

Bias in Childhood

Biases based on race, ethnicity, nationality, and language begin to emerge before kindergarten. Children notice differences all around them, including differences in how people act and treat others. Use these research-based tips to help children process the differences they observe and counteract the negative impact of bias.



Body Language

Practice using gestures with your child as another way to communicate. You can wave your hand and say "hi!" or shake your head and say "no." Or you can clap your hands and say "yay!" See if they will mimic your actions and sounds. Try going back and forth like a conversation.

Brainy Background

Many children use gestures before they speak. When you show your child how bodies and words work together, you teach them how to communicate. You also help them make connections between words and actions, an important part of talking, reading, and writing.

Suggested Age 0 - 2 years

Powered by
vroom

Do As I Do

It's not just what we say that matters. Children learn many things, including biases, by observing and imitating the behaviors of trusted adults around them.

Pay attention not only to what you do, but also how you do it, including being attuned to your body language. Model the behaviors, values, and actions you want your child to replicate. Caregivers and teachers are children's earliest role models.

Perspectives

From a young age, children recognize differences between people. Parents can help children make meaning of the world around them by talking about human diversity, including race, gender, interests, and abilities.

If you don't talk about differences, children will make their own assumptions. Spend time talking about not only differences in appearance, but also different experiences and perspectives.



Comparing Faces

Find a picture of a child in a magazine, book, or even a sign you may see around you. Point it out to them and talk about what is the same and what is different between them and the child in the picture. "She has two eyes and so do you!" "Her eyes are blue and yours are brown." Take turns!

Suggested Age 1 - 3 years

Brainy Background

As you talk about the details in what you notice together, you're promoting the life skill of focus. You're also helping your child see similarities and differences between them and others. This is an important part of being able to understand another person's point of view.

Powered by
vroom

Powered by
vroom

For more Brain Building Activities™ visit Vroom.org

INSTITUTE FOR LEARNING & BRAIN SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON

Explore more I-LABS resources: modules.ilabs.uw.edu/outreach