



FOSTERTALK

EQUALITY

EMPOWERING FOSTER CARERS TO DISCUSS RACE INEQUALITIES

On May 28th 2020, the UK held the first solidarity protest in London to support race inequality in light of the death of George Floyd in America. Since this date, we have seen and heard about protests, marches and demonstrations that have taken place all over the country. Anti-racist-protesters and activists have called for an end to racism and inequality against Black people. At present much of the country has been divided in their response to these protests and marches, and this has been highlighted by Prime Minister Boris Johnson who says 'the UK 'is not a racist country'. Nevertheless, the lived experiences from a cross section of the BAME (Black, Asian & Minority Ethnic) community show opinions would differ.

Many children will be seeing images and conversations about the protesting, demonstrations and the portrayal of violence on the TV and Social Media. Therefore, it is our responsibility and yours as foster carers to have open discussions about current affairs and topics that are shaping the world we live in. However, for you to engage in these conversations we need to understand these matters and be able to translate them into a language that children will understand.

Talking about race and racism is not an easy topic to approach, therefore we have created this guide to support you to start the conversation about race inequality, privilege, and to challenge racism. We have also provided a list of useful resources to assist you on your journey to widen your knowledge. We at FosterTalk understand that this guide will not answer all your questions, therefore we have developed a course on diversity to empower you to have discussions and continue to be role models for your foster children.



#BLACKLIVESMATTER

In 2013, Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors, and Opal Tometi — created the movement Black Lives Matter in response to the acquittal of Trayvon Martin’s murderer, George Zimmerman. 17-year old African-American Trayvon Martin was killed by a member of neighbourhood watch, George Zimmerman, after he deemed to have looked ‘suspicious’. The police had told Zimmerman not to pursue, however he failed to listen and fatally shot Trayvon. Zimmerman was later acquitted for the crime, even though they was an outcry from the community and across America and it is believed there was racial bias during the trial.

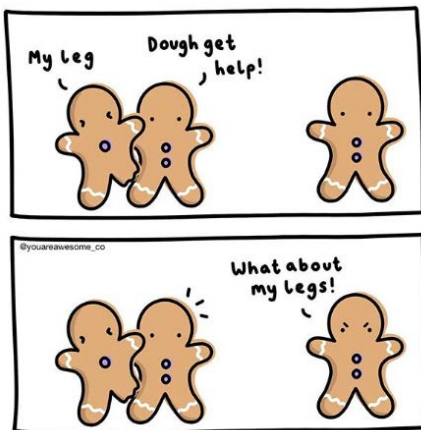
As a mission, it strives ‘to eradicate white supremacy’ intervene in violence inflicted against Black communities, creating space for Black imagination and innovation to improve lives. This movement speaks out against police brutality and vigilantism targeting at black communities. It acknowledges that there have been countless killing of black men, women and children and in many of these cases justice was not served due to institutional racism or racial bias. Black Lives Matter is an Anti – Racist movement and a social movement that is fighting for social justice for black people. Today Black Lives Matters, has been used as a Twitter hashtag a slogan and visual representation for change, a social movement and the topic of many debates in the media and many peoples household.



WHY BLM, HOW DO WE EXPLAIN THIS TO CHILDREN?

When we are discussing Black Lives Matter with children, we want them to understand that this slogan is not suggesting that all lives don’t matter, but at the moment there are some problems that the black community are facing and therefore this needs some attention so things can change for the better. Analogies that can be used...

GINGER BREAD PERSON (FOR UNDER 10S)

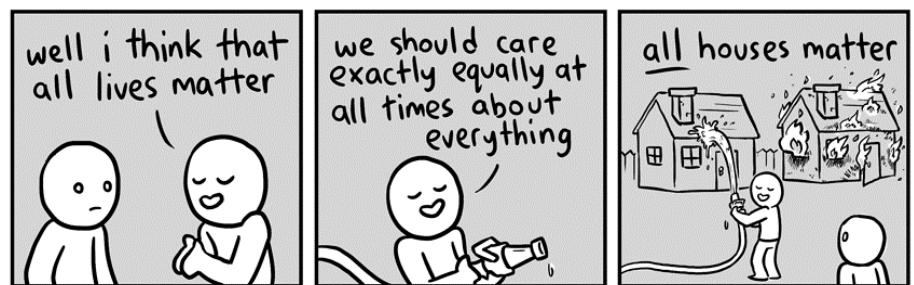


This illustration shows the ginger bread person with a broken leg. He is advised to get help. However, the other ginger bread person is asking what about my leg, however from the image we can see that this leg is perfectly intact so help is not necessary. In other words your leg matters, but it is not broken.

