

A SHORT STARTER "GROWN-UPS" GUIDE FOR

TALKING TO CHILDREN

ABOUT RACE AND DISCRIMINATION.



STEP 1. MAKE SPACE FOR CONVERSATION

Introducing children to new words allows them to grow their vocabulary and learn new ways of describing situations and understanding.

I've compiled some definitions and thinking points on the next few slides. Let's not make this "taboo".

There's also some helpful books designed for children. I'm only posting ones I've read and used myself.

DISCRIMINATION

dis*crim*i*na*tion noun
\ dis-ˌkrɪm-ə-'nā-shən \

Seeing differences in somebody and then treating them worse because of what makes them different.

RACE

race noun \ 'rās \

1. A group of people of whose family may come from a particular place - not always where they are born.
2. A group of people who may share interests or habits.
3. A category of humankind that shares certain distinctive physical traits: like skin tone.

RACISM

rac*ism noun \ 'rā-,sɪz-əm \

1. A belief that certain kinds of people are by birth and nature superior or better than others.
2. Unfair treatment of people based on the opinion that somebody's skin colour means they are worth less.

Racism is not felt by everyone in the same way, it is more than discrimination because of the history and things like slavery

STEP 2. DIVERSIFY YOUR CONTENT

If you're reading a story, watching a movie or anything else - turn it into an opportunity to learn about other cultures.

Don't try to be "colour-blind". We may all be human but it's ignorant to claim we all have similar experiences. By denying our differences, you're forcing others to adapt who they are.

We all experience different access to opportunities like education, jobs and food - you're inadvertently teaching an idea that minorities deserve maltreatment or "did not work hard enough" to succeed.

STEP 3.

MAKE IT INTERACTIVE

Children as young as three can be aware of racial differences but what do they know?

Visit an exhibition or museum (or virtual version) which explores this complex area in different ways. For those who are worried about the violent side of things, do research beforehand to see what you can find.

There will be "age-appropriate" content available. I took one of "my" kids to the Museum of Childhood to learn about how different generations grew up and also spoke about different countries.

STEP 4. BE HONEST

It's okay not to have all of the answers. It's not okay to avoid teaching this side of history until they're older.

Share stories and experiences with other adults like teachers or friends who have had this conversation. Learn from what they have or haven't done. There's not just one way of doing any of this.

Finally, don't just have the "don't be racist" talk. Teach why racism is wrong through practicing anti-racism as often as you can.