



# 2021



## Dove **CROWN** Research Study for Girls

Dove CROWN Research Study for Girls (2021). Conducted by JOY Collective.  
Study conducted in U.S. among 1000 girls aged 5 -18 (500 Black, 500 white).

# The 2021 Dove CROWN Research Study for Girls

Across the country, Black children face systemic and structural racism, bias, and discrimination that impacts their ability to navigate socially and academically, and affects how they perceive their value in the world. Negative attitudes towards natural Black hair and protective hairstyles perpetuate bias and discrimination by playing a central role in a beauty narrative that has historically ignored, misrepresented, and marginalized Black girls.

This 2021 CROWN Research Study for Girls reveals when and where race-based hair discrimination occurs and confirms it is both pervasive and negatively impactful. An online survey of 1000 girls (500 Black and 500 white girls) aged 5-18 years old was conducted to assess the experience with hair bias and discrimination in the elementary and high school years.

## CHILDREN'S AGES

(Mom fills out survey for girls under 13)

	Black	White	Total
5 to 8	150	150	300
9 to 12	150	150	300
13 to 15	100	100	200
16 to 18	100	100	200
Total	500	500	1000

This work builds on our 2019 CROWN Research Study, which examined race-based hair discrimination in the workplace.





## Hair bias and discrimination most often occurs during the elementary school years and can occur as early as five years old

### For Black Girls Who Experience Hair Discrimination, It Starts Early

**53%** of Black mothers, whose daughters have experienced hair discrimination, say their daughters have experienced race-based hair discrimination as early as 5 years old

**66%** of Black girls in majority-white schools report experiencing hair discrimination with 87% of those girls facing the discrimination by the age of 12

**100%** of Black elementary school girls in majority-white schools who report experiencing hair discrimination state they experienced the discrimination by the age of 10

**45%** of Black school girls ages 5-18, in all school environments report experiencing hair bias and discrimination

**86%** of Black teens who experience discrimination state they have experienced discrimination based on their hair by the age of 12

## It Continues As She Ages

Teenage Black girls are missing a week of school due to hair dissatisfaction

**47%** of Black mothers report having experienced discrimination related to their hair

**81%** Among those Black mothers, 81% remember that experience happening by the time they were 12 years old

## It Changes How She Sees Herself

**81%** of Black girls in majority-white schools say they sometimes wish their hair was straight

**32%** of Black girls state that “negative comments about my hair make me feel bad about myself”

Disparaging comments made to Black girls and women impact their confidence and self-esteem well into adulthood

**Hair bias and discrimination is prevalent in predominantly white schools where Black girls are most vulnerable to racial bias and discrimination.**

Racial discrimination is most pervasive in environments where Black girls are not the majority. Hair bias and discrimination can occur in ethnically diverse school environments, yet it is most prevalent in majority-white schools. In the U.S., nearly 75% of Black students attend majority-minority schools.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst Black children at majority-white schools (white students' account for greater than 50% of student enrollment) are the exception to the rule, it still leaves an estimated 2.3 million Black children vulnerable to hair discrimination every year.

Black girls exist in an overall healthy space with respect to self-esteem. Although Black girls have high levels of self-identity and confidence around their hair with 90% of Black girls stating that their hair is beautiful, school environments often affect Black girls' view of themselves.



**90%**  
Of Black Girls State Their Hair Is Beautiful

<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics



## BLACK GIRLS

attending majority-white schools have a more negatively impactful experience with bias that significantly impacts how they see their role in society and potential for greatness, than Black girls in a majority-Black school environment.

Young Black Girls In White  
School Environments Are

# 50%

More Likely To  
Experience Discrimination.

## Black Hair Bias And Microaggression Experiences

“ My daughter experienced someone asking her to touch her hair and said it was nappy. It made her feel sad ”

“ My mom had to come to my school because my teacher said that she could do my hair better than it was. It looked like she didn't care about me ”

“ A Caucasian teacher told my daughter she needs to straighten her kinky hair ”

“ She had her natural hair out and a little boy said she looked like she had been electrocuted ”



# A New Day. A New Perspective: Revisiting the 1954 Doll Test



This study not only examined when and where hair discrimination is happening, but also revealed perceptions of natural Black hair are shifting.

To understand how bias has evolved over time in connection with self image, we updated the 1954 Doll test done in *Brown vs. Board of Education* to understand how colorism presents in today's society. Girls were exposed randomly to one of seven dolls and asked a series of questions about doll attributes.

They were then asked to apply a superlative of the seven dolls on attributes such as

nicest, smartest, prettiest, or friendliest to understand how society's views of race are shaped inside of images shown to young girls.

Results of the 2021 Doll test demonstrate that both races were less likely to attribute negative characteristics to the Black doll than they were in the past. Additionally, both races were more likely to pick a doll from their own race when looking at positive attributes.



# We Surveyed.

## **1000 School-Aged Girls**

(500 Black and 500 white)

### **Ages 5 – 18**

Includes a natural mix of Black girls who attend predominately Black schools, diverse schools and predominately white school environments.



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