HOUSE ON FIRE (SECONDARY SCHOOL)

This cartoon script, explains the concept of Black Lives Matter, using the analogy of a fire.

It highlights that it is accepted that 'every house matters', however due to the urgency of the house burning down, it is important that this problem gets addressed as soon as possible. In other words, your house matters but it isn't burning down.



TWITTER COMMENTS (TEENS)



These twitter users have given examples of needing support for a specific health problem. They explain why this problem needs to be addressed as a priority. In other words, your ailments/health does matter, however we are concentrating on this specific condition as it is urgent. These trending statement were made on social media that explains this further.

WE SAID: BLACK LIVES MATTER

WE NEVER SAID: ONLY BLACK LIVES MATTER

WE KNOW: THAT ALL LIVES MATTER

**WE JUST NEED YOUR HELP WITH
#BLACKLIVESMATTER FOR BLACK LIVES ARE
IN DANGER!**



START TALKING ABOUT RACISM EARLY ON

Starting the conversation about racism as early as 5 years old can make all the difference in how kids view the world and others. It is important that we do not shelter children from the harsh reality of racism and bias. However we must be appropriate and use explanation that they will be able to understand. Teaching children to be brave and to stand up for what's right from early on is what this world needs, however this can be a challenge that all parents face. However, if we engage in meaningful and honest conversation this is one step towards supporting children to see and defy inequality and discrimination "It's not about leaving a better world for our children, it's about leaving better children for this world"



UNDER 10S

- If it was your birthday and I didn't buy you a present, but I got one for your brother/sister, how would that make you feel?
- If you threw your toys around the room and I told you to sit on the naughty step, and your brother/sister did the same and continued to play...do you think this would be fair?
- If there was a school trip and the teacher said everyone could go on the trip expect you...would you think this is fair?

These three examples are events that younger children would be familiar with, and will assist them to understand and consider how others may feel when they are unjustly treated.



SECONDARY SCHOOL

- For older children, you can try and gain an understanding of what they know and discuss justice and equality.
- Do you know why people are protesting and marching?
- Have you ever witnessed anyone being treated differently because of the colour of their skin?
- What is your understanding of racism?

TEENS

- What is your understanding of Black Lives Matter?
- Have you heard of George Floyd ?
- What do you think you could do to make a difference and treat people equally?

These questions are more thought provoking and promoting the young people to share their views and also challenge them to become part of the solution. It is important to engage in a conversations and not judge them for their views. If some of their view appear bias, then you have a responsibility to educate them further to help shape their future thinking.



BLACK
LIVES
MATTER

DON'T PRETEND PRIVILEGE DOESN'T EXIST

It's important for white parents to teach their children about the advantages they possess simply for being born a white person. It's a critical step in raising anti-racist children. There is nothing wrong with privilege, however it is how you choose to use/ignore it that is the point of contention.

“White privilege is not to say that a white person will not have struggles or adversity, but instead, it should be viewed as an inherent advantage that the person has without doing anything other than having white skin,” says Lucinda D. Norman Johnson, a teacher at the Penn-Griffin School For the Arts in High Point, North Carolina. “White privilege is afforded to all white people of all socioeconomic status, gender, geographical location, age, or acknowledgment.”

Below are 2 links to YouTube video's that explain privilege. Both examples highlight that based on your position in life, which are predisposed, you can have an advantage other others.



This movement is a challenge for all people to come together to use whatever advantage you have to benefit each other. Only then can we build a society based on equality and justice.



WE NEED
A CHANGE

DON'T PRETEND COLOUR DOESN'T EXIST

A 2016 study called 'Children's Racial Categorization in Context' explains that children can begin to differentiate race by as early as 3 months old and can classify others by race between 6 and 8 years old. If parents do not teach children about race, then you are teaching the child not to know the identity of the other person. This means that you are not recognising their history or truly acknowledging them as a person and ignoring racism.



Adam Grant  @AdamMGrant · Jul 28, 2019
Don't pretend to be color-blind. It intensifies racial bias:
"If you can't see race, you can't see racism."

Don't ignore racial differences. Discuss them openly.

Answer questions about race honestly and factually. The inquisitiveness children exhibit is their way of seeking to understand and learn.

