



Resources for Families Wanting to Diversify Their Book & Toy Collections

POWERED BY: [Kids Swag](#)

Mindful Representation - **Coined by Kim West, Founder of [KidsSwag.ca](#)**

WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

What: The idea behind Mindful Representation is being intentional about the images and experiences that your child engages in to gain a greater sense of self and an appreciation of others.

Why: Did you realize that as early as 3 years old, kids are classifying people based on their appearances? (Source: [The Atlantic](#)) Want to know more about the importance of visuals from 0-7? Check out this Instagram post by [The Conscious Kid](#)

Where to Start:

1. Take a visual audit of your home? Toys, TV Shows, Books, who is represented? Does it only reflect your family instead of the diversity of our world?
2. Reflect on your child's world how often do they have meaningful interaction with others that look or act different?





For Your Kids

Books

DIVERSITY IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS 2018

Percentage of books depicting characters from diverse backgrounds based on the 2018 publishing statistics compiled by the Cooperative Children's Book Center, School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison:
ccbc.education.wisc.edu/books/pclist.asp

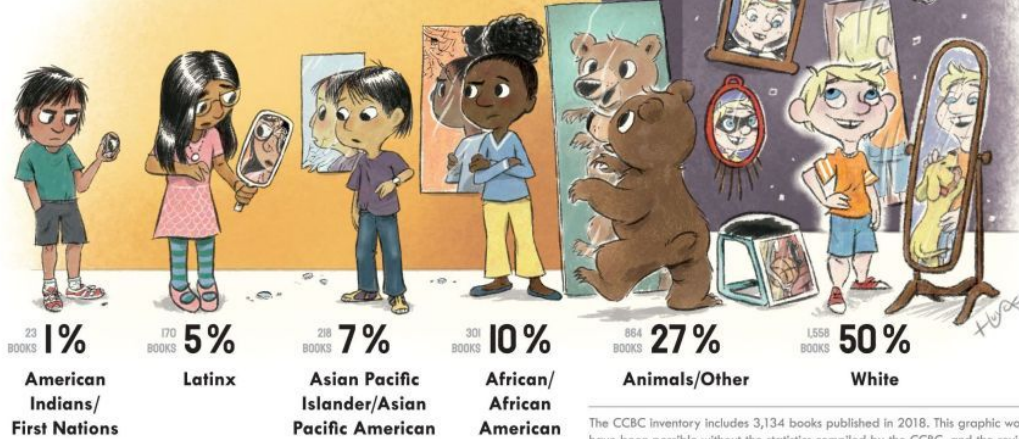


Illustration by David Huyck, in consultation with Sarah Park Dahlen
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The CCBC inventory includes 3,134 books published in 2018. This graphic would not have been possible without the statistics compiled by the CCBC, and the review and feedback we received from Edith Campbell, Molly Beth Griffin, K. T. Horning, Debbie Reese, Ebony Elizabeth Thomas, and Madeline Tyner. Many thanks.

The [2018 Diversity in Children's Literature graphic](#) (produced by Sarah Park Dahlen and David Huyck) is available as a two-sided, full color 5 x 7 postcard.

Books	Curated Lists	Free Printables
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hair Love ● Feyi Fay ● What are you gonna do with that hair ● A kids book about Little Leaders ● Author Lisa Bowen (Canadian) ● Author Carol Franks-Randall ● The Amazing Zoe Defeats The Germie Germlins 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 55 Diverse Picture Board Books 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Coloring Sheets inspired by Africa ● Children book on Covid

Great Places For a Curated Collection of Diverse Books

Shop	Discover
<p>Knowledge Bookstore Canadian bookstore based in Brampton with a wide selection of black books for adult and kids</p> <p>A Different Booklist Canadian bookstore based in Torontowith a wide selection of black books for adult and kids</p> <p>Notability Canadian bookstore based in Ajax with a wide selection of black books for kids & adults</p> <p>Just Like Me A monthly black book subscription box</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Instagram Accounts With Regular Recommendations</p> <p>Here We Read</p> <p>Black Baby Books</p> <p>Mango and Marigold</p> <p>Diverse Reads</p>

Toys & Activities

Dolls	Puzzles & Activities Books	Guides
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nia Ballerina ● Malaville Dolls ● Healthy Roots Dolls ● My Family Builders ● Nana Dolls ● Uzuri Kids ● Harperiman ● Just Like Me ● Les Poupees Dor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Very Very Puzzled Afro Diaspora Maps ● Puzzle Huddle - puzzles of black children as everyday heroes ● Rewardums ● FeltSmart - felt learning boards (great for homeschooling!) ● Big Dreamers: The Canadian Black History Activity Book for Kids Volume 1 (French & English) 	<p>41 Great Holiday Gifts for Kids Made by Black-Owned Businesses</p>

