Family, Community, and Representation
Participants will discuss identifying as AfroLatinx, explore different examples of identity from the community, and explore their own identity by preparing to engage their family in activities or conversations.
Turn and Talk with a partner

Building Background Knowledge

- What do you love most about yourself?
  - Your culture?
  - Your place of origin?
  - Your family traditions?
- Who is considered to be AfroLatinx?
Building Background Knowledge

• You are the only one who can define your identity as AfroLatinx.
• Anyone who wants to embrace their Blackness tends to identify as AfroLatinx.
• Your identity is based on who you are, your ancestors and your experiences.
Identifying as AfroLatinx

Not all families are raised with the knowledge of Afro-Latino as part of their upbringing. As such, these families have very different experiences than those raised with the knowledge of their Afro-Latino background.

One example of someone who grew up understanding her Afro-Latino identity is Shantel Miller, a recent M.A. in Social Work student who shares her story about growing up in an Afro-Latino home. Both of Shantel’s parents were born in the Dominican Republic and passed that knowledge down to their daughters. In telling her story, she recalls her childhood experiences of being called “different” from other blacks because her mother spoke Spanish and was not raised with the privilege of passing her Africano identity on to her children.

By contrast, Amanda Correa speaks about a very different experience growing up without a sense of black consciousness. She was born and identified as Afro-Latino during her college years, and when Amanda identified as Afro-Latino to her family, she told them about the anti-black racism and microaggressions from certain family members. Unbeknownst to her, she became politically involved in the “Black Lives Matter” movement.

Unfortunately, there are some individuals who tend to consciously deny their Blackness for a number of reasons, some of which include being raised without the knowledge of one’s ethnicity or racial background politics of one’s native country, societal racism and/or internalized racism.

Nonetheless, with new streams of global communication becoming readily available, the Afro-Latino community now has a means to share their stories through blogs, podcasts, videos, and for some, to create organizations like the National Black & Latino Council. Capturing and sharing Afro-Latino experiences is one way to fill the missed history of this community’s past. As information is disseminated, more people are learning and having much-needed conversations about their social and ethnic identities with their family members, communities, and most importantly, within themselves.

When exploring one’s Afro-Latino identity, it is possible to learn about one’s history, connect with others near and across the world, and be a part of history by sharing one’s own story. Regardless of one’s background, however, learning Afro-Latino history is not just for Afro-Latino people. It is part of everyone’s shared history, for the continent of Africa is known as the birthplace of humanity, and it is responsible for a great many contributions to our present-day society.
AfroLatinidad: Who Gets to Claim It?

As you listen, think about:

• How does your family identify ethnically and racially?

• What are their reasons for identifying as such?

  For example, sometimes families have a long “fixed” history about who they are.

• How has your family talked or not talked about Blackness?