

## Promoting Black Beauty through peer interaction



My name is a Nehanda Higinio and I have an eight year old daughter named Cynthea who wants to have straight hair. She is my inspiration to helping young girls who struggle with their self-image realize that they are all beautiful just as they are. I sat with a few young girls from my town and asked them what they thought was beautiful. They started talking about princesses such as Rapunzel, Snow white and Cinderella.



When asked if they thought of themselves as princesses that are just as beautiful as Snow white and Cinderella. Zorya was the only that said yes. Mila, a biracial 6 year old, feels like she is sometimes too white or not white enough to be consider pretty. When I asked her why, she said that the kids at school told her that. I asked Zorya and Cynthea if they thought that Mila was pretty, they said. So I asked them to tell her as often as they can. It was true this simple exercise that we say a boost in the Mila's confidence. I call it positive peer affirmation.

I also found out that while they are still quit young their self-esteem is already being compromised by media influence. Zorya's mother and I have decided to make a campaign to help to encourage these girls and others like them to see their beauty by teaching them how to find beauty in themselves because of their difference in what is considered standard beauty.

Zorya 11 yrs old



She is a dark skinned Hispanic girl that gets teased for being too dark.

Mila



My niece who gets harassed for being too "white looking" She is a half black tanned skinned 6 year old with dirty blonde hair.

Cynthea 8 years old



She gets teased for having very kinky hair. Through this exercise I have learned that she doesn't think that she is pretty.

What we did.

Positive peer interaction

We played some games that we used to play when we kids that have been proven to help with self-esteem.



My daughter loves my hair and all the cool styles that I make with it. I had to show her that it was the same hair and that she can have her hair look the same. A big part of what we deal with was making these girls feel like they have a sense of accomplishment. My daughter was getting this through learning how to braid her own hair. She knows how to make herself look beautiful and is learning to take care of herself. So, I braided her hair and I am teaching how to care for own hair. This has helped her to be able to like it more.

