

Raising Children Without Bias

Contributed by Deb Capone

Showing children you are fair

Don Imus' ridiculous remarks directed at the Rutgers University women's basketball team, coupled with the Korean government's concern that the horrific actions of a Korean-American at Virginia Tech would spark backlash against Koreans, has put racism on the front line. These unfortunate events forced us all to face the state of racism and its repercussions for our children. We are now forced to:

- Relinquish the fantasy that racism doesn't exist or it's 'better' than it used to be. Recognize that racism has serious consequences.
- Admit that if we can't raise our children without biases and racist attitudes then we are limiting their potential.

This really is good news. Now we can start unlearning our bad habits of racism and bias. Racism is a habit. It's something we learned. And what can be learned can also be unlearned. It takes time, effort and commitment. But, it is do-able. Experts believe that it takes as long as 30 days to break a simple habit like the order you put your shoes on in the morning. So unlearning your racism habits may take some work. Don't expect overnight results. Take things step-by-step and day-by-day, starting now. Here are four steps to unlearning racism and raising confident children in the 21st Century:

Step 1: Take the power out of racism. Talk about it openly. We actually talk about race all the time, but we do it in code. Much of our discussions about everyday life-politics, education, welfare, taxes and even movies, entertainers, sports and neighborhood happenings have racial underpinnings. Racism, like any 'ism' gets more power when we don't talk about it openly. First, admit that racism exists in today's society as recent events clearly demonstrate. Then we can make the issue less scary by getting racism out of its closet and talking about it openly.

Step 2: Decode the 'codes' of racism. To take the emotion and power out of racism, we have to understand what we are really saying. Consider the words terrorist and illegal alien as an example of 'code words'. Has terrorist become a 'code' word for people of Arab decent that hide anti-Arab sentiments? Illegal aliens simply don't exist. There are people living in the United States that don't have the proper documentation to enter the US. But they themselves are not illegal. How can people be illegal? Today's illegal aliens are likely to be from Mexico which begs the question of what are we truly worried about-the legal or racial implications of our immigration policies? It wouldn't be the first time that racist sentiments have been masked in legalities.

Step 3: Focus on the end result. Racism can only exist where there is ignorance and fear. Examine your values and beliefs when you consider those who are different from you. Then educate yourself where need be and demonstrate your willingness to learn and explore different cultures, races and religions to your children. If you can replace your biases and prejudices with facts, your children will garner real intercultural competence. And, only then will they be armed to face the 21st century with confidence. You will be arming them with one of the most important tools for their success in the world.

Step 4: Don't just stand there - do something. If you hear a racist joke, ask the jokester to 'cease and desist'. If a high profile person crosses the line, then write a letter or make a phone call. Make a commitment to examine your own 'isms' and stop them or your children's sake if not your own. Admit that you can be wrong about people and live the possibility that you can make the world more tolerant, more accepting, and more respectful. Give your children a major key to success-the focus on humankind and not just "our own kind." No one is born with racism. It is a learned set of beliefs and values, which believe it or not can be unlearned. It is up to all of us to make sure that our children don't become a poster child for racism when they inherit the world. Deb Capone, President and CEO of 'As Simple As That,' and the author of three award-winning children's books, helps parents and educators break the cycle of bias and bullying. Sign up for her free monthly newsletter "Breaking the Cycle" today. For more information and articles on overcoming bias and creating a cultural diverse future for our children, check out Deb's new blog.

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woman and really gorgeous ones too. I honestly have tried lot's of other sites.

I dated one girl seriously from EliteMate, that ended. About 3 weeks ago

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this girl is a keeper. She is great, although it is a little early to tell her that,

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We connect so well, and both feel really comfortable around each other.

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person for you, and EliteMate has made it easy to find that person.

The site is easy to use and totally affordable. Thank you so much for making dating easy and fun again.

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