



raising anti-racist kids

**A SHORT GUIDE TO
ANSWERING QUESTIONS
ABOUT RACE**



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step 1

acknowledge and reward curiosity, reinforce that *you are* open to, and encouraging of these conversations even when they are difficult.

ex.

This is a really important conversation, I am so glad to see you're thinking about it.

This is a really good question, we should learn more about it together



step 2

answer the actual question being asked, provide a direct, honest answer

ex.

Melanin is what determines how dark your skin is, some people have more melanin than others.

Yes, Canada is built on stolen land, Indigenous communities were harmed/killed for Canada to become a country, and they continue to be today.

NB: introduce as much context as your child can comprehend, avoid getting tangential.



step 3

ask a question back. It's important to assess where a child is at, and to instill within them that this conversation is their responsibility whether or not they experience racism. You should also *remain open to learning from children.*

ex.

What do you think about that?

what do you think should be done to make racism a thing of the past?



step 4

instill a value. It's important to begin and continue instilling the values and practices of anti-racism in children of all ages.

ex.

In our family, we support and stand up with Black communities, in this house, Black Lives DO Matter!

I understand that we feel guilty when we learn about our privileges, but it's important to use that guilt to create justice and not get too caught up in our feelings!



step 5

compel an action! Addressing racism is all of our responsibility.

ex.

The next time that you hear them say something like that again, I want you to say that it's not true and you're not okay with it, and I will have your back!

I want you to go to the library and check out some books about race, then we can talk about it.



Remember...

- **don't lie, minimize or misrepresent the impact or reality of racism, introduce as much information as is appropriate for the age of the child, add more as they get older**
- **don't present racism as a historical problem, situate it as an issue with a past, present, and future unless we intervene**
- **don't present racism as the behaviour of a few "bad" people but as a system that we all participate in and that some benefit from at the expense of others**
- **show children examples of resistance beyond what is widely known in popular culture including examples of children and young people resisting injustice**
- **engage the adults in your life in conversation, children have to learn that no one is exempt**
- **remember that for BIPOC children, opting out of the conversation isn't an option, your children are old enough to talk about race if ours are old enough to experience racism**
- **share about your learnings and shortcomings too to encourage accountability and change**



Be as mindful and intentional with your body language and non verbal communication as you are with your words. Children infer that race is a taboo, that should illicit discomfort from the responses of grown folks in their lives. This reinforces fragility and contributes to the lack of safety and race based discrimination that Black, Indigenous and children of color experience.

