

KEEP DREAMING

Parent Toolkit





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THANK YOU

**To our fearless and creative parent and teacher design team,
Thank you!**

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The Keep Dreaming Toolkit is the product of your collaborative wisdom and commitment. You dedicated your time and genius to bring forth a vision of what was possible for Black children. What you have envisioned is a continuation of the work of those who have come before us, you have decided to create spaces where our children's Black Genius can thrive. Lastly, the Keep Dreaming Toolkit would not be possible without the design brilliance and effort of Dr. Aeran Baskin. Continue to live in your Black Genius!

Thank You



A MESSAGE FOR OUR READERS

Daily, Black children and families navigate the harsh and oppressive realities of systems that were not designed by them or for them. The physical, emotional, and psychic costs of supremacist ideologies impact the identity and self-worth of Black children as learners. As this country comes to a racial reckoning unlike any other in history, Black parents and families strive to create spaces and messages that affirm the racial identity and self-worth of our children.

"For a people to be truly independent, they must have an independent educational system. If they are dependent on another people's educational system, they are dependent on another people's information. No other people feeds into other people that kind of information that gives that people the ability to dominate them. Therefore I have often said, education has but one honorable purpose, one alone, everything else is a waste of time: the role of education is to train the student to be a proper handler of power."

Dr. John Henrik Clarke

The goal is simple: create a space to mine and elevate the collective wisdom and expertise of Black parents as creators of culturally and racially affirming environments for our children. Leveraging the cultural wisdom of Black parents as a means to affirm our children's Blackness is an antidote to a world that actively depletes our children's self-worth through systemic racism and interpersonal racial discrimination.

Black parents have a lot of wisdom to share! To our school leaders, we encourage you to create spaces for parents to share insights and expertise. To our parents, we hope that this resource becomes a springboard to affirm the identity and racial pride of your children and to start a conversation with your schools.

The time is now.

THE BLACK GENIUS FRAMEWORK

The Black Genius Framework is a liberatory approach to whole learner development. The practices in the Keep Dreaming Toolkit align with the framework and aim to allow young people to explore, thrive, and self-actualize. Village of Wisdom developed the Black Genius Framework in partnership with Black parents. The six elements include:



Interest Awareness involves using a child's interests to engage them in learning and includes encouraging them to embrace significant challenges and persist in learning for long periods of time.

Can-Do Attitude is the practice of creating learning environments that reward children who extend themselves beyond what they know, e.g., providing feedback and creating spaces for children to learn from challenges and mistakes.

Multicultural Navigation involves creating a learning environment that explores various cultures in meaningful ways, where the learner discovers new ideas. This includes preparing learners for an increasingly globalized world.

Racial Identity is the practice of using a child's connection to their race and culture to increase the relevance of a learning task. The purpose of this practice is to counteract the negative impact of discriminatory experiences on the academic self-concept of children.

Selective Trust increases child safety and desire to participate in learning by identifying and using actions that build a child's trust in the instructor. This practice especially helps to increase learning participation in activities that require and would benefit from love and creativity.

Social Justice is the practice of creating learning environments that challenge children to analyze social injustices, especially those that are relevant to their communities. The purpose of this practice is to encourage children to devise strategies that create a world of their choosing.

HOW TO USE THE TOOLKIT



The Keep Dreaming Toolkit includes five practices Black parents developed and tried out. These practices can help you create a culturally affirming and learning-rich environment for your child. Each practice includes an explanation, a Black Genius element, and 2-3 actions you can try at home.

Begin with [**Practice 1: Woosah, Chile**](#) before moving to another practice. It's designed to help relieve a little stress! Feedback from parent users told us that each practice can build on the other. You can begin with [**Practice 1, Woosah, Chile**](#) and then go to [**Practice 2, Break Free**](#). Helping your child relax first, practice deep breathing, then inviting them to move and connect their body and senses to a task or learning could be a dope daily practice.

In the Keep Dreaming Toolkit you will see, **Try This Out**, where we invite you to try an action. **Level Up**, invites caregivers and parents who have older learners to try this action. Each practice includes a suggestion for the age group it may work best with; however, the practices can be tried across all age groups.

[**Practice 3, Let's Talk**](#) and [**Practice 4, Our Story**](#) include some suggestions to help you improve the practice. We learned these from our parents and share that with you. We also offer a [**Reflection**](#) after each practice to invite you to think about what is working for you and what may need more effort. Feel free to share your learning with us on Facebook and Instagram @VillageofWisdom.

If you are interested in getting more tools for Black Genius Protection, then go [**here**](#).

