

TALKING WITH KIDS ABOUT RACE & RACISM



Tips to help parents and other caregivers raise empathetic, race-conscious children

Kids notice differences in how people look and how they are treated. Here are some ways parents can spark conversations, answer questions and talk about feelings.

PREPARE

- Think about and begin to address your own feelings, experiences, privileges and biases.
- Seek out resources to help you begin conversations and respond to questions.

TALK, TALK, TALK

- Check in with your child. Ask about their feelings and what they've seen.
- Start early. There are ways to have appropriate conversations with kids of all ages. Be concrete and keep things simple (but honest!) for the youngest children.
- Give small 'bites' of information to start the conversation and let children know the door is open to continued discussion.
- Start conversations before children have questions. Be proactive to combat negative societal messages and teach children that it's okay to talk about race and racism.

SEEK OUT DIVERSITY

- Make a point of visiting places where you will encounter people of different races and cultures.
- Celebrate differences your child notices as interesting, positive and beautiful. Be careful not to 'shush' young children who are vocal in these observations.

READ, WATCH & DISCUSS

- Seek out books and videos on race and racism specifically made for children.
- Read books and watch videos that feature diverse people and cultures. Make sure to include stories that feature children of all backgrounds doing 'everyday activities' (i.e. losing a tooth, going camping), and not just in 'hero' or Civil Rights roles.

TAKE A STAND

- Make it clear that it is wrong to treat someone unfairly because of their race. Teach children about being 'upstanders' and discuss your/your family's privilege, however that may show up.
- Point out stereotypes, biases or wrong beliefs when they come up in everyday life (e.g. books, media, conversations).
- Acknowledge that racial injustice exists while committing to work toward a better future.



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Resources for Talking with Kids about Race & Racism

These resources provide guidance to parents and other caregivers who want to have conversations with children about race, racism and racial injustice.

RESOURCE LISTS

[Racial Justice Resources \(Little Moments Count\)](#)

A comprehensive, easy-to-navigate list of 100+ key resources and links to assist families that want to learn about racial and social justice and work toward becoming anti-racist.

[Talking to Young Children About Race and Racism \(PBS\)](#)

Tips and resources to support meaningful conversations with young children about race, racism and being anti-racist. Includes videos, topical articles, book lists, printable activities and additional resources for parents.

[EmbraceRace](#)

A comprehensive collection of resources to support parents and caretakers in raising children who are brave and thoughtful about race. Includes webinars, tip sheets, stories, articles and more, as well as resources specifically tailored for supporting kids of color.

TOOLKITS

[Coming Together: Talking to Children About Race and Identity \(Sesame Street\)](#)

Developed by Sesame Workshop and featuring Sesame Street characters, Coming Together is a curation of developmentally appropriate resources to guide children to become an 'upstander' to racism.

[Let's Talk: A Toolkit for Conversations About Race \(Cleveland State University and Children's Museum of Cleveland\)](#)

Designed to help caregivers introduce topics of race and racism with kids, the toolkit provides age-appropriate information, anti-racist learning objectives, reading lists, conversation guides and interactive activities.

[Talking About Race \(National Museum of African American History and Culture\)](#)

Tools and guidance to inspire conversations about race, with a dedicated section geared toward parents and caregivers.

PODCASTS

["Early Risers" Podcast](#)

A new podcast from Little Moments Count and MPR with facts, stories and tips for anyone who cares about raising children with a clear-eyed understanding of cultural differences, race and implicit bias.

ARTICLES

["Talking to Kids About Racism" \(University of Minnesota\)](#)

Provides answers to common questions from parents and caregivers wondering how to explain racial injustice, racism and uprising to their children.

["Talking to Children About Racial Bias" \(American Academy of Pediatrics\)](#)

Written by two pediatricians, this article provides an understanding of how children learn and present racial biases, and offers strategies for talking about and confronting issues related to race.

BOOKS

For Adults

- "Beyond the Golden Rule: A Parent's Guide to Preventing and Responding to Prejudice"* by Dana Williams
- "Raising White Kids: Bringing Up Kids in a Racially Unjust America"* by Jennifer Harvey
- "Raising Antiracist Kids"* by Rebekah Gienapp
- "Parenting for Liberation: A Guide for Raising Black Children"* by Trina Greene Brown

For Younger Kids

- "Something Happened In Our Town: A Child's Story About Racial Injustice"* by Marianne Celano, Marietta Collins and Ann Hazzard
- "Not My Idea"* by Anastasia Higginbotham
- "The Skin you Live In"* by Michael Tyler

For Older Kids

- "The Undefeated"* by Kwame Alexander
- "A Ride to Remember: A Civil Rights Story"* by Sharon Langley and Amy Nathan
- "The Hate U Give"* by Angie Thomas



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