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Teaching Children About Diversity

by **Christopher J. Metzler, Ph.D.**



Christopher Metzler is one of the world's leading authorities on issues of diversity and inclusion. [Read more »](#)

We are living in an increasingly diverse world, and this is a wonderful gift. Our children attend schools with children who are much different than they are. For example, more children are being raised by single parents, by same sex parents and in blended families. Many children are non-native English speakers and some are children with disabilities (both physical and mental).

The challenge for parents is ensuring that children learn to accept and respect differences, thus making them more productive adults. But, where do we start? Children don't come with instructions, but they do come with open minds. Much of what they learn about respecting differences comes from their parents. That being said, consider the following suggestions:

Start with us. Children listen to what we say as well as watch what we do. So as parents, we must deal with our own diversity deficits, so that we can lead by not just saying but also by doing. For example, one parent tells her children not to judge people by their color. The family lives in a majority white community and the children have had very limited interactions with blacks.

However, her children hear her telling friends that the blacks with whom she works are so lazy that she has to do their job and her job. If we are to teach our children to make decisions that are not based on stereotypes, then we must do the same. In this example, the people may in fact have been lazy. However, it is not their blackness that makes them lazy - they are just lazy. "Do as I say but not as I do" does not help children become more

accepting of differences.

Get out of our comfort zone. For all the talk about diversity, Americans still segregate ourselves into fairly homogenous communities. Teaching our children to accept differences may require that we use the power of the internet to learn about differences, that we seek out cultural activities that are out of our community and explore the strength and value in diversity. It is not enough to simply visit cultural events, eat ethnic foods and thus learn about differences from a voyeuristic point of view. Instead, we must make a deliberate effort to get out of the familiar and show our children we mean it. Accepting differences should be how we live our lives.

Listen and respond. When children ask about differences, start by listening to the question they are asking and the language they are using. If in asking questions about differences they are using hurtful or stereotypical language, explore with them why such language is hurtful. Explain in an age-appropriate manner why stereotypes don't tell the whole story and are divisive.

Don't be blind to differences. Parents often tell me that they want their children to be "difference blind." This is both unrealistic and misses the point. Children will notice that Jouain has a different sounding name or that Yasmeen always wears a head scarf to school, or that Rajiv eats foods that look and smell different from what they eat. They will have a natural curiosity about this. As parents, we must help them appreciate and learn about those differences, not pretend that they do not exist. The question is not whether differences exist; it is what message we are sending by teaching children to be "blind" to differences. Unless we as parents are willing to help explain to children what seems strange or different to them, we will never be successful in teaching children to understand and appreciate differences.

Avoid political correctness. Parents who teach children to be politically correct when interacting with differences are making the situation worse. Rather than teach children the correct labels or names for people, let's teach them that differences are only a part of who we are. It is not the total of who we are.

Parents teach children how to brush their teeth, to comb their hair, to be responsible and to be successful. We do so by introducing and reinforcing behavior that helps achieve these goals. We should do the same when it comes to appreciating diversity. It is only then that we can move from tolerance to acceptance.

So, how have you been teaching your child about diversity? Do you think it's working?

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Comments

nicole writes...

Dr. Metzler, I try to show my children the beauty in different races and cultures, just as my parents taught me. But what should I do when some of my children's friends' parents clearly don't believe in diversity as we do. It's evident in the things their children say and do. Is it worth addressing the parents or should I just focus on what I tell my children? Thanks.

Nicole

Posted on [February 3, 2009 at 12:50 PM](#)

Christopher? writes...

Hello Nicole. This is a constant issue that we as parents must address. I don't think that you should spend too much time and energy on the parents unless you think they are open to change. The better investment is to talk with your child who looks to you for guidance and support.

Posted on [February 4, 2009 at 3:17 PM](#)

Julia writes...

Dr. Meltzer-

I try to co-view with my son as much as I can. Lots of commercials and shows include stereotypical portrayals. What is the best way to offset these images and messages? Should I actively be calling attention to them? Should I wait for my son to comment? Thanks.

Julia

Posted on [February 3, 2009 at 4:48 PM](#)

Christopher? writes...

Hello Julia. I think that the best way to deal with this is to point these out before your child learns about it from someone else. You should then talk with your child about these images and messages. I think it best to have the parent take control of the message and address it head on. Encourage your child to talk with you as well when these images come up outside of the home.

