children—including story books, parenting classes, trainings, and videos—the unique issues facing biracial children are seldom addressed. Multicultural courses, once thought to be inclusive, are now missing an important component with the growing number of biracial children in America. Although multiracial children are minorities within the true sense of the word—as representatives of a *blend* of different cultures—they are often overlooked and ignored, for they do not fit neatly within monoracial parameters. It has become more important, now more than ever, to broaden everyday discussions to encompass a multiracial perspective.

Reid and Henry (2000) stated that "[t]he healthy development of a biracial child requires assistance and sensitivity from the adults in their lives," including the school counselor and parents (p. 574). Heeding their advice, this would suggest that school districts need to organize and expand curriculum units to address race and ethnicity more completely, and that parents need to be informed accurately in responding to the issues of their biracial child in an appropriate manner. It is the researcher's contention that such attentiveness and support of biracial children would elicit positive outcomes at home and in the classroom.

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the demographics across the United States have transformed significantly. An increased trend of multiracial births in America has introduced a whole new set of variables to respond to. While the overall body of literature on the biracial experience is slowly expanding, few studies have explored these variables in terms of needs. In order for society to effectively serve children from interracial families, resources defining these needs and how best to address them must be made available to educate important stakeholders. Given that a child spends a large amount of his or her day in school before returning home, school counselors and parents must be equipped with information specifically geared toward making accommodations for the changing composition of today's families.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research endeavor was to develop an awareness and concern for the needs of multi/biracial children in the form of a literature review. Data will be analyzed within the context of school and home and adapted into a resource guide that will be made available for parents and school counselors in the winter of 2010. The guide will be intended to improve existing school guidance programs and advance parenting practices among interracial families by providing research-based suggestions when working with children of mixed heritage.

Assumptions of the Study

This study assumed that school counselors and parents of multi/biracial children (a) lack accurate information on best practices related to working with multiracial children, and (b) will use the new insight presented in the study to adjust their role accordingly. These assumptions became the motivation for this paper and for the construction of its accompanying resource manual.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions have been taken from the diversity curriculum prepared by the California Child Care Health Program (2000), which has been an overriding source from the multicultural field.

Bias. An opinion, attitude, or tendency formed unfairly often without justification.

Biracial. A person whose biological parents are of dissimilar ethnic groups.

Culture. The sharing of social, religious, linguistic, dietary, and other values and beliefs held by a group of people, which are passed on through generations.

Ethnicity. A concept that ascribes social, religious, linguistic, dietary, and other variables to individual people and populations; usually tied to the notion of shared origins and culture.

Identity. The set of behavioral or personal characteristics by which an individual is recognizable as a member of a group; the distinct personality of an individual.

Interracial. The marriage or union between individuals of different races and/or family units comprised of individuals having different racial backgrounds.

Minority. A group of people other than the dominant culture, with unequal access to significant services such as health, education, economic opportunity, and housing.

Monoracial. Individuals having a single racial heritage.

Multiracial. Individuals having more than two racial heritages (one or both parents are of mixed race).

Prejudice. An adverse judgment or opinion formed beforehand or without knowledge or examination of the facts.

Race. A group of people united or classified together on the basis of common history, nationality, or geography.

Racism. A system of privilege that is based on race.

Stereotype. A fixed image of a person or group of people, which is oversimplified and does not consider the individual.

Limitations of the Study

This study confines its research to the examination of the biological offspring of interracial couples, and not of adopted multi/biracial children. The experience of a child who shares a common blood line with each parent compared to that of a child who does not may differ considerably. Therefore, the resource guide in Chapter Four will not be as useful to parents of children who do not fit the targeted population.

Chapter II: Literature Review

This chapter will explore the various aspects involved in growing up as a biracial child in today's society. Chapter Two will begin with an overview of the biracial movement, followed by a series of statistics that explain the current scope of the multiracial community within America. After looking at an existing racial identity model as it relates to all children, examples of identity-related maladaptive behaviors in biracial children will be provided. This chapter ends with a thorough investigation of each need that most biracial children often present, so as to reduce or eliminate some of the unfavorable manifestations parents and school counselors see.

Biracial Movement into America

In the late 1600's, Virginia enacted laws against marriages of different races (Root, 1992). The laws, which specifically targeted the union between Whites and Blacks, were created to protect White womanhood and to protect the procreation of mixed racial children. Furthermore, those who established the laws had believed marriages between Whites and Blacks reduced the "supremacy of whiteness" because social equality was slowly emerging as these marriages occurred.

Root (1992) stated that, during this time, "[c]hildren born of two different races were considered mentally and physically inferior to 'pure' White race children" (p. 22). Physical characteristics of a person also defined his or her place and benefits in society (Wardle, 1992). For example, White people in Virginia were generally entitled to receive privileges, whereas a person of color was not. This was vastly in part due to the fact that the Constitution and laws during that time were written by White people for White people (Haney López, 2006). Skin color particularly posed a challenge when interracial couples had biracial children who looked White. In an attempt to avoid the burden to try to prove that biracial offspring were something other

than what they looked, Root (1992) pointed out that the state made laws to try to counteract the problem.

As with any laws come consequences. The penalty within Virginia for any person of the White race who chose to marry an African American was banishment from the colony (Root, 1992). Black men who married or had sexual relations with a White woman were convicted of rape and were put to death. White men, on the other hand, were neither convicted of rape, nor put to death for having sexual relations with a Black woman. Before the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery, many of these White men were slave masters who secretly took advantage of Black women through rape and violence. Many of them fathered biracial children outside of their own marriages; in most cases, these children were considered Black. Children born to a Black parent and a White parent were forced to assume the mothers' status: children of slave mothers assumed the slave status, while children of White mothers were sold as indentured servants until the age of thirty (Root, 1992). Punishments also existed for any person who had authorized a marriage license to or knowingly united an interracial couple in marriage—whether it was through the law, the church, or both.

Historical data revealed that, on June 12, 1967, laws against interracial marriages were abolished because they were considered unconstitutional (Root, 1992; Wright, 1998). This revision was due largely in part to the Supreme Court case of *Loving v. Virginia* when, in 1958, a White man by the name of Richard Loving married an African American woman named Mildred Jeter in Washington, D.C. and they returned together to Virginia as husband and wife.

Shortly thereafter, the Lovings were prosecuted under a statute enacted in 1924 entitled "An Act to Preserve Racial Integrity" (Root, 1992). Wright (1998) indicated that the statute "criminalized interracial marriages outside the state with the intent of evading Virginia's

prohibition" (p. 46). The Lovings pleaded guilty to violating the Act and were sentenced to one year in jail. However, the trial judge gave them the option of avoiding incarceration on the condition that they leave the state and not return for 25 years. In 1961, the decision was overturned because issues of unconstitutionality arose. In doing so, the Supreme Court invalidated similar laws in fifteen states. Thus, as of 1967, interracial marriages were no longer illegal in any state.

Statistical Portrait

As America approaches the 48th year of the Loving decision, views on interracial marriages have improved substantially. In 1991, a Gallop poll found that for the first time more people in the United States approved of interracial marriages (48%) than disapproved (42%) (Gibbs, 1990). These figures significantly increased from 1958, when studies indicated that only 4% of White Americans approved of such marriages.

Given the nation's changing perceptions toward interracial unions, more and more couples of different races appear to feel comfortable getting married. For instance, a study by Harris (2003) showed that the number of U.S. couples who married interracially has gone from 310,000 couples in 1970 to 1.3 million in 1994. In addition, according to the summary of 2000 Census data that Lopez (2003) provided, one in fifty marriages is interracial—which is four times the number compared to 1970.

With an increase in interracial marriages, studies have revealed that the amount of biracial births have increased as well. In 1990, the Census stated that nearly 10 million Americans reported as having qualified under the category of "Other, Not Specified" (Reid & Henry, 2000). However, using data from the 2000 Census—which allowed people to identify themselves and their children by more than one race for the first time—results indicated that 6.8

million people, or 2.4% of Americans, checked two or more races (Lopez, 2003). Forty-two percent of this multiracial population indicated that they were below the age of 18. In addition, 393,959 people, who checked more than one racial box, lived in New York City—which is just under 5% of eight million New Yorkers (Lopez, 2003). New York City demonstrated the highest multiracial population of any U.S. city.

