

Race intentionality and racial consciousness are used in this framework to formulate a practice model that encourages practitioners to think carefully about children's needs around race, culture, and heritage (inclusive of religion) in transracial adoption.

Race intentionality and racial consciousness models provide a framework for social workers and adoptive parents to think carefully about what should be in place to meet the needs of these children. The framework helps social workers to assess and make a professional judgement on what adopters can skilfully offer to meet the child's identity needs.

Read on to understand how these two concepts can be combined to help with decision-making.

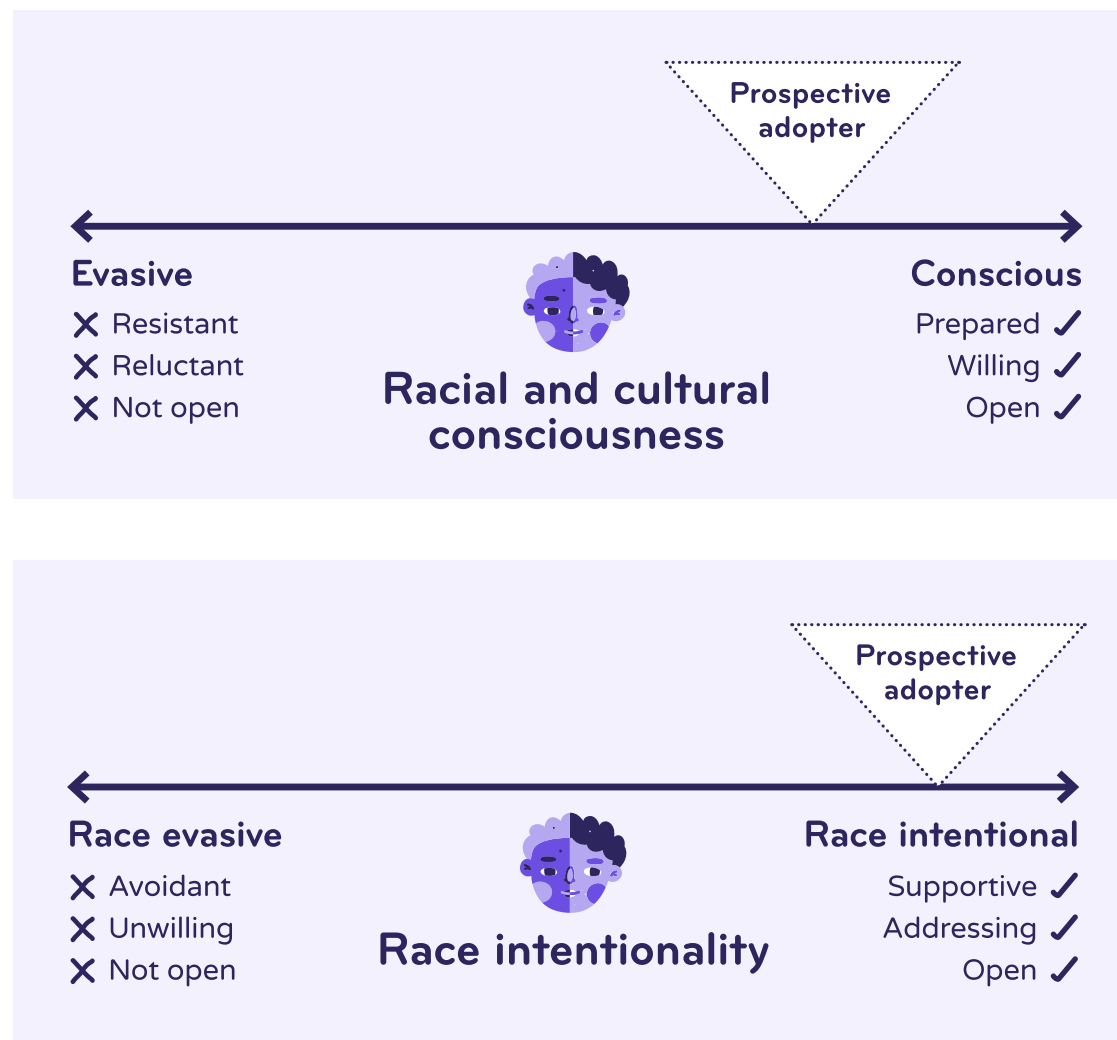


Fig 2.
Race and cultural
consciousness
and race
intentionality
decision tool

We suggest assessing each component separately and then combining assessment rankings to make an overall judgement and provide recommendations.

Ratings and definitions:



Tip:

Adoptive parents can also use this for self-assessment.

(0) Evasiveness

Complete avoidance of becoming more conscious about their own race and culture and associated earned or unearned privileges. Denial of racial and cultural differences and adopters fail to see colour. They do not acknowledge or address the child's racial and cultural identity.

(1) Minimisation

Racial differences are recognised but their significance is minimised. Superficial attempts to understand their own identity, racial and cultural histories. Superficial cultural exposure and lacking deeper understanding of the child's needs beyond surface needs (e.g. hair or skin products).

(2) Awareness

Basic awareness of their own identity, that of the child. Efforts to address race and cultural differences are inconsistent. They seek guidance or resources sporadically, but without depth or the child's interest at heart.

(3) Exploration

Prospective adopters actively seek to understand their own privilege and cultural history and its role in systemic oppression. They learn about and explore the child's racial and cultural background through educational activities, events, community connections and their own family/social networks. They create an environment that celebrates, nurtures and affirms the child's identity.

(4) Racial & Cultural Integration

A highest level of awareness and commitment to promoting the child's racial and cultural identity. The adoptive parents have a deep understanding of their own identity and privilege. They understand systemic issues and challenges faced by individuals of the child's racial and cultural background. They actively advocate for diversity, equity, and inclusion, and work to dismantle societal barriers and biases.

Racial and cultural consciousness



Race intentionality

(0) Avoidance

Complete absence of intentional efforts to acknowledge, explore or integrate the child's racial and cultural background. Dismissal of related discussions/activities needed to meet the child's needs.

(1) Minimal

Recognising importance but efforts are sporadic and lack sustained commitment. Cultural exposure is an occasional afterthought and done without thoughtful intent.

(2) Basic

Baseline intentionality in seeking resources, cultural activities and community connections, but efforts may be surface-level.

(3) Moderate

Actively seeking opportunities to learn about and incorporate the child's heritage into family life through diverse perspectives, events and environments. Intentional commitment to minimise identity confusion and conflict.

(4) High

Proactive inclusion of child's identity into every aspect of their family's life. Proactive and ongoing pursuit of educational resources, cultural mentors/organisations and active participation in traditions honouring the child's background. Active preparation for challenging bias and racism with intention to build a solid ground for positive racial and cultural identity.

Social workers can assess the race intentionality and race consciousness using sliding scales to aid professional judgement and reach a decision about potential adopters' suitability for transracial adoption. This work can feed into the Prospective Adopters' Report.

Fig 3.
Race
Intentionality
as a Model for
Practice

