

CAMBODIAN (KHMER) PARENTS' EXPERIENCES OF RACISM

In this series, Best Starts for Kids (BSK) shares survey results about seven questions related to racism from the 2019 BSK Health Survey, along with reactions and insights from families who reviewed these survey results for their community. Across the 10 BIPOC communities included, families faced racism to varying degrees in every facet of life, and families said that racism is under-reported in the BSK Health Survey. Families were commonly subjected to racism in public and professional settings. Families from most communities agreed that acts of racism were common at their child's school, and most communities described racist occurrences in the healthcare system. For more information about the café findings, please see the full Community Café Collaborative report at: <https://bit.ly/3pMbzgf>

74%

of Cambodian (Khmer) parents said they experienced racism.

Among Cambodian (Khmer) parents who experienced everyday racism:

54% while receiving medical care

57% at child's activities

63% at child's school

26

Cambodian (Khmer) parents took the survey in 2019.



Major Takeaways, Insights, and Themes from Café Discussion:

Most café participants agreed that the language barrier is at the root of most of their racist experiences, such as communication barriers not being addressed by schools and workplace discrimination. Participants talked about constantly feeling looked down upon or undervalued. There was also a general feeling that schools did not care about the Cambodian community since there was a lack of effort to improve communication between families and schools. They cited flyers and other communication from schools only being distributed in English.

Café participants also felt that the number of participants taking the survey and the number of Khmer people who know about the survey needs to be improved, and that the data does not reflect their community due to the low participation rate.



"Even I am able to speak English and have good education and I worked as an interpreter for schools and hospitals, but I still heard people said that I am not a seed that was planted here in the United States."

– Cambodian (Khmer) Café participant

"I feel that schools don't care about our Cambodian community."

– Cambodian (Khmer) Café participant

"Even though we have the same skills and can speak English well like other Americans, we cannot complete at the same level as them because employers do not value our knowledge and skills."

– Cambodian (Khmer) Café participant



Notes:

The Cambodian café discussion was facilitated in Khmer. Cambodian parents are defined as parents who wrote in "Cambodian" or "Khmer" in the open field for "Another race" on the survey. Multiracial people are reflected in each category that they selected (e.g., a parent who selected Cambodian and Somali on the survey would have their responses counted in both Cambodian and Somali results). Photos generously provided by members of the Cambodian (Khmer) community.