Sonja Tafoya (2000) from the Public Policy Institute of California, on the other hand, found that multiracial births represented nearly 15% of all births in California in 2000. In this case, multiracial births were the third largest category of births in the state of California, proceeding Hispanics and Whites.

Racial Identity Model—Marguerite Wright

Noting that one of the fastest growing populations in the United States is multiracial, it is important to gain a sound familiarity with the ages and stages of racial identity before specifically addressing the issues of biracial children. Without a developmental perspective upon which to rely, one cannot fully understand what is "normal" and "expected" of typical children in terms of how they view race. The following material on racial identity among children was adapted from a training guide for child care providers who serve biracial children and their families, published by the California Child Care Health Program in the year 2000.

According to Marguerite Wright (1998), the author of "I'm Chocolate, You're Vanilla," children typically develop their racial identity between the ages of three and ten. Wright (1998) described the first stage of her model as Racial Innocence, in which three-year-olds generally are unable to accurately identify their skin color, much less their race. During this stage of Racial Innocence, children reside in a world where anything is possible, including changes in skin color and gender. As for the origin of racial identity within this stage, Wright (1998) explained that

children around age three are often unaware of how they have come to biologically inherit a particular skin color. Furthermore, preschoolers do not possess the ability to correctly categorize people by race and, according to Wright (1998), are developmentally inclined to see people as individuals rather than as members of racial groups.

The second stage within Wright's (1998) model of racial identity development is known as the Color Awareness stage. This stage is characterized by children three to five years of age who present adults with many questions. For instance, a child within the Color Awareness stage may wonder how he or she got his/her skin color. It is not uncommon for children in this stage to accurately identify their skin color using words like "brown," white," "tan," or "black." Wright (1998) stated that when children enter the Color Awareness stage they believe that, if they desire, they can change their skin color by "magical means like wishing and painting" (p. 34). This stage reveals children who can accurately group people by skin color, but not race. Moreover, children at this level continue to see people of their own and other races without considering skin color and racial prejudices.

Moving on, Wright (1998) referred to the third stage of her model as Awakening to Social Color. When children reach this stage, they are typically about six or seven years of age. As opposed to previous stages, children in the Awakening to Social Color stage can make relative skin color distinctions, like "light-skinned" or "dark-skinned." Wright (1998) felt that children begin to perceive that their skin color is a permanent feature of their bodies and understand that the sun's effect on the skin is only temporary. Not only can children begin to grasp the connection between their color and that of their parents', but they also begin understanding that skin color means more than mere color. In turn, children in the Awakening to Social Color stage may begin to feel inclined to categorize people by color, rather than race. As a

result, Wright (1998) believed that children may be vulnerable to adopting skin color prejudices of their family and friends.

The Racial Awareness stage is the last stage addressed in Wright's (1998) model. It is often during this time that children ages eight through ten can accurately identify their race using terms like "Caucasian" and "African American." Most children at this point can fully comprehend that racial identity is permanent and that some basis exists for it. Although children may look to skin color to determine a person's group, they will also consider other physical cues when they are in the Racial Awareness stage (e.g., hair color and textures, facial features, etc.). Wright (1998) claimed that unless children within this stage are sensitively taught not to prejudge people based on their race, they may develop full-fledged racial stereotypes.

Maladaptive Behaviors Observed in Biracial Children

Being biracial does not automatically lead to emotional or relational problems. On the contrary, biracial children that are nurtured in loving and supportive households have a strong foundation for a healthy development. However, due to society becoming acclimated to this new wave of children, multiracial individuals are often subject to a great deal of glares, strange looks, and possibly hurtful comments.

Negative societal reactions to one's race are problems that can deeply affect the well being of biracial children (Milan & Keiley, 2000). Articles on the counseling of multiracial populations determine that individuals contending with two or more races have a potentially greater likelihood of experiencing conflict among their peers, within their family, and internally (Milan & Keiley, 2000; Schofield, 1975; Suzuki-Crumly & Hyers, 2004). This conflict can manifest in number of different ways.

According to Raushanah Hud-Aleem and Jacqueline Countryman (2008), studies have shown that biracial children are potentially more at risk to develop racial identification issues, lowered self esteem, violence, and substance abuse. Roger Herring (1995) identified sociocultural issues that multiracial children may face such as "…self-hatred, alcohol and other drug abuse, suicide, delinquency, alienation, and denial of self" (p. 32). Researchers such as Gibbs (1987) hypothesize that these higher rates of risk behaviors among biracial individuals may be due to the inherent ambiguity and uncertainty of their identity.

In 1992, Gibbs and Hines found that biracial teens often felt socially marginalized and that those rejected by peers as a result of their racial/ethnic heritage had the poorest academic and psychological outcomes (as cited in Buchanan & Acevedo, 2004). As Root (1996) and others have articulated clearly, biracial youth often feel a great responsibility in having to prove their ethnic legitimacy. Because the combination of two races challenges social convention and muddies our country's classification rules around race, biracial children have historically experienced a great deal of stress in combating our society's resistance to a multiracial standard. While it is quite possible that biracial children can grow up happy and healthy, it is also evident that particular adverse effects associated with identity must be negotiated.

Exploration of Needs

The remainder of Chapter Two is divided into categories based upon the premise that human experience is arranged around underlying needs. That is to say, for instance, the person who struggles with spontaneity likely possesses a need for structure or routine. The *reason* for the need in the previous example—whether due to a learning disability, a product of their environment, or a conditioned response—becomes irrelevant.

By applying this same principle to the biracial child, literature on his or her unique circumstance suggests to the researcher the following needs. While it would be dangerous to assume that all biracial children of any age and/or developmental level seek out the same things, research has illustrated that common themes exist across demographically-diverse biracial populations.

The sub-headings that follow highlight needs that have emerged from a rigorous examination of literature on the biracial experience. For the reader's convenience, the data has been separated by topic and a discussion of the findings on each subject has been placed beneath its corresponding category. This chapter will conclude with a summary of the literature critically analyzed within this review and key points will be made.

Affirmation. The need for affirmation within a child who is biracial specifically pertains to his or her environment. Our environment—which includes everything around us—affects people on many different levels. Based on cues we receive from what we see on posters, on billboards, on television, and in books, among other things, we begin to develop an understanding of what is valued and embraced. These impressions from the observations we make from our physical surroundings influence our feelings, our behavior, and our comfort level. Just as a particular paint color or furniture layout in a living room can evoke different emotions within a person, it stands to reason that the images a child is exposed to at home or in school impacts his or her thoughts and feelings about themselves and others.

While there may be many elements that parents and guidance counselors have limited control over, helping foster a positive and supportive environment that enhances a child's sense of self is certainly within reach. In the case of the biracial child, who may identify with more

than one racial or ethnic group, there is an even greater responsibility of the parent and school personnel to provide culturally-sensitive surroundings that celebrate both backgrounds.

Diane de Anda (1984) believes the environment that positively acknowledges the biracial child's background can provide cultural translators and models. She goes on to state that when biracial children see pictures of themselves and their families depicted around them, they receive a sense of validation. To achieve this support, Wardle (1987) pointed out, adults must work to create a climate that reflects the child's family type and cultural heritages, as well as one that promotes acceptance of religious and social differences.

The composition of an interracial family is complex—therefore, the search for multicultural activities and materials that affirm the identities of all its members requires adults to remain active and attentive. Prior to the end of the 20th century, the content of television, film, and print material rendered mixed-race individuals virtually invisible by denying their existence through reliance upon monoracial images (Beltrán & Fojas, 2008). The omission of a diversified selection of toys, multicultural literature in children's classics, and iconic figures in mass media has had limited application and relevancy to those who share multiple cultures.

