

# Talking About Race and Equity at Home



## Start early. Start now.

Kids start noticing racial differences as early as 6 months old. Helping them make sense of those differences is critical to developing healthy attitudes about race and equity.

*Without context, children will make their own (often incorrect) assumptions about race and difference. Let them know that it's okay to notice race and skin color. Start talking about what racial differences mean and don't mean.*

## Be honest.

Be honest with your child in age-appropriate ways about bigotry and oppression.

Be sure your child knows that the struggle for racial fairness is still happening and that your family can take part in that struggle.

## Use mistakes as learning opportunities.

We don't get it right all the time, and our children won't either. Rather than criticizing your child for making an error, try to use their mistake as a learning opportunity.

Find out where their incorrect thought is coming from, and talk through why it isn't the right approach.

## Don't expect perfection from yourself or your child.

It's okay to say "I'm not sure" or "let's come back to that later," but make sure you do come back to those topics.

You won't always have the answers, and it's important for your child to know that these are difficult topics. Seek out research-based resources that will help you help them.

## Meet them where they are.

Understanding race and practicing equity is not all-or-nothing. Your child may be knowledgeable in some areas, and less understanding in others. Try to assess where they are coming from and start there.

## Develop racial literacy.

Study and talk about the histories and experiences of groups of people we call Black, African American, Hispanic, Latino/Latina, Asian American, Native American/Indigenous, and white, among others.

*Be sure your child understands that every racial and ethnic group includes people who believe different things and behave in different ways. There is as much diversity within racial groups as across them.*

## Use these prompts to open the conversation.

It's okay to be unsure how to start. Try some of these open-ended prompts to get your family talking:

"There are times when people are treated differently just because of their race or gender. How do you feel about that?"

"How does fairness play a role in your school? Our home? Our community? What happens when you see something that isn't fair?"

"Think about a time when you've felt different. How did that feel? How can we make sure others always feel included, valued, and celebrated?"