

ultra

# Kidtelligence



## WHY REPRESENTATION MATTERS

For the first time in U.S. history, the population of kids under age 18 is less than 50% white, yet sixty-five percent of the characters in kids' media are white.

When asked what roles they see themselves playing in tv shows and movies BIPOC kids responded: Poor Kid, Jock, Sidekick, Villain, Dancer.

"A study on the effects of television exposure on the self-esteem of elementary-aged children showed that TV exposure related to lower self-esteem for Black girls and boys and white girls, but was actually related to higher self-esteem for white boys (Martins & Harrison, 2012)."

Shows like *City of Ghosts* and *The Baby-Sitters Club* feature ethnically diverse casts and tell culturally relevant stories.

Earlier this year Crayola's Colors of The World, a set of 24 skin tone colored crayons and markers, were honored as Creative Toy of the Year at the 2021 Toy of the Year Awards.

It's not enough to add more BIPOC characters in supporting roles. Kids need to see themselves reflected in media, marketing, advertising and product development authentically, an understanding that comes from a group of creators that is as diverse as their generation.

"For young children, being able to see people who share their skin tone, name, disability, language, religion and even hair in various media shows them that they belong, that they matter and that their stories deserve to be told."

- Southwest Human Development of Phoenix

"We need diverse representation not only so every kid can see themselves as the hero of the story, but so that every kid can understand that \*other\* kinds of kids are \*also\* the heroes of the story," said author, Rabbi Dana Ruttenberg.