Doll manufacturers, for example, did not begin to market their lines to multiracial youth until recently. In fact, before the year 2001, when MGA Entertainment Inc. launched 40 multi-ethnic Bratz dolls, few major toy companies produced figurines that represented a fusion of races (Chin, 1999). America first turned its attention to race within the toy industry when Mattel released their first Black Barbie in 1967 and, then again in 1980, following the debut of their International Collection (Browne & Browne, 2001). From that point forward, for a period of nearly ten years, consumers periodically began seeing renditions of white dolls displaying different shades of brown skin, but very few offering distinct features of two or more ethnic

groups complete with varying shaped eyes, noses, and hair textures (Browne & Browne, 2001). Sadly, American Girl's first biracial doll in 2006, whose heritage was supposedly Japanese and Scottish-Irish, did very little to advance the accurate depiction of biracial qualities.

The Walt Disney Company, a paramount in the field of family entertainment, has also been slow to respond to this diversity gap. It wasn't until Disney's 33rd animated feature, *Pocahontas*, that biracial children saw a similar take of their parent's interracial relationship contained within the entire Walt Disney Animated Classic series—72 years since the studio's inception at that time (Beltrán & Fojas, 2008). *Pocahontas*, which was loosely based on the historical encounter between a Native American girl and Englishman John Smith, hit television screens in 1995.

"As a significant social influence on our culture, media [is not the only force that] under represents multiracial members giving the perception they are an oddity who do not blend in with the rest of society" (Boster, 2006, p. 183). After reviewing two collections of essays that were compiled from a number of different authorities around the country, published in 1993 and 1997, Jean Mendoza and Debbie Reese (2001) asserted that people who were not European or European American appeared very little in children's literature prior to the 1960's. Their findings further revealed that non-European Americans were often depicted in negative and/or stereotypical representations. This phenomena, Mendoza and Reese (2001) say, gained national recognition in 1965 when the *Saturday Review* printed an article by librarian Nancy Larrick titled "The All-White World of Children's Books."

To corroborate the historical research of Mendoza and Reese, Long (1984) concluded that only four children's books portraying interracial themes were published between 1958 and 1984. Lovett (2002) went on to purport that "the closest thing available to a biracial picture book

in the late 1950's and 1960's was Garth Williams' *The Rabbits' Wedding*, published by Harper & Row in 1958" (p. 6). While the story of the marriage between the black and white rabbit carried strong interracial connotations, young audiences didn't see a picture book involving racially mixed human beings until 1972.

Still, in spite of this small socio-cultural change during the 1960's and 1970's, university professor Anne Creany had reported that only three percent of picture books represented minority cultures in 1994. Though it was unclear if Creany's estimate had included mixed-race individuals and/or families, statistics had not improved over time. Thirteen years following Creany's work, Francis Wardle (2007) announced the results of his analysis on current child development textbooks. Of the 12 textbooks he appraised for content, Wardle (2007) found only two had addressed multiracial children at all.

The absence of an accurate classification system on forms that ask a person to identify which race they are is also an indication of our society's long-running ambivalence to the shift in modern America. Each time a biracial individual elects to apply to college, for a job, or takes a standardized test, they are confronted with little to no options. Fortunately, in 1997, the Federal Office of Management and Budget resolved to remedy this problem by altering the format of the 2000 United States Census to permit multiple responses for the demographic data requested (Jones & Smith, 2001).

According to James Banks, one of the pioneers of multicultural education, a successful multicultural environment would be one that positively includes all ethnic minority groups by reflecting their cultures, experiences, and perspectives in the curriculum (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010). As one of the first multicultural education scholars to examine schools as social systems from a multicultural context, Banks grounded his conceptualization of multicultural

education in the idea of "educational equality." Educational equality seen through Banks' eyes refers to changing the total educational environment "so that diverse racial and ethnic groups, both gender groups, exceptional students, and students from each social-class group will experience equal educational opportunities in schools and universities" (Banks & McGee Banks, 2010, p. 446). To this end, Banks insists that all aspects of the school have to be examined and transformed, including policies, teachers' attitudes, instructional materials, assessment methods, counseling, and teaching styles.

Banks describes the dimensions of multicultural education in five overlapping areas, which are used widely by school districts to conceptualize and develop courses and programs in multicultural education. The five dimensions are: (1) content integration; (2) the knowledge construction process; (3) equity pedagogy; (4) prejudice reduction; and (5) an empowering school culture and social structure.

Content integration requires the teacher to put content about marginalized groups in the curriculum. Mexican Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, and biracial individuals are examples of groups that should all be incorporated. In the knowledge construction process, the teacher is seen helping students understand, investigate, and determine the implicit cultural assumptions and frames of reference of the discipline they're teaching (Tucker & Banks, 1998). Equity pedagogy, on the other hand, involves the teacher changing his or her methods to enable kids from diverse racial groups and both genders to achieve. Moving forward, anytime the teacher is helping kids develop more positive racial attitudes, he or she is practicing prejudice reduction. Lastly, an empowering school culture is the dimension of multicultural education that enables the other four dimensions. In this final dimension, the teacher must examine the

structures of education that impede learning and empower diverse students and families (Tucker & Banks, 1998).

For the past hundred years, dating as far back as Cooley's looking-glass theory in 1902, child development experts have argued that when children process the stimuli around them—be it through illustrations, text, paintings, pictures, stories, or play—they construct their own views of self and the world. As a result, Warren and Cruz-Janzen (as cited in Baxley, 2008) propose that we move away from what Banks (2003) calls the "heroes and holidays" approach to providing an inclusive environment for the biracial child, in which only surface level concepts are introduced on commemorative occasions, and begin infusing the biracial experience into everyday living.

Leading researchers on biracial children admit that cultivating a true multicultural space at home and in the classroom is not an easy task. It extends beyond the deliberate management of the images and objects that pass below the eyes of those who are racially mixed (Wardle, 1998; Tatum, 1997). For example, while it is certainly beneficial for parents and educators to consciously incorporate diverse articles, magazines, and wall art in their childrearing or teaching practices, Wardle (1992) agrees with Banks that it is just as important that they "adapt activities and conversations to include varying perspectives"(Wardle, 1992).

Operating from a multicultural vantage point such as this requires a different way of thinking to ensure that biracial children do not receive the implicit message that they are nonentities. Adults can best communicate to the child that he or she is important enough to appear in books, within discussions, and packaged on department store shelves by bringing those symbolic items (among other things) into their reality. Early childhood teachers may even go so far as to respect and embrace various sleeping arrangements during nap time, preparing non-

traditional snacks, and providing a well-stocked cabinet of wide-ranging art supplies (Wardle, 1998).

 Special Hair/Skin Care. Since the beginning of civilization, dress and adornment has been intricately woven into self-esteem and identity. The significance of something as simple as a hairstyle can contain special meaning and a rich storyline. Throughout history, hair has been identified as a major symbol of socio-economic status, artistic expression, religious beliefs, and heritage. In Egyptian times, beards were a symbol of maturity and authority mainly worn by adult male rulers (Dunn, 2005). Rastafarian beliefs require that the hair (Dreadlocks) never be cut, as Dreadlocks represent strength and unity (Melville, 2008). Muslim women observe the covering of the head and body to convey the message to greater society that they are of good moral character (Shalash, 2005).

 In writing about the cultural and spiritual importance of hair to the Black community, Ayana and Tharps (as cited in "African American Culture," 2009) referenced a time when Africans had their heads shaved involuntarily by Europeans before being sold as slaves. This dehumanizing act became a means to "erase the slaves' culture and alter the relationship between the African and his or her hair" (Ayana & Tharps, as cited in "African American Culture," 2009, Hair section, para. 1). Years later, many African Americans resorted to straightening their hair in order to adorn themselves to be acceptable to the majority culture. It wasn't until the 1960's, with the entrance of the Afro, that African Americans began making their own statement and used their hair as a way to showcase a link to their African ancestors and Blacks throughout the diaspora. The Afro, which helped define Black identity in conjunction with the Civil Rights movement, was "an expression of pride, connection, power, revolution, and differentiation" ("African American Culture," Hair section, para. 4).

