

Radical Parenting Study Targets White Mothers and Their Children

A research project at the University of Minnesota is drawing renewed scrutiny for focusing on what researchers call “antiracist parenting,” specifically for white mothers and their young children.

The study, now entering its third year, is funded by nearly \$600,000 from a private foundation and reflects the continued spread of race-centered ideology in higher education.

The project is led by psychology professor Gail Ferguson through the university’s Institute of Child Development. Known as CARPE DIEM, short for Courageous, Antiracist, and Reflective Parenting Efforts: Deepening Intentionality with Each Moment, the study examines how White mothers communicate about race, racism, and “antiracism” to children between the ages of five and eight. Researchers state the goal is to shape children’s racial awareness and attitudes at an early age.



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Funding for the project comes from the William T. Grant Foundation, which awarded the grant in 2023. The study also partners with EmbraceRace, an advocacy group that promotes racial identity education for families. Recruitment materials indicate the program is aimed at mothers already engaged in or interested in adopting antiracist parenting practices.

The initiative has been highlighted by The College Fix, which reported that critics are raising concerns about public universities promoting ideological frameworks rooted in racial categorization. Conservative education advocates argue that

targeting parents based on race undermines equal treatment and shifts academic research away from shared moral foundations and individual character development.

University officials maintain the study meets ethical standards and is purely academic in nature. However, critics counter that framing parenting through a racial lens reflects broader trends in academia that prioritize identity politics over unifying values, leaving many families questioning how far such approaches should extend into publicly supported institutions.

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