



Talking to Children About Racism

Having tough conversations with children can be hard for any parent. Children need us now more than ever to answer their questions and talk about race. Taking the time to educate yourself about racial issues is just the start. Children are actually acutely aware of race, but may not be aware of how comments based on racial differences can hurt. Your guidance is extremely important as it is an opportunity for you and your child to learn together. Remember, it's ok to not have all of the answers. To learn more about racism check out <https://nypost.com/2020/06/03/7-books-about-racism-every-adult-should-read-right-now/>.

Explain What You Do and Why

Children follow what they see. Model to them openness to learn, kindness to others, and speaking up when you see injustice. They hear and see you. Make phone calls and write letters together to public officials when you demand racial justice to show them how to use their voices for good. Show them public art created by artists of color for their beauty and power. Expose them to music by artists of color.



“Breathe Life 3” by Rob Gibbs. PHOTO: CELINA COLBY

Spread Optimism

Even during this time where all may seem dim, there is always light. It is important for children to know that there is still good in their environments. Talk about the positive changes that are happening around racial inclusion within their immediate environment and beyond. Expose your children to places, websites, and books to include racially diverse authors. Enter the following title in your internet browser to see a selection: [Today's Parent - 30 books to Help you Talk to Your Kids About Racism](#).

Share What You Know and Limit Media Exposure

As children ask you questions, address the concerns they have. Be aware of how much information you offer. Simplicity is key. Limit exposure to media, which can often include images meant to scare and highlight racist stereotypes. For preschoolers, talk about and celebrate differences which make us all unique and beautiful. Continue to check in about their feelings. Make sure they feel heard and able to come to you when they need. As children get older, continue to give them more information about how racism impacts them.

Share Diverse Resources

Grow your family's world view by sharing stories that feature voices and characters of color. Seek out stories by authors who look and live differently than you. If you find yourself in spaces without diverse representation, ask those in charge to improve their collection. You can find a full resource from our friends at PBS Kids at: <https://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/childrens-books-about-race-and-diversity>.