Whether about Black pride, rebellion, loving oneself, or culture, today's changing demographic of children insists that caretakers move beyond the "one size fits all" prescription when it comes to providing proper hair and skin care. Because a child's combinations of race are endless, no one rule can be followed to ensure that multiethnic children look and feel their best. Incidentally, when two cultures cross paths, they merge to create a one-of-a-kind blend of variations in physical attributes. Due to the number of ethnic possibilities in hair and skin, it is imperative that parents of biracial children seek out products and treatment regimens that are a suitable balance of both cultures.

Despite each individual's differences in skin and hair, clinical studies revealed common denominators among African Americans that place them in a league of their own (Bates, 2003). This carries important ramifications for those who genetically are part Black. According to Dr. Susan Taylor (2006), a leading dermatologist in ethnic hair and skin care, Black hair is courser in texture than other hair types and contains many tiny, microscopic knots. In 2005, contributors of the *Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children* Training Manual referred to these knots as "stress points" that run the length of kinky Black hair and results in a higher risk of breakage while combing (Hewitt & Hewitt, 2005). When compared side by side in a mechanical analysis of stretched hair fibers, African American hair demonstrated a breaking stress that was twice as weak as Asian hair and approximately half as strong as European hair (Bates, 2003).

Unlike Asian or European hair types, African hair is typically very curly and is more elliptical in shape (Schaefer, 2006). Due to its tight coiled pattern, which inhibits essential oils from migrating freely down each fiber, children with predominantly Black hair may require greater use of conditioning lotions to improve its surface quality and replenish moisture (Taylor,

2006). Finding the perfect product for biracial children that is neither too heavy nor too stripping can be difficult. Gels and shampoos with high alcohol content are most commonly marketed to Caucasians/Europeans, while hair grease and thick creams are generally designed for full-blooded African Americans.

Black hair follicles, which Dr. Taylor defined as the areas below the surface of the skin from which the hair originates, are curved rather than straight as in White hair. In her article *The Uniqueness of Black Hair*, Taylor (2006, para. 2) further indicated that "[t]he curvature of the follicle is responsible for the curl of the hair and tendency to develop ingrown hairs," particularly in males of African heritage. Because their facial hair spirals as it grows, the hair turns into the face more frequently, which translates into greater razor bumps for the Black biracial teen. James Whittall (2009), President of MenEssentials, recommends the use of a glycolic facial cleanser or polishing scrub before shaving to reduce the chances of severe infection and scarring.

In a recent article published within *Cosmetics & Toiletries*, Patrick Obukowho, principal consulting chemist at Advantage Research Lab, had identified distinctions in African American skin care as well (Schaefer, 2007). He stated, though "biologically and functionally, all skin types are the same…moisturization is key in the Black community because Black skin is often dry" (Schaefer, 2007, p. 88). To counteract symptoms of excessive dryness or ashy skin, skin that has a gray or white dusty appearance, biracial children who have inherited African American characteristics should regularly apply a high-quality lotion with ultra hydrating benefits and intensive healing properties. Cetaphil and Eucerin have proven to work well in these cases.

Another item that should be incorporated into every person's daily routine is sunscreen. Biracial children, no matter what their complexion, are no exception. Although dark skin produces extra pigmentation or "melanin" to help combat the sun's harmful UV rays, one must

still use protection when outside ("Myths about Dark skin," n.d.). Contrary to popular belief, "those from African American, Asian and Latino backgrounds have a higher mortality and morbidity rate for malignant melanoma than their white counterparts" (Yadegaran, 2008, para. 3). *Melanoma* is a cancer of the pigment-producing cells in the skin, known as melanocytes ("Malignant Melanoma," n.d.).

Positive Sources to Identify With. Within a discussion of their findings on children and heroism in 2007, researchers Patricia Bricheno and Mary Thornton classified a role model as "a person you respect, follow, look up to or want to be like" (p. 385). Other scholars, such as Dr. Osabu-kle (n.d.), took the term a step further, having described a role model as a "motivating and admirable personality, psychological mentor, or guiding light whose, skills, achievements and behavior are worthy of emulation" (p. 1).

Role models or mentors can come from all walks of life. Some are employed as teachers, coaches, and athletes, whereas others may be clergy members, political figures, or pop stars. In the last few years, role models for multiracial Americans have become more visible and open about their mixed heritages (Lovett, 2002). Barack Obama, Tiger Woods, Halle Berry, Derek Jeter, and Alicia Keys are a few well-known faces of multiple ethnicities that have previously made headlines.

Even understood in its most basic and simplistic form, the utility of inspiring greatness in others has become a widely-accepted notion whose benefits have been observed by hundreds of youth-serving organizations across the country today (e.g. Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the Boys and Girls Club, etc.). The premise behind its effectiveness is that modeling the positive behavior, thoughts, and attitudes of "successful" people helps a person generate success in his or

her own life. The subjective interpretation of success may mean different things to different people.

Relationships between children and their mentors "seem to lie on a continuum from those which are intense and personal, involving a great deal of interaction, to those in which there may be no physical contact at all" (Pleiss & Feldhusen, 1995, p. 159). Emotional attachment to a highly-honored adult can range from an intimate face-to-face consultation for advice, for instance, to the imitation of a public figure from afar (Yancey, 1998). Whether their influence borders on idolatry, or involves life-altering conversations, countless studies confirmed that adults in these positions have a direct and measurable impact on children's lives (Malgady, Rogler, & Costantino, 1990; Pleiss & Feldhusen, 1995; Yancey, 1998).

Multiracial youth, possibly more so than any other population, need positive role models that share a common background who can assist them in navigating a life few can relate to. Unlike other minorities who may adequately rely on their parents for insight and coaching through race-related issues, biracial individuals do not have immediate access to a multiracial resource within their direct social environment. As a result, little support is available to provide biracial individuals with positive messages and strategies for resisting multiracial racism (Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005). In a focus group interview of 16 multiracial college students, Nishimura (1998) learned that group members possessed an overwhelming desire for a personal role model, "someone who could empathize with their particular situation and provide them with a sense of direction" (p. 49). A participant within her study expressed, "If someone had been there to guide me through, encouraging me to accept being biracial, it would have been easier."

A discussion on role models as it relates to biracial children is relevant because a link between the development of a stable identity in ethnically marginalized youngsters and the exposure to positive role models has been well-documented (Yancey, 1998; Yancey, Siegel, & McDaniel, 2002). Pilot mentorship programs, like PRIDE (Personal and Racial/Ethnic Identity Development and Enhancement), is one such way of "utilizing successful, ethnically-relevant role models...to create a significant cognitive and emotional experience for teens" (Yancey, 1998, p. 3). The PRIDE intervention, which was instituted in 1989 by Nancy Yancey in an effort to increase participation of responsible health care behavior among racially-diverse youth in a large New York City foster care agency, consisted of 145 sessions with 175 role models who were deliberately recruited from various ethnic backgrounds. Twenty-five percent of the role model participants acknowledged overcoming barriers associated with foster care, adoption, single parenting, divorce, rape, and substance abuse (Yancey, 1998). Prior to their regular visits to the agency, the role models were encouraged to center their discussions on personal/professional development and to volunteer stories regarding their own experiences with familial disruption. Following the review of her results in 1992, Yancey (1998) found that the adolescents responded well to the opportunity to talk to successful people who survived the odds. Overall, the PRIDE intervention developed confidence, improved self-esteem, and motivated teen-use of educational/vocational resources in an independent living program (Yancey, 1998). In addition, appointment compliance and self-disclosure with agency medical staff had also reached record-breaking heights.

In 2002, Yancey expanded her research on role models to Los Angeles County. Over a period of 18 months, she along with other medical professionals had gathered data from a series of in-home interviews with a multiethnic sample of adolescents. Their sequence of questions

assessed role model presence and absence against measures of substance abuse, academic performance, and self-perception. Those who reported having a role model had earned higher grades, possessed greater self-esteem, and had shown stronger ethnic identity (Yancey, Siegel, & McDaniel, 2002). For ethnic identity alone, each increment in closeness with a role model was associated with a significant increase in mean score, suggesting that ethnic identity plays an important role in connectedness. Evidence such as this demonstrates clearly that "having real role models is crucial to [students'] overall success and positive racial identity" (Wardle & Cruz-Janzen, as cited in Baxley, 2008, p. 232).

