

# How To Talk About RACE with your kids

I believe having the race conversation with your children, at a young age is critical. But whatever age your kids are, its never too late. As Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. says "The time is always right to do what is right." Children begin to notice racial and ethnic differences in particular between the ages of 3 and 5. This brings about a naive curiosity that isn't yet linked to any positive or negative qualities about different groups of people. What happens after that is that positive and negative qualities do come into the picture, conveyed to children through their parents, significant others and the mass media.

This is why parents are the first and most important and influential teacher. Kids are learning and hearing about race regardless of whether parents are talking to them about it. And not talking about race causes children to come to a lot of harmful, problematic and factually inaccurate conclusions. Let us not be a generation who turns away from difficult conversations, but instead let us press into them, proclaiming the restorative hope that the gospel offers.

I am praying that this list will serve your family as you equip your children to talk about and confront racism Biblically. I've narrowed down 5 steps to begin or continue the race conversation in your home. These are good for any age child. I've listed plenty of references for you at the bottom, as well. Don't depend on anyone else to teach your children about racial injustice. The next generation is looking to you parents to create the change we are fighting for. May the Lord bless you in this journey.

-Gabrielle Veneracion

# KNOW TRUTH.

Have a biblical understanding of creation and love. Tell your kids how people are equally made and created by God in His image, worthy and valued. The Bible is clear about God's love for all people. It is absolute when declaring the good news of Jesus Christ is for all nations (1 Chron. 16:23-24; Matt. 28:19; Rev. 7:9). It is emphatic that believers are called to care about the good of all people (Matt. 25:31-40; James 2: 1-13; Isa. 1:17; Deut. 15:4-5; 1 John 3:17). Raise up your children in that same mentality.

Unity in the body of believers, a unity that transcends family ties and ethnicity, is preached throughout the New Testament. These truths should affect the way we live with and love each other. When talking to your children about race and racism, affirm Christ's call for unity and the dignity and beauty of those whose dignity is under attack.

Learn about and share our society's history and current issues with racism. Let's teach our children how to love, celebrate diversity, respect others, and cultivate unity.

# Be OPEN

Don't shy away from the tough questions. Explore the natural, innocent curiosities your child may have. Have intentional, serious age-appropriate conversations.

Be honest with your child about what's going on in the world; even more so, be honest with your child about what's going on in your heart. Make it personal. Tell real stories, use real names.

Speak confidence and value into your kids diversity. Be honest about the realities of life as a Person of Color and the things they may have to navigate and face. Negate comparison thoughts with positive reaffirming encouragements.

Challenge any "put down language" and how offensive speak can be hurtful and influence others. Be an open, available safe source for questions, fears, and thoughts. Your silence reinforces this behavior, and even furthers it, so this is a battle worth fighting.

# Model EQUITY ΔΔΔ

Your kids see ALL! Especially your actions. So practice what you preach. Model the unity. Set the example. Both verbally and nonverbally:

Many parents talk to their children about embracing difference, but in subtle, covert ways, they communicate something very different. The "do what I say, not what I do" doesn't work here!

For example, when approaching a group of black youngsters, a mother may unconsciously pull the child nearer to her. Such actions will portray an association with fear and even anger.

Also, many white parents often talk to kids about the evils of prejudice and discrimination, yet in their own lives they have few friends or neighbors of color with whom they regularly socialize. These implicit communications are more powerful than any intentional efforts on the part of parents.

Actions speak louder than words. Your actions will teach your kids certain behaviors. You don't need to have all the answers, but identify and correct your own racially biased thoughts, feelings, and actions. So do the work!

# Do SOMETHING!

Normalize nonwhite ethnicities by including books, movies, TV shows and other cultural expressions by people of color alongside those by whites.


Children's books are one of the most effective and practical tools for initiating these critical conversations, and can also be used to model what it means to resist and dismantle oppression.

Educate yourself and your kids accurately about history, include historical accounts involving Asian Americans and Native Americans as well as other ethnicities. Talk often about current events and posts they might see on social media related to those events. The tendency is to think that children are too young to have these conversations, but any conversation can be adapted to be age-appropriate.

Expand your social, professional and faith circles to include people and families of different ethnicities and doing the same for your kids. This will show children that you value people from all ethnicities and count them worthy of friendship and social association. This is KEY, as relationships dismantle stereotypes and negative thoughts. Diverse communities bridge great relationships, as well as helpful parenting allies.

# How To Talk About **RACE** *with your kids*

KNOW TRUTH. 

Be OPEN 

Model EQUITY 

Do SOMETHING! 

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## Articles

[Anti-racism Resources for White People](#)

[Biblically Teach About Racism](#)

[Parent ToolKit- Social Awareness](#)

[Healthy Children - Racial Bias](#)

[Asian American Christian Collaborative - AntiAsian Racism](#)

[Central Racial Justice - Talking about Racial Violence with Kids](#)

<http://www.raceconscious.org/>

<https://www.tolerance.org/>

[@theconsciouskid](#)

## Kids Books

[The Skin You Live In](#) by Michael Tyler

[The Day You Begin](#) by Jacqueline Woodson

[All Are Welcome](#) by Alexandra Penfold

[Last Stop on Market Street](#) by Matt de la Peña

[Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History](#) by Vashti Harrison

[ThoughtFull: Discovering the Unique Gifts in Each of Us](#) by Ms.

Dorena Williamson

[The Tiny Truths Illustrated Bible](#) by Joanna Rivard

["More More More," Said the Baby Board Book](#) by Vera B Williams

[We're Different, We're the Same \(Sesame Street\)](#) by Bobbi Kates

[Hair Love](#) by Matthew A. Cherry

[When God Made You](#) by Matthew Paul Turner

[All the Colors We Are/Todos los colores de nuestra piel: The Story of](#)

[How We Get Our Skin Color/La historia de por qué tenemos](#)

[diferentes colores de piel](#) by Katie Kissinger

EMMAUS  
CHURCH

KIDS

I am here for you, as a Christ-led, Black & Asian Female Pastor of a mutli-racial community. Reach out if you have more to add to the list, have questions, or just want to talk.  
[gabrielle@emmauschurchsa.org](mailto:gabrielle@emmauschurchsa.org) ~ 714.932.4767  
[www.emmauschurchsa.org](http://www.emmauschurchsa.org)



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