

SPENCER FOUNDATION

How Do I Talk With My Kids About the “Chinese Virus”?: Racialized Trauma, Youth Voices, and Transnational Chinese Families in the U.S.

- (1) What is the lived experience of Chinese transnational families in the U.S., including both parents/caregivers and children and/or youths during and immediately after the COVID-19 pandemic?
- (2) How do Chinese transnational parents/caregivers address the global COVID-19 pandemic, the rising xenophobic anti-immigration/anti-Chinese racism in the U.S., as well as China’s authoritarian control of its citizen’s mobility in their parenting activities and their family life?
- (3) How do Chinese transnational youths and children in the U.S. respond to the rising concerns in their communities about racism in the U.S. and authoritarianism in China?
- (4) How do Chinese transnational youths stand up for their communities in the evolving Stop Asian Hate Movement? how do both the anti-Asian racism and the Stop Asian Hate Movement contribute to their ethnic and racial socialization process?

Proposal Summary (200 word limit)

This collaborative, multi-sited, and critical ethnographic study proposes to understand the lived experience of Chinese transnational families during and immediately after the pandemic at the intersection of a global public health crisis, rising anti-Asian racism, and the influence of China’s authoritarianism. It examines how the multilayered, racialized trauma has negatively impacted children, youths, and families in a community that has been targeted by the racist violence and harmed by authoritarianism, the transnational Chinese communities. The study also foregrounds the voices of the transnational Chinese youths/children who are often rendered invisible in racialized educational discourse, politics, and public policy due to the “model minority” myth.

Recruiting participants in both the metropolitan Boston area and the state of Florida with a focus on Gainesville, this community-engaged project will combine virtual and face-to-face critical ethnographies to generate data from interviews, artifacts, home videos, and observations. Besides research publications, the dissemination of the study will include community educational opportunities to share research findings and strategies of trauma-informed, anti-racist caring/parenting. Eventually, the project will bear witness to a historical moment of social injustice and political activism, and supporting this marginalized group to embark on the restoration and healing process.