NEWS | POSTED SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

# SRCD Members in the News: Dr. Melanie Killen

SRCD Member Dr. Melanie Killen (Professor of Human Development and Quantitative Methodology at the University of Maryland, College Park) and her lab are featured prominently in a *Washington Post* column.

Dr. Killen's program, designed to promote intergroup friendships and reduce prejudice in childhood, was featured prominently by *Washington Post* columnist Jay Mathews on September 19, 2021 in "How to teach about race: One way is to have kids talk to each other in class."

> *With her team [Killen] developed a Web-based and teacher-led program designed to promote intergroup friendships and reduce prejudice and bias...Killen knows much more than I do about how kids form opinions. "Children have basic social-cognitive skills to make judgments about what's fair or right," she said. "But their group identity gets in the way of always enacting on their fair principles. Unfortunately, kids get bombarded by negative stereotypic messages about groups, and this makes it confusing for them when it comes to deciding whom to include or exclude in everyday peer encounters...."The best way to help children and adolescents figure this out . . . is for them to learn from their peers, which we refer to as 'bottom-up,' or more technically, 'facilitating relationships of mutual respect,' " Killen said.*

Dr. Killen has funding from both the NSF and the NIH to evaluate the effectiveness of the program using a randomized control design.

Read the Washington Post Column