Posted on [February 4, 2009 at 3:15 PM](#)

Mary writes...

Dr. Metzler-

Are children aware of race and ethnic differences from birth? Or is there a certain age at which children register those differences? Thanks!

Mary

Posted on [February 3, 2009 at 5:08 PM](#)

Christopher? writes...

Hello Mary. My research indicates that Birth Through Three: Toddlers become aware of physical race and skin color differences and learn names for specific groups. They do not comprehend the real meanings of these labels, and may be puzzled by the use of colors to describe both people and objects. Four Through Six: Preschoolers can usually identify their own racial or ethnic group and may place a positive or negative value on their own and other groups. Feelings about groups are acquired by absorbing societal messages from the media, literature, toys, and their surroundings, even in the absence of contact or parental instruction. Children notice their own racial and ethnic differences from their parents and may express a desire to be the same race and ethnicity as the parents the children love. Seven Through Eleven: Latency age children usually have a firmer understanding of their own racial and ethnic identity and--given the opportunity--will explore what it means to be a member of this group.

Posted on [February 4, 2009 at 3:13 PM](#)

Sophie writes...

Can you recommend any children's books, TV programs or movies for young children that include good messages about diversity?

Posted on [February 3, 2009 at 11:54 PM](#)

Christopher? writes...

Hello Sophie. There are so many. The following books are among my favorites:

David's Drawings by Cathryn Falwell, How My Parents Learned to Eat , I Love My Hair! and Jack and Jim . As to movies, 1959 Racism, Prejudice, & Cultural Diversity Discrimination Movie, "Buddy G, My Two Moms and Me", Dream Keeper and the Hiding Place.

Posted on February 4, 2009 at 3:09 PM

Toni writes...

We are a caucasian family with one biological daughter and adopting an african american daughter. My daughters will learn about diversity by simply being loving sisters with each other.

Posted on February 4, 2009 at 2:00 PM

Christopher? writes...

Thank you for your reply Toni. I agree. However, I also think that families who adopt children from another race can show how to best love by discussing the differences and showing acceptance for those differences. While they will be loving sisters at home, the family must also help them deal with the comments that will be made outside of the home.

Posted on February 4, 2009 at 2:58 PM

Gabrielle writes...

Hi Dr. Metzler. I live in an all-white neighborhood. Though my family is black, my husband looks white and our kids look mulatto.

They go to a small, private preschool where they are 2 of 3 black children. My 5 yr old is aware of the lack of color, but not my 2 1/2 yr old (at least he doesn't articulate it).

How do I keep them from feeling SO very different at school? How do I explain why they are usually the only ones of color in and around our community? Sometimes, I worry about raising them in our area, though we love it there and have no plans to move. Thanks.

Posted on February 6, 2009 at 1:03 PM

Kathy Ann writes...

Dear Dr. Metzler,

I read your posting on diversity...very interesting. As a minority family that lives in a 96% white county with his school about 1% black, our kindergarten son's development, education and self-confidence is of great concern to us. How should we interpret his report card when it does not seem to tell the whole truth regarding his academic and personal performance? What is the best way to confront his teacher and principal with our concerns without them feeling that we are playing the 'race' card?

Posted on February 6, 2009 at 6:16 PM

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Thanks for your question Kathy Ann. The most important thing here is the care and well being of your child. To that end, I would address the issue with the teacher and principal in a caring, firm respectful manner. I would say something like, "I am concerned that the report card does not reflect my son's true performance for the following reasons and would like to find a way for us all to make sure that we are working to a true representation. I will do my best, what are you committed to doing to help?"

As to the feeling of playing the race card, I think it important that you not worry about that. The fact is, if you address the issues as I suggest, it would reduce but not necessarily eliminate the race card issue. However, at the end of the day, teachers, parents and others must be concerned about the well being of the child. Also, when people think that the race card is being played, there is little we can do about that. What you can control is a proactive approach to the care and nurturing of your child. This approach is a start.

Posted on February 10, 2009 at 8:57 PM

L M P writes...

With all due respect Dr. Metzler,

"The challenge for parents is ensuring that children learn to accept and respect differences."

Yes, when the differences are good and pure and decent - all peoples. However, children nor adults for that matter, should accept nor "respect" behaviors - note the word - "behaviors" that are indecent, unhealthy, harmful and unnatural.