Affiliation. When referencing Piaget's work in his book entitled *The Moral Judgment of the Child*, Rheta DeVries (1997) indicated that "peer interactions are crucial to the child's construction of social and moral feelings, values, and social and intellectual competence" (p. 4). Schools and daycares across America reinforce this belief everyday by providing children with outlets to play, make friends, and to develop important social skills. These relationships or bonds with like-minded peers facilitate within the child a healthy self-concept and sense of security (Bukowski & Hoza, 1993). Likewise, Schrepferman, Eby, Snyder, & Stropes (2006, p. 58) discovered that "positive social relationships and interactions may serve as protective factors in regards to the development of internalizing disorders" (i.e. depressive behaviors).

As children grow older, some will advance on to college and take advantage of the options on campus to get involved and stay connected with peers, while others will not. The significance of engaging with others into young adulthood, particularly with those whose experiences may be comparable, remains both natural and gratifying.

Historically speaking, the arrival of organizations for students of color on primarily White campuses did not appear until the Civil Rights Movement (Young & Hannon, 2002). This

"awakening," according to Young and Hannon, was spurred by an interest within students of color to safely discuss issues related to race with other minorities who shared similar ethnic backgrounds. Conclusions drawn from multiple studies on identity-based student groups suggest that the basic reasons why minorities joined organizations in the first place have changed very little over time.

The specific grounds behind a person's decision to enter and become involved in student organizations vary from one individual to the next. Social, political, and psychological explanations are all cited in the literature as factors that prompt student involvement (Ozaki & Johnston, 2008, p. 54). Scores of articles illustrate the benefits of group membership (Schrepferman et al., 2006; Utsey, Chae, Brown, & Kelly, 2002), which has shown to potentially contribute to the retention of its members (Paladino & Davis, 2006; Sands & Schuh, 2004). Much of what one gains from affiliation with a group echoes several of the same curative factors identified by Yalom in his conventional group therapy (as cited in Yancey, 1998). They include the instillation of hope, a sense of cohesiveness, and catharsis.

For the multiethnic student, the process of finding a campus organization that fulfills his or her needs becomes a bit more convoluted. While the biracial child has two choices of groups they may "fit" into, some students confronted with this dilemma report never feeling a complete part of either (Miville, Constantine, Baysden, & So-Lloyd, 2005). Rather than experiencing a sensation of comfort and acceptance as "whole" persons, mixed race individuals describe feelings of alienation and marginality surrounding reference group orientation (Mivelle et al., 2005). For example, Black biracial students may not feel Black enough or White biracial students may not feel White enough.

If founder and editor of Inside Higher Ed, Scott Jaschiki, is correct in predicting an upcoming surge in the number of multiracial students attending college (as cited in Shang, 2008), primarily due to 40 percent of America's mixed race citizens checking in under the age of 18 in the year 2000, then campuses across the country should be prepared to accommodate this type of student. At present, many institutions provide services and organizations that traditionally target four racial minority groups: African American/Black, Chicano/Latino/Hispanic, Native American/American Indian, and Asian American/Pacific Islander (Ozaki & Johnston, 2008, p. 57). For instance, an article in *Recruitment & Retention in Higher Education* noted that there are currently eight multicultural student organizations at Susquehanna University in Pennsylvania, although not one focuses on multiracial students exclusively ("Students Bring Multiracial Identities," 2006). This was in sharp contrast to the high level of support that Wong & Buckner (2008) identified at Brown University during their case study analysis of multiracial student services models. Located in Providence, Rhode Island, Wong & Buckner (2008) established that the services provided to students of color at Brown University explicitly include multiracial student services in name and deed. Brown University even goes so far as to offer a multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, co-ed singing group called Shades of Brown.

To help students who feel that their full identities are not being represented, the Mavin Foundation launched its campus awareness and compliance initiative in 2004 ("Students Bring Multiracial Identities," 2006). Trainings, resources, activist opportunities, and research are some of the means by which the Mavin Foundation delivers their message. Like BOMBS (Brown's Organization of Multiracial and Biracial Students) at Brown University, where students are invited to explore their individual identities as people of mixed race through workshops and

discussion, Mavin seeks to support multiethnic and transracially-adopted students at U.S. colleges and universities.

Clear Ethnic Title. Among all the needs examined in this chapter, the need for a clear ethnic title is possibly the most debatable. Research examining this topic has received mixed reviews, depending upon how far back one goes. It has not been until recently that some social scientists have begun to shift their assumption from what *one* racial identity is considered ideal for this population, to entertaining the possibility that some biracial individuals do not experience conflict with their ambiguous ethnicity at all (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005). In spite of the controversy over biracial identity models, the need for a clear ethnic title is still worth mentioning, as this concept may apply to a considerable amount of racially mixed individuals.

In 2000, a training guide on diversity, developed for early childhood educators by the California Child Care Health Program stated that many children of dual-race parentage perceive a need for an identity category that accurately describes them. Nearly a decade later, Ozaki & Johnston (2008) summarized Maria Root's work in *A Bill of Rights for Racially Mixed People*, asserting that "the naming of one's identity is an important step in self-empowerment and validation of one's existence as a multiracial individual" (p. 56).

According to Francis Wardle (1992), biracial children desperately need a label to help them develop a strong identity and to assist them in talking to insensitive children and adults. Because the lines between groups are not "clean," but blurred, those with multiple ethnic backgrounds sometimes struggle to articulate or find a system that defines their reality. Being able to see themselves as whole people rather than as fragmented—part this, part that—has shown to contribute significantly to their ability to decipher their behavior, their words, their loyalties, even their choice of appearance (Root, 1996, p. 3). Finding peace within themselves,

and meaning out of their experience, provides biracial children with a solid point of reference from which they feel confident and well-equipped to respond to insult or injury.

The biracial child's heritage is "a single unit, comprised of a rich collection of equal, varied, and exciting parts" (Wardle, 1992, p. 164). However, some biracial children have greater difficulty than others accepting that their identities may fail to unite in a nice cohesive whole. The biracial child who yearns for such reconciliation, or a unified sense of self, may or may not ever find a personally meaningful label if he or she is looking for a place where one race stops before the other starts. Given the amount of gray matter in a biracial child's identity, one must be as fluid and flexible as possible (Rockquemore & Laszloffy, 2005).

Freedom to Individualize. An extension of the research on the way in which biracial children interpret their identity includes a discussion on the factors that often shadow or influence their decision. Generally speaking, children internalize the appraisal of others and begin to regard themselves in ways consistent with their perception of these evaluations (Chesley & Wagner, 2003). Along these same lines, Harter (1999) contended that children gather information about themselves from their interactions with significant others and society as a whole.

According to Brown (as cited in Chesley & Wagner, 2003), examination in this area is valuable as it relates to the biracial child because "unlike their monoracial peers, multiracial children experience unique social pressures to identify with a single aspect of their racial heritage." Kerwin, Ponterotto, Jackson and Harris (1993) offer their example from the work they conducted with nine African American/European American multiracial children. Of the four oldest children they interviewed, 13 to 16 years old, all of them could recall a time when they believed they had to choose one racial identity over another. This challenge often arises when

peers or adults ask the question, "What are you?" of which Tatum (1997) believes the questioner may really be asking, "Which side are you on? Where do you stand?" Thus, these findings suggest that adults' attitudes toward race affect children's sense of self.

With respect to identity formation, literature has revealed that children seek to look, act, feel, and be like significant people in their social environment. More specifically, Bowles (1993) determined from her clinical work that "a child's racial group is formed by the reflected judgments of family members and the community" (p. 420). Family members, particularly parents, can have a powerful impact on the way their biracial son or daughter feels about themselves. If a young biracial child asks their mother or father why their skin doesn't "match," he or she is likely to accept their parent's explanation, because they are not yet ready to question their parent's advice and judgment.

However parents choose to deal with the question, experts within the field, like Francis Wardle (1987), caution against stressing one race over another. Interviews with parents of biracial children suggest that this is not the easiest thing to do. Sometimes what is not said, in body language or tone of voice, is a stronger communicator than the actual response itself. The parent's attitude may be well intentioned, but often such attempts seem forced, or they tend to confuse a young child.

