

STRATEGIES FOR TALKING ABOUT RACE WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

BEAR IN MIND	IN THE MOMENT	PROACTIVE
<p><u>AVOID:</u></p> <p>Silence</p> <p>Changing the topic</p> <p>Shaming</p> <p>Guiltig</p> <p>Running Away (flight response)</p> <p>Losing your temper (fight response)</p> <p><u>REMEMBER:</u></p> <p>You are going to mess up...a lot.</p> <p>Making a mistake doesn't mean you are causing irreparable damage.</p> <p>You do not have all the answers and never will.</p> <p>Your children can teach you, too.</p> <p>You aren't aware of all of your blind spots.</p>	<p>Reflect back the question or comment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "What I think I hear you asking is..." • "I see you noticing that..." <p>Consider the environment, delay if needed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "That's a great question! I want to answer that, but let's talk about it when we get back in the car." <p>Seek more information (and buy yourself time):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Tell me more..." • "What do you already know about ____?" <p>Model empathy by finding something to validate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I hear where you're coming from..." • "I agree with you that _____..." • "I hear you are curious about this, I had that question once too." <p>Flip the context- relate it to what they experience:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "It reminds me of adults' assumptions about kids..." <p>Assume good will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I know you didn't mean it this way, but..." <p>Change your voice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speak more softly, slow your pace, lower your pitch. <p>Plant a seed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give a relevant piece of accurate information. <p>Acknowledge gaps in your own understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm not sure. Let's investigate that together." <p>Take corrective action if warranted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "I'm sorry, I shouldn't have scolded you. I know you're really curious about..." • I'm sorry, I shouldn't have picked you up and left the playground. If I could do it over again, I would..." 	<p>Increase your own awareness of and about your relationship to and with race and its impact</p> <p>Practice talking about race/racism with peers.</p> <p>Talk about melanin and its connection to geography.</p> <p>If you see acts of racial discrimination or bias, say something.</p> <p>Name your prejudiced thoughts and their corrections.</p> <p>Talk about racial discrimination and bias in history. Include examples of resistance by <u>both</u> people of color and white people.</p> <p>Discuss communities of color's distinct and rich cultures, strengths, histories, beauty, and achievements.</p> <p>Take stock of how racially diverse your own and your children's social circles are.</p> <p>Externalize your thoughts to model critical literacy. <i>Ex. I wish the illustrator had...or I'm glad the movie...</i></p> <p>Fill your home library with authors and characters of color whose stories aren't always about racist history.</p> <p>Fill your home library with authors and characters who are white that fought against racial injustice.</p> <p>Take your children with you to racial justice events, and support their own activism if they express interest.</p>

Adapted from Courageous Change