

Racism amid the COVID-19 pandemic: A path forward

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Because SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, was first discovered in China, Chinese American families in the United States have reported an increase in racist experiences during the ongoing

pandemic. Tina Cheng, M.D., M.P.H., director of the Department of Pediatrics at Johns Hopkins Children's Center and a Chinese academic pediatrician, and her daughter, Alison Conca-Cheng, a third-year medical student, wrote a commentary published in *Pediatrics* on Sept. 1 in response to a study on racism affecting Chinese American parents and children. Both Cheng and Conca-Cheng report that they have experienced—both inside and outside the health care setting—implicit and explicit bias.

In their commentary, Cheng and Conca-Cheng say racism against any group is an "enduring crisis which is inflamed in the presence of other crises," adding that addressing such racism is necessary to achieve health equity. They offer critical steps to combat the problem, including calling on people to learn about the history of racial bias and how it affects families, as well as urging parents and schools to teach children about it. They also urge clinicians to understand how race is a social determinant of health and how racial biases continue to be correlated with poorer health outcomes. They ask clinicians to learn about and address their own biases, which they say can affect patient interactions, [medical training](#) and workplace conditions.

More information: Tina L. Cheng et al. The Pandemics of Racism and COVID-19: Danger and Opportunity, *Pediatrics* (2020). [DOI: 10.1542/peds.2020-024836](#)

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