THE KEEP DREAMING PRACTICES

We invite you to review each of the five practices in the Keep Dreaming Toolkit. Each practice will support you in creating a learning environment that affirms your child.



WOOSAH, CHILE

Woosah, Chile invites the learner to release stress, to declutter the mind to increase self-awareness.



BREAK FREE

Break Free invites the learner to connect their body and senses to their surroundings, learning and their identity.



LET'S TALK

Let's Talk invites the learner to tap into their curiosity, their questions, and embrace mistakes through authentic self-expression.



OUR STORY

Our Story invites the learner to define and express themselves creatively without references to stereotypes and systems of oppression.



YOU MATTER

You Matter affirms the learner and invites them to be experts of their own learning, their experiences.

Practice 1

WOOSAH, CHILE

BREATHE. THEN BREATHE, AGAIN.

Woosah, Chile is the practice of mindfulness. This practice encourages your child to build self-awareness and declutter their minds from stress.



BLACK GENIUS ELEMENT

Interest Awareness - the practice of leveraging your child's interest to engage learning

TRY THIS FIRST

LoFi Music

Create a playlist of inspirational and/or soothing LoFi music for your child's next learning session. Music can create a calm environment for your child. These playlists can be used at the beginning of the day or during study sessions or downtimes.

Suggested Ages: 5-19

NEXT LEVEL

Get involved

Ask your child to envision the type of mood they want to create during learning. Work with them to create a playlist of their favorite music.

You can find LoFi playlists to get you started on iTunes, Spotify, or YouTube.

Suggested Ages: 5-15

LEVEL UP

Daily Mindfulness

Invite your child to practice mindfulness in everyday activities.

- Meals - describe the tastes, smells, and textures they encounter in food.
- Walking - describe what they smell, feel, and see.
- Feelings - describe their emotions as they practice different tasks.

Suggested Ages: All

PARENT REFLECTION

After each practice, take a pause and think about how does this work for you and your family. Taking a minute or two out of your day to "reflect" can support your learning as a parent.

How would I rate this practice?

1. Not working for me and my child/children
2. Working a little bit for me and my child/children
3. Not sure if it is working
4. It is working for me and my child/children
5. It is really working for me and my child/children

How often was I able to practice this in a week?

1. Only once
2. Maybe two times
3. About three times
4. More than three times

What did I like about this practice?

What did I struggle with? *How can those around me support me in working through this struggle?*

How might I improve it or change it?

Practice 2

BREAK FREE

EVERYTHING YOU NEED IS INSIDE YOU AND AROUND YOU. YOU ARE A CANVAS. BREAK FREE.

Break Free recognizes that children learn and engage the world in multiple ways, e.g. touch, sight, smell, movement. Through this practice, you will encourage your child to explore autonomy and a full sensory experience through the use of their bodies and nature.



BLACK GENIUS ELEMENT

Interest Awareness - the practice of leveraging your child's interest to engage learning

TRY THIS

Invite your child to::

- Express a poem through sound and color
- Observe math in nature
- Express your feelings through a dance

Suggested Ages: 5-13

NEXT LEVEL

Yes, Mother Earth - Move the learning outside!

:

- Go grounding or sunbathing in the forest
- Create art with items found in nature

Suggested Ages: All

PARENT REFLECTION

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What did I like about this practice?

What did I struggle with? *How can those around me support me in working through this struggle?*

How might I improve it or change it?

Practice 3

LET'S TALK

**ENGAGE MY HEART.
ENGAGE MY MIND.
TALK TO ME.**

Let's Talk can create space for your child to define themselves through the use of questions and thoughtful conversation with peers and adults.



BLACK GENIUS ELEMENT

Selective Trust- the practice of increasing engagement through trust with teachers and peers.

TRY THIS

Sacred Circles - Circles create an opportunity for children to fully engage in making meaning of their day. Create spaces for your child to share their thoughts through:

- free expression
- conflict resolution
- check-ins and milestones
- celebration
- feedback

Suggested Ages: All

NEXT LEVEL

:Circle Up- Use circle time to check in with your child. This can happen throughout the day, like in the car or during dinner time. Start the conversation off with:

- You get to express yourself freely without judgment.
- I will listen fully first.

Suggested Ages: 11-18

Strategy 3 Tips

LET'S TALK

Let's Talk, for some parents, may not come so easy if this is the first time you are doing this at home or anywhere. If this is the first time you are doing this practice, we want to share some tips we gathered from other parents to support you.