Directly or indirectly requiring a biracial child to deny half of their heritage places them in an anxiety-provoking position where they feel compelled to divide loyalties among parents (Wardle, 1987). Inevitably being pushed to claim one racial heritage over the other automatically negates the heritage of one of their parents. As a result, biracial children may often find themselves torn, guilty, or upset by the tension brewing, even if they do not understand the conflict (California Child Care Health Program, 2000).

Parents are not usually aware of the identity tasks their multiracial children face unless they, too, are multiracial (Root, 1996). Oscillating between two worlds and toggling back and forth from realities is a huge undertaking, especially for younger children who may be alone in figuring things out. Parents can support the identity process by opening the lines of communication. Parents' invitations for conversations, in which they attempt to understand how and why their multiracial children identify themselves the way they do, promote self-esteem and foster respect and psychological intimacy (Root, 1996, p. 11).

Parents should acknowledge the differences in their biracial children and help them form a sense of pride in their "doubly rich" heritage (Wardle, 1987). Adults can achieve this by allowing mixed race children freedom to form their own framework by which they approach their identity, rather than chastising them or drawing a line in the sand. Wardle (1987) recommends that parents avoid imposing upon their children their own values and beliefs and, instead, focus on providing them with the liberty to accept or reject parts of their identities they like or dislike.

Summary of Findings

The body of research on biracial children becomes greater as America begins to embrace a new image of ethnic diversity. With today's mounting interest in dating across cultures, many interracial couples are producing a new generation of unique individuals. These children enter the world bringing an experience unlike any other individual of a single race. Fortunately, this experience has greatly improved since the 1600's, when biracial children were originally rejected and driven out of churches and communities in Virginia.

While racial identity experts like Marguerite Wright contribute their model on the development of race in children, the complexities of being biracial may best be understood

through their needs and vulnerabilities. If one was to interpret problem behaviors (i.e., delinquency, academic decline, and psychological disturbances) as the expression of unmet needs, then it is easy to see the advantages of gaining visibility into what the biracial child may require. Some of the needs that have surfaced throughout the literature include the necessity for (a) affirmation, (b) positive sources to identify with, and (c) freedom to individualize.

In an attempt to minimize the possibility of problems, it becomes imperative that trusted adults learn the finest means of managing the innate desires within biracial children. This demand for a helpful launching point called for the measures in Chapter Three to be taken, which resulted in the creation of the manual that closes this research endeavor with practical implications of its findings and a well-developed list of resources.

Chapter III: Methodology

This chapter explains the steps involved in the construction of the resource manual in

Chapter Four. The resource manual is designed to support the successful application of the data

presented in this literature review. Insight into its preparation lays the groundwork for further

research to be conducted. The following discussion of the manual offers an analysis of (a) its

content, (b) the layout, (c) the process by which data was compiled, (d) the criteria used for

choosing quality resource material, and (e) the constraints that the researcher encountered.

Subject Selection and Description

Data that specifically pertained to school counselors and parents of biracial children from

birth to 18 years of age formed the basis for the manual's content. The subject matter selected

spoke to all blends of race, and not to one particular multi-racial perspective. Promising practices

were drawn from a variety of written and online sources that directly targeted the needs of

biracial children identified in Chapter Two. The how-to nature of the manual was backed by

empirical evidence and rooted in the themes discussed in the literature review.

Instrumentation

The manual consists of two main components. The first half of the manual offers school

counselors, other personnel, and parents of biracial children a series of promising practices that

address each of the needs expressed in Chapter Two. The second half of the manual depicts the

supplies needed to carry out the suggested childrearing or educational strategies.

Promising Practices. Practical ideas that could be implemented in the home and at

school have been placed in this section. Each theme has been separated out by need, in the order

that Chapter Two was presented. Suggestions were adapted from the research conducted for the

literature review. The numeric list of resources that follow every record coincides with the material catalogued in the second half of the manual.

    Supply List. Each resource within the supply list was grouped by topic and assigned a number (1-88). The numbers within this section of the manual correspond with the numbers listed in the Promising Practices section. This provides the reader a well-organized and quick reference system when he or she wishes to employ a recommended strategy but does not know where to turn.

Data Collection Procedures

    The majority of the information included in the first half of the manual was obtained from scholarly journals and books, as well as from periodicals for audiences with a special interest in kids. Literature was initially located by means of the Internet, using guided keywords like "biracial" and "multiracial" in the library indexes and databases at the University of Wisconsin-Stout and in Google's search engine. Items that were available on campus were reviewed and accessed by call number. Some titles for full text articles not owned by the University were purchased online. Expert advice on biracial children was also retrieved from posts within web forums and from reputable magazines featuring stories on tried-and-true parenting techniques for interracial families.

    Resources provided in the supply list were gathered from a number of different areas. Those tools, specifically chosen with the promising practices in mind, were integrated into a detailed directory highlighting a wide range of multicultural books, films, toys, hair/skin care lines, informative websites, and specialty products. Material was generated from already-existing resource lists, from online vendors endorsing products and services that facilitate the healthy development of biracial children, and from the researcher's personal collection of guidance

counseling curriculum. Professional school counseling organizations, such as American School Counselor Association and Wisconsin School Counselor Association, and the juvenile literature section at the University of Wisconsin-Stout (Educational Materials Center) were also consulted for additional insight.

Data Analysis

Sources for the resource manual were evaluated for quality, quantity, and depth. Information that applied directly to the thesis statement was of high priority, as were articles that were published no later than ten years from the onset of this research endeavor. Items that appeared to contain bias or distortion were screened out and second-hand data was avoided, when possible. The researcher relied on contributions from credible, peer-reviewed material and working websites with little to no commercial ties.

Limitations of the Resource Manual

The resource manual will be made available to school counselors, other school personnel. and parents of biracial children in the winter of 2010. Due to the expense of duplication, distribution of hard copies will be limited to residents and school districts within Iron and Gogebic counties among the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Northern Wisconsin, where the researcher is employed. Guidance departments and other youth service professionals outside the region will be sent the document electronically. Those who receive the manual via email will be responsible for reproducing and furnishing it to students and families who may find the information beneficial.

Support for the biracial community is growing over time. Because the body of resources is multiplying day by day, the manual's content is only as current as the launching of this

research paper. The solid foundation of resources provides the reader with a great place to start

acquiring help for themselves and a base upon which they may continue to build.

Chapter IV: Resource Manual

Note to Recipient

This free manual was developed by a University of Wisconsin-Stout graduate student as part of a thesis project designed to address the unique needs within children having two or more racial heritages. While the content has been geared specifically toward parents and school counselors, it is intended for any adult interested in supplementing their knowledge of biracial children with a collection of research-driven practices and tools.

The resources listed that follow are a sampling of the many ways individuals, who have significant, direct contact with biracial youth, can provide support at home and in the classroom. Please feel free to share copies of this manual with those seeking the proven strategies to approach such interactions with accurate information and increased confidence.

At the time of this publication's printing, all links to websites were working and had provided appropriate material that was in accordance with the mission of the manual.

Navigating the Manual

Review the suggested educational and childrearing strategies within the section entitled Promising Practices. Identify the resources recommended to implement each theme by locating the reference numbers within the corresponding Supply List. It is advised that both segments of the manual be used together in order to maximize the instrument's potential.

