

Asian American Identity Development Model

1. The *Ethnic Awareness Stage* begins around the ages of 3-4 when the child's family members serve as the significant ethnic group model. Positive or neutral attitudes toward one's own ethnic origin are formed depending on the amount of ethnic exposure conveyed by the caretakers.
2. The *White Identification* stage begins when children enter school where peers and the surroundings become powerful forces in conveying racial prejudice, which negatively impacts their self-esteem and identity. The realization of "differentness" from such interactions leads to self-blame and a desire to escape their own racial heritage by identifying with White society.
3. The *Awakening to Social Political Consciousness* stage means the adoption of a new perspective, often correlated with increased political awareness. Kim believes that the civil rights and women's movements and other significant political events often precipitate this new awakening. The primary result is an abandoning of identification with White society and a consequent understanding of oppression and oppressed groups.
4. The *Redirection* stage means a reconnection or renewed connection with one's Asian American heritage and culture. This is often followed by a realization of White oppression as the culprit for the negative experiences of youth. Anger against White racism may become a defining theme with concomitant increases of Asian American self and group pride.
5. The *incorporation stage* represents the highest form of identity evolution. It encompasses the development of a positive and comfortable identity as Asian American and consequent respect for other racial/cultural heritages. Identification for or against White culture is no longer an important issue.

Kim J. (1981) The process of Asian American identity development from Sue, et al. (1998). *Multicultural Counseling Competencies: Individual and Organizational Development*. Sage Productions. Thousand Oaks, CA.