

# KIDS, RACE AND UNITY

A NICK NEWS SPECIAL

## SUMMER 2020 | TIPS FOR FAMILIES

Nickelodeon is grateful to its partners for offering guidance on this important topic. The Conscious Kid ([theconsciouskid.org](http://theconsciouskid.org)) is a nonprofit education, research, and policy organization dedicated to equity and promoting positive racial identity development in youth. They provided these discussion tips to accompany **Kids, Race and Unity: A Nick News Special**. They can connect you to great books and other resources to help your family learn to be anti-racist. Licensed family therapist Dr. George James ([georgetalks.com](http://georgetalks.com)) also contributed.

## WATCH. LEARN. TAKE ACTION.

Hosted by global superstar Alicia Keys, **Kids, Race and Unity: A Nick News Special** amplifies the voices and experiences of Black children across the country amid current events. The special features the leaders of the Black Lives Matter movement answering questions from kids, offers tools for families to hold constructive conversations about race and inclusivity, and highlights teen activists fighting racial injustice.

Find **Nick News** on Nickelodeon YouTube, Nick On Demand, the Nick App, and the Nick Pluto TV channel.



## TIPS FOR PARENTS

Research shows that children start receiving explicit and implicit messages about race from birth and begin to show racial bias by age 3. Here are some tips from the Conscious Kid to help adults and kids have healthy, constructive conversations about issues involving race, racism, and racial bias.

### REMEMBER THAT IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO TALK ABOUT RACE.

Before your child can talk, they are already learning about the world and about race from you. Seek out, value, and support creators, authors, colleagues, neighbors, professionals, and educators of color. Find diversity in your friendships and the organizations and events your family is a part of. This will show kids that you mean it when you say, "Black Lives Matter."

### HAVE OPEN CONVERSATIONS.

If you're not sure how to answer a question, it's OK! Families work together to learn together—through research and meaningful conversation. Transparent conversations about feelings and uncertainties offer kids a model for a positive approach to challenging topics and situations. When we address race regularly, we create a framework for dignity and resilience.

### AUDACITY IS GOOD!

Shushing children for asking questions about race, or when they make inaccurate or racist comments, doesn't make the questions go away. It just means they go unanswered. Instead, think of these times as teachable moments.

### LISTEN. LISTEN. LISTEN.

Make sure you aren't the only one talking when you're having a conversation about race with kids. Kids speaking about race is a sign they are engaged, and that deep learning is taking place. Make a point to interact with them and hear their perspectives about what they notice in the world around them. As seen in the **Nick News** special, kids can lead the way to new ideas and problem solving.

### AFFIRM BLACK KIDS AND KIDS OF COLOR.

Children of all races need to see positive affirmations and narratives surrounding people of color, and Blackness in particular. It's important for white people and non-Black people of color to communicate positive affirmations about Blackness. Have a conversation about how kids can identify and speak up against the anti-Blackness and colorism present in themselves, in media, and in their communities.

### NAME WHITE PRIVILEGE.

It is important to be direct about whiteness and white privilege. Naming systems of inequity is key to disrupting their impact on the development of children. White privilege is the set of advantages, entitlements, benefits, and choices that people have solely because they are white. White privilege is not the suggestion that white people have never struggled, but that race/skin color is not one of the things making their struggle harder.

### WE CAN'T FIX A PROBLEM UNTIL WE NAME IT.

Naming whiteness and privilege empowers kids with vocabulary and shared language. They need to identify inequity and take action on their own.

### LEARN ABOUT STRUCTURAL RACISM.

It's important to understand that racism is not limited to the individual choices of "bad people." Racism is structural and embedded into all aspects of society, including laws, institutional policies, businesses, dominant cultural norms, and our very own consciousness. Ibram X. Kendi's explanations during the episode describe this perspective, which has a history of more than 400 years. Use videos and other resources at [theconsciouskid.org](http://theconsciouskid.org) to learn more.

### EMPOWER KIDS.

Provide children with models and examples of the work that people of all races are doing toward racial equity. Engage them in actions they can start taking. Invite kids to decide the next topic to learn about or cause to support. Trust your instinct and theirs when something seems wrong to speak up and take action.

WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT ANY OF THESE TIPS? LEARN MORE AT [THECONSCIOUSKID.ORG/RESOURCES](http://THECONSCIOUSKID.ORG/RESOURCES)

## KIDS' TO-DO LIST

- Write and sign a pledge committing to how you and your family will be actively anti-racist.
- Sign—or start!—a petition committing to fight systemic racism in your community, and everywhere!
- Read a book—either fiction or nonfiction—by a Black writer, and let a friend borrow it when you're done! Go to [theconsciouskid.org/books](http://theconsciouskid.org/books) for a list.
- Make sure the grownups in your life are registered to vote! Go to [usa.gov/register-to-vote](http://usa.gov/register-to-vote) for details.
- When you see something that isn't right, speak up! As a family, write to local politicians and other leaders to let them know what you're seeing and what changes your family wants to happen.
- Talk to your parents and grandparents about how race has impacted their lives. Make a video to share.

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## HERE FOR YOU

Looking for more ideas? Nick is here to help!

[NickHelps.com](http://NickHelps.com)

for kids of all ages

[NickParents.com](http://NickParents.com)

for parents and caregivers

[NickCommunity.com](http://NickCommunity.com)

for youth organizations and educators

[Noggin.com/racial-progress-resources](http://Noggin.com/racial-progress-resources)

for tips on talking to preschoolers about racism