

Savannah "Uriah" W
December 13th 2022

Never Give Up On Belonging

"Never give up on anything" - Aneeka Wise, My Mother

My name is Savannah, and I am a pretty young Black girl in Athens, GA. Mrs. Hattie Thomas Whitehead, also grew up in Athens in a place called Linnentown. Me and Mrs. Hattie have a lot of similarities. First we are both Black girls who grew up in Athens. Back when Mrs. Hattie was growing up and still today Black girls like us don't feel like they belong in all the places they go. There are a lot of people who are racist to young Black girls. But when young Black girls stand up for the rights, sing with others at church, and play outside with their friends and family, they find their belonging.

The first place young Black girls can find belonging is by standing up for our equal rights. For example, when Mrs. Hattie was younger she used to go to downtown Athens to protest segregation. She and her older sister would chant protest songs so people can feel their desire for change. In this moment, she found a sense of belonging. She was with her people and her big sister marching and demanding their rights.

Another way young Black girls can find belonging is singing together at church. For me, when I sing at church, I feel like I belong with everybody in there. It feels like they are all my family when we are rocking side to side, with our hands up in the air, and no one is arguing. Mrs. Hattie also said she felt a sense of belonging singing with her people. She would sing with the other protesters after she got locked up by white police for protesting.

Finally, young Black girls can find a sense of belonging when playing outside. For example, Mrs. Hattie and I both love to play outside in the cold creek. It makes us feel

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like there's no one there to make fun of us or make us feel bad. On a beautiful bright sunny day, when we are all together in the dry grass along the creek banks, time slips away as we play all day.

To wrap it all up, please remember that young Black girls find a sense of belonging when they stand up with each other, sing together and play outside. This matters because young Black girls like me should never give up on belonging.