Posted on February 9, 2009 at 3:24 PM

Dr. Metzler? writes...

LMP, thank you for your comment. My point is a simple one. As parents we should teach children how to respect and accept differences. Of course we will make the choice as to which differences are, to use your words, "good, pure and decent." We should do so in a way that accepts that people are and will continue to be different. Just because I refuse to accept a difference does not mean, nor should it mean that people will cease to be different.

As to the question of behaviors, I leave it up to parents to discuss behaviors with their children much like I do so with my own. I must always, and do ask myself if in doing so I am relying on facts or fiction. As you correctly note, this is about differences and not behavior that some may find objectionable.

Posted on February 10, 2009 at 8:50 PM

Sarah writes...

Dear Dr Metzler,

My six year old daughter has coeliac disease and lactose intolerance and has a bad to reaction to even small amounts of gluten 'contamination'. As a result she is often placed on her own to eat her lunch as it is extra work for the staff to watch that other kids do not interfere with her food. During school festivals celebrated with food, she can be placed to one side 'to keep her safe' but with little regard to her emotional safety (eg when a mother sent in Christmas cookies, the teacher said she had solved the problem by having my daughter sit safely out of the way on a chair and having all the children wash their hands afterwards... it did not occur to anyone that she was mortified that she could not eat a cookie with the rest of the class) Last year she was excluded from taking a turn at cookery club. This year she has finally been able to have her chance, but when I discovered that both the chocolate and marshmallows for fruit kebabs were unsuitable (both of which with notice I could have provided gluten free) the teacher said 'it doesn't matter' and said that my daughter 'could just' do fruit on the kebab on a side table. As each club only consists of four sessions, I was distressed that more effort (even just to communicate with me) had not been made to include her. How do I explain to the staff and other parents that there is more to this than just removing the gluten? How do I answer my daughter when she asks again 'why is my tummy not made for yummy food like everyone else?'

Posted on February 10, 2009 at 6:18 PM

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Sarah. I think that you have a good opportunity to educate staff and parents for children who face this issue everyday. First, I would ask for a meeting to thank staff and parents for attempting to help by removing the gluten. Then, I would explain to them that an important part of every child's growth and learning is to be included. In that conversation, I would also ask them to think of a time when they felt different or excluded and how that made them feel. Then, I would explain in an open way (asking for questions) the steps they can take to ensure inclusion.

As to your daughter, I would tell her that just like children come in all shapes, sizes, colors etc. so do tummies. I would tell her that her tummy enjoys food differently and that her tummy is a special tummy. Then we will talk about the kind of yummy foods that go well with her special tummy. The point here is to get her to understand that yummy tummies are as different as everything else.

Posted on February 10, 2009 at 9:05 PM

Casti writes...

Hello Dr. Metzler,

I am the proud mother of two children. My husband and I strongly wish them to have the very best outlook on life. We are a white family, living in a dominantly white neighborhood. Please explain to me, what do my children have to gain through this "diversity" and "multiculti"? I have done extensive research on racial differences and how that becomes a huge factor in the overall perception of a particular people through their behavior, intelligence, and chosen lifestyles. It is a fascinating and incredible how evolution can make humans so unique and different.

I feel that a lot of white parents such as myself do not however, wish their children exposed to these differences because more often than not, this is detrimental to EVERY child's confidence when they are so afraid of being "racist" or "bad", that they force themselves into bad situations, which later effect their education, happiness, and emotional stability. Now, my family stays among our own community not out of any hate for anyone else. Instead, we value diversity greatly in the world and wish our children and future grandchildren to keep out cultural and traditional values.

My dilemma- Is there anything wrong keeping our European American traditions? Is there anything wrong with wishing our children and grandchildren to never feel racially guilty by being exposed to diversity?

Posted on February 12, 2009 at 9:19 PM

Casti writes...

Sorry, I made a typo:

"wish our children and future grandchildren to keep out cultural and traditional values."

It's supposed to be:

"wish our children and future grandchildren to keep OUR cultural and traditional values."

Posted on [February 12, 2009 at 9:24 PM](#)

Marty writes...

