

EKKLESIA RALEIGH.ORG

# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

A PARENT'S GUIDE FOR LEADING AND  
LEARNING TOGETHER



# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

## A Note to Parents

We know that conversations on the topic of race and racism with our children can feel difficult. However, whether we talk about it or not the research shows that from an early age children begin processing racial differences and drawing conclusions from their surroundings and experiences. Safe conversations with our children will help to shape and form their understanding and hopefully move us towards healthier relationships and greater empathy and love for all.

We will fumble over words, we will make mistakes, but we have a responsibility to do it anyways with a posture of humbly learning and walking with our children. Our own personal growth will impact the way our children see the world and the biases they hold. Children will naturally form racial biases within our culture but we can help them process that and work toward identifying and dismantling unhealthy systems that make space for change.

More important than what we say is what we show them. How do they see us engaging? Do we have relationships across races? What leaders of color do they see in their lives? What books do we read them? How do we talk about history?

This is meant to be a starting point for you as parents. A compilation of ideas and resources to return to in this journey. We aren't re-creating the wheel here but hope to point you to black and brown voices and others leading in beautiful and helpful ways. Let's journey together! - Ekklesia Church Raleigh

# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

Where do we begin?

- Four questions to ask yourself before talking to your kids about racism

As we begin our conversations we should also have an honest conversation with ourselves and prayerfully seek the ways we need to grow and change.

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

*PSALM 139:23-24*

- Begin with Listening

If you are white, your first response should be to listen to the stories, experiences, and concerns of those most affected by racism. Notice if/when you feel defensive and ask yourself why? Listen without defending, correcting, or offering solutions. Take on the posture of a student and do your own work to learn and grow.

Before empathy speaks, it listens...When we frame our hearts around empathy, we learn the art of restraint. - Lisa Van Engen

# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

## Read Diverse Books

We are naturally drawn to stories, especially children! Diversifying the books you read is one easy way to broaden the perspectives you are hearing and learning from. Picture books also help give visual representation of black and brown skinned people. It may seem like a small thing but it's important!

- Lee and Low Books: Find and buy great books from the largest multicultural children's book publisher in the U.S.
- 31 children's books to support conversations on race, racism, and resistance
- Lesson plans and book resources from Colorful Pages
- Sign up for a diverse book subscription from the Conscious Kid
- 75 children's books for raising race conscious kids
- Follow the Tutu Teacher, Vera, for diverse book lists





# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

## Engage in Discussion

Our kids notice a lot more than we often realize and process a lot internally. Give them a safe space to respond and ask good questions. We can share appropriately about events in the news and make space for discussion in our home where they will be heard and led with love.

- Use [these 30 meal facts about race](#) to learn and discuss together at your family's table and [this 30 prayers for race](#) printable to pray together (created by Lisa Van Engen).
- [Your Kids Aren't Too Young to Talk About Race: Resource Roundup](#)
- Share current events in age appropriate ways and ask your kids:
  1. How does that make you feel?
  2. What do you think is right?
  3. What do you think should happen next?
- Look to scripture: The Gospel of Jesus is good news for all! In your reading and discussions hi-light God's love for all people. If using a children's picture Bible, look for ones that do not only portray Jesus and other Bible characters as white.
- The book, [And Social Justice for All](#) , breaks down social justice issues by topic and age appropriate resources and activities to facilitate family discussions.

# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

## Community Support

As we continue in healthy dialogue within our homes, we will find new ways of growing, learning, and serving our communities together. One of the ways we show our commitment to racial equity and that we value diversity is by giving and supporting those teaching and working for change, amplifying their voices, and supporting diverse artists and businesses with our money.

- Serve as a family: Join in the work already happening in your community by coming alongside organizations working on the behalf of racial injustices and supporting the work of leaders of color.
- Give to organizations like Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) or United Negro College Fund, or the Equal Justice Initiative just to name a few.
- Support diverse artists and businesses. You can do that with your money as well as sharing their content and profiles on social media or with friends.



# CONVERSATIONS ON RACE

## Other Considerations and resources

- Purchase Multi-cultural toys
- Add multi-toned crayons, play-doh, and Band-aids to your home or classrooms.
- Name and celebrate differences! When children point out differences, don't silence them. Allow them to name it and then respond positively with love and celebration of those differences.
- Don't stand for passive comments or racial slurs. Stop and correct immediately and teach from that moment.



## Just For Parents

- Be the Bridge by Latasha Morrison and her Be the Bridge Groups
- A Sojourner's Truth by Natasha Robinson
- White Picket Fences by Amy Julia Becker
- Codeswitch Podcast from NPR
- Racial Equity Institute
- The Encouraging Place (Local to Raleigh)
- A comprehensive anti-racism resource for white people