Hosting a SURJ “Raising Race Conscious Children Workshop/Webinar”
Questions or want to talk to a coach who can help you out? Email: SURJfamilies@gmail.com
www.showingupforracialjustice.org

What is it?
Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) is a national network of organizers working to bring White people together to work for racial justice. ‘SURJ Families’ is encouraging our members to host an evening with an interactive workshop/webinar on “How to talk with kids about race” produced by Raising Race Conscious Children. The webinar is designed with White families in mind, but other families who want to start with the basics of naming race may find it helpful too.

The Raising Race Conscious Children interactive workshop/webinar presents and models ways to name race with very young children, from infants through elementary school. It will share basic information on bias and racism, but will spend the majority of the workshop focusing on strategies for naming race. The format involves modeling strategies and giving participants practice time so that we can feel confident getting started or deepening our personal work on naming race in everyday life.

Goals:
● Educate parents as they begin to navigate conversations about race with their children.
● Create a space of growing and bonding among like minded families looking to show up for racial justice.
● Begin to build a list of supporters and potential leaders for future ‘SURJ Families’ events.
● Identify next steps for your community that can take you from conversation into action. For example: If there is an existing SURJ group, you can invite people to the next meeting or action, if not, you can invite people to meet again to start a ‘SURJ Families’ playgroup or house meeting and/or plan actions you can take together in your community as families or educators.

Organizing the event:
1) The basics: The whole event will take about 2.5-3 hours total so you may consider providing food and childcare for those that attend. This can be funded by splitting the cost, seeking a sponsor or covering the cost yourself. You will need a space that can comfortably seat up to 8 people, reliable internet access, and a computer. If you can connect to a big screen so everyone in the room can see, and use speakers, you will have a better experience. The actual workshop/webinars will air for about 1.5 hours. We have allotted for 30 minutes before the beginning to get in and settled and 30 minutes to an 1 hour after to debrief the workshop/webinar and discuss next steps of action for your community. Sign up for the webinar here: bit.ly/SURJRaceConsciousWebinar
2) Get the word out: There is an 8 person limit to each workshop/webinar so keep that in mind as you Invite people you think might be interested, or post an invitation in a community place or listserv. You can reach out within your existing local SURJ network, your preschool/school, a congregation, your library, invite a playgroup, post an invite on a listserv for families.
3) Sign people up & build your list: You will want to keep track of contact information so that you can confirm before your event, share any materials you will need for the event, and use for follow up for future events and action. (A sample sign in sheet is in this toolkit).
4) **Remind:** Send everyone signed up a friendly reminder a week before the workshop/webinar and then again a day before the workshop/webinar. Raising Race Conscious Children may send out materials as well so be sure to check in with everyone to make sure everyone attending has the materials needed.

5) **Follow up:** Have a next step ready to invite people to - it might be to join your existing SURJ (or other racial justice) group. Or, if you’re just getting started, you could invite them to a SURJ Families house meeting or playgroup. Follow up to confirm who can make it, and do one-on-one visits starting with the families who express interest in helping you to organize future events. For information about one-on-ones see: [http://www.moveon.org/organize/onetoone/reportback.html](http://www.moveon.org/organize/onetoone/reportback.html)

**The day of the Workshop/Webinar:**

1) **Ask for help to set up:** You can do this yourself but asking others to help is a great way to get people involved on a deeper level than just showing up. You will need people to be responsible for some or all of the following tasks: greeting & sign in, food, childcare, collecting money, and someone to bring and monitor the computer and any other technology needed. You should consider assigning these tasks ahead of time so everyone can come prepared for the evening.

2) **Set the tone:** You as the facilitator will set the tone for the event. Everyone who has agreed to attend is doing something big and important by opening themselves to the beginning of talking about race with their children and then hopefully committing to some action steps moving forward. Everyone attending is also making themselves vulnerable as they open up to learn and it is important you create a safe space to do that growing. Take the time to thank everyone for coming, share why you decided to host this event and why showing up for racial justice is important to you personally. The more vulnerable and personal you can be as the facilitator the more open and willing your guests will be in the space as they work through this webinar. Once you have set the tone for the space you can go a little into what SURJ is before the webinar gets started ([http://www.showingupforsocialjustice.org/about](http://www.showingupforsocialjustice.org/about)), and let them know that you’ll be talking more about what we can do in our community after the webinar. Consider printing the SURJ values as a handout to share as well.

