

- “That means **prospering** to me as if my children are not only elevating themselves in school but potentially socially.” — *Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA*
- “Consistently growing.” — *Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA*
- “I guess it just means progressing in the right direction. Yeah, just kind of bettering yourself. Yeah, I think that's kind of, like, how I would define it.” — *White non/partial-custodial father, nationwide*
- “What my son's name means in our language is ascending. I have thought about this a lot. So, I think it means to **rise above or be above**. So, for me when I think of ascending, it just means, like, how to distinguish yourself in a better way or higher way, not necessarily physically above but just how to continue to grow and be better.” — *Asian mother, nationwide*

When we delved deeper into what it would mean if “America were ascending,” participants say it would mean we are getting better and making progress as a nation. The country would be moving in an upward direction. If America were ascending, racism and police brutality would be gone, health resources would be available to everyone, thus people would be able to live better. Some also felt that if America were ascending, we would have progressive policies like universal education, housing, and healthcare. Associating ascending with ending racism came up in both POC and white groups.

- “**No racism.**” — *African American mother, TN/MS/GA*
- “**Equal opportunities.**” — *African American mother, TN/MS/GA*
- “No police brutality.” — *African American mother, TN/MS/GA*
- “Well, I'm pretty liberal, so for me that would look like, ugh, **universal healthcare, market regulations so that corporations couldn't tamper with politics and, and the general well-being of the common good.** Free higher education, more housing, just stuff like that. I guess think Bernie Sanders, like that's kind of where I would think.” — *Latina mother, WA/OR/CO*
- “To me, **if America was ascending, racism would be decreasing, health would be going up, maybe a cure to cancer available to everyone.** Just not so much that money controls the world or that certain people with money control the world or etcetera, etcetera, just better ways of living.” — *Mother (mixed races), under 200% FPL due to pandemic, NJ/CT/MD*
- “To ascend means to go up, **so for America to do that, it would just mean to me that we would just be moving in an upward direction** to better things, whatever it may be.” — *Mother (mixed races), under 200% FPL due to pandemic, NJ/CT/MD*
- “I think when you say if America was ascending, what brings to me is just like, education would be a big thing. Like, and it's not just about college. You've got to start education young. Like, I think college discussion is great. **Making college more affordable would be great, but also making preschool more accessible.** And so, I feel, like, if we're going to ascend, if America is ascending, our education system would be bulletproof and well-funded and number one in the world. And it's, I mean it's not.” — *Native American mother, nationwide*
- “It would be the land of the free for real.” — *Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA*
- “Definitely something done **about the wealth and equality.**” — *Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA*
- “I don't know if it will ever be like completely, like all equal, but it needs to be a bit more evenly distributed, like, because it is crazy.” — *Black/African American father, OH/MI/PA*
- “**You know doing better than whatever we were doing before.** Being better as a country and kind of getting back to where we were before with America being a world leader in anything and everything. I feel like we have kind of gotten away from that, so we are kind of no longer ascending as a country.” — *White non/partial-custodial father, nationwide*
- “For me, it is more of **people's lives are improving, people's quality of lives is getting better, so less people that are living paycheck to paycheck, less homeless people, and our needs getting met.**” — *Asian mother, nationwide*
- “Better healthcare.” — *Asian mother, nationwide*
- “I believe it would look like **communities coming together, racial tensions steadily declining, and being able to relate to other people regardless of beliefs as a whole, not just individuals separately.**” — *White mother, nationwide*