Dr. Metzler,

I live in a safe all white middle working class area. But lately, Black children have been starting to come around because their area is so bad. They have been chasing young white children from the playground, harassing white school girls, even sexually assaulting some of them, they deal drugs, carry guns. We have called the police, but they said, there is nothing they can do. They accused us of being racist because we want our kids to be safe. How do I tell my kids not all black children are bad? They may make a mistake and trust some of these kids and get hurt or worse. This is happening across America. I voted for Obama, I do want diversity, but I don't want my kids to get hurt.

Posted on [February 12, 2009 at 10:35 PM](#)

Ulfur Engil writes...

Dr. Metzler,

If the definition of diversity is established by the differences between the peoples, then how would anyone in the world benefit from intermingling those differences, even if only on a mental level?

In order to maintain TRUE diversity in the world, would that not require that the aspects which make each culture in the world unique be preserved, rather than assimilated?

To use an example: The behaviour of a lion, which is what in part uniquely makes it a lion, can not be properly preserved if it is forced to coexist in a cage with a tiger. In fact, not only would the unique behaviour of both the lion and the tiger be under threat, but also the safety of both, as both would probably act with hostility towards one another.

By suggesting that we as parents go outside of our environments to teach our children about different cultures, would we not subject them to that same threat, and also in turn threaten those who live in that different culture?

Posted on [February 12, 2009 at 11:27 PM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Ulfur. I am not at all arguing for assimilation. I am also not sure what you mean when you say go outside of your environment. The reality is that America and in fact the world is inhabited by people who are different. Of course, as parents we could choose to live in a world where we all look, think and behave alike. We could live in an area where everyone is exactly like us, we can ensure that our children never watch TV or go anywhere where there are different people. In fact, we can create our own racial and ethnic reality. It is our choice. The problem, of course, is when they grow up and then interact with the differences that we hid from them; we did not do them any favors.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 10:13 PM](#)

Mickey writes...

Forced integration is the very counter-force of multiculturalism. If we are all encouraged to blend into society's melting pot, then where is the culture? One should celebrate one's *own* culture, and not make others look as tyrants for not doing so.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 12:06 AM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Mickey. Diversity and forced integration are not at all the same thing. I think that we should teach all children to celebrate their own culture as well as the culture of others. This is about inclusion not exclusion.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:52 PM](#)

Steve writes...

Dr. Christopher; if diversity is such a wonderful gift to our schools, then why is America ninth in relation to the industrial nations of the world on secondary education? One of the most non-diverse countries, Iceland is the leader in education and literacy rates. America used to be number 1 now were slipping down the ladder.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 3:43 AM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Steve. I am not aware of any research that links diversity or homogeneity in industrial nations or developing nations to school success and ranking. If you are, please pass it along to me.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:50 PM](#)

Denise writes...

Will you please explain the practical, real-world benefits of "diversity" in American schools? As far as I can tell, the doctrine of "diversity" brings grotesquely dumbed-down academic standards, and the need to place armed police on public schools, the more "diverse" the schools become. Can you please explain why there is a push for "Afro-Centered" schools, for BLACK CHILDREN ONLY? Are those schools adverse to teaching Blacks about other people? And can you explain why those schools are dismal failures, in every way, from almost the moment they open their doors? What about Jewish schools? They do not allow non-Jews in, based on ethnic identification alone. Why are there no protests, or law suits, to force non-Jews into these schools? Please answer these critical and legitimate questions. Thank you.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 8:28 AM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Denise. First, I am not aware of the doctrine of diversity of which you write. Second, there is no link between what you term "dumbed-down academic standards" and diversity. Clearly, you do not see the value in diversity and there is nothing at all wrong with that. The fact is that people are different and we can either teach our children to accept this or not.

There are some educators and parents who push for "afro-centric" schools because they think that it is important to teach children the importance of their heritage in what they consider to be a more hospitable academic setting. While I am not at all a proponent of this approach, I respect the parents' rights to do so. In addition, as a researcher in this area, I can tell you that you simply do not have your facts correct when you say that all "afro-centric" schools are a dismal failure from the time they open their doors."

I do not agree that the sole basis for any school should be race or ethnic identification. However, we cannot ignore the fact that some schools simply present children with a distorted and selective view of history and that many parents do not teach their children to accept diversity either because they do not agree with diversity or they are simply teaching what they were taught as children. To some parents, the solution is schools that organize around identity.

