Diverse Book Collection Heading to EBR Schools Thanks to Line4Line, Knock Knock

The Conscious Kid to Provide 58 sets of this Children’s Books that celebrate diversity

Baton Rouge, La. (Jan 4, 2021) The public and charter elementary schools in East Baton Rouge Parish will soon receive a collection of books curated by The Conscious Kid, that focus on and celebrate diversity. Line4Line, a Baton Rouge literacy program that works through barbershops to change the narrative around reading outcomes and success for African American boys, along with Knock Knock Children’s Museum, the East Baton Rouge Parish Public Library, and the East Baton Rouge Parish Public School System are working together on this unique initiative to Support Conversations on Race, Racism, and Resistance. All 54 East Baton Rouge Parish public elementary schools and four community sites will receive this collection of 40 children’s books written by Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and featuring BIPOC and LGBTQ+ characters and stories.

The goals of this project include:

- Increasing access to diverse books
- Developing community awareness around the role diverse books play in supporting literacy
- Countering racial bias by focusing on BIPOC characters and authors
- Challenging racism by presenting new perspectives and sharing stories that haven’t been told, assisting with disrupting systems that perpetuate inequality and inequity.

Lucy Perera, Director of Community Programs at Knock Knock Children’s Museum and co-founder of Line4Line, saw Conscious Kid’s collection as an opportunity to educate the community around the role books play in changing unconscious bias.

“Today, schools must have books that represent all children, and several local programs exist that promote literacy by getting books into students’ homes; however, we must be more intentional in the books we are using and choose focus diverse characters, authors and stories,” explains Perera. “In reality most schools and libraries, as well as books used in school curriculum still focus predominantly on white characters’ voices and experiences and are written by white authors.”

Perera explains, “The current awareness around racial inequity creates a perfect space for change. This will not, and should not, go away, so we must actively push for change. The partners involved in this project, Knock Knock Children’s Museum, The EBR Library and the EBR School System are the heavy hitters for youth education in our city. They have the capacity to take a position on the importance it is to have beautifully written and illustrated books in
this collection that go beyond race and racism and empower readers to take action. When children see themselves, their families, and their experiences in books, they feel connected and loved.” This collection of Children’s Books to Support Conversations on Race, Racism, and Resistance highlights resistance, resilience, and activism, and seeks to empower youth to participate in the ongoing movement for racial justice. Children and families, as well as the wider community not only need to know what individual, systemic, and internalized racism looks like, they need to know what they can do about it. This book collection is also available for purchase for parents who wish to buy these books for their home libraries or to donate to schools outside of the East Baton Rouge Parish Public School System.

The Conscious Kid Book Collection will be delivered to schools during the first three weeks in January with a Press event on Wednesday, January 27 at Cedarcrest Southmoor Elementary School where all program partners will be present along with the East Baton Rouge Public School interim superintendent. A Resource Guide with detailed information on this project and partners is available.

For more information on this project please contact Lucy Perera 575/613-0062 lperera@knockknockmuseum.org

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