

Talking to your children about Racism



Encouraging our children to be open to listening and alter their behaviours enables them to be proactive learners and to speak out against injustice. Inspiring our children to be brave if they witness an injustice and encouraging them to be curious about current views; this is a powerful lesson to learn and helps our children to be conscientious world citizens. Whilst it is not always easy, as parents we should try to acknowledge and be aware of our own implicit bias. Take a note of your gestures, how you look at people, and how you interact with people. Small changes like these can go a long way.

Resources for younger children

Sharing books with children can be a great way to introduce diversity and difference. Some books may address prejudice specifically, other books may not focus on race but will feature ethnically diverse characters. The following link details a range of books with ethnically diverse characters: [Book list](#)

Some examples of TV shows for younger children that celebrate diversity: [One World Together](#) | [Everyone's Welcome in the CBeebies House - YouTube](#)
Examples: [common sense media](#)

Video explaining discrimination
<https://youtu.be/6uXgJA-VfjI>



Resources for older children

Blue Peter presenters explain racism
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9LLBDsVREaI>

BBC Bite Size on tackling racism and bullying: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/clips/z3krkqt>

BBC Newsround explains George Floyd and protests in the UK [What types of prejudice are there? - Prejudice and discrimination - GCSE Religious Studies Revision - BBC Bitesize](#)

Explanation of systemic racism in the USA https://youtu.be/YrHIQIO_bdQ

Resources for Teenagers

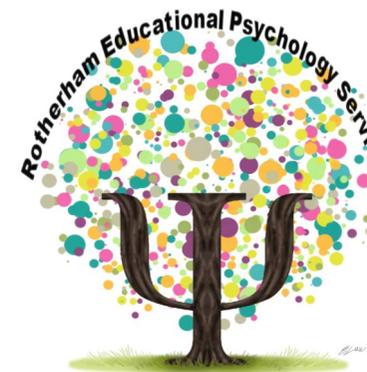
Ted X Talk, Nova Reid, British activist and writer talks about racism in Britain:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8iNGeVvU8s>

Jada Pinket-Smith and her family discuss a variety of topics:
<https://www.facebook.com/redtabletalk>

With special thanks to Yoopies #StrongerUnited for their resource "A parents Guide to Black Lives Matter" which has informed this leaflet. For further resources please see additional sheet

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An information leaflet to help develop our confidence in talking to our children about racism



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What is #Black Lives Matter?

The Black Lives Matter (#BLM) movement was created in 2013 by three Black American women, Patrisse Khan-Cullors, Alicia Garza and Opal Tometi. The purpose of BLM is to bring about positive change and equality for the Black community. The BLM movement is made up of multiple ethnicities and cuts across a range of generations. International support for the BLM movement has increased substantially since George Floyd's murder in May 2020 in the USA. The BLM movement is an anti-racist movement, which brings together people who - through their actions and beliefs - have a common goal of ending violence towards Black people and ending their experience of institutional or systemic racism.

Racism is the belief that people of different races and ethnicities have a different and lesser value in our society. Racism uses power and influence to oppress people deemed to have less 'value' than their white counterparts. Systemic or institutional racism happens when Black people have an experience of being treated less favourably than white people in jointly used institutions or 'systems' such as their schools, workplaces or services, for example, hospitals.



How do I open a conversation with my child about racism?

People around the world are taking action against racism; older children may have questions about news coverage and social media. Younger children may not have been exposed to news but it's never too young to talk about racism in a child-friendly way. You may feel that racism doesn't affect you as a family but to support others in our community it helps to have open discussions that will educate our children and promote equality for all. Below are some suggestions for ways to talk with different age groups:

Younger Children

Young children have a strong sense of fairness and from a young age we hear them say 'it's not fair'; we can give different examples of things that aren't fair and explain that 'in our family we think everyone should be treated fairly'. We can use books, films and music to positively promote people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and talk about fairness.

Older Children

Older children may have questions about the world around them and racism; listen to your children, find out what they know. Ask questions such as: What do they know about racism? Have they ever witnessed or experienced racism? What is their opinion on recent events? By listening to children we can build on conversations and help to fill gaps in knowledge; we can also provide resources to help promote understanding.

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What does White Privilege mean?

Racism has often been thought of as an overt, intentional act of hate. However, this simplistic understanding has meant that many people have not recognised the ways in which it might apply to us all. White privilege is an important concept to understand and explain to children because it helps move the conversation beyond a simplistic understanding of racism and it brings awareness to the existence and reality of systemic racism and the fact that, inherent in our society, are systems that privilege one race over others.

The term 'white privilege' can generate some defensive feelings and reactions and it is important to recognise that white privilege doesn't mean that white people necessarily have it easy or that they don't experience struggle, or that they have never lived in poverty. Instead it explains that the problems experienced are not as a result of their skin colour

But how do we explain this concept to young people?

Making our explanations visual, concrete and relatable is an important part of helping young people understand this privilege. The video clip below has been shared widely online and provides a visual way of showing children that people can experience advantages or disadvantages from factors that are not within their individual control. This clip can help us to start conversations about equity and fairness.



[White Privilege](#)

Being a Role model through action

Talking about race can be challenging and it may be hard to know how to approach these conversations; we hope that that the information shared here is helpful in opening up these conversations. The next step is really considering our actions and asking ourselves if our actions reflect our viewpoints. A quote from Angela Davies reminds us that it is not just our thoughts and viewpoints that matter, but our actions as well:

"...it is not enough to be non-racist, we must be anti-racist"

Our Children will learn from our actions, and the actions of those around us. Standing up for injustices when we see them will not only help to make the situation better for those involved but it also teaches our children the importance of challenging wrongdoings. Even if you think your children won't engage in racist behaviour there are things that they can do to help ensure that schools, playgrounds and activities are not tainted with racial injustices.