The solution is simple. Schools should be accurate in their approach, teachers should be inclusive and parents should reinforce this with fact not fiction.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:44 PM](#)

Taylor writes...

Dr. Christopher, my life partner and myself recently adopted Deshawn, a beautiful 5 year old African American child. He has brought so much joy to both of us and our families, but the dilemma we are both facing as parents is how to bring him up around the holiday season. We are both Christians but we still want to celebrate Kwanzaa and teach Deshawn about his rich African heritage. Do you have any advice on how do we can go about doing this without completely confusing him? Thank you in advance.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 11:49 AM](#)

Tracey (PBS Parents)Author Profile Page writes...

Hi everyone. I'm excited about the level of interest in Dr. Metzler's post. As a reminder, the topic is how to raise children who respect differences. Please try to stay on topic, so that we can keep your comment on our site. Thanks.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 3:03 PM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Taylor. I think that you address this as you will address any learning in Deshawn's young life. First, teach him that he is a very special child and get to celebrate more than one holiday. Second, my research indicates that children who are racially different from the parents who are raising them end up identifying with the group that is most accepting to them. Thus, you want to make sure to teach Deshawn that he is "both and" not "either or." Third, one of the most important things for raising a black boy is to ensure that he knows that he is black. The world will notice. So, be sure to provide activities, holidays and culture that pay tribute to all of him. Finally, be sure that you teach him not only about African heritage but also about black-American heritage.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 10:05 PM](#)

Josh writes...

If diversity is so great, then why are diverse communities always worse than communities that aren't diverse. Even with wealth and population density taken into account, a

neighborhood, town, or school district that is diverse will have much more crime, people who have no interest in improving their lives, and students who have no desire to learn anything. That's why people are constantly moving out of more "diverse" communities and into less "diverse" ones.

Posted on [February 13, 2009 at 4:00 PM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Josh. I am writing about how to teach children to accept diversity. Your question is a political and ideological one that I am not going to opine on. I will say that in teaching children about diversity, I always ensure that I respond with facts and not stereotypes.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:25 PM](#)

Patricia writes...

I have a dilemma, Dr. Christopher. I am a mixture of Scottish and French and am married to a man whose mother is Dutch and whose father is Swahili. We met in college, dated briefly, and eventually married.

Now I am pregnant and we have begun to argue about how to raise the child even though I haven't finished the first trimester.

My husband doesn't identify with his Dutch heritage at all; he is strongly Afrocentric. This is one of the things that initially attracted me to him, but I don't want my child to miss out on the other aspects of our heritage.

I want my child to recognize all parts of our heritage, but I don't want to anger my husband or confuse my child in the process. What do I do?

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 12:44 AM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Patricia. I think it very important that you have a candid conversation with your husband about what will be in the best interest of the child. The fact is that as the child grows, he or she will naturally want to know more about who or she is. So, if your husband chooses to ignore his Dutch heritage, that is his choice. However, he should consider how keeping it from the child will affect him or her as he or she grows. Keep in mind that culture and heritage is one aspect of being a person and the more we know, the richer we are.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:21 PM](#)

Fenria writes...

If the end result of multiculturalism is to blend all people into one brown race, isn't that the antithesis of diversity? If all cultures and ethnicities are fully integrated and assimilated, then what happens to the unique differences that made them interesting in the first place? What is the point of multiculturalism if the end result is just another big homogeneous race of people who all share the same culture, namely just consumerism.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 3:34 AM](#)

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Fenria. When teaching children about diversity, I explain to them the beauty and value in all. Multiculturalism properly taught, explains just that. The point is not a homogeneous community in which differences are erased. As I indicated in my post, it is not about being "blind" to differences.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 9:06 PM](#)

Denise writes...

Hi Tracey,

I see that you have pulled posts, including my 100% factually correct description of the specious, fraudulent, Communist, NON-African "holiday" of Kwanzaa, created by the criminal racist Muslim kidnapper/torturer Ron Karnega, in response to the alleged Christian Taylor's bizarre and destructive desire to mis-educate young adoptee DeShawn. Why, Tracey, why? My posts address real consequential issues. Why have you removed my posts? You have also removed my post regarding the destruction of Academic standards, and the shocking rise on serious criminal activities IN "diverse" schools. What are you afraid of, Tracey? Do you censor easily-verifiable facts that conflict with the Party Line? That's not respectful of genuinely diverse discussion at all, Tracey. And where has Dr. Metzler gone? He's not addressing any questions anymore.

