

Explore & More's Commitment to Racial Equity

JULY 2, 2020

Explore & More, The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Children's Museum was founded on the belief that every child deserves the chance to play, laugh and learn. In our 26 years we have been dedicated to fulfilling this mission with equity, access and inclusion regardless of creed, race, gender, sexual orientation or physical abilities at the forefront.

Through exhibits that highlight our neighbors from around the world, bilingual signage, cultural activities, Au-some Evenings, our Person Centered Services Community Treehouse and providing opportunities for schoolchildren and who might not otherwise be able to visit, we are continually considering ways in which we can be more inclusive. But we have to acknowledge that there is more work to be done.

At a time when the nation is facing the largest civil rights movement in decades, we feel it is important to specifically highlight the systemic racism that our Black communities have been facing and how we can educate our children and families to live a more just and anti-racist life.

During this time we have not been sitting silent - we wanted to act first, so that we could commit to our community the specific ways in which we will do better. We have formed a Diversity Committee, a team dedicated to ensuring our programming, staff, board and visitor experience are truly inclusive and representative of the diverse fabric of our community. While we recognize we cannot fix the weight of the world, we can impact WNY.

Some immediate changes we have enacted include:

- ▶ Changing our programming to ensure more Black and person of color authors are being included in our summer camp syllabus and in-museum libraries
- ▶ Engaging local Black organizations to help craft at-home Sanity Saver activities to highlight the gifts of our local Black community
- ▶ Developing lesson plans that highlight social justice topics including the local history of the NAACP

Long term commitments include:

- ▶ Developing ways in which we can measure and track our progress in creating a more inclusive space for Black communities
- ▶ Ongoing diversity, equity and inclusion training for staff and board members
- ▶ A commitment to programming that not only educates families on racial justice but also celebrates Black culture, especially in our WNY community

Racial equity in America is not an impossible dream. We are committed to doing our part to eliminate social injustice through providing resources for children and families, through leveraging the healing powers of play, that is inclusive to every color on the beautiful tapestry of humanity.



THE RALPH C. WILSON, JR. CHILDREN'S MUSEUM