— PROMISING PRACTICES —

Theme 1. Affirmation
Educational Strategies.
- Encourage teachers to scan textbooks, curriculum, and classroom for a well-balanced representation of different cultures and multiracial populations.
- Coordinate multicultural celebrations on a regular basis – not just on holidays.
- Collaborate with parents to discuss any important traditions, rituals, or special foods that may be able to be accommodated in biracial student's school day.
- Speak to librarian about expanding collection of multiracial resources/literature.
- Lobby to change school forms that require biracial students to check "Other."
- Arrange an inservice for school personnel on how to use more inclusive language, to provide validating visual images in their work environment, and to use material that does not overlook marginalized populations.
- Develop guidance lessons on multiculturalism, tolerance, and stereotypes.
- Implement school-wide diversity programs or initiatives.
- Advocate for the use of a wide range of craft supplies in Art class, including skin-colored crayons, construction paper in various flesh tones, and paint.
- For elementary guidance counselors practicing play therapy—offer a large selection of multiethnic dolls and other manipulatives.
- Adorn hallways and other high-traffic areas with multicultural objects and symbols, such as flags, posters, etc.
- Investigate the possibility of broadcasting music from different parts of the world over the intercom during breaks, in library, and/or in restrooms.
- Propose the infusion of international, non-American foods in cafeteria menu options.
- Promote the use of home language in classrooms with teachers and among students.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Search for picture books, posters, calendars, and art work that reflect the heritages of all family members.
- Surround child with doll sets, puzzles, and activity books that mirror their cultural make up.
- Acquire special interest television programming geared towards child's diverse background; consciously select films and movies with multiethnic characters.
- Incorporate cultural traditions into the fabric of one's family life.
- Live in a diverse community where the sense of being different or unacceptable is minimized.
- Avoid materials that show one child or person of each standard ethnic group; include people whose ethnic/racial identity is not obvious.

Recommended Resources. 1, 3-5, 7, 8, 10-17, 21-28, 30, 31, 33-40, 41-53, 74, 76, 77-88

Theme 2. Special Hair/Skin Care

Educational Strategies.
- Develop packets on special hair/skin care to distribute to students and parents.
- Become knowledgeable of area dermatologists that specialize in ethnic hair and skin care.
- Place ethnic products in showers of gym bathrooms.
- Keep a supply of ethnic personal hygiene products for emergencies or upon request (e.g. sunblock, lotion).
- Recommend ethnic hairstyle magazines and books for student library and lounge areas.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Purchase hair/skin care products designed for those of mixed races.
- Establish regular visits with child to reputable barbers and hair stylists who are well-versed in working with biracial hair.
- Educate oneself on suggested treatment of biracial hair/skin.
- Seek out other biracial individuals who have successfully determined an effective hair/skin care regime.
- Apply moisturizer and sun block consistently to biracial child.
- Exercise caution when combing brittle, delicate hair of Black biracial child.

Recommended Resources. 54-60

Theme 3. Positive Sources to Identify With

Educational Strategies.
- Launch a school mentorship program that targets at-risk minority students, with a special emphasis on marketing to the multiracial population.
- Locate professional referrals (e.g. counselors, therapists, etc.) that are racially diverse.
- Schedule mixed race guest speakers to visit classrooms to discuss their personal and professional experiences.
- Consider a bus-buddy program that aligns older biracial students with younger biracial students.
- Assist students with membership in Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys & Girls Club, and other non-profit youth agencies.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Locate magazines, books, and movies that portray multiracial individuals as positive role models.
- Engage in conversations with child about past and present multiethnic heroes.
- Model appropriate and positive behavior in the presence of child.
- Inquire with child about biracial experience and their reality with juggling two ethnicities.
- Connect child to successful multiracial contacts and influences.

Recommended Resources. 61-76

Theme 4. Affiliation

Educational Strategies.
- Introduce pen pal system to biracial students interested in communicating with people from different countries that they may identify with.
- Encourage involvement and leadership in language clubs.
- Create multiracial student unions and/or minority ethnic groups.
- Increase multicultural activism and visibility on campus through a central hub or center specifically for those representing a blend of different cultures.
- Verbally acknowledge those students who are accepting of others at lunch room table; praise positive group behavior.
- Open up opportunities for biracial students to participate in plays, singing groups, and academic organizations.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Enroll child in sports, school clubs, community projects, or church activities that will cultivate a feeling of belonging.
- Endorse mixed race friendships and interaction at family and social functions.
- Extend invitations to socialize after school at positive youth drop-in centers.
- Inform child of multiracial communities and affiliations available to him or her.

Recommended Resources. 61, 63, 64, 66, 67, 69-72

Theme 5. Clear Ethnic Title

Educational Strategies.
- Be sensitive to biracial students' nonverbal signals and comments about identity confusion; facilitate a confidential conversation with student to discuss concerns.
- Offer books and material on identity development to conflicted biracial students.
- Furnish biracial students with journals to improve their understanding of themselves among existing classification systems.
- Avoid unnecessarily placing biracial students in positions where they are forced to categorize themselves.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Establish support networks for child from the school, grandparents, relatives, neighbors, and the greater community.
- Bring attention to all aspects that unite every child worldwide (e.g. all children have parents, go to sleep when tired, have emotions, etc.).
- Verbally process factors that help child define his or her sense of self; discuss their perception of their physical characteristics, their philosophy, and values.
- Remain consistent between home and school in the naming and supporting of who the biracial child labels him or her to be.

- Help child fill out school forms and other applications requesting demographic information.

Recommended Resources. 11, 13, 20, 21, 33, 40, 61-76

Theme 6. Freedom to Individualize

Educational Strategies.
- Pair racially different students in group together to break cultural boundaries and to initiate conversation.
- Organize off-campus field trips to culturally-rich locations and events.
- Resist the temptation to ally with one parent over the other; honor all aspects of biracial student's family history.
- Foster biracial students' learning about themselves through family tree diagrams, self-portraits, and collage assignments.

Childrearing Strategies.
- Expose child to different stories, customs, languages, and family responsibilities related to their ethnicity.
- Celebrate each part of child's heritage when opportunity arises.
- Embrace child's own unique sense of style and dress.
- Encourage and support child's desire to join various ethnic groups.
- Foster an atmosphere of trust and safety that promotes questions, curiosity, and open communication.
- Attend cultural art gallery exhibits, museums, and festivals with child.
- Provide activities to help child explore his or her skin color and facial features.
- Recognize that child may identify with different parts of their heritage at different stages of development or in varied settings in order to "fit in."
- Spend time visiting relatives and extended family with child.

Recommended Resources. 2, 6, 9, 18-20, 32, 64, 67, 68, 72, 73, 77, 85, 88

— SUPPLY LIST —

Books

1. Adoff, Arnold. <u>Black is Brown is Tan</u> (children fiction)

2. Alperson, Myra. <u>Dim Sum, Bagels, and Grits: A Sourcebook for Multicultural Families</u> (parents)

3. Bley, Anette. <u>A Friend</u> (children fiction)

4. Boelts, Maribeth. <u>Those Shoes</u> (children fiction)

5. Cisneros, Sandra. <u>Hairs/Pelitos</u> (children fiction)

6. Davis, Bonnie. <u>The Biracial and Multiracial Student Experience</u> (parents/professionals)

7. Davol, Marguerite. <u>Black, White, Just Right!</u> (children fiction)

8. Dickey, Eric. <u>Milk in my Coffee</u> (interracial romance fiction)

9. Edwards, Myrtice. <u>Mixed Race Kids of All Nations</u> (parents)

10. Fox, Mem. <u>Whoever You Are</u> (children fiction)

11. Frazier, Sundee. <u>Check All That Apply: Finding Wholeness as a Multiracial Person</u> (teens)

12. Friedman, Ina. <u>How My Parents Learned to Eat</u> (children fiction)

13. Gaskins. Pearl. <u>What Are You? Voices of Mixed-Race Young People</u> (teens)

14. Hooks, Bell. <u>Happy to be Nappy</u> (children fiction)

15. Knotts, Kim and Kevin. <u>Amy Hodgepodge series</u> (children fiction)

16. Kurtz, John. <u>Jump at the Sun Fairytale Classics</u> (children fiction)

17. Lacapa, Kathleen. <u>Less than Half, More than Whole</u> (children fiction)

18. Laszloffy, Tracey. <u>Raising Biracial Children</u> (parents)

19. Mavin Foundation. <u>Multiracial Child Resource Book</u> (parents/professionals)

20. Nakazawa, Donna. <u>Does Anybody Else Look Like Me?</u> (parents)

21. O'Hearn, Claudine. <u>Half & Half: Writers on Growing Up Biracial and Bicultural</u> (teens/parents)

22. Prasad, Chandra. <u>Mixed: An Anthology of Short Fiction on the Multiracial Experience</u> (teens)

23. Rattigan, Jama Kim. <u>Dumpling Soup</u> (children fiction)

24. Root, Maria. <u>Love's Revolution</u> (interracial couples)

25. Smith, Cynthia Leitich. <u>Rain is Not My Indian Name</u> (teen fiction)

26. Starr, Meg. <u>Alicia's Happy Day</u> (children fiction)

27. Tarpley, Natasha. <u>I Love My Hair!</u> (children fiction)

28. Vance, Kimiko. <u>My Rainbow Family</u> (children fiction)

29. Wardle, Francis. <u>Tomorrow's Children</u> (parents/professionals)

30. Williams, Garth. <u>The Rabbits' Wedding</u> (children fiction)

31. Wing, Natasha. <u>Jalapeño Bagels</u> (children fiction)

32. Wright, Marguerite. <u>You're Chocolate, I'm Vanilla</u> (parents)

Films

33. <u>Chasing Daybreak</u> – Five multiracial individuals tour across the country and spark discussions on mixed race and diversity (documentary)