Posted on [February 14, 2009 at 12:19 PM](#)

[Tracey \(PBS Parents\)Author Profile Page writes...](#)

Hi Denise. If you look a few posts up, you will see that your earlier post is still there.

Dr. Metzler was scheduled to answer questions for a two-week period which ended February 13. So, he will answer questions that were posted before 11:59 PM last night. As a professor, author, consultant and lecturer, he is quite busy. Please check back for his response. Have a great day.

Posted on *February 14, 2009 at 4:13 PM*

Will writes...

I'm 45, white and lived in the Chicago area for some time. In 2000 I took a historic walk down Cicero Blvd where Dr. King had marched in the 60's and was surprised to find that once all white neighborhood now all Mexican with no other races to be found. As I continued my walk I was met by many evil looking stares, and about 2 miles through my walk I was stopped by a white police officer and told to go back to the subway station and that I would be robbed if I continued on my historic walk. Then it dawned on me that the diversity Dr. King hoped to promote in reality was just a replacing of one racial group for another. While whites are told to feel guilty, all other races are told to be proud of their race and hate whitey with impunity.

With all do respect, we learn from nature that all racial groups including whites need to stick together to protect their own interests. We can still do this and respect each other's differences. But if when one racial group imposes on another's society it will never work. Nature doesn't recognize racial diversity but only drives those who embrace it into extinction.

Posted on *February 14, 2009 at 5:19 PM*

Dr. Metzler? writes...

Hello Will, based on what you wrote, it appears that the police officer was not taught to respect diversity as a child. In that spirit, teaching children to respect differences is not about replacing one group with the other. Instead, as I wrote in my post, it is about helping them understand that we are not all alike nor should we be. Even if we were to ignore diversity, it simply will not go away.

Posted on *February 14, 2009 at 9:11 PM*

Mark writes...

Years ago my daughter was diagnosed with leukemia at age 5. At the time, she was in kindergarten and began treatment almost immediately after the diagnosis. This presented a problem for us as we had never thought of how the other children would react to her appearance once the chemo and radiation therapies started working. Fortunately, the hospital set up an assembly to educate about the illness and what the reactions to the treatments would be to the other children. This was to try to counter any adversity amongst the pupils towards my daughter.

As the school was very "diverse", pupils from almost all the spectrum, this was new to them as they had never encountered a child on cancer treatment.

When my daughter finally returned. The response was overwhelmingly positive, especially amongst the White and Asian children. As the school year progressed, the animosity between my daughter and children of mestizo or black heritage became unbearable and we had to move her to another school. Teasing was the major problem, but there were incidents of bullying also.

Finally, we moved to another state after the leukemia was in remission and found that a majority white school was a better environment for her to learn and thrive. She is now almost 30 years old and expecting to have a child of her own. We took great pains in teaching our daughter to respect other peoples and cultures but found that our European-American culture takes better care of European-Americans as opposed to African-American, Latin-American or even Asian-American.

My question to you, Dr. Metzler, is that we have all noticed that one's own kind take care of each other best. This is a Natural state and has been in our DNA since who knows when and can not be changed. Why then is it imperative that Whites are required to bow to diversity when the other races and cultures are not?

Posted on *February 15, 2009 at 7:10 AM*

Will writes...

Thanks for responding Dr. Metzler. Actually if it had not been for that police officer I may not be alive right now. I had no idea I was straying into Mexican gangland territory ruled by MS13 and by some miracle this officer stopped me just before I walked right into it. Turns out the transit station I was hoping to arrive at the end of my walk was closed on Saturdays and I would have been stranded had I even got there.

Now regarding multi-racialism, as a child in school I was taught as everyone else was to respect racial differences and I believe I always have but what I've also learned over the past 40 years is that this has not been the nature or reality of racial-diversity's end result and Cicero is just one example of what has been happening in every major city in America and Europe. My point being that the good intentions of racial-diversity accepted into the society of one racial group eventually leads to the alienation, extinction and replacement by another racial group.

The world is and always has been a multi-racial planet of separate nations and peace can only be maintained as long as each racial group respects and is respected by it's neighbors and permitted to seek it's own interests and manage it's own affairs. More nations around the world are accepting this view; it is called 'Nationalism.'