3) **Facilitate during the webinar:** Raising Race Conscious Children will provide instructions for group facilitators before the day of the event. As a facilitator you should plan to help keep time and make sure people understand the instructions during breakouts and keep a flexible spirit as you adapt the room to work for your participants as they move around.

4) **Follow up conversation with focus on future action steps:** Our first step as parents and educators is to dismantle racism in how we interact with children when naming race for individual change. There is an opportunity for us as parents to also step into action and show our children how to create change in the world to work for racial justice and dismantle white supremacy. After the webinar as the facilitator you will again set an open and inviting tone to the space so people are comfortable to speak up and be honest as you debrief what you have just learned and explore next steps of action as a community. Make sure you don't dominate this section and there is room for everyone to share their voice. The goal is to help people think about how they can be agents for change in their circles, listening for leaders, and help them commit to taking action.

Here’s an agenda you can use:

*(times are for a 30 minute conversation, expand c & d if you have more time)*
a) **What is SURJ? (Facilitator -- 2 mins)**
   (A quick intro to the organization. One big focus of SURJ is the core values which we use as a solid foundation for our work: calling in not calling out, mutual interest, accountability, taking risks and enough for everyone.)

b) **Your name & one change. (10 mins)**
   Name one thing you’d like to change so we’d have a more racially just community for our children. You have one minute. (Facilitator should go first then go around the room in the manner of your choice)

c) **Who else agrees with you/us? (5 mins)**
   Brainstorm other communities you are a part of within the larger community you share. Think about who in your community you can call into the work of racial justice. Brainstorm silently alone for a minute and then write them up so people can see all the places that we impact together.

d) **What could we do together? (10 mins)**
   What are easy actions we could take together, and/or what could we change if we did? Create a list of ideas for events, activities or creative meeting spaces to work from when deciding the next step. (Facilitator should open this section and set up the questions then step back, be quiet and write down ideas being put out there. Ask questions when needed to clarify ideas.)

e) **What can we commit to build as a group? (5 mins)**
   What can we each commit to individually to help create space for SURJ families? If you have five minutes, use this time to set another date and time to meet make sure you have everyone’s email &/or phone number. If you have more time, ask people to name one action they will take personally, and one action they’d like to see us take as a group. There are endless possibilities for your next step but some suggestions are: attend the next local SURJ meeting together and share what you learned through the webinar, host a SURJ Families playgroup or living room meeting, attend a local rally, march or vigil together as a family contingent, organize a family friendly action like a march or table at a farmers market. SURJ families (SURJFamilies@gmail.com) is gathering examples of what groups are doing to share, contact us to share your ideas or ask about other options we have in the works.

5) **Closing:** Show your deep appreciation to everyone for coming, being willing to be vulnerable together and share, and being willing to grow as a community. Encourage everyone to go back to their daily lives tomorrow and begin to use the strategies and skills everyone learned through the webinar and the brainstorming session after.

6) **Follow up:** Set up whatever form of communication you have decided on as a group, if you have decided on an action step as a group already confirm everyone’s role in a message about a week after the meeting. If you have not set up an action follow up with everyone individually to keep people engaged in the organizing process moving forward. It is important in the work for racial justice we hold one another accountable for moving forward. If there are people who are willing to step up more and maybe step into leading/organizing you should do a one-on-one to help not only engage them into the work you are beginning but also to help them work through
what role they may be able to fill within the broader beginning of starting a SURJ families branch in your area. (http://www.moveon.org/organize/one2one/reportback.html)

**Toolkit Materials:**
*(make sure to change the parts in italics in these documents to fit your event)*

Flyer
Sign up/Sign in
Questions? Email: SURJfamilies@gmail.com

(Note: Developed August 6, 2015)