34. <u>Coffee Colored Children</u> – A film set in England of racism, prejudice, and self-definition experience by biracial children of a Caucasian/Nigerian marriage (semi-autobiography)

35. <u>Guess Who</u> – A Black woman brings home her White fiancé to meet her less than enthusiastic father and learns that love prevails despite differences in skin color (romantic comedy)

36. <u>Jungle Fever</u> – An interracial couple experiences intense pressure from family and friends as a result of their relationship (adult drama)

37. <u>Mixing Nia</u> – Light-hearted tale of a biracial woman grappling with identity issues and finds her voice as a writer (urban comedy/drama)

38. <u>More to the Chinese Side</u> – A Chinese American of biracial descent and several family members discuss how they are commonly mistaken for other ethnicities (documentary)

39. <u>Othello</u> – A Venetian society rejects the interracial marriage of Othello and Desdemona as anathema (Shakespearian play)

40. <u>Save the Last Dance</u> – A teenage love interest is scrutinized when a hip hop dancer helps train a ballerina of another race for an important audition (teenage romance)

Toys

41. Around the World – The ultimate global board game and trivia card packs:
http://aroundtheworldgames.com/store.php

42. Dolls Like Me – Dolls and toys for every hue:
http://www.dollslikeme.com/

43. Eeboo – Multicultural lacing cards, puzzles, paper doll dress-up, and memory games:
http://www.eeboo.com/startpage.php?cat=55

44. EthiDolls – Authentic African dolls signature collection:
http://www.ethidolls.com/

45. Friends Forever Girls – Multicultural dolls that expand young girls' cultural horizons:
http://www.friendsforevergirls.com/

46. JamboKids – Ethnic dolls, adventure storybooks, and education resources:
http://www.jambokids.com/

47. Kingka – Learn the Chinese language fun and effortlessly through different games and media:
http://www.kingkagames.com/products.html

48. Melissa and Doug – Sushi slicing play food set:
http://www.melissaanddoug.com/dyn_prod.php?p=2608

49. Mixis – Collectible play dolls that encourage children to be proud of their unique heritage:
http://www.mixis.com/

50. Pattycake Doll Company – Dolls for all ethnicities:
http://www.pattycakedoll.com/site/480019/page/551990

51. So In Style – All African American doll line from Mattel:
http://www.barbiecollector.com/news/news.aspx?news_id=196

52. Tabloach Productions – Customized cultural dolls for the avid collector:
http://www.tabloach.com/

53. Vanange dolls – Dolls from different locations around the world:
http://www.vannuzza.com/store/

Hair/Skin Care

54. Ada Cosmetics – Makeup for women of all color and complexion:
http://www.adacosmetics.com/store/home.php

55. Biracial Hair Care Guide (*Treasured Locks*) – African and biracial children's hair care tips:
http://lib.store.yahoo.net/lib/treasuredlocks/biracial-hair-care-guide.pdf

56. Blended Beauty – Full range of hair care products for biracial and afro hair types:
http://www.blendedbeauty.com/

57. Curls & Curly Q's – A premium ethnic hair company for multiethnic women and girls:
http://www.curls.biz/about-curls.html

58. Hair and Skin Care for African American and Biracial Children Workbook:
http://www.pacwcbt.pitt.edu/Curriculum/937-2.%20African%20Hair%20and%20Skin
%20Care/Workbook/curriculum%20workbook.pdf

59. Mixed Chicks – A curl-defining system designed for mixed race individuals:
http://www.mixedchicks.net/

60. Treasured Locks – Hair and skin care supply store specializing in natural, hard-to-find products:
http://www.treasuredlocks.com/biracial-hair-care-guide.html

Online Support

61. Association of Multiethnic Americans – Educates on behalf of multiethnic community:
http://www.ameasite.org/about.asp

62. Center for the Study of Biracial Children – Materials for and about biracial children and families:
http://csbchome.org/?page_id=2

63. ColorBlind Cupid – Online blog for interracial couples/families:
http://colorblindcupid.wordpress.com/about/

64. Fusion – A program for mixed heritage youth:
http://www.fusionprogram.org/resources.php

65. iCelebrateDiversity.com – Gifts and resources that celebrate diversity:
https://www.icelebratediversity.com/index.htm

66. International Interracial Association – Promoting interracial & intercultural harmony worldwide:
http://www.i3n.net/

67. iPRIDE – Interracial intercultural pride:
http://www.ipride.org/

68. Maria P.P. Root – Trainer, educator, and public speaker on the topics of multiracial families:
http://www.drmariaroot.com/index.php

69. Mavin Foundation – Raises awareness about the experiences of mixed heritage people:
http://www.mavinfoundation.org/

70. Mixed Asians – Dedicated to enriching the lives of Asian/Pacific Islanders of mixed heritage:
http://www.mixedasians.com/

71. MixedFolks.Com – Representing multiracial people:
http://mixedfolks.com/mfc/Welcome.html

72. Multicultural Pavilion – Provides resources for educators/activists interested in multiculturalism:
http://www.edchange.org/multicultural/index.html

73. Multiracial Sky – Resources for multiracial families:
http://www.multiracialsky.com/

74. OneWorld Now! – Offers multicultural training and foreign language to disadvantaged youth:
http://www.oneworldnow.org/home.html

75. Polly Wanna Cracka? – Internet resource for interracial relationships:
http://www.pollywannacracka.com/

76. The Multiracial Activist – A libertarian oriented activist journal covering biracial issues:
http://multiracial.com/site/

Specialty Products

77. Alaafia Kids – Clothes, educational items, arts and crafts, music:
http://www.alaafiakids.com/products.html

78. AsianParent.com – Quality Chinese books and DVD for children:
http://www.asianparent.com/

79. China Sprout – Chinese cultural & educational products:
http://www.chinasprout.com/culture

80. Cookies & Cream Creations – Multicultural gifts and apparel:
http://www.cafepress.com/cookiesandcream

81. Global Adventures Set (*Barefoot Books*) – Experience the sights & sounds of our colorful planet:
http://store.barefootbooks.com/global-adventures-gift-set.html

82. Mandy's Moon – Personalized multicultural gifts:
http://www.mandysmoon.com/Qstore/Qstore.cgi

83. Melting Pot Gifts – Cards and gifts for the interracial community:
http://www.meltingpotgifts.com/

84. Teacher's Aide Catalog – Multicultural art supplies (e.g. construction paper, crayons, markers):
http://catalog.ateachersaide.com/multicultural_construction_paper_12_x_18-p-117053.html

85. Multicultural Kids, Inc. – Educator resources, posters, games, arts and crafts, DVDs:
http://www.multiculturalkids.com/home.php

86. Multicultural Playground Activity Kits (*Putumayo Kids*) – Diversity tools and teaching guides:
http://www.putumayo.com/en/putumayo_kids_multi.php

87. Of Many Colors (*Family Diversity Projects*) – Portraits of multiracial families & other exhibits:
http://www.familydiv.org/ofmanycolors.php

88. Putumayo Kids – Committed to introducing children to other cultures through world music:
http://www.putumayo.com/en/putumayo_kids.php

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