On the other hand, a racially diverse society can only be maintained with the same principles for each individual on a very small scale such as a church or social group and only on a voluntary basis unless it is enforced by strict laws that would then violate those very principles of freedom and human rights that they had intended to protect.

Posted on *February 15, 2009 at 11:48 AM*

Tracey (PBS Parents)Author Profile Page writes...

Hi everyone. I appreciate the various opinions expressed on this Q & A. That being said, let me remind you that this is a forum for parents who are interested in raising children to appreciate and respect different cultures, races, ethnicities, genders and the like. If you have a related comment, please feel free to post it. Our ground rules for posting are listed above the fields for leaving comments.

As mentioned yesterday, Dr. Metzler's scheduled time to answer questions ended on Friday. Our next expert Q & A will be posted in a few days. Thanks.

Posted on *February 15, 2009 at 1:26 PM*

Venus writes...

The article I just read is very informative. I think I need to read this everyday. Thanks for sharing good information for parents like me. God Bless!!

Edited for clarification by Tracey at PBS Parents.

Posted on *February 17, 2009 at 12:49 PM*

Erin writes...

I am a caucasian woman married to an Indian (Asian Pacific Islander) man and we have a beautiful 18 mo old boy. I hope when he is old enough to realize he looks different from other people that he is faced with children and adults that have been taught the beauty of diversity. I hope I am able to teach my son to love others regardless of their race, class or religion. It breaks my heart as a parent that there is so much hate and ignorance when it comes to peoples differences. Thank you Dr Metzler for addressing this issue.

Posted on *February 19, 2009 at 3:00 PM*

Kymerlee writes...

Dr. Metzler, I appreciate what you have to say here. There are some very practical, useful ideas about talking about diversity and culture. Thank you.

I feel concerned about your use of the word "race". When I was a child, I was taught that there are three races of people. Now that I am an adult, I know that the entire concept of race is a social construct that has often been used divisively by people in power.

I am fully supportive of multicultural awareness and discussing the rich diversity of human beings but feel strongly that the word race applied to difference in the way people look needs to be eliminated. It is not scientifically accurate and creates a lot of division and confusion.

As I'm sure you know, where we come from in the world determines how we look whereas culture determines how we act and interact.

I am curious how you might frame this with children without using the outdated word "race".

Posted on *March 11, 2010 at 12:32 PM*

gucci outlet writes...

gucci outlet

Posted on *December 8, 2010 at 9:17 AM*

gucci outlet writes...

gucci outletgucci outlet come

Posted on *December 8, 2010 at 9:18 AM*

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H Christiane Mahoney · 2 years ago

Thank you Dr. Metzler for everything you do. We as teachers and parents have a responsibility to teach our children from a young age about diversity and tolerance. It is indeed very painful to read some of these hateful comments. hatred comes from fear. We need to rise above all this and embrace other cultures for a better world for our children. There are many children books that deal with this very issue like the books by Randa Handler and if as parents we lead by example be more open to other races and cultures the world would be a more peaceful place

^ | v · Reply · Share



ham · 2 years ago

Can you give us some examples on how we can talk about 'differences' to our 5 year old?

^ | v · Reply · Share



Elizabeth · 2 years ago

What does diversity teach us?

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Ghulam Sarwar · 3 years ago

what type of diversity in pakistani society is facing

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elaine.warmington · 3 years ago

Can you give me some ideas of how to teach ubder 3s about diversity ?

^ | v · Reply · Share



Feyza · 3 years ago

Can you give me a fact or source on how you came up with these brilliant ideas?

^ | v · Reply · Share



single parenting facts · 4 years ago

Hello..

Kids learn both from home and school so it is the duty of the teachers and parents that they make them a good person and explain that there is no difference between people. Everybody is equal in each part of the world.

^ | v · Reply · Share



elma · 5 years ago

this is very good steps for explanations of accepting diversity!!!!!!

^ | v · Reply · Share

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10 comments · 4 years ago

Mrs Jump — there is a great book i read periodically to my kids "how to behave and why" they accually like ...

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6 comments · 3 years ago

foundingsmom — I appreciate your comment, Bamboo. So vitally important -- and we all need reminders from ...

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