

Talking to Your Girls About Racism

Whenever we see injustice, we all have a responsibility to confront it. Every day, every one of us has a role to play in taking on an unfair system while working to build a new one that truly works for all. Guiding our girls in learning to recognize and challenge structures and practices that perpetuate inequality helps them play an active role in creating the positive change our society needs.

We know that talking to girls about injustice is difficult. It may be tempting to avoid the topic of racism altogether, but statistics show that justice, health, and education systems aren't fair in basic ways that can negatively affect a girl's life on a foundational level. What follows is a guide for navigating these conversations. Also included is a list of resources – websites, videos, and reading lists. We are available to help whenever possible.

Be straightforward, ask questions, and listen to her.

Don't avoid the topic. Starting the conversation is a difficult step, but a necessary one. You don't need a big speech. Ask what they've seen and heard and listen to what they say. Let them know that whatever they're feeling is OK, including if they're scared, uncomfortable, or angry. Make sure you listen, even if they have trouble vocalizing how they feel.

Teach her to identify racism.

To make discussion about race and racism a part of "normal" conversation, start when your girls are young. Talking about who's left out and who's included, and how they're treated when they are included, is important. Whenever you're met with exclusion based on race, ask if they think it's fair, how it makes them feel, and how your troop might work together to fight these everyday types of racism.

Teach her the value of diversity and inclusion, and to embrace our differences.

Saying everyone is the same implies that everyone has the same experiences and is treated the same in our society—which isn't the case. Instead, talk with your girls about how we can honor and celebrate our differences, and about how we all, with our unique backgrounds and experiences, bring beauty to the world in so many different ways.

Empower her to challenge racism when she sees it.

Racism isn't always violent or overt. It appears in many forms. Your community and what she sees every day in her world counts. Racism didn't end with the Civil Rights Movement. Showing people who've taken action against injustice, and had roles in making change, can help them understand we all have a role to play. It empowers them.

Learn and take action together.

Be open and talk with your girls about the fact that you're learning at the same time they are. You can also talk with her about actions you're taking for positive change as an adult. Connecting with groups in your community that are working for equality are just a few of the many ways you and your girls can help build a just world for all.



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Resources:

Girl Scouts' Resources:

[Girl Scouts of the USA Blog](#)

[Raising Awesome Girls Series](#)

Books for Girls:

[Books about Racism and Social Justice for Ages K-12 – Common Sense Media](#)

Videos:

[Helping Your Child Cope with Media Coverage of Community Racial Trauma and Civil Unrest](#)

[Kimberle Crenshaw TedTalk on "intersectionalism"](#)

Articles:

[100 Race-Conscious Things You Can Say to Your Child to Advance Racial Justice](#)

[Black Lives Matter and the Workplace](#)

[How to Talk to Your Children About Protests and Racism - CNN](#)

Social Media:

[@hereweread](#) - diversity and inclusion books for children

[@theconscioukid](#) - diversity and inclusion parenting