

Pioneering Breakfast Clubs Aim to End Systemic Racism in the UK

Submitted by: Breakfast Clubs Against Racism

Thursday, 4 February 2021

Institutional racism is one of the most toxic problems facing British society. It has been a significant issue for generations, albeit one that is often hidden from plain sight. Institutional racism reduces the chances and prospects of ethnic minorities in the UK at almost every milestone of life. One example is, teachers are 3.5 times more likely to exclude black children of Caribbean descent than other children [1].

The issue of institutional racism is exacerbated by the white majority's denials and the silence that follows attempts at bringing racism to attention, however, the BLM movement has hugely helped to raise awareness of racism as a British problem. Breakfast Clubs Against Racism is an anti-racism charity that creates a new approach to tackling systemic racism in the UK. They believe that education has a significant role to play. The Founder for Breakfast Clubs Against Racism said, "Only through education and understanding can we eradicate long-standing racism in the UK"

Tackling racism through better education

To tackle racism in the UK, children of all races need to be educated about the problem of racial discrimination and the various forms it takes. Children might be able to identify and even stand up to overt racism, but teaching them how to challenge systemic and institutional racism is much more difficult. Breakfast Clubs Against Racism aims to make a difference by giving children a toolkit on how to recognize racial discrimination in British society and leadership skills to build the confidence to challenge it. They hope that this will provide a true anecdote to the long-standing issue of racism.

Through better education, Breakfast Clubs Against Racism is trying to nurture the next generation to create thoughtful, educated, inclusive leaders who can spearhead meaningful long-term change.

What does racism in the UK look like?

The effects of racism on individuals and society at large are far-reaching and manifest in both overt and subtle forms, both having catastrophic consequences.

One of the most immediate problems caused by institutional racism is the increased incidences of police brutality against BAME citizens. BAME people in the UK are up to 10 times as likely to be stopped and searched by police [2]. They are also significantly more likely to be subjected to the use of force. Black citizens in London have also been fined for covid-19 lockdown breaches at twice the rate of white citizens, this is just 1 example of harsher sentencing for the same crime, faced by the BAME community compared to the white community.

BAME women in the UK are more likely to die in childbirth or the first year of their baby's life [3]. Black women are almost five times as likely to die prematurely as white women, whereas Asian women are nearly twice as likely.

BAME individuals are less likely to be hired by employers, leading to a higher unemployment rate for these demographics. On average, a BAME jobseeker needs to send out 60% more job applications than their

white counterparts (even when their CVs are identical). [4]

These issues are compounded by less representation of BAME communities at all levels of British politics and government.

The program

Breakfast Clubs Against Racism will be launching three breakfast clubs throughout south and east London in September 2021. Children from neighboring schools will be invited to apply.

Each club will have 15 spaces and run every Saturday morning for 10 weeks during the winter term. The goal is to expand the program in 2022, implementing lessons learned during this initial series. Of course, the ongoing covid crisis means that plans might have to be adjusted slightly.

The People

The founder of Breakfast Clubs Against Racism is 30-year-old Lara Sengupta. Having been born and raised in London, Lara has experienced the challenges facing BAME communities first-hand. Her experience includes founding her own ethical yoga brand, CorkYogis, which appeared on Dragon's Den and supported human trafficking survivors in Kolkata. CorkYogis is still changing lives in India, although Lara has stepped away to pursue other projects.

Another key figure involved in Breakfast Clubs Against Racism is Rhiannon Turner (<https://www.linkedin.com/in/rhiannon-turner-1ba94822/>). Rhiannon is a professor of psychology featured in the documentary "The School That Tried To End Racism". That documentary was a key source of inspiration for these breakfast clubs. Rhiannon is now serving as a trustee on the board, helping to devise a positive and powerful curriculum for the children.

Other trustees include Niran Vinod, a creative strategist and the co-author of "How to Build it" from the Stormzy-curated "How to..." series by #Merkybooks. And Josephine Jengo, Lead for the representation of Women in Parliament within the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association.

Crowdfunder

In order to help get this project off the ground, a crowdfunding campaign has been launched. Donations of any size are welcome.

<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/breakfast-clubs-against-racism>
(<https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/breakfast-clubs-against-racism>)

Find out more today

Anyone looking to find out more about Breakfast Clubs Against Racism can contact Lara via email at hello@breakfastclubsagainstracism.co.uk. Or by phone at 075555720939.

Click here for the Breakfast Clubs Against Racism (<https://breakfastclubsagainstracism.co.uk/>) website.

Resources

1. <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/how-systemic-racism-affects-young-people-uk>
(<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/blog/how-systemic-racism-affects-young-people-uk>)
2. <https://leftfootforward.org/2020/06/five-shocking-stats-about-police-brutality-in-the-uk/>
(<https://leftfootforward.org/2020/06/five-shocking-stats-about-police-brutality-in-the-uk/>)
3. <https://www.aims.org.uk/journal/item/mbrace-bame> (<https://www.aims.org.uk/journal/item/mbrace-bame>)
4. <http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/?p=1299> (<http://csi.nuff.ox.ac.uk/?p=1299>)