Often, what parents think they are doing in this situation—avoiding embarrassment and ridicule—can give the message to children that race is something to view negatively, something to fear, or something to ignore.

If your child makes a statement such as...

"That lady's skin is brown, and yours is white," agree with them and ask them a question such as, **"What do you think about that?"** or **"What made you say that?"**

Respond with factual information, while noting differences, and similarities; this prevents differences from leading to division. Listen without judgment so that they are open with you, but correct inaccurate information and stereotypes if your child makes a negative remark about someone with different hair texture, you can say...

'Her hair isn't ugly, sweetie. Her hair is curly, just like your hair is curly, but her curls look different than yours but it is still pretty. Just because it is different doesn't make it bad.'



BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL

Children are always watching you for guidance and support which in turn will help them to understand the world around them. Once you understand racism and bias, you can then be in a position to challenge and teach children and young people. Seeking out information and being open to change, will demonstrate ‘actions speaks louder than words’ and children will be able to mirror your behaviour. Be intentional about your actions and be mindful about the language you use.

Know it’s OK to feel uncomfortable when talking about race and if you feel moved by things what are going on in the world don’t hide your emotions. Children are sponges and if we can teach children anti-racism that we are one step closer to bring about social justice and positive change in the world we live in.



UK HISTORY & RACE RELATIONS

Here are some that have influenced and affected the UK in the last 70 years. They are useful to research to understand some of the injustices and issues that are still current in our society today.

UK HISTORY & RACE RELATIONS

The arrival of the cruise ship Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks on the morning of 22 June, 1948 when black people were invited to support Britain to rebuild the UK after World War 2.

BRIXTON RIOTS

In 1981, violence flared up in urban centres across England as young blacks vented their anger at society and, in particular, their treatment by police. Brixton, in South London, was the first flashpoint.

DEATH OF STEVEN LAWRENCE 'MACPHERSON REPORT'

In 1993 Steven Lawrence was murdered for the colour of his skin. The Macpherson report blamed police racism and incompetence for scuppering any chance of justice. Crucially, he also identified the police as “institutionally racist.”

GRENFELL TOWER INQUIRY

The Inquiry is still going on, 3 years after the fire and there are still hundreds of tower blocks with flammable cladding despite the government stating it would all be removed. In June 2017, 72 people died in Grenfell Tower in West London. Many of the people living in Grenfell Tower were from BAME backgrounds. There was an inquiry into the fire, the deaths and injuries of all the people and there were suggestions around institutional racism, as many of the people living in Grenfell Tower were from BAME backgrounds.



FAMILY FRIENDLY RESOURCES

UNDER 10S

Books

- Grace Byers: I am enough (Age 3-8) [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Ann Hazzard: Something Happened in Our Town (age 4-8) [FIND IT HERE >](#)

- Matthew Cherry: Hair Love [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Vashti Harrison: Little Leaders: Bold Women in Black History (Age 7-10) [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Fran Manushkin Happy in our Skin (Age 2+) [FIND IT HERE >](#)

Films

- Hidden Figures (PG)
- Akeelah and the Bee (PG)
- The Painting (U)
- The Princess and the Frog (PG)

SECONDARY SCHOOL & TEENS

Books

- Malorie Blackman: Noughts and Crosses series (age 11-16) [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Maya Angelou: I know why the caged birds sing (14+) [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Angie Thomas: The Hate You Give (14+) [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Lisa Heathfield: I am not a number (14+) [FIND IT HERE >](#)

Films

- The Hate You Give (12)
- The Help (12A)
- American History X (15)
- 12 Years a Slave (15)
- Self-Made (Inspired by the life of Madam C.J. Walker) (Netflix series)

ADULTS

Books

- Reni Eddo-Lodge: Why I'm no longer talking to White people about race [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Banaji, M.R. and Greenwald, A.G., 2016. Blindspot: Hidden biases of good people. [FIND IT HERE >](#)
- Akala Natives: Race and Class in the Ruins of Empire [FIND IT HERE >](#)

Films & Documentaries

- Sitting in Limbo – BBC I player
- The Unwanted: The Secret Windrush Files- BBC I player
- 13th – Netflix
- American Son- Netflix

**BE THAT ROLE MODEL. BE THAT DIFFERENCE.
HAVE THOSE DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS, BUT
YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE!**

**GET IN TOUCH WITH US FOR MORE TRAINING
MATERIAL, RESOURCES AND SUPPORT.
TOGETHER, THAT'S HOW CHANGE HAPPENS!**



CONTACT US



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