**Let’s Talk Race: Community Healing through Conversation**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/lets-talk-race.html>

Library communities around the country are seeing rising levels of division, distrust, and segregation. Recognizing the need for community healing, library staff at the Richland Library in South Carolina formed the Let’s Talk Race team to explore strategies for deepening community connections and engagement. Since 2016, the Let’s Talk Race team has facilitated more than 250 in-person or online discussions, community forums, and events, reaching more than 4,000 participants, and creating opportunities for civic engagement, community connections, and courageous conversations. Earlier this year, the Richland Library launched the open-source [Let’s Talk Race Curriculum](https://www.richlandlibrary.com/lets-talk-race-curriculum), providing a set of easy-to-follow resources for other libraries, museums, and related organizations to implement with their local communities. The curriculum includes facilitation best practices, conversation guides, videos, and more. The curriculum provides a learning pathway to help get started, build facilitation skills, and create conversation guides to hold your own circles of dialog.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** | |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Prioritizing Racial Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** | |
| Libraries are increasingly assessing their resources, collections, programs, and services with an equity lens. You or your library may be new to this work, or perhaps you have already explored steps to take action in prioritizing racial equity, diversity, and inclusion for your community.  Richland Library began this work in 2015, after the murder of Walter Scott in North Charleston and the Charleston Emanuel AME church shooting. South Carolinians were angry, confused, and frightened, and neighbors, friends, family, and staff struggled with how to process these events and how to move forward together.  Consider the events or trends that have impacted your community’s experience with race:   * Did something happen? An incident? A current event? * Have we talked internally as a team about prioritizing equity, diversity and inclusion? Why or why not? * Has your library reviewed your mission and vision statements lately to include framing for equity, diversity, and inclusion?   Use the Let’s Talk Race*Readiness Checklists & Starter Packs*to further understand where you’re starting from and the steps to get started. | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Assemble Your Team** |
| Foundational to all this work is *the people*. The Let’s Talk Race curriculum identifies five key steps to Assemble Your Team, to put people at the center of your planning:   1. Establish your WHY: What is inspiring you to launch a Let's Talk Race program? 2. Assess your needs: What will you need to get started? 3. Communicate the opportunity: Identify and connect with people who may be interested in joining your team. 4. Meet and greet: Plan a get-together to learn more about the people who are ready to join your team. 5. Build community: Create a positive safe space among your team to encourage bonding and participation.   Use the *Assemble Your Team* template to review each of these steps, with further questions for consideration. |
| **Facilitation** |
| At the core of the Let’s Talk Race curriculum, there are five modules that will prepare you to facilitate conversations about race in your community:   1. Understanding the role of a Let's Talk Race facilitator 2. Planning a Let's Talk Race conversation 3. Fostering a "welcoming and brave" space 4. Encouraging participation 5. Taking care of yourself   The modules are estimated to take between 15-40 minutes to work through. Each module includes a checklist, designed to help you assess your understanding and identify any particular parts in the facilitation modules that you might want to revisit. These modules will prepare you to move onto the final steps outlined in the curriculum, to help you choose a theme and create a guide for your Let's Talk Race conversation. |
| **Let’s Talk Race Programs** |
| After learning more about Let’s Talk Race programming, consider which option(s) might be a good first step for you or your organization:   * [Diverse Books for Families](https://www.richlandlibrary.com/catalog?q=&SU=Book+club+set%2C+Family&item=1623453) * [Book and Media Groups](https://www.richlandlibrary.com/blog/2020-10-22/lets-talk-race-virtual-book-club-how-be-antiracist) * [Dinner Table Talks](https://www.richlandlibrary.com/series/dinner-table-talks) * [#OwnVoices](https://www.richlandlibrary.com/series/ownvoices)   It may be an easier pitch for your organization to start with something familiar like a book or media group. You can still utilize the community conversation tools to facilitate discussions that explore race and racism deeply through the shared language of books or media. |

|  |
| --- |
| **Mini Action Plan:** |

|  |
| --- |
| Use this space to identify some initial next steps in your learning. After viewing the webinar and discussing with your team, use the *Action Plan* in the Let’s Talk Race curriculum to build out a complete plan. |