- Circle up daily and consistently.
- Encourage your child to express themselves freely.
- Reinforce usually shy or hesitant children with constant affirmation and encouragement, also reinforce those who speak up and express themselves more.
- Use your child's interest to focus circle up time or just ask them, "what would you like to focus on today?"
- Encourage your child to share what they enjoyed about the day or an activity.
- Use feedback like "I see you, I hear you, I appreciate you sharing".



PARENT REFLECTION

After each practice, take a pause and think about how does this work for you and your family. Taking a minute or two out of your day to "reflect" can support your learning as a parent.

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What did I like about this practice?

What did I struggle with? *How can those around me support me in working through this struggle?*

How might I improve it or change it?

Practice 4

OUR STORY

AND NOTHING, NO CHALLENGE, NO DISTANCE, NO SINGLE MOMENT, CAN HOLD YOU BACK.

Our Story comes from creative expression and creates opportunities for your child to experience the full and dynamic experience of Black people. This allows your child to resist stereotypical definitions of Blackness and understand that Black stories include triumph, victory, and hope.



BLACK GENIUS ELEMENT

Racial Identity - the practice of using a child's connection to their race and culture to increase the relevance of a learning task.

TRY THIS FIRST

Curate a Library

Work with your child to create a vision of the future. Ask them to consider resources they want in a library that would help to facilitate that vision. Help them to curate a library that reflects their experiences, desires, identity, and vision of the future.

Suggested Ages: 5-11

NEXT LEVEL

Unearthing Our Story

Work with your child to choose a historical event of interest. Ask them to review this historical event from a Black lens (e.g. what was the experience of Reconstruction for Black communities?). Work with your child to consider how this historical event impacted and shaped the lives of Black people in that time period.

Suggested Ages: 5-13

LEVEL UP

Our Story Making

Work with your child to choose a historical event. Ask them to make connections to the event and how it shapes the present. Using that analysis, ask your child to make predictions from events of the past, in context with the present. Ask them what this mean to the future of our communities (e.g., How did Reconstruction in Black communities provide us with lessons for the future?)

Suggested Ages: 11-18

Strategy 4 Tips

OUR STORY

Our Story, for some parents, can begin by visiting your local library and encouraging your child to go on a "**By Us, For Us Book Hunt**" and find books that include positive Black characters. We want to share some other tips we gathered from parents to support you.

- Invite your child to create a vision for what kinds of books they want to see in a library.
- Invite your child to use different pictures, images or stories to create a visual library.
- Encourage your child to create their own historical event and ask them to share how that event could give us a brighter future.
- Encourage your child to write their own story and connect it to historical figures
- Encourage your child to find ways that Black people expressed love, joy and genius throughout history.
- Encourage your child to bring art, music and other forms of expression in retelling historical events.



PARENT REFLECTION



After each practice, take a pause and think about how does this work for you and your family. Taking a minute or two out of your day to "reflect" can support your learning as a parent.

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What did I like about this practice?

What did I struggle with? How can those around me support me in working through this struggle?

How might I improve it or change it?

Practice 5

YOU MATTER

AND IF YOU EVER FORGET, WE WILL BE RIGHT HERE TO REMIND YOU.

You Matter is a practice that recognizes your child as the expert of their own experiences and affirms them as an individual.



BLACK GENIUS ELEMENT

Can-Do Attitude - the practice of creating a learning environment that rewards children who extend themselves beyond what they know

TRY THIS FIRST

Subject Matter Expert - Ask your child to choose a topic that they would like to learn more about and/or help teach. Help them to dive into the subject through research, activities, experiments, and/or story-making. Encourage your child to share what they have discovered through a presentation or teaching others

Suggested Ages: 5-13

NEXT LEVEL

Stick With It - Invite your child to identify where they may have made a mistake or to approach a task differently when they begin to struggle on a task. Allow them to walk away for a moment and practice "Woosah, Chile" or "Break Free". Use "Let's Talk" to encourage open conversation, where they feel comfortable talking about mistakes or challenges.

Suggested Ages: 11-13

PARENT REFLECTION



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How might I improve it or change it?

A FINAL WORD



Village of Wisdom is on a mission to close the academic opportunity gap by protecting the intellectual curiosity and positive racial self-concept of Black children (aka Black Genius) through the love and wisdom of their families and communities. We develop tools and resources that help parents, teachers, and students create ideal learning environments for Black learners, as well as support family organizing and advocacy entities working to eliminate racial injustice in schools. Black families, caregivers, and parents, we take this Keep Dreaming journey with you. Visit us to learn more: www.villageofwisdom.org.

The quotes in the Keep Dreaming Toolkit were gathered from the [Black Genius Breathe Workbook](#) and [Video](#).



KEEP DREAMING

