

Parenting Series - Addressing and Preventing Racism

Part 3 Activities To Raise Children Who Are Comfortable With Diversity

We have provided a list of practical suggestions for developing an environment in which diversity is valued. These are everyday practices that we can all do to raise children who are comfortable with diversity

- 1. Take an inventory of your home's diversity.** Are your toys sending a subtle message? Choose books and toys that include persons of different races and ethnicities. Make it a point to buy dolls and action figures of every race. Watch how your kids react.
- 2. Be intentional in showing your children positive examples of other races in the media they watch.** Some great examples are [Go, Diego, Go!](#), [Little Bill](#), [Ni Hao, Kai-Lan](#), [Dora the Explorer](#), and [Cooking for Kids with Luis](#).
- 3. Take inventory of your own racial biases.** Be careful with the language you use around your children. Avoid making stereotypical statements, derogatory remarks or racial jokes in front of your children (or better yet, don't do it at all).
- 4. Look for opportunities to immerse your family in other cultures.** Try to find situations where your family is the minority. This is a great stretching and empathy-building opportunity for you and your kids. Try attending a minority church event or a cultural festival. Invite others to share your cultural and religious experiences. Again, observe your child's reactions and open a dialogue about how that feels.
- 5. Read books that depict children from other races and countries.** For an incredible list of multicultural children's books, check out [Shades of Love](#) at [Shelfari.com](#).
- 6. Just observe.** Watch how your children play with children who are different from them, whether that difference involves skin color, gender, disability or physical difference. Talk about it. Let your child know that you are a safe person to process their feelings and reactions with, while at the same time guiding them to accept and celebrate children (and all people) who are different from them.
- 7. Talk to your children about racial prejudice.** Ask them to recall any they have observed. Encourage them to be advocates against mistreatment of children who are different.
- 8. Lead by example.** If you don't have a diverse social circle already, widen your network of friends and acquaintances to include people from different backgrounds, cultures and experiences.
- 9. Visit museums** that feature exhibits about a variety of cultures and religions.
- 10. Get involved in your child's school.** You will have the opportunity to know your child's peers firsthand and be a positive role model to the children.