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10 TIPS FOR TALKING WITH YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT RACISM, SOCIAL UNREST, AND PROTESTS

1. Think about your own perspectives on the topics: how clear are *you* about your thoughts and feelings on these difficult topics? Know your deepest, truest feelings and be honest with yourself.
2. Know what you want to accomplish with the dialogue. What is the main point you are trying to make or the primary subject of the discussion?
3. Be willing to admit to your child that perhaps you are not clear on your feelings because these are very complex issues. We become clearer as we discuss them. This is good modeling for your child. Be honest with your child.
4. Don't lecture.... rather, as your child open ended questions about *their* thoughts and feelings on the topics.
5. Let them speak and permit them to have their own opinions even if they contradict yours. Remember, learning, growth and change will come through the process of dialoging. Do not 'lead' them with suggestive questions.
6. Challenge respectfully. Provide many opportunities for learning and growth. Give examples of actual perspectives or experiences in your life. Show videos or articles. Questions maturely and respectfully.
7. Discuss and explore philosophical and moral considerations. Discuss concepts of 'right and wrong,' 'oppression,' 'freedom of speech,' etc. Discuss or explore together the historical context of the issues.
8. Encourage thinking "outside the box" and challenge commonly held beliefs... explore with your child.
9. Make it relatable. Speak about someone your child knows who is a minority or of a different race, ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Ask them how they would feel if that person were the victim of racism or oppression. *Humanize the dialogue and the people you are speaking about.*
10. Leave the topic open for further communication. Allow time for processing of news and current affairs as they arise.