Shows/Videos

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hair Love (A Short Film) ● Circle Time with Ms. Monica ● STEAM Activity for Kids ● Kujos Kid Zone ● Ubongo Kids ● Akili and Me ● Super Sema ● BinoandFino - YouTube ● Sankofa Read Aloud
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Accessories

Clothing	Jewelry	Mealtime	Party Supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little Muffincakes cute baby accessories and clothes • MyLela clothing and other products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nia Ballerina-jewelry boxes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorfull Plates diverse image-based plates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anna & Pookie Party Supplies • Craft My Occasion - Party Supplies

Experiences For Your Kids

Note - Current experiences listed are based in Toronto Canada. We hope to expand this list over time.

Dance Classes

- [Afiwi Groove](#)
- [Riddim Fit Dance & Education Program](#)

Culturally specific activities for parents, youth and families

- [Side by Side Family Centre](#) - Durham Region

For Parents

Books/Articles

- [Anti Racism Resources compiled by Sarah Sophie Flicker, Alyssa Klein in May 2020.](#)
- [What White People Can do for Racial Injustice](#)
- [Promoting Diversity During Playtime](#)

Groups/Communities

- [Parents for diversity](#)
- [From Privileged to Progress](#)
- [The Conscious Kid](#)



Talking With Your Child About Race & Diversity

Keep it simple and just start! The worst conversation adults can have with kids about race is no conversation at all!

Is it time to jump into a race conversation? It depends, but generally, at age 5 and younger a conversation is not as important as the visuals and the type of language you use to have conversations about the different races and ethnicities in our world.

Mindful Rep - not discussing race		Discussing Race	
Age 0-2	Age 2-3	Age 3-4	Age 4-5
<p>Have toys, books and shows that have black characters</p> <p>Highlight similarities <i>'I love that he plays soccer like you!'</i></p>	<p>Comments about their uniqueness or difference</p> <p><i>'I love her skin or hair.'</i></p> <p>Or</p> <p><i>'This character/toy looks just like (someone you know), isn't that so cool!'</i></p>	<p>Start with culture before race</p> <p><i>'There are so many types of people in the world (for example Abi is from Jamaica and we are from Italy), do you want to learn more about that country?'</i></p> <p>Starting with culture helps ensure race is not seen as a monolith - black people from Ghana are different from Guyana.</p>	<p>Discussing race</p> <p>Use books and shows on this topic as your guide.</p> <p>They help start the conversation.</p>



What Allies are Saying About This Resource:

"I have been upset reading and watching the news from the isolation of our home in quarantine, and haven't felt like I knew how to make sure I was doing the right things with my 2.5 year old daughter to teach her about diversity, inclusion and kindness.. As the granddaughter of a Holocaust survivor, we say "Never Again," when we speak about the atrocities of the Holocaust and yet people continue to turn to fear and hatred. I wanted to know how to diversify my toy and book collection to help my daughter and I learn.

I started with a google search and I typed in phrases like *children's books about diversity*, and *toys that celebrate all skin colours to add to my collection*; keywords that didn't result in much other than an Amazon feed of results. I wasn't sure which books to buy or which toys would be truly representative or give true support to the Black community. I knew I wanted to support Black artists, creatives, toymakers and educator resources and I realized I didn't know where to start. I had to do the work and learn.

After a short and meaningful conversation with Kim, she decided she wanted to put together these resources for parents who want to help to raise kids with compassion, empathy, celebration and understanding about the diversity in the world around them.

I am so proud of what Kim has done in this resource document and I would like to see parents and families add to it. **You can email my team and I at kidsswag@schmooz.ca if you want to add to the resource list.** We want to make it easier for everyone to find ways to help and support each other. It is in coming together that we are stronger, it is in recognizing humanity, love and celebration that we can make the world a better place.

I am ready to go shopping to diversify my toy and book collection! I hope you are too.

-Zoe Share



Dear Families,

This resource was created out of a need to respond to the current social climate. Zoe of Schmooz reached out and I (Kim West founder of Kids Swag) knew that I had a plethora of resources that could help. It just needed to be turned into a curated list. Kids Swag is dedicated to helping parents Raise Confident Kids That Appreciate Difference.

If you are looking to continue the conversation join the [Kids Swag Community](#) for additional resources and a safe place to discuss and share with other parents